

**Czech University of Life Sciences Prague**

**Faculty of Economics and Management**



**Department of Humanities**

**Bachelor Thesis**

**Public Understanding and Experience of Discrimination  
in Europe**

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## BACHELOR THESIS ASSIGNMENT

John Gaston Schwarz

Business Administration

Thesis title

**Public Understanding and Experience of Discrimination in Europe**

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### Objectives of thesis

The thesis will consist of a study of public understandings and awareness of discrimination in Europe, with a particular focus on issues of workplace and market discrimination. The concept of discrimination forms an important part of a wide range of legislation related to business conduct, employment law and public administration. Laws against discrimination are widespread, but there are debates about how discrimination should be measured, conceptualised and prevented. The thesis will investigate existing laws and debates around discrimination, and also whether and to what extent public understandings and experiences reflect these legal and ethical debates. This will be done through comparative analysis of publicly available documents, and a quantitative survey of attitudes and experiences.

### Methodology

The thesis will develop a literature review covering ethical, legal and policy debates about the concept of discrimination. It will present and analyze the existing laws, policies and regulations concerning discrimination in Europe through critical comparative analysis of publicly available documents. It will carry out a quantitative survey into understandings and experiences of discrimination among citizens of selected European countries.

## The proposed extent of the thesis

40-50 pages

## Keywords

Discrimination, Ethics, Public Attitudes, Law, Workplace, Employment

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ALTMAN, Andrew. (2020). 'Discrimination.' The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2020 Edition). Edward N. Zalta (ed.). URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2020/entries/discrimination/>>.

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and Council of Europe. (2018). Handbook on European non-discrimination law. Available at: [https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/fra-2018-handbook-non-discrimination-law-2018\\_en.pdf](https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-handbook-non-discrimination-law-2018_en.pdf)

LIPPERT-RASMUSSEN, Kasper (Ed.). (2017). The Routledge Handbook of the Ethics of Discrimination. London: Routledge.

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## **Declaration**

I declare that I have worked on my bachelor thesis titled "Public Understanding and Experience of Discrimination in Europe" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the bachelor thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on 15/3/2022

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**John Gaston Schwarz**

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# **Public Understanding and Experience of Discrimination in Europe**

## **Abstract**

This bachelor thesis studies public understanding and experience of discrimination in Europe. Discrimination as a topic is becoming a more prevalent theme in recent years. And the issues surrounding discrimination can be seen in almost every environment and society, including developed continents such as Europe.

For the theoretical part, the thesis will take a look at the conceptual ideas behind discrimination, and give modern-day examples towards the research. It will also speak about the wrongfulness behind discrimination and how it may affect people, while also taking into consideration the social meaning behind it. And lastly, the author will speak about current European legislation and what is being done at this time concerning the research topic.

The practical part focuses on the analysis of individuals' experiences with discrimination in the workplace. For the research, the author uses an online survey, which consists of examples of discriminatory behaviour, and write-in answers, where the respondent must answer based on their awareness and past experience.

**Keywords:** Discrimination, Ethics, Public Understanding, Law, Workplace, Experience, Behaviour, Europe.

# **Porozumění a zkušenosti veřejnosti s diskriminací v Evropě**

## **Abstrakt**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá chápáním a zkušenostmi veřejnosti s diskriminací v Evropě. Diskriminace jako téma se v posledních letech stává stále častějším tématem. A s problematikou diskriminace se lze setkat téměř v každém prostředí a společnosti, včetně vyspělých kontinentů, jako je Evropa.

V teoretické části se práce bude zabývat koncepčními myšlenkami, které stojí za diskriminací, a uvede příklady z moderní doby směrem k výzkumu. Bude také hovořit o tom, co se za diskriminací skrývá a jak může na lidi působit, přičemž bude brát v úvahu i její společenský význam. A nakonec bude hovořit o současné evropské legislativě a o tom, co se v současné době děje v souvislosti s tématem výzkumu.

Praktická část se zaměřuje na analýzu zkušeností jednotlivců s diskriminací na pracovišti. Pro výzkum využívá online dotazník, který se skládá z příkladů diskriminačního chování a písemných odpovědí, kde respondent musí odpovědět na základě svého povědomí a minulých zkušeností.

**Klíčová slova:** Diskriminace, Etika, Porozumění veřejnosti, Právo, Pracoviště, Zkušenosti, Chování, Evropa.

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## List of abbreviations

**CoE** = Council of Europe

**ECHF** = European convention on human rights

**ECtHF** = European court of human rights

**UN** = United Nations

**EU** = European Union

**FRA** = European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

**ADEA** = Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967

**UHDR** = Universal declaration of human rights

**ESC** = European Social Charter

**ECRI** = European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance

**CJEU** = Court of Justice of the European Union

**ICCPR** = International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

**ICESCR** = International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights

**ICERD** = International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

**CEDAW** = Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

**CRC** = Convention Against Torture, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child

# 1 Introduction

Over the years, our society has blossomed into something truly unique. From globalizing the entire world into a common market, for technology to advance at monumental speeds, to even going to places such as the moon. Nevertheless, even with these achievements, we as a people still lack fundamental concepts related to ethics, and our moral values are sometimes yet to be present. Discrimination is still far from being resolved; however, it is also true that the world has made significant progress towards protecting individuals and raising the equality of opportunity over the decades. In this thesis, the author will attempt to inform the reader on the conceptual issues surrounding discrimination such as: what it is, where it stems from, and which individuals are impacted by it. The author will also present examples and questions relating to business ethics and the workplace to allow the reader to get a greater understanding for how it effects employers and employees alike. Subsequently, issues surrounding the wrongness of discrimination will also be talked about, and how it not only impacts the individual, but society as a whole. Lastly, the thesis will talk about European legislation and how member states use their authority to handle discrimination.

This thesis seeks to investigate public perceptions and experiences of discrimination in Europe. Within the practical section, questions such as whether workplace discrimination exists and how it affects individuals will be addressed through a series of surveys. The author will present public opinions and experiences and attempt to explain the meaning and what can be done about it using the information gathered.

## **2 Objectives and Methodology**

### **Objective of thesis**

The thesis will consist of a study of public understandings and awareness of discrimination in Europe, with a particular focus on issues of workplace and market discrimination. The concept of discrimination forms an important part of a wide range of legislation related to business conduct, employment law and public administration. Laws against discrimination are widespread, but there are debates about how discrimination should be measured, conceptualised, and prevented. The thesis will investigate existing laws and debates around discrimination, and whether and to what extent public understandings and experiences reflect these legal and ethical debates. This will be done through comparative analysis of publicly available documents, and a quantitative survey of attitudes and experiences. The objective of this thesis is to explore public perceptions and experiences of discrimination in Europe. Questions such as whether workplace discrimination exists and how it affects individuals will be addressed.

### **Methodology**

The thesis will develop a literature review covering ethical, legal and policy debates about the concept of discrimination. It will present and analyze the existing laws, policies and regulations concerning discrimination in Europe through critical comparative analysis of publicly available documents. It will carry out a quantitative survey into understandings and experiences of discrimination among citizens of selected European countries.

### **3 Literature Review**

#### **Conceptual issues**

Over the years, our society has blossomed into something truly unique. From globalizing the entire world into a common market, for technology to advance at monumental speeds, to even going to places such as the moon. Nevertheless, even with these achievements, we as a people still lack fundamental concepts related to ethics, and our moral values are sometimes yet to be present. It seems as though our world has finally found a way to live peacefully, where people do not have to fight for natural resources.

Nevertheless, with the comfortable live style came a price, and that is our society accepting a capitalist view of the world and its resources. In today's society, money can practically change a person's life, and due to this, many people formed a blind obsession with living lavish lifestyles. However, these lavish lifestyles came at a cost, and that cost was people's moral values. You see, moral values are important in any society, because they are what guides people to make decisions and judgements according to their own sense of what is right and wrong. And when a society is guided by a lust for wealth instead of moral principles, it can forget the fundamental values that protect society from past atrocities.

The world has undoubtedly become more progressive towards its progress for universal rights, however, the fight for universal equality is far from over. Discrimination is still a daily occurrence in even the most developed nations, and for some, it's a never-ending reality that haunts their daily lives.

The term "discrimination", as the American Psychological Association describes, is the unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, or sexual orientation (American Psychological Association, 2019).

However, it is not sufficient enough to be familiar with the definition alone, we must delve deeper to find the true cause of discrimination, and what we can do about it in today's society. So, where does discrimination stem from? Well, the Council of Europe believes that discrimination and intolerance are frequently founded on or justified by prejudice and stereotyping of individuals and social groups, whether consciously or subconsciously; they are a manifestation of bias in action (Council of Europe, 2022). It is also important to note what stereotypes and prejudices are.

A stereotype is a generalized view or opinion about a specific group of individuals, for example, women having long hair and wearing skirts, or men expected to be strong, and not show emotions. Stereotypes are often founded on some form of personal experience or impressions obtained through early childhood socialization from adults around us at home, school, or through the media, which are subsequently generalized to include all persons who may possibly be associated (Council of Europe, 2005).

A prejudice is a judgment, generally negative, that we form about another person or group of people without fully knowing them. Prejudices, like stereotypes, are formed as part of the socialization process. One distinction between a stereotype and a prejudice is that when adequate knowledge about a person or a circumstance becomes accessible, we abandon our stereotypes. Prejudice, on the other hand, functions as a filter through which we perceive any given piece of reality; thus, information alone is rarely enough to overcome prejudice, because prejudices alter our perceptions of reality; humans will process information that confirms our prejudice while failing to notice or "forgetting" anything that contradicts it (Council of Europe, 2022).

From the information above it is clear that the latter is much more difficult to overcome, because if prejudice is contradicted by facts, human nature would rather deny the facts than dispute the prejudice.

### **Groups of discriminates**

Throughout history people have been discriminated in all possible forms, and it is one of the most prevalent types of human rights violations and abuse. Every day, millions of individuals are affected by it, and it is one of the most difficult to identify (Council of Europe, 2022). As was talked about previously, discrimination is often the result of the prejudices people hold. It deprives individuals of authority, prevents them from being active citizens,

prevents them from developing their talents, and, in many cases, prevents them from getting jobs, health care, education, or housing.

This section discusses the many forms of discrimination and how they influence human rights, as well as certain measures and initiatives that are now in place or should be implemented to combat discrimination.

### **Direct and indirect discrimination**

Discrimination may be practised in a direct or indirect way. For example, if a person of Romani descent was denied job applications, this would be direct discrimination because of the intention to discriminate against a person or a group. However, if for example, the fire department set a firefighters' minimum height criteria (which may exclude many more female than male applicants) than this would be an instance of indirect discrimination where a seemingly neutral policy, standard, or practice disadvantages members of a certain group in comparison to others (Council of Europe, 2022). Indirect discrimination is sometimes more prevalent and tougher to prove than direct discrimination, nonetheless, both direct and indirect discrimination are forbidden under the human rights instruments. This topic will be discussed more thoroughly in the next section.

### **Majorities and minorities**

Democracies are vulnerable to the "tyranny of majority". When a certain group of the populace has the majority in something, be it a political aspect or a religious aspect, it usually means that the majority will have the power to enact its own laws and policies. Unfortunately, discrimination is usually exercised by the majority upon the minority, even though discrimination from minorities also exists (Council of Europe, 2022). In the EU, the human rights framework not only gives protection against the persecution of a single person or a small group of individuals, but it also safeguards minorities from the majority.

### **Discrimination and race**

One of the most prominent forms of discrimination is racism. The impact of racist ideologies has been felt many times by the world over the centuries. It has left a significant impact on humanity; where it helped justify instances of slavery, colonialism, apartheid, and

annihilations of citizens of the world. The U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission describes racial discrimination as the involvement of unfavourable treatment of someone because he or she is of a certain race or because of personal qualities related with race (such as hair texture, skin colour, or certain facial features) (U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2022). However, it is also vital to mention that people often associate racism with acts of abuse or harassment. However, it doesn't have to include any aggressive or frightening behaviour at all. Consider racial slurs and jokes. Consider circumstances in which people are excluded from groups or activities because of their origin. Racism is comprised of more than simply words, ideas, and deeds. It encompasses all of the obstacles that prohibit people from experiencing dignity and equality because of their race.

### **Discrimination and religion**

Religious freedom and religious tolerance are one of the basic values present in every western society, yet acts of discrimination founded on religion have not yet disappeared. Religious intolerance is frequently associated with racism and xenophobia, especially antisemitism and Islamophobia (Council of Europe, 2022). Whilst Europe was plagued with religious intolerance in the past, in recent times Europe has been experiencing a growing religious diversity, and its citizens enjoy the right to practice their religion of choice.

### **Discrimination and age**

Age discrimination involves treating a person less favourably because of his or her age. This type of discrimination is most often encountered in the workplace, E.g., such as an individual being denied a job application because they are too old. Both the United States and the European Commission have laws in place for legal protection from Age discrimination; the Age Discrimination Employment Act (ADEA) and Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 respectively. However, some limitations apply, as the ADEA does not protect citizens under the age of 40, although some states do have laws in place to protect younger workers from age discrimination (U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2022).



## **Discrimination based on gender identity, gender, and sexual orientation**

Another prominent form of discrimination is based on gender and sexual orientation. Gender related discrimination refers to the practice of treating people differently solely because they are male or female, rather than on the basis of their unique qualities or capacities (this form is also called sexism or sex discrimination) as well as transgender or transsexual persons whose gender identity is discordant with or not culturally linked with their assigned sex (Council of Europe, 2022).

Discrimination based on sexual orientation refers to the practice of treating someone differently because of their sexual orientation, which is often referred to as homophobia (Typically applies to members of the LGBT). Homophobia is often defined as "an irrational fear or an aversion to homosexuality and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals based on prejudice, such as racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, and sexism, and people assumed to be LGBT (Council of Europe, 2022). Even today in many parts of the world, members of the LGBT community are still subject to different forms of violence that range from verbal attacks to even being murdered. Homosexuality is still a crime in many nations across the world, and in some of them it is punishable by prison time or the death penalty.

LGBT people are often denied their human rights, or at the very least, have their right to safety questioned every single day. Whether it be by being bullied for their sexual orientation at school, or being denied their right to work, as they get fired by their employers due to their gender identity. "61% of young gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons from 37 European countries claimed that they experienced prejudice and/or discrimination in school, and 51% in their family. 38% of respondents said they had experienced prejudice and/or discrimination in a community they belonged to and 30% did so in their circle of friends." (Council of Europe, 2022).

### **Sites of discrimination**

This section will attempt to describe the different areas of life an individual may find themselves in and encounter discrimination. Depending on where an individual finds themselves in, such as at work or at a social gathering, they may encounter wildly different forms of discrimination. To be filled in. Three main areas to touch on

## **Discrimination and the workplace**

Discrimination in the workplace occurs when an individual or a group of individuals is treated unjustly or unequally based on specified qualities. Race, ethnicity, gender identity, age, handicap, sexual orientation, religious views, and national origin are all protected traits. Workplace discrimination can occur between co-workers, between job seekers, or between employees and their employers. Discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, is criminal regardless of intent. The widely recognized forms of discrimination in the workplace consists of bias during job application selection, and wage gap differences by race and gender (Goff, 2018). It is important to mention however, that the latter form of discrimination could be caused by the Human Capital Theory. According to human capital theory, companies assign employment based on job applicants' capacity to make productive contributions, often known as their "human capital." (Goff, 2018). This would suggest that in the case of gender, women may be perceived as having a lower human capital, due to them having a greater tendency to take interruptions at work due to the division of labour in the family. Even than this theory is hard to prove as most discrimination in the workplace takes form of indirect discrimination, as it is unlawful for employers to actively discriminate against women (Goff, 2018).

## **Discrimination and education**

Like many other areas of social life, education is an area struggling with discrimination related issues. Discrimination in education occurs when a person or entity takes unfair action (or inaction) against persons belonging to specific groups in their pursuit of their full right to an education. Discrimination in education can occur due to age, disability, gender, national origin, race, or religion. Discriminatory behaviour is typically performed by instructors, administrators, or other students. Gideon Elford describes that there are two main ways an individual may be discriminated against within educational system. The first way is through academic tests and qualifications. You see Academic tests and qualifications typically serve a dual purpose in educational institutions. For example, where some universities conduct interviews as part of their admissions process, the university is simultaneously running a 'admissions' process as well as a 'assessment' test, based on which they may assign each candidate a 'interview score' that functions similarly

to a qualification or grade (Elford, 2018). While these processes themselves don't provoke and form of objectual bias or intention, they do bring up an important case. You see, in a non-specifically educational setting, a model situation would be preferring applications from males over women on the basis that men are less likely to require time away from work for childbearing, implying that they will be more productive employees (Elford, 2018). While differentiating between candidates based on predicted productivity may not be unethical in and of itself, doing so in this circumstance consistently disadvantages women in a way that is seen to subtly discriminate against them as a group.

Another method in which social class may be linked to indirect discrimination is the use of fees as a basis for selection in education. You see, charging a higher price for individuals to attend university may make it more difficult for some to attend university, or at the very least, make it less attractive, given its price (Elford, 2018). As a result, it may be argued that costly private schools that admit students based on their parents' capacity and desire to pay indirectly discriminates against individuals from lower socioeconomic levels. Of course, it may be argued that if free, public education is accessible, individuals from lower income families are not denied the chance to learn, but rather limited in the number of educational options open to them. Academic criteria used by educational institutions to assess and accept students have the potential to constitute indirect discrimination across a variety of dimensions, including socioeconomic class, race, and gender.

### **Discrimination and politics**

Political philosophers and legal theorists studying the issue of discrimination hardly ever include electoral politics. They mostly refer to discrimination arising in areas such as employment, education, and housing. Yet, numerous studies show that discrimination exists in politics too. Nenad Stojanovic believes that there are 3 main areas where an individual may be discriminated against within politics. Stojanovic distinguishes between three important political actors in a democracy: voters, political parties, and candidates (Stojanovic, 2018).

First there are voters, where the fundamental concept is that in a democracy, every citizen should have the right to participate in the political process. In the words of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 article 21.1 (United Nations, 1948) "everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through

freely chosen representative.”. There is now broad consensus that the distribution of the right to vote "should not discriminate unfairly between individuals based on irrelevant distinctions." (Beckman, 2009). In this context, the most commonly cited politically irrelevant traits are race, colour, sex, and religion. The most prime example of this form of discrimination would be the history of women’s suffrage. Another example would be how southern states in the United States disenfranchised large numbers of African Americans by introducing laws stipulating, that only citizens with a basic level of literacy would be allowed to vote (Stojanovic, 2018). This would be the case until the 1965 Voting Rights Act, however, this did not completely diminish the issues, so multiple amendments had to be created until recently in 2007.

The second important political actor albeit small are the political parties. Although though that there are few examples of countries that have legally banned ethnic minority parties, society does have enough evidence of this existing. The Venice Commission lists Albania, Bulgaria, Georgia, and Turkey as countries that have “prohibited parties representing minorities” (Council of Europe, 2000) In Albania, for example, the Albanians make up 98 percent of the population and do not have problems in forming parties that bear “Albanian” in their name. As a result, the restriction on ethnic parties effectively prevents the Greek minority (0.9%) from founding their own ethnic party. Another example would be when the government of Vladimír Mečiar of Slovakia, required coalitions of two or more parties to gain at least 5 percent of the vote for each party in the alliance and to have at least 10,000 members. The Hungarian parties avoided the problem by uniting into a single party that received 9% of the vote and 10% of the seats in 1998. Nevertheless, as Lublin (Lublin, 2014) remarks, “Slovakia demonstrated how governments can cloak attacks on minority parties in seemingly neutral electoral rules”.

The third kind of political actors who are potential victims of discrimination in politics are citizen candidates. This section will examine the cases of direct discrimination in which the constitution or law prevents certain groups of citizens from running for office on grounds of their membership of socially salient groups. Subsequently then address the cases of legal but indirect discrimination.

The cases of legal and direct discrimination concern countries where certain groups of citizens are not allowed to run for office because of their group identities. Stojanovic gives the example of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where candidates who do not belong to an of the

three “constitutive peoples” (Bosniaks, Croats, Serbs) cannot run for the three-member Presidency and cannot be appointed to the second chamber of Parliament (The House of Peoples) (Stojanovic, 2018). It is also important to mention however that not all free citizens have the right to run for political offices of their choosing. An example of legal and direct discrimination that is viewed positively by citizens, for instance, many states around the world such as the United States have set a minimum age requirement to be able to run for office.

The Constitution or laws may contain provisions that do not directly aim at preventing certain individuals from running for office, but that still produce similar effects. Stojanovic gives the example of financial provisions in electoral laws. Namely, Candidates from economically disadvantaged groups may be hampered if they are legally forced to pay huge sums of money – either to the state or to their parties – in order to participate in elections. However, it is also mentioned that even within economically disadvantaged groups, there will always be someone better off who can afford to run for office. So therefore, it is not as problematic per se. Though, even if there are no laws requiring candidates to pay larger sums of money, it can still be quite costly (Cohen, 2009).

It is also crucial to note that there is another form of Indirect discrimination, often called “imputed discrimination”, where sometimes selectors are not necessarily racists or sexists, but they exclude minority candidates because they believe the majority of voters will not support them. In other words, party selectors operate based on minority candidates' perceived lack of electability in order to avoid losing votes.

## **The wrongness of discrimination**

### **Introduction to the wrongness of discrimination**

Discrimination has obvious implications for those who are discriminated against, but it also has indirect and profound consequences for society. A society in which prejudice is permitted or accepted deprives people of the freedom to realize their greatest potential for themselves and society. Discrimination impedes on the daily lives of millions of people around the world and suffocates them by making individuals feel like they don't belong, additionally exacerbates stress and is linked to mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression. This section aims to explain the wrongfulness of discrimination, and the different

areas it affects. However, it is not enough to just list adequate theories of discrimination. For instance, in order to truly mark something as discriminatory it must fulfil two things. First you must identify cases of wrongful discrimination, and secondly, also explain why they are wrong (Beeghly, 2018).

So why is discrimination wrong? Well, it is important to note that those who view this topic with a humanist approach will always view discrimination as always wrong. Due to this it is important to distinguish discrimination. The first way is that we have the right to be judged based on our merit and capacity rather than on generalizations over traits that we are not responsible for. Specifically, no one has the right to be assessed or treated unfairly based on characteristics that do not represent a significant difference in merit (e.g., having committed a crime) or capacity (e.g., athletic ability). Furthermore, it is immoral to infringe on someone's rights. Discriminating based on ethnicity or gender, for example, is a violation of someone's rights. So, in essence, discrimination becomes wrong once the primary focus is on the persons generalization rather than based on their individual merit and capacity. To understand this in greater detail, let's look at two examples of discrimination in the workplace.

Hiring: Jim is looking for applicants for a position in his firm. Jim knows that being a member of an ethnic minority strongly correlates with crime. Because of this, Jim chooses to not look at applications belong to minorities.

Hiring: John is looking for an experienced marketing manager at his company. John receives an application from Jenny. Jenny is overqualified for her position and has left a good impression during her interview. However, Jenny is in her early twenties and has not had children yet. Due to this, the employer denies her application over fear of human capital and having to look for a possible replacement in the future.

These are both cases of discrimination. In their respective cases, Jim and John both treat some group of individuals very differently based on an irrelevant trait (being an ethnic minority and Jenny's gender).

### **Discrimination and disrespect**

Erin Beegly's chapter on discrimination and disrespect will be used for this section. In her Biography, Erin writes that there are three conceptions of disrespect and why they are wrongful. The first conception invokes the mental-state conception of disrespect. In “What

Makes Wrongful Discrimination Wrong?” Larry Alexander proposes a theory of wrongful discrimination built on this conception. He states that when someone is wrongly judged to be of lower moral worth and treated as such, that this treatment is morally wrong regardless of the gravity of its effects (Alexander, 1992). An example of this in practice that is mentioned in the biography is the laws that used to prevent black Americans from using public beaches. Discriminatory laws requiring white-only swimming pools, in his opinion, were disrespectful and illegal since they were based on the mistaken idea that black and white Americans were not moral equals (Alexander, 1992)

The second conception conceptualizes disrespect in a more public way. According to this conception, disrespect is found in the social meaning of actions or policies. “There are conventional methods an individual can use to express respect such as taking off one's hat when entering a room, writing a thank you note to one's dinner host, looking someone in the eye when speaking... In a similar way, albeit less formalized and defined, there are conventions for disrespect as well---giving someone the finger, spitting on someone, looking over someone's shoulder when she is speaking to one, and so on. Demeaning is, in part expressing disrespect and as such depends on conventions regarding how disrespect is expressed in a particular culture” (Hellman, 2008). This quote was written by Deborah Hellman of the University of Virginia school of law, who is a strong advocate of equal protection law and philosophical justification. In the quote above Hellman is arguing that discrimination is wrong when it is demeaning. So, in essence, she argues that demeaning treatment is the lack of respect for the equal humanity of the other, and that is why it is disrespectful. Thanks to Hellman's view on the social meaning of actions, it is now possible to see the second reason why laws segregating swimming spaces were disrespectful from Larry Alexander's example. The laws publicly signified that black Americans did not have an equal right to inhabit public space. Thus, announcing that they were inferior to the white Americans.

Finally, the third conception describes disrespect as the deliberative concept. This concept consists of a viewing discrimination as a certain kind of deliberative failure. The idea behind this conception in Benjamin Eidelson's view, is that you might discriminate against someone because you value their interests at a discounted rate, or you might discriminate against someone based on judgement about what they are like (Eidelson, 2015) For example, if an employer does not hire an intern based on the applicant belonging to a

certain racial minority and not based on merit, they may be invoking deliberative failure, and choose to believe their racist preferences and prejudice's.

So far it has been examined that there are three ways to conceptualize disrespect. Each conception received a specific example and provided a special way to understand how and why discrimination can be disrespectful.

### **Discrimination and social meaning**

Discrimination laws often ban discrimination based on specific, stated characteristics. Discrimination based on race, sex, disability, or religion, for example, is forbidden. However, conceptualism aside, in order to truly assess the social meaning behind when discrimination is wrong, it is important to know discrimination is. For this, Deborah Hellman's chapter on discrimination and social meaning will be used.

To call something “discriminatory”, means to assert that an action of a certain type is wrong. Unfortunately, defining discrimination is a difficult task. To begin with, the term discrimination is confusing in its moral and non-moral meanings. We often use the term discrimination in a way that makes it sound like it's synonymous with wrongful discrimination (Hellman, 2008). Hellman gives the example of when parents of transgender teenagers claim that a school policy requiring children to use the toilet that corresponds to their biological sex is discriminatory, they are implying that the regulation treats their child unfairly. Alternatively, the term discrimination can refer to a specific style of behavior without necessarily implying that it is incorrect. For instance, the requirement to reach the age of 18 before an individual is allowed to vote is an example of age discrimination in the non-moralized way. So, when is discrimination wrong? The answer is that it isn't always wrong, only sometimes.

Whether we mean the moralized or non-moralized concept of discrimination, the term discrimination may seem too expansive. Hellman argues that it could identify either type X policies that are always erroneous or type X policies that are possibly wrong but not always. Furthermore, when we try to deconstruct X, we see that it contains policies that discriminate against people based on a trait they possess or lack, as well as policies that treat everyone equally but have a disproportionate influence on a specific set of people. It's impossible to fathom a legislation, policy, or practice that does not treat people differently based on their characteristics or has a differential impact on some groups (Hellman, 2018).



By looking at discrimination this way, perhaps then, the focus should shift to the claim that an individual is asserting rather than the potential discriminatory act or law due to the potential of almost everything being viewed as discrimination. To view this more closely let's look at an example. Consider the case in which a business firm hires John instead of Daniel, because John is white, and Daniel is Asian, and now compare it with a case where John gets hired instead of Daniel because John has a master's degree and Daniel does not. In either case, John gets the job and Daniel does not. And in each case, the employer makes a hiring decision in response to one of Daniels traits. The difference between the two however is that the first case shows an example of wrongful discrimination, and the latter shows what most individuals would consider a case of permissible discrimination. Discrimination is widespread in the non-moralized sense. Many behaviors and policies make distinctions between persons based on some trait (direct discrimination). Furthermore, many policies have a divergent influence on groups of individuals who are characterized by a specific attribute (indirect discrimination).

Additionally, it is important to look at on the wrongness of discrimination is when it is demeaning. Discrimination is wrong when it is demeaning. Deborah Hellman gives the example of Jim Crow laws, where black American's were racially segregated in schools, busses, and even water fountains (Hellman, 2018). When we consider what made racial segregation in schools, buses, and water fountains discriminatory, we must understand that one of the most prominent factors of these practices is that they all represent the belief that black people are inferior.

So why is demeaning morally problematic? Before this is answered, it is important to note that individuals and institutions cannot treat everyone the same. Sometimes doing so would be impractical, and sometimes doing so would be impossible. So, we could rephrase the essential question: when do acts and policies that treat people differently based on whether they possess a particular trait fail to regard them as moral equals? (Hellman, 2018). The reason that differentiating individuals is a cause for moral concern is that all people matter equally, so expressions that dispute this truth and convey that a person or group has a lower status or rank than others are morally wrong (Waldron, 2012). The best example of this again, is found in the United States where colored individuals were demeaned of their social standings based on their traits. In the 1896 case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, Justice Harlan, explained that segregation of rail cars expressed that “colored citizens are so inferior and

degrade that they cannot be allowed to sit in public coaches occupied by white citizens” (Plessy v. Ferguson, 1896).

Lastly, it is important to mention that wrongful discrimination is the expression of denigration by an actor with power. To demean, as Hellman puts it's, “means that the actor must have sufficient power such that her actions could lower the actual social standing of the people she affects” (Hellman, 2018). Hellman further examines this by giving the example of an employer and employee. To order something from someone requires a certain degree of authority or power. Suppose an employer says to her employee, “Bring me the report.” This is an order. If the employee says the same thing to her employer, she may be trying to command the boss in an unprofessional manner, but she hasn't succeeded. To order requires a certain degree of authority or power (Hellman, 2018). In essence, it is possible to see that employer usually hold more power than most individuals, and if the employee would try to do the same thing, the would-be discriminator would fail to demean and thereby fails to wrongly discriminate.

## **European non-discrimination law**

### **Context and background to European non-discrimination law**

This final chapter will outline the origins of non-discrimination law in Europe and attempt to give a brief understanding of the role of the CoE and the EU along with understandings towards Article 14 and Protocol 12 of the ECHR.

The principles of equality and non-discrimination are laid down in the UDHR: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights (FRA, 2018). This concept of equality in dignity and rights is embedded in contemporary democracy, so states are obliged to protect various minorities and vulnerable groups from unequal treatment. Article 2 enshrines freedom from discrimination: "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind".

The Council of Europe member states are also committed to non-discrimination in Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights. This article only gives protection from discrimination in relation to the enjoyment of the other rights set forth in the convention. Protocol 12 to the ECHR was drawn up to provide a stronger, free-standing right to equality and a general prohibition of discrimination: "The enjoyment of any right set forth

by law shall be secured without discrimination on any ground..." (FRA, 2018). Thus, this protocol broadens the scope of the ECHR as it covers discrimination in any legal right, even when that right is not specifically covered by the convention.

The chapter will also discuss which individuals are subject to receive protection under the European non-discrimination law and seek to discuss the scope of the ECHR.

### **Council of Europe: development of non-discrimination law**

The Council of Europe is an intergovernmental organization founded after World War II to promote, among other things, the rule of law, democracy, human rights, and socioeconomic development. The principle of non-discrimination is enshrined in several Council of Europe treaties. The Council of Europe member states established the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in 1950, requesting assistance from the ECHR to attain these goals. The European Convention on Human Rights was the first contemporary human rights treaty, based on the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It establishes a legally enforceable commitment for its members to ensure a list of human rights to all people living under its territory, not only residents. The prohibition of discrimination is established in Article 14 of the ECHR, which ensures equal treatment in the enjoyment of the other rights enshrined in the Convention. The CoE uses another main human rights treaty, in the form of the ESC. In this revised charter lies Article E, which explicitly states provisions prohibiting discrimination. In which, it protects against discrimination by a horizontal provision that covers bases including race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other viewpoints, national extraction or social origin, health affiliation with a national minority, birth, or 'other status.' (FRA, 2018).

The principle of non-discrimination is a governing principle in a number of other Council of Europe instruments, For example, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), a Council of Europe human rights organization, monitors racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, intolerance, and racial discrimination. In the ECHR words "The principle of non-discrimination has been influential in shaping CoE standards and is seen as a fundamental right that needs to be protected." (FRA, 2018).

## **European Union: development of non-discrimination law**

According to the ECHR, human rights and their protection were not included in the initial treaties of the European communities. The establishment of a free trade zone in Europe was not expected to have any influence on human rights. However, when cases came before the CJEU claiming human rights violations caused by Community Law, the CJEU produced a collection of judge-made legislation known as the "general principles" of Community Law, that eventually became the framework for the founding values instituted today.

Initially, the EU anti-discrimination law was restricted to a clause forbidding sex discrimination in work. The applicable regulations sought to prohibit the EU Member States from acquiring a competitive advantage by paying women less or providing less favorable working conditions. Over the years, the EU has evolved the anti-discrimination laws considerably, however, it was not until the Amsterdam Treaty entered into effect in 1999, that the EU gained the authority to act against discrimination in the wider sense.

Article 10 of the TFEU requires the EU to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation when defining and implementing its policies and activities, along with the Equality directive (2000/43/EC) which prohibits discrimination based on race or ethnicity within employment gave way to an important expansion of anti-discrimination law under the EU law (FRA, 2018).

The EU and its Member States proclaimed the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights in the year 2000. This charter provides a list of human rights based on the rights included in the member states' constitutions, the ECHR, and global human rights treaties such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Lastly, it is vital to mention that so far, European antidiscrimination legislation only requires the establishment of equality committees in the sectors of race, ethnicity, and gender. However, a proposal to extend protection to other areas is currently being debated in EU institutions, and many countries have organizations that deal with discriminatory grounds as well (FRA, 2018).

## **European non-discrimination law and UN human rights treaties**

European human rights law is influenced by the UN human rights treaties. So, it is no surprise that human rights measures are not restricted to Europe. The United Nations

(UN), together with other regional bodies in the Americas, Africa, and the Middle East, established a large corpus of international human rights legislation.

To just name a few human rights treaties that all EU member states follow: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention Against Torture, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). All of the mentioned human right directives recognize the protection against discrimination in the provision, protection, and promotion of rights.

### **Who receives protection under European non-discrimination law?**

The ECHR protects all individuals within the jurisdiction of its 47 States Parties. The ECHR states that protection is provided by the ECHR to all individuals under a member state's jurisdiction, whether they are citizens or not, and even outside the national boundaries to those regions under the state's effective authority (such as occupied territories) (FRA, 2018). However, in section 5.7 of the case law of the ECHR, a state may consider in distinct situations to differentiate between nationals and non-nationals as mentioned by the FRA. The reasoning for this is that under EU law, Article 18 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union bans "any discrimination on the basis of nationality," ensuring that all nationalities and EU citizens are treated equally within the scope of the Treaties. Article 18's goal was to guarantee that the principle of equal treatment was respected in order to allow for the free movement of people. However, there is a caveat to this, and that is that under EU secondary law, the personal scope of the protection is limited. As the FRA describes, under the non-discrimination directives, third-country nationals or citizens of a state that is not a member of the EU are not protected against negative treatment based on their nationality (FRA, 2018).

### **Scope of the ECHR: Article 14 and Protocol No.12**

The ECtHR always examines an alleged violation of Article 14 in combination with a substantive right. Frequently, an applicant will allege a violation of a substantive right as well as a violation of a substantive right in combination with Article 14. That is, the

interference with their rights was discriminatory in the sense that individuals in a comparable circumstance did not incur a similar disadvantage, in addition to failing to fulfill the requirements needed by the substantive right.

This section will first provide a quick overview of the rights protected by the ECHR before explaining how the ECtHR has interpreted the scope of the ECHR for the purposes of implementing Article 14.

### **Rights covered by the ECHR**

The ECHR's substantive rights include the right to life, the right to privacy and family life, and the freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, to name a few. Because of this, Article 14 is fully dependent on discrimination based on one of the significant rights guaranteed in the ECHR. As mentioned above in the past chapter, whenever an issue of discrimination relates to one of the areas above, the ECtHR will consider and analyze whether a breach of Article 14 has happened.

As stated by the FRA, this is a critical contrast between EU law and the ECHR, because the ECHR protects against discrimination in areas where EU non-discrimination law does not apply. Even though the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights requires the EU not to interfere with human rights in the actions it takes, (including a prohibition of discrimination), the Charter only applies to the Member States when they are applying EU law (FRA, 2018).

### **Scope of ECHR rights**

When implementing Article 14, the ECtHR has taken a broad view of the extent of ECHR rights. There are two main interpretations that are outlined by the ECHR themselves. First, the ECtHR has made it clear that it may investigate allegations brought under Article 14 in combination with a substantive right, even if there has been no breach of the substantive right itself. Secondly, it has ruled that a complaint of discrimination can fall within the scope of a specific right even if the issue at hand does not relate to a specific entitlement granted by the ECHR. In such cases, it was sufficient that the facts of the case were broadly related to issues covered by the ECHR (FRA, 2018).

## **Protocol No.12 to the ECHR**

As the ECtHR describes, Protocol No. 12 prohibits discrimination in relation to the ‘enjoyment of any right set forth by law’ and ‘by any public authority’ and thus has a broader scope than Article 14, which only addresses the rights guaranteed by the Convention. It is important to understand that both Article 14 and Article 1 of Protocol No. 12 are to be interpreted in the same manner.

The ECtHR give us an understanding of what exactly Protocol No. 12 of Article 1 relates to in terms of discrimination:

- (i) In the enjoyment of any right specifically granted to an individual under national law.
- (ii) in the enjoyment of a right which may be inferred from a clear obligation of a public authority under national law, that is, where a public authority is under an obligation under national law to behave in a particular manner.
- (iii) by a public authority in the exercise of discretionary power (for example, granting certain subsidies).
- (iv) by any other act or omission by a public authority (for example, the behaviour of law enforcement officers when controlling a riot).

So, while the Protocol primarily protects individuals from discrimination by the state, it will also apply to private-person relationships that should normally be regulated by the state (FRA, 2018).

## **4 Practical Part**

### **Research Methods**

This research will be divided into two smaller kinds of research involving both the participants awareness and experiences to discrimination in the workplace. The first and foremost part will comprise of a survey consisting of a series of detailed questions, which are of great importance to the research. The series of questions in the first section will analyze the experiences of a wide array of participants living in Europe. The questions revolve around the participants experiences surrounding discrimination in the workplace, such as: negative comments, abusive behavior, stereotyping, microaggression's, and other areas the individuals wish to share. Furthermore, the first part of the survey serves as basis to understand what type of discrimination individuals are met with on a daily basis in their workplace such as: age, nationality, religious beliefs, economic status, disability, gender identity, sex, race or ethnicity, sexuality, et cetera. The first part of the survey will also serve as a tool to figure out who is carrying out the discrimination within the workplace according to the participants, and their general attitudes towards the topic.

The second part of the research focusses on yet another survey where its primary goal is to assess the participants awareness to the topics of discrimination such as: if the participants learned about discrimination within their educational system, opinions on the educational system regarding discrimination, opinions on how their local governments handle discrimination, and what the participants would to handle discrimination in the workplace if they had the authority.

All that was mentioned above will serve as basis to recommend solutions and ideas on how to limit discrimination within the workplace and possibly as a whole. On top of that, the data from both surveys will serve as a comparison to the present European laws to see whether the issue lies within the law itself or the individuals. All things considered; the application of both surveys will allow the author to present the individuals experiences and awareness from a wide range of selected persons living in Europe.



## **Choice of participants**

The main criteria behind choosing someone as a participant for the practical part was whether they reside in Europe, and whether they work a full time or part time job. The idea behind this was that participants who have never worked a job in their lives, or do not reside within Europe could not give a clear opinion on the matter at hand. The choice of participants spans far and wide, along with varying ages and countries of origin. This was done because in order to get the best results from the survey, the target audience had to come a wide cultural background. It was also important to find individuals who work in different job sectors to see whether their experiences would differ or not. As it was shown in the research, discrimination affect individuals from all walks of life, and every culture has a distinct perspective on things, as well as a distinct method of reacting to and interpreting them. So, the idea was to question participants that come from a wide range of different cultures, such as North America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia with the importance of now residing in Europe. Another central idea to the selection procedure was to see whether different characteristic traits affected how a person is treated within the workplace and how they perceive it in general and from whom.

## **Findings**

After finalising the main methodology of research and comparing the data from the surveys, two things became immediately clear. The first thing that became clear was that most participants within the survey have at the very least, somewhat of an understanding of discrimination and displayed a certain level of awareness to it. The second thing that became abundantly clear is that most individuals within the survey have encountered and experienced discrimination directed towards themselves or at the very least from someone else's experience.

Interestingly enough, the process of collecting people's experiences was quite easy. The individuals who participated in the survey openly contributed their own experiences in the form of write in answers and in some case explained in detail what exactly went on in the specific situation. The answers varied, however, one thing they all shared was a common goal of giving advice on how to possibly stop or at the very least limit the discrimination.

There were two things however that were not expected. Firstly, that most of the participants either believed that the educational system did not adequately provide or did not know of sufficient learning possibilities to its students regarding discrimination. Secondly, and what is more interesting is that an overwhelming majority believed that their governments do not do enough to handle discrimination in the workplace.

As for the rest of the observations, it was expected that most people would have encountered some form of discrimination while at work. And as was expected, in most cases, there was a solid majority of people who believed that they have encountered at least one form of discrimination while at work, whether it was directed at themselves or others.

All in all, both surveys proved to be highly useful at providing quality information from a wide range of individuals.

## 5 Results and Discussion

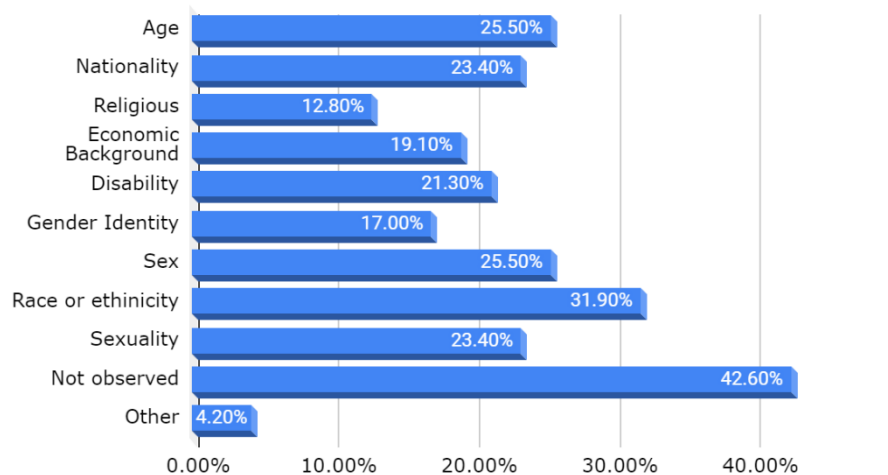
### Personal beliefs and experiences

The main criteria behind choosing someone as a participant for the practical part was whether they reside in Europe and whether they work a full time or part time job. The idea behind this was that participants who have never worked a job in their lives, or do not reside within Europe could not give a clear opinion on the matter at hand. Finally, I wish to address that the participants that took part in the survey came from a wide range of different cultures, such as North America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia. Hence, the following presentation of data should come from a wide sample and not just one cultural group.

The first thing that became abundantly clear after conducting a series of surveys with the participants, was that the data collected showed that most of the participants had encountered workplace discrimination. Whether directed at themselves or at someone else, it became clear that the results were not an anomaly, and that people from all walks of life have come into contact with it.

*Figure 1 Have you observed negative comments at work?*

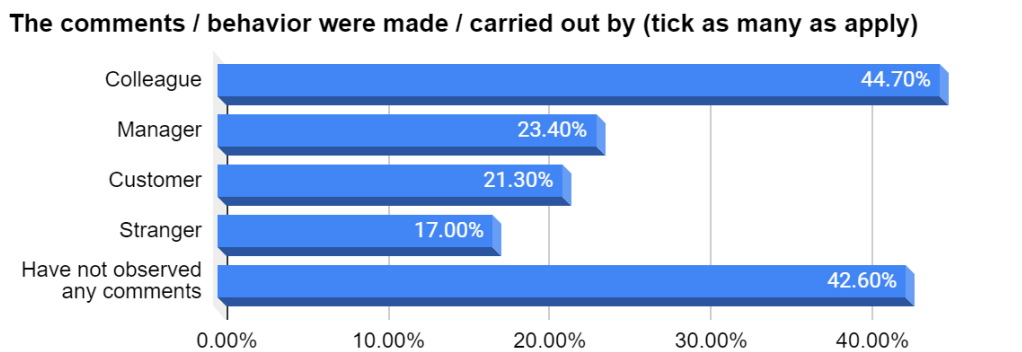
**I have observed negative comments or abusive behavior at work relating to my own or someone else's (tick as many as apply)**



Source: Own processing

Figure 1 depicts that at least 60% of the individuals surveyed have encountered discrimination in some measure. Looking at the graph, we can see that the most common form of negative comments pertains to either race, ethnicity, or age. Of course, one should not overlook the fact that 43% of the participants surveyed said they did not observe any form of negative behavior. However, what is more surprising, is that of those who encountered forms of negative behavior in the workplace, a large majority selected that the perpetrator was a colleague, rather than a person in a higher-ranking position.

Figure 2 Who carried out the negative behavior?

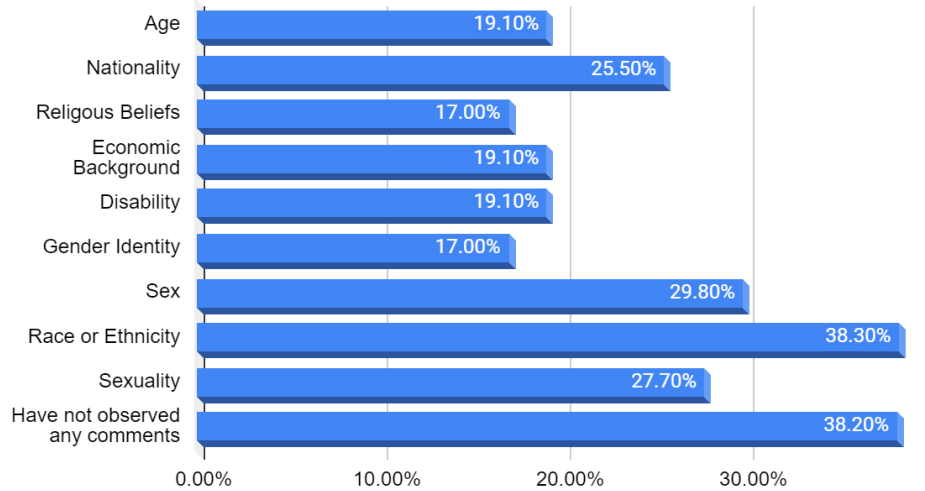


Source: Own processing

By taking a closer look at the individual responses, we are able to see into the reasoning behind these negative behaviors. The most frequent occurrences of abusive behavior for example were verbal attacks such as: “Women have no place in engineering”, “I’d like my house to be sold by a man”, “Go back to where you came from” and “judging/gossiping” about race”. These remarks could possibly indicate that there may be a lack of awareness to social issues within the host country. This could also lead to a bigger question, like if the educational system of said country is actively educating its student on discrimination awareness. It is important to mention that this lack of awareness shows itself again through the next two figures as well.

Figure 3 I have heard stereotyping comments at work

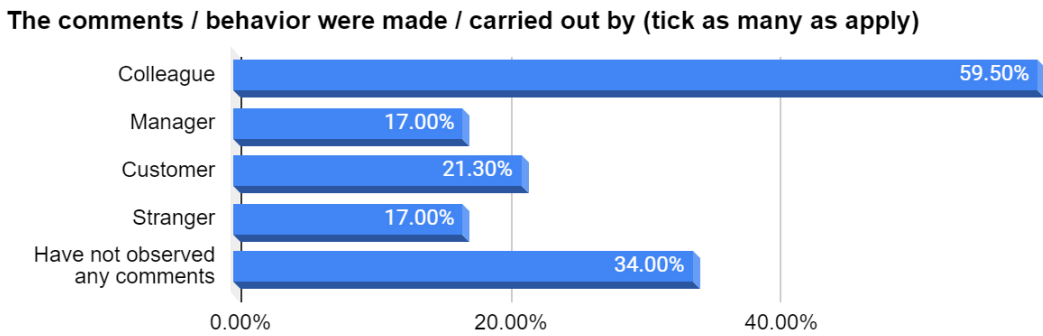
**I have heard stereotyping comments at work relating to my own or someone else's (tick as many as applies)**



Source: Own processing

From figure 3 it is immediately obvious that the percentages for nationality, sex, and race/ethnicity went up by a significant margin. It is also apparent that the percentage of people who had not observed any form of discrimination has gotten slightly lower. Now the reasoning for this can vary, however, if my previous research is considered. Then, this figure is not as surprising, since stereotyping is one of the main forms of discrimination and is still quite rampant even to this day. Figure 4 a great visualization of this concept. From the figure below we are able to see that discrimination from colleagues rose by 14.8%, in addition to this, the amount of individual that said that they have not encountered discrimination has gone down by 4%. So, what we can take from this is that between abusive behavior and stereotyping, the latter is significantly more prevalent in the workplace.

Figure 4 Who carried out the stereotyping?



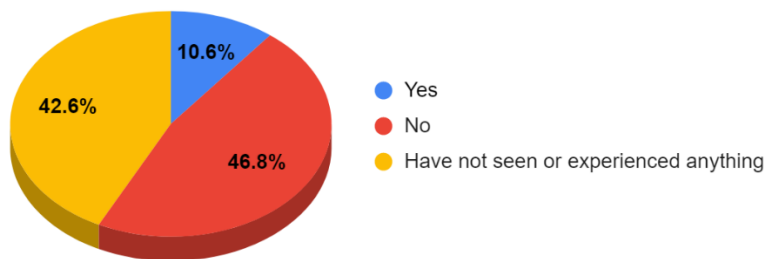
Source: Own processing

What possibly cements this point even further is that the individual responses indicated that stereotypes are a major daily occurrence, and they affect all cultural groups, and not just minorities. For example, individuals' responses to what they have recently encountered varied from: "Because I'm white, I could have never grown-up poor, which I did", to "I am Asian, so I my family must own a corner shop". Unfortunately, the problem here does not lie in something that we can easily change, such as a law. These stereotypes are rooted deeply inside of humans and getting rid of these prejudices isn't as simple as raising awareness to the issue. Some people would rather see the world burn for example, instead of addressing their own insecurities and prejudices.

The final issue that needs to be discussed regarding the participants experiences that I would like to address is the importance of reaching out to your employer regarding incidents that had occurred. According to the responses in figure 5, many people prefer not to report incidents that occur at work, as opposed to those who do.

Figure 5 Did you report any of these incidents to your employer?

Did you report any of these incidents to your employer?



Source: Own processing

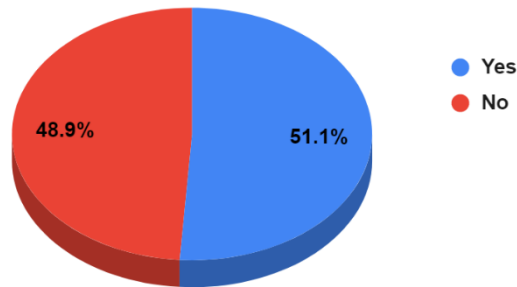
The reasoning behind these responses varies, but a common consensus is that of the participants who left a written reason, more than half believed that nothing would have changed even if they brought it to someone's attention. Another interesting statistic is that roughly one-third of respondents were afraid of retaliation from their superiors, which brings up an interesting topic. Based on the information we have; it may appear that the problem may reside within two places. The first option appears to be that individuals are afraid of speaking up for themselves, as if there is a social stigma lingering around them. The second option, which was clearly represented is that individuals are simply afraid of repercussions from their superiors. For example, individuals wrote that "Nothing would change, could worsen my situation", "I knew my manager would just talk badly about me because of reporting this, to all of the other staff, due to her high social status in the town I live in.", to "Regrettably, most corporations won't provide aid without proof." As it stands, the problem appears to be with the companies rather than with the law itself. The only thing that might change in the near future is if companies were held accountable and public awareness of the issues increased. Because, currently, it appears that individuals are too afraid to take the first step due to workplace pressure.

### **Personal beliefs and awareness**

This section will briefly talk about the participants awareness towards social issues and present the individuals rationale in an explorative way. As discussed within the previous section, I raised the question whether education played an important role in the upbringing of awareness and social issues. So, this section is dedicated to allowing the individual respondents to speak freely about what they believe in and changes they would bring if they had the ability to.

Figure 6 During school did you have a subject related to discrimination?

During school, did you have a subject or lesson where you learned about discrimination?

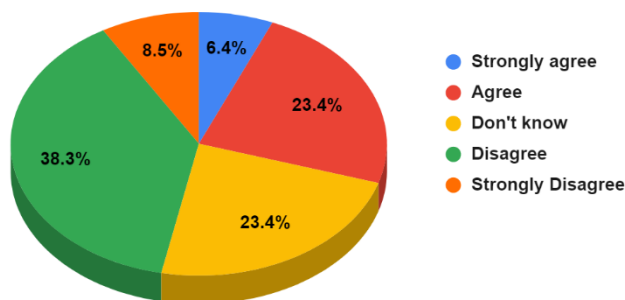


Source: Own processing

Both figures 6 and 7 relate to the area of education. Participants of the survey were asked whether they believe their educational systems provided adequate learning facilities for discrimination awareness, and whether they believe their educational systems does a good job at educating them on the topic. Surprisingly enough, the participants were split on whether their schools provided adequate educational services. In the latter figure, this split is even more accurately distinguishable as it is further broken down into exact categories.

Figure 7 Do you believe that the education system does a good job at teaching about discrimination?

Do you believe that the education system does a good job at teaching about discrimination?



Source: Own processing

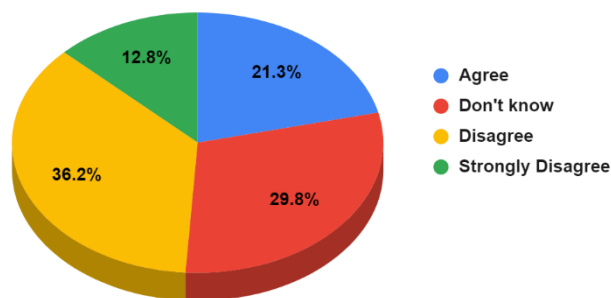
Thanks to the respondents, it is possible to note why there is such a division within the answers. Many of those who voted that their educational systems are failing believe that the



root cause is a lack of funding. On the opposing side, the people that do believe their education systems provide proper learning environments believe that the issues do not stem from a lack of funding, but rather the absence of good parenting.

Figure 8 Do you believe your local government does a good job at preventing discrimination in the workplace?

Do you believe that your local government does a good job at preventing discrimination in the workplace?



Source: Own processing

In some ways, the last figure represents the same issue. This could be due to the fact that education in Europe is state-funded, so if the educational system does a poor job of raising their students, there is no doubt that this will have long-term consequences in later stages of life, such as the workplace. Many of the participants expressed their thoughts on how they would address discrimination, and the consensus appears to be that it should be easier to raise awareness of the issues and allow each other to express our concerns.

## 6 Conclusion

To summarize, discrimination is still far from being resolved; however, it is also true that the world has made significant progress towards protecting individuals and raising the equality of opportunity over the decades.

The first section discussed the conceptual ideas surrounding discrimination, such as what it is, where it comes from, who it affects, and how it affects them.

It was also discussed that most of today's discrimination comes in the form of systematic discrimination, where practices or attitudes that have, whether by design or impact, the effect of limiting an individual. This form of discrimination is often hard to detect and even harder to get rid of. Nonetheless, we are able to see that most individuals have at the very least, a certain awareness towards discrimination practices, and are able to apply this information. So, a possible way of limiting this form of discrimination in the workplace could be by increasing awareness of it from a young age, and as stated by a respondent to: “confront the issue immediately” and “Speak up and encourage the victims”. Another interesting point of view was that many respondents believed the problem stemmed from a lack of parenting or previous negative experiences. Of course, changing this would be difficult because it could be seen as the root of the problem, but it is possible if awareness is invested in children from a young age.

The second section discussed the wrongfulness of discrimination and the possible implications of it. The section went into great on the areas of discrimination and disrespect, and discrimination and social meaning. Where topics such as what discrimination is and why it is wrong were discussed. Specific examples were shown such as: discrimination during the application process, employer vs employee authority, and historical forms of discrimination and how they have evolved.

Lastly, and possibly most importantly, the final section allowed us to see what the Council of Europe, and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights have been doing in order to limit the possible impact of discrimination. Whether in the workplace, or in general, the Council of Europe is constantly concerned with revising and upholding their laws. Talks of new laws are always in progress in order to impose additional control over what goes on, and to give the individuals more legal protection and rights whether they are from Europe or not.

In conclusion, the research gathered shows that discrimination does, without a doubt, still exist. It manifests itself in a variety of ways and affects all individuals in different ways, and no cultural group is immune. I believe that the problem does not reside within the laws themselves, however certain changes to the educational system may be required in order to teach children about discrimination at a young age and why it has such a negative impact on our society, and society should become more open to talking about past negative experiences, so individuals have the possibility to raise awareness.

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