

ACCT

Anti-racism & Civic Courage Training

Local Assessments Report

Developed By:

COMPARATIVE
RESEARCH
NETWORK:

 **Perspekt**
INITIATIVE

 **Crossing Borders**

 **Stowarzyszenie
Dla Ziemi**

 **imagina**

 **АСОЦИАЦИЯ
ЗА БЕЖАНЦИ
И МИГРАНТИ
БЪЛГАРИЯ**
**ASSOCIATION
ON REFUGEES
& MIGRANTS
BULGARIA**

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Stowarzyszenie "Dla Ziemi"

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01.

Overview & Methods



Overview

This report represents the initial assessment of the ACCT localities. By assessing the localities, we get an overview of issues of discrimination to be addressed by the curriculum in local trainings. Further, we gain information on the contexts in which the partner organisations have worked on the topic of anti-discrimination, thus allowing us to include their expertise in the final curriculum. We finalise the report by suggesting the target groups for the local ACCT trainings, based on the experiences and issues relevant in each of the localities.

This report, therefore, provides an overview of the partnership's status quo on

- issues related to discrimination relevant in the localities,
- anti-racist practices and methods applied,
- affiliated partners and stakeholders involved in actions addressing issues related to discrimination,
- target groups for anti-racist interventions

Methods

1.Desk Research assessing the localities

All partners conducted research to formulate a state of the art on anti-discrimination in their country and region, including

- biggest minorities in their country
- groups (not only minorities) suffering from discrimination and racism the most
- statistics on discriminatory and racist crimes and incidences
- Further, existing anti-discrimination interventions in the partner localities were assessed. Here, special attention was given to information on registers / monitoring activities of discriminatory as well as racist incidents.

2.Guideline interviews

We conducted guided problem-centred interviews with representatives from each partner organisation. We conducted a mix of dyadic interviews, i.e. with two representatives, and single interviews, with one representative, according to availability. With pairs of interview partners we conducted dyadic interviews. In this interview method, the conversation between the interviewees on the questions and topics become part of the material, which adds depth to the analysis (Morgan et al. 2016).

The following guide was used for (Dyadic) Interviews:

In contrast to individual interviews, pair interviews are generally conducted in such a way that I ask questions which you are welcome to discuss with each other. You are free to comment on each other's answers and to discuss with each other if you disagree or consider something else important. We start with a question about your organisation.

Part 1: Conflict Lines

1. What are conflict lines in your organisation? *(Start by being open to all conflict lines, steer towards issues of discrimination, if answers deviate strongly from the topic of ACCT)*
2. What are conflict lines in your network?
3. What are conflict lines in society?

Part 2: Interventions

4. In which way is your organisation intervening in the discussed conflict lines* in your society? *(Name the conflicts addressed by the interviewees in 1.-3.)*
5. In how far are organisations in your network intervening in these conflict lines*? *(Name the conflicts addressed by the interviewees in 1.-3.)*

Part 3: Target Groups

6. After this interview, do you have an idea for possible target groups for the ACCT training in your country? What are they? *(Ask if it has not been brought up in previous conversation flow)*

3.Coding of the Interview Material

Following the method for thematic analysis (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006), our analysis was conducted from interview transcripts to allow the identification of overarching themes that captured the phenomena of discrimination and interventions against it in the partners' localities. For this purpose, we used coding, which assigns a meaning to a piece of text (e.g., a word, a sentence, a phrase or paragraph) using a label (usually one or a couple of words, such as "target groups", "interventions by own organisation", "conflicts in society") that best represents the text. We coded all interview transcripts with a combination of

- deductive coding, meaning i.e. interprets raw textual data to develop concepts, themes or a process model through interpretations based on data (Thomas 2006; Boyatzis 1998; Corbin and Strauss 1990 cited by Chandra and Cheng 2019:102)
- and inductive coding, meaning guided by research questions, hypothesis and assumptions (Thomas 2006; Scheunemann et al. 2015; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006; Bazeley and Jackson 2013 cited by Chandra and Cheng 2019)

(see Chandra and Cheng 2019: 91 ff. for a detailed description of coding methods)

The first round of coding was done deductively to allow for the inclusion of interviewee-driven topics into the analysis. The second round was coded inductively, to ensure the topics intended for the development plan of the curriculum and training are included. Inductive coding was based on the following research questions:

4. Research questions for analysis

1. Conflict Lines and Groups

Which groups are in conflict with each other?

What is the role of power in the context in each case and what are the implications?

Which conflicts and groups are mentioned in relation to the country or national society?

In relation to the organisation?

2. Interventions

In which way do the partner organisations intervene in societal issues of discrimination and racism?

3. Stakeholders and Target groups

Which types of organisations are involved in these interventions?

In how far do the partners work with stakeholders actively working on anti-discrimination?

Which target groups in the vicinity of the partners would profit from the ACCT training?

Based on the codes, we created an overview of

- conflict lines and issues related to discrimination in the localities,
- practices and interventions conducted by the partners and their networks,
- stakeholders and target groups relevant for targeting and countering discrimination in the localities

Organisational issues were only included in coding and analysis, regarding their position in societal conflicts. Further, the conflicts in organisations were anonymised by summing them up in an overview of dominant topics in all organisations.

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02.

Country
Descriptions



Germany

General overview

Germany is a migration country: Over a quarter (27.3 %) of Germany's population has a so-called migration background (BAMF 2022), meaning they either have own migration experience or at least one parent who migrated to Germany. More than half of this group are German nationals, and just under two-thirds immigrated to Germany themselves (id.).

While Turkey, Greece, former Yugoslavia and Italy formed the biggest migrant groups in the past, today the top three sending countries of new migration are Ukraine, Romania and Poland (Statista 2023). The share of persons immigrating from European countries was 63.8 percent in 2021 (2020: 69.1 percent), including 46.7 percent accounted for by people from Member States of the EU (not including the United Kingdom).

As a migration country with a growing community of immigrants, countering racism is at the core of combatting discrimination in Germany. Ethnicity is one of the characteristics protected under the General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG), others being age, disability, ethnic origin, race, gender, religion or belief or sexual orientation (Section 1 AGG) (Antidiskriminierungsstelle 2022)

Overview of consultation statistics

In 2021, the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency received 5,617 requests for consultation related to a characteristic protected under the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG). This marks the second-highest number in the history of the Anti-Discrimination Agency.

It is relevant to note that while the General Act on Equal Treatment (German abbreviation: AGG) offers protection against discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, ethnic origin, race, gender, religion or belief or sexual orientation, people also experience discrimination on other grounds. These other grounds are not covered by the General Act on Equal Treatment, which is a shortcoming that needs to be addressed. This also affects the statistics of the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency.

"The number of discrimination accounts shared with us is alarming – but it also shows us that there are people out there who will not put up with discrimination and seek legal advice", said the Independent Federal Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Ferda Ataman, when unveiling the annual report." (Antidiskriminierungsstelle 2022)

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Denmark

General overview

Muslim and racialized communities, or Non-Western/ethnic minorities, face particularly high levels of discrimination in Denmark. According to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) Report on Denmark in 2022, Muslims, including guest workers and asylum seekers, are often depicted as a threat to Danish values and culture. This discrimination is even institutionalised in some political platforms that advocate for the "cleansing" of Muslims, often with minimal pushback from other political figures. According to Action Aid Denmark (or MS - *Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke*), ethnic minorities in Denmark face discrimination across various sectors. About 45% of non-Western immigrants and descendants report facing ethnic discrimination. In the workplace, both employees and managers with ethnic backgrounds encounter bias and derogatory comments. Finding housing proves more challenging for those with non-Danish sounding names. In education, ethnic minority children face challenges due to bullying and lack of representation in the curriculum. Moreover, issues with ethnic profiling by the police disproportionately affect these communities, leading to unwarranted stops and higher charges without convictions.

Roma people, in Denmark also face discrimination, particularly in the employment sector, despite Denmark's policy on equal treatment for the Roma. They are often relegated to menial jobs, indicating systemic discrimination against this group.

Persons with disabilities, are considered, in 9 out of 10 areas, to be considerably worse off than those without when it comes to violence, discrimination, accessibility and education. Persons with disability have experienced worse living conditions to the general population.

Inuit or Greenlanders: Despite holding Danish citizenship, Inuit individuals in Denmark face significant discrimination and social exclusion. Action Aid Denmark (MS) reports that just 33% of Inuit are employed, despite rising education levels. They encounter obstacles on the job market and face discrimination in housing due to prejudice from landlords. Inuit children in educational settings suffer from derogatory remarks and jokes about their background, leading to negative impacts on their identity and self-esteem.

LGBTQ+ Community: Based on 2019 data, Denmark performs better than the OECD average concerning laws addressing challenges faced by same-sex couples. On the Rainbow Europe Map 2020, Denmark has one of the highest scores and is ranked 5th among 49 countries surveyed, with an overall score of 68%.

The ECRI noted that in 2020, the Danish Government proposed legislative amendments to improve the respect of human rights of LGBTQ+ people in different policy areas, divided into three focus areas, namely work against discrimination, hate speech and hate crime; family law; and legal gender recognition. Yet, LGBTQ+ community members do face individual discrimination and are victims of hate crimes.

Eastern European Workers: Since the EU's 2004 enlargement, there has been an increase of migration from Eastern European workers to Denmark, primarily finding employment in sectors such as construction and service. Although these workers can legally work in Denmark as EU citizens, they face challenges in integrating into Danish society. Public debates often cast them in stereotypical roles, either as victims of exploitation or as “disloyal” and “unskilled”.

Statistics on discriminated groups

Largest Immigrant Groups of Country of Origin:

- **Western Countries:** Poland, Romania, Ukraine, Germany
- **Non-Western Countries*:** Turkey, Syria, Ukraine, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Iran

Persons of Danish origin make up 87.6% of the population, with a projected number of 5.021.755 individuals.



Immigrants from "Western" countries account for 5.1% of the population, totaling approximately 292.615 individuals.

Immigrants from "Non-Western" countries make up 7.1% of the population, with about 405.365 individuals.

Descendants from "Western" countries account for 0.7% of the population, numbering around 38.827 individuals.

Descendants from "Non-Western" countries make up 3.0% of the population, with an approximate total of 174.091 individuals.

The Danish Ministry for Economic and Interior Affairs (via *Statistics Denmark*) **categorises "non-Western" * countries** as those outside the EU. However, nations like Andorra, Australia, Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, New Zealand, Norway, San Marino, Switzerland, the USA, and the Vatican State are exceptions to this definition. Consequently, the term "non-Western" often refers to Denmark's ethnic groups that are neither white nor European in origin.

By taking all these aspects into account, it is evident that **the largest minority groups in Denmark as of 2023 come from both "Western" and "Non-Western"** countries, with notable contributions from Poland, Romania, Ukraine, and Germany among Western countries, and Turkey, Syria, Ukraine, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, and Iran among "Non-Western" countries.

Special Groups:

- **In 2022, the largest group of arrivals was from Ukraine** with over 30.000 arriving. Romania, Germany, Poland, Italy, and the USA all had fewer than 10.000 arrivals.
- The Council of Europe estimates that **approximately 5.500 Roma live in Denmark**, although estimates vary from 1.000 to 10.000, making up less than 0.1% of the population.
- There are **approximately 17.067 Greenlanders** living in Denmark.
- 30% of Danes aged 16-64 consider themselves to have a disability in the form of a long-term health problem, physical disability or mental disorder. 12% consider that their disability has the character of a major disability.



The Ghetto Laws, or Parallel Societies

The **"ghetto laws"** in Denmark refer to a set of policies aimed at "integrating" *non-Western* communities into mainstream Danish society. These laws were part of an integration policy introduced to address the challenges of areas with high rates of unemployment, crime, and residents with lower levels of education and income. The term "ghetto" was officially used in legislation to designate such areas, but was **later changed in November 2021 to terms like "parallel societies" and "transformation areas"** after amendments to the Act on Social Housing.

Criteria for Designation

Neighborhoods are identified based on a set of criteria, which include the percentage of residents who are immigrants or descendants of immigrants from "non-Western" countries, the employment rate, the level of criminality, and the education level. If a neighbourhood meets a certain number of these criteria, it is designated as "parallel society," or "transformation area.", and (formerly as) a "ghetto".

Policy Measures

Once an area is designated, a range of interventions can be applied, such as targeted social programs, increased police presence, and housing regulations. One of the most controversial aspects of the laws is the provision for the eviction of residents to make way for new social housing projects aimed at diversifying the resident population. These evictions disproportionately affect non-Western immigrants and their descendants, leading to criticisms that the policies are discriminatory.

Labour Market Stigmatization

Employment agencies have access to information on whether an applicant is classified as a "non-Westerner," contributing to further stigmatization and discrimination in the labour market.

Human Rights Concerns

The United Nations Committee on Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the Danish Institute for Human Rights have criticised the policy, stating it is discriminatory and stigmatising, thus violating basic human rights. CERD recommends that terms like 'Western' and 'non-Western' be completely removed from Danish legislation. Furthermore, the legislation has led to the demolition, sale, or conversion of buildings into housing for the elderly or young people, resulting in the displacement of residents, especially those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The "parallel society" policy is controversial for its divisive classification system, its contribution to labour market discrimination, and its violation of basic human rights standards, affecting mainly non-Western, Muslim, Black, and other racialised communities in Denmark. Critics argue that the policy needs to be confronted and revised, both in terms of its stigmatising language and the discriminatory criteria used for categorising residential areas.

Hate Crimes in Denmark

Racially motivated hate crimes are unfortunately a prominent issue in Denmark. In 2021, there were 254 hate crimes registered as being specifically linked to racism. The Ministry of Justice's annual victim survey suggests that the actual number of hate crimes could be significantly higher. Between 2008 and 2020, 8% of victims of violence believed they were targeted due to a racist motive behind the violence.

In 2021, the primary types of hate crimes were **hateful expressions** (112 cases), **violence** (70 cases), **vandalism and graffiti** (43 cases), and **threats** (41 cases).

Racially motivated hate crimes were the most common (254 cases), followed by **religiously motivated ones** (164 cases) and those **targeting LGBTQ+ individuals** (102 cases).

There were 93 cases related to Judaism, an 18% increase from 2020. This rise can be attributed to a single individual's hateful anti-Semitic comments via emails in 2021.

In 2021, there was **one recorded hate crime case related to disability**.

Danish Police Report on Hate Crimes for 2021:

- In 2021, 521 cases were identified as hate crimes, a decrease of 114 cases (or 18%) from 2020 (from 635 to 521 cases).
- There was a decrease in racially motivated hate crimes (from 360 in 2020 to 254 in 2021, a 29% drop).
- Hate crimes against the LGBTQ+ community rose by 29% (from 79 cases in 2020 to 102 in 2021).
- The most significant drop was in cases categorized as incident and investigation cases, with a decline of 33%. Such cases involve situations where there's uncertainty if a reported action is a crime or ambiguity about the crime details.
- Hate crimes categorized as penal cases fell by 3% (from 314 cases in 2020 to 306 in 2021). However, violent hate crimes increased by 63% (from 43 cases in 2020 to 70 in 2021).



Activities against Discrimination and Racism - Monitoring and Reporting Bodies

Danish Institute for Human Rights: As Denmark's national equal treatment body, this institute has the mandate to promote, evaluate, and monitor the equal treatment of ethnic minorities, gender minorities, and people with disabilities in Denmark. It has the authority to bring forth cases of significant nature or public interest to the Equal Treatment Board. The institute writes reports on the situation in Denmark to several international bodies, including the UN, the Council of Europe and the EU. They advise the Danish Parliament and submit around 80 consultations per year on human rights in Denmark.

The Discrimination Helpline: The Helpline is an advisory hotline, run by Danish Institute for Human Rights, designed for individuals who have faced discrimination due to various factors, including race, gender, age, and religion. The helpline offers guidance, advice, and potential legal counsel to help individuals understand their situation and options, especially if they wish to escalate their case to the Board of Equal Treatment.

Copenhagen City Hotline: Established specifically for reporting discriminatory behaviour in municipal services.

Ligebehandlingsnævnet (The Board of Equal Treatment): Founded in 2009, it predominantly functions as a quasi-judicial body. This board deals with discrimination complaints both inside and outside the labor market, offering compensations when deemed appropriate. However, it does not have the mandate to initiate cases on its own.

The Disability Index, or Handicap Barometer, is an easy-to-access source of knowledge about the situation of persons with disabilities in Denmark. It monitors how the Danish state performs its obligations to persons with disability under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by focusing on ten key areas: Equality and non-discrimination, Violence, Accessibility and Mobility, Freedom and personal integrity, Independent living and inclusion, Education, Health, Employment, Social protection, Political participation.

National Police of Denmark have written 7 reports (to date) on statistical Hate Crime trends. All such reports can be found on the police website. The report draws from police monitoring and aims to improve the registration of hate crimes, offering insights into frequency, reasons, type, location, and more, using data from the police case management system.

Educational and Preventative Measures:

The Danish government has invested in **state-funded education to directly address and combat racism and discrimination**:

The 2023 Action Plan against racism, ethnic discrimination, and hate crimes has been rolled out by the Copenhagen Government in collaboration with local NGOs. This initiative is aimed at pioneering new strategies to battle discrimination.

In 2021, the **Danish Parliament refined the Criminal Code's provision on hate crimes** to unmistakably state that such crimes can be influenced either wholly or partially by various factors including a person's ethnicity, religion, or gender identity (Danish Institute for Human Rights, 2022).

The Danish government formed a digital unit as part of a political agreement in 2019. This unit is dedicated to detecting and countering online crimes, with a significant emphasis on online hate speech.

The Danish Football Union (DBU) has established a code of conduct which directly addresses racist or discriminatory remarks made by players or fans.

From 2017-2018, **an initiative was launched in a state school designed to prevent hate crimes**. This program utilised various tools to bolster democratic skills, including critical thinking, dialogue, and reflection, to counteract polarisation, prejudice, violent behaviour, and hate crimes.

Nalik, an Inuit rights organisation in Denmark, has collaborated with *Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke* and other entities to draft **an action plan against discrimination set for 2023**.

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Poland

General Overview

There are four ethnic minorities in Poland: Roma, Lemkos, Tatars, Karaites. The Roma are the most numerous and most discriminated against group in Polish society. Although there are apparently fewer of them in the latest 2021 census, it is taken into account that many did not participate in the Census or did not state their Roma identity. Reasons may be the complicated procedure related to the census, reluctance to reveal one's identity for fear of discrimination, and not everyone taking part in the census.



Ethnic minorities in Poland

Roma - 16,723 according to the 2011 Census, may be up to 30.000
Lemkos, 12,700 (According to a signaling message from the Central Statistical Office on April 11, 2023)
Tatars (according to the 2011 Census), 1,828 people
Karaites: 313 people
Jewish minority 15,700

Roma in Poland

In Poland, among the largest ethnic minorities are the Roma, who have been present in the country since the 15th century. According to the 2005 Law on National and Ethnic Minorities and Regional Language, the Roma are officially classified as an ethnic minority. According to the penultimate Census of 2011, the number of the Roma community in Poland is 16,723 people, and the largest concentrations of Roma and Roma in Poland are in the provinces of Lesser Poland, Lower Silesia and Silesia. On the other hand, the Central Statistical Office's signaling message of April 11, 2023 (this is not the final data of the 2021 Census) on the national-ethnic structure of Poland shows that Poles and Polish women of Roma origin in Poland are 11.800.

Both the penultimate and final census may not accurately reflect reality. Estimates even put the number at around 25,000 to 30,000 people of Roma origin. In addition to Polish citizens of Roma origin in Poland, come Roma from Romania, who have the status of migrants and live in large cities, i.e. Wroclaw, Poznan, Gdansk. On the other hand, after the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, a fairly large group of people belonging to the Roma minority in that country fled to Poland. Data from the European Commission from April 2022, puts the number of people who have crossed the border of the European Union at 100,000. However, it is difficult to determine the number of Ukrainian Roma and Roma women in Poland, because information on ethnicity is sensitive data that is subject to special protection under European law. A lot of cases of exclusion of Roma and Roma women have been registered, ranging from access to assistance at the border, to housing, work, or discrimination in public offices, including admission to schools.

The European Agency for Fundamental Rights reports that Roma and Roma women face unequal treatment in national institutions and organisations at various levels, and are the most discriminated against and persecuted minority in Europe. Main issues continue to include employment, low levels of education and access to health care and housing. Some 80% of the children from Roma families are at risk of poverty. Low social involvement by members of the Roma community is noted in many European countries. National and religious minorities in Poland include: Belarusians, Czechs, Lithuanians, Germans, Armenians, Russians, Slovaks, Ukrainians, and Jewish people. According to a signal message from the last Census, the number of people identifying themselves in the Census with their national minority is:



National minorities

German: 132, 500

Ukrainian: 79,400

Belarusian: 54 300

Czech: according to the 2011 Census 2,833 people

Armenian minority: according to the 2011 Census 1,683 people

Russian: 14,800

Slovak: according to the 2011 Census: 2,740 people

Lithuanian: 9,700

Migration and Flight

The number of migrants in Poland is 3.5-4 million people. The comparatively high number is mostly due to the war in Ukraine, as about 60% -75% of the migrants in Poland are Ukrainians (data on economic migrants, data according to insurance from the Social Insurance Institution). Other migrant groups include migrants from countries such as Belarus, Georgia, India and Moldova, as well as Turkmenistan, Indonesia, Philippines, Azerbaijan, Colombia, Bangladesh and Uzbekistan. Most of these people migrate due to economic considerations. Many migrants consider that they are employed "below their qualifications," which is partly related to the language barrier. Besides, Poland has not developed a clear immigration policy. Other necessary instruments include developing educational programs, recognizing qualifications and supporting entrepreneurship among migrants.

The ruling party (Law and Justice) declares a policy of strict border policing, but in practice the situation has been described as quite chaotic. The opposition accuses the government of trying to scare off and treat immigrants illegitimately and illegally on the one hand, and welcoming them in an uncontrolled manner on the other: In the fall of 2023, a visa scandal erupted in Poland. The investigation, currently being conducted by the Central Bureau of Investigation, the National Prosecutor's Office and the Central Anti-Corruption Bureau, concerns irregularities in the issuing of visas for immigrants from Southeast Asian and African countries.

Crisis on the Polish-Belarusian border

Belarusian ruler Aleksandr Lukashenko, promising easy access to Europe, has opened a migration channel through Belarus, thus luring people fleeing wars, persecution, extreme poverty and violence into a trap. Polish border guards push those they arrest back to Belarus, violating international law and exposing them to torture there. Since the summer of 2021, at least 54 people have died due to these policies and procedures. Groups trying to respond to the crisis are social activists, NGOs, local individuals. The Polish government engages in hate speech against people who illegally try to cross the Polish border. Polish uniformed services use violence against these migrants.

Refugees from Ukraine

As of June 2023, Poland was the country that received the most refugees from Ukraine, alongside the Czech Republic and Estonia, namely 977,740 people (24% of those fleeing). Since the outbreak of the war, the Polish government has taken a number of aid measures involving many state institutions and prevention services to support those fleeing the war. Civil society, non-governmental organisations, and individual support also play a big role in the effort to support. The main problems of refugees in Poland include labour exploitation, low wages, hate speech in social media and discrimination in state institutions and public places.

Hate crimes

According to 2018 data from the Ombudsman's Office and ODIHR/OBWE - only 5% of such cases are reported to the police . The actual scale of hate crimes in Poland against Ukrainians, migrants from Muslim countries and from sub-Saharan Africa is greatly underestimated. Victims of these crimes change their daily habits - they give up speaking Ukrainian in public; Muslims avoid clothing associated with their religion, and migrants from sub-Saharan Africa try to appear less visible.

In recent years, Poland has also failed to adequately develop national law on the issues of hate speech and hate crimes because, according to the government plenipotentiary, there is no need to do so. The Ombudsman advised the Prime Minister's to pay attention to the need to create a comprehensive strategy to counter hate crimes, yet without success to this point. The European Commission has found that Poland has failed to comply with EU law by incorrectly transposing Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of November 28, 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law.

Organisations and institutions

The Office of the Ombudsman accepts information on issues of discrimination and intervenes in many cases, especially concerning discrimination on the part of government officials and local government institutions. In the last years of the Law and Justice's (PiS) rule in Poland, the Ombudsman's Office was one of the few organizations independently defending human rights in Poland.

Other organisations acting against discrimination in Poland are:

- Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights
- Amnesty International
- Polish Society of Antidiscrimination Law
- Open Republic
- Association Against Anti-Semitism and Xenophobia
- Monitoring Center for Racist and Xenophobic Behavior
- OSCE/ODIHR - Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

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Bulgaria

General Overview

At the 2011 census, the population inhabiting Bulgaria was 7,364,570 in total , but the 2021 Census calculated that the population had declined to 6.5 million . The peak was in 1989, the year when the borders opened after a 45 years, when the population numbered 9,009,018.

Ethnic minorities in Bulgaria

In Bulgaria's September 2021 national census, 84.6 per cent defined themselves as Bulgarians, 8.4 per cent as Turks and 4.4 per cent as Roma, according to the National Statistical Institute (NSI). Of Bulgaria's 2021 population of 6.519.789, a total of 5.118.494 individuals identified as Bulgarians, 508.378 identified as Turks, 266.720 as Roma. Those defining themselves as of other ethnicities added up to 1.3 per cent, while for the remainder of cases, the question (to which responding was voluntary), went unanswered. Among those in the "other" category, close to 15.000 were Pomaks, 14.000 Russians, 5306 Armenians, 3239 Ukrainians, 2894 as British, 2071 Karakachans, 1625 Greeks, 1153 Jews, 1143 Macedonians, 1129 Tatars, 865 Italians, 824 Poles and 683 Romanians. After February 2022, 902.608 Ukrainians had fled to Bulgaria, of whom 51.445 remained in the country.

Prejudice and Racism

An empirical sociological survey conducted by AFIS in the fall of 2020 shows the resilience of extreme-right attitudes in Bulgarian society. Compared to a similar study in 2011, there are no significant dynamics, but rather the persistence of stereotypes that reject difference.

The widespread stereotypes in today's Bulgarian society regarding "others", such as Turks, Roma, Jews, refugees, and queer people are negative. But there are also differing levels of tolerance for different groups, with the Roma being the most discriminated and least accepted ethnic group.

Anti-Roma attitudes largely reflect social jealousy of integration policies and positive measures targeted at this marginalised group in general in Bulgarian society. At the same time, this social jealousy is superimposed on the ideology of racism. Its vectors are various far-right, but also nationalist, right-wing and left-wing organisations and the intellectuals who represent them.

Despite the authorities' commendable efforts in the field of education of Roma children, problems persist with regard to advancing to secondary education and the quality of education. Roma continue to be affected by marked socio-economic inequality in education, housing and employment and are still exposed to high levels of discrimination, hostility and anti-Romaism. Frequent de-facto segregation in education, as well as in the housing and health sectors, is a reality and the authorities' efforts in combating this situation are insufficient. The authorities are making efforts to promote inter-ethnic and inter-religious tolerance, but these are regularly undermined by racist, anti-Roma, Islamophobic and antisemitic statements by high-level politicians and media reporting of a similar nature, to which the authorities often fail to respond. Persons belonging to national minorities are often subject to incitement to hatred, motivated most frequently by anti-Romaism and Islamophobia. While the legal framework on hate speech and hate crime is largely satisfactory, cases of sanctions for hate crimes remain isolated and interlocutors complain about a climate of impunity, in particular with regard to hate speech and hate crimes against Roma.

Although **anti-Semitism** has no traditional large support in Bulgarian society, it has its speakers and spokesmen among extreme-right political activists, who thus build their political identity. Anti-Semitic manifestations remain marginal, but inexplicable in a society where the pride of saving main-land Bulgarian Jews from deportation during World War II is shared. Rather, anti-Semitism in Bulgaria, on a populist level, is associated with conspiracy theories, re-emerging nationalism and the attitude of the "strong hand" in governing society.

Far-right organisations in today's Bulgaria have significant but limited support (in the last elections after 2010, they did not exceed 15% of the actual votes). There has been no strong positive trend in the last five years. Their leaders, usually well-educated, use discriminatory language. They do so instrumentally, to be recognised by the public, often not sincerely believing their own words. Thus, in political terms, it is a pragmatic instrumentalisation of far-right ideologies, which carries a huge risk of indoctrination of a large part of society.

The spread of prejudice against groups marked as "others" is also facilitated by the low level of civic competence in society, and a lack of understanding of concepts related to politics and democracy. The misunderstanding of the meanings of the left and the right, of the liberal and the conservative, of the socialist, of the far right is widespread. This does not allow many people to identify far-right extremism, to qualify it with understanding, to distinguish it from other ideological positions. Some intellectuals also play a role in this, insisting on the ideological closeness of the far right and the far left, which further confuses the notions of the general public.

The study also shows the extremely limited practices of inter-ethnic contacts and inter-ethnic understanding. Bulgarian society remains closed in its perceptions of the world, which further strengthens racism as an extreme form of distrust of foreigners. The highlighted abstracts suggest towards what direction should be directed the actions towards combating racism, prejudice and discrimination. Looking at the regular general Human Rights reports of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, so far no official registers, or consolidated statistics on discriminatory and racist crimes and incidents exist.

Anti-Discrimination Interventions

In 2005, the Commission for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) was established by the Protection against Discrimination Act (PaDA) in Bulgaria. The grounds and fields of discrimination covered by this equality body are gender, gender identity, race and ethnic origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, as well as religion and belief. The type of its mandate is that of a predominantly tribunal (quasi-judicial type) body. So far the published information is predominantly educational. There are no indication on existing registers, monitoring activities and racist incidents, or follow-up on concrete discrimination cases.

Concerning asylum, refugee and migration cases, the annual status determination procedure reports of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee are regularly published and contain important information. However, there are no publications related to the many existing cases of concrete discrimination and incidents of racism concerning asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants in Bulgaria.

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Spain

General Overview of the situation in Spain

The most relevant minorities living in Spain can be divided into ethnic and religious groups. The biggest ethnic minority group in Spain is that of Moroccan immigrants (775.294 people in 01.01.2022, +0,9% in comparison to 01.01.2021), followed by Romanian immigrants (658.005 people on 01.01.2022, -3,8% in comparison to 01.01.2021) and people from the United Kingdom (313.975 people on 01.01.2022, +0,8% in comparison to 01.01.2021).

In terms of religion, Muslims form the biggest minority living in Spain (approximately 2.35 million at the end of 2022), followed by Protestant Christians (approximately 1.5 million in 2017), Buddhists (approximately 100.000 in 2017) and Jewish people (approximately 45.00 in 2017)

Measures and initiatives taken by the Spanish government to combat racism and promote equality:

1. Anti-Discrimination Laws: Spain has anti-discrimination laws in place, which prohibit discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, and other factors. These laws are designed to protect the rights of individuals and ensure equal treatment. For example, in 2022, The current Spanish Government promoted the adoption of a number of equality and non-discrimination laws. The latest two, approved in the summer of 2023, are the New Spanish Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination Law and the Comprehensive Guarantee of Sexual Freedom Law.

2. National Action Plan Against Racism: Spain has developed a National Action Plan Against Racism and Xenophobia, which outlines strategies and actions to combat racism and promote social inclusion. This plan includes measures related to education, employment, and social services.

3. Promotion of Multiculturalism: Spain promotes a multicultural approach to society, recognising the diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds of its population. Efforts have been made to celebrate cultural diversity and foster social cohesion.

4. Education and Awareness: The government has implemented programmes to raise awareness about racism and promote tolerance and diversity in educational institutions. This includes curriculum changes, teacher training, and awareness campaigns.

5. Support for NGOs and Civil Society: The government provides support to NGOs and civil society groups working to combat racism and support marginalised communities.

6. Reporting and Monitoring: There are mechanisms in place for individuals to report incidents of racism and discrimination. These reports are used for monitoring and addressing issues.

7. Integration and Inclusion Programs: Spain has implemented integration and inclusion programmes for migrant communities and refugees, aiming to facilitate their access to education, healthcare, and employment.

8. Police and Law Enforcement Training: Efforts have been made to train law enforcement personnel to be sensitive to issues of racial profiling and discrimination.

9. Data Collection: Collecting data on racial and ethnic disparities is an important part of addressing systemic racism. The Spanish government has been working on improving data collection in this regard.

OBERAXE

The Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia (OBERAXE) gathers information on projects, surveys, resources, reports and research promoted by the Secretary of State for Migration and other ministerial departments, entities and organisations in order to serve as a platform offering information and analysis and spurring on work to combat racism, racial discrimination and other forms of intolerance as well as hate incidents and crimes . The work of the Observatory is done in cooperation with various levels of governmental institutions and civil society organisations in Spain, European Union and other international institutions.

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03.

Analysis
of expert interviews
with partner
organisations



Analysis of expert interviews with partner organisations

The staff of Perspekt Initiative conducted interviews with representatives of all partner organisations during the second Transnational Project Meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria, in May 2023.

The results of the analysis for the purpose of an assessment of the localities and partner organisations for existing lines of conflict and issues related discrimination are presented below.

Conflict lines and issues related to discrimination in the localities

Discrimination is a part of everyday life in our societies. Reflecting upon related conflicts in our organisations allows us to address the topic from our own needs and experiences.

Institutional barriers

The experience of the partner organisations reflects power disparities within our respective societies in the following topics and ways:

Gender

- The preference of women for social sector jobs in society is mirrored in the majority of the staff being female in all ACCT partner organisations
- Partner organisations with male management and female staff reproduce power hierarchies that are present in our societies in general
- Partner organisations with female management are met with barriers resulting from male-dominated power hierarchies, for instance when:
 - when organisations are required to interact with other institutions and companies
 - when dealing with staff that is used to predominantly “male” management styles

Ethnic Minorities / Migration

- We can observe a structural underrepresentation of migrants on the level of management as well as within the broader organisations themselves as an issue in some of the partner organisations
- Organisations managed by members of majority society and/or exhibiting an underrepresentation of migrants and/or BIPOC within the broader organisation tend to have difficulties understanding conflicts and different forms of racism concerning marginalised communities and communities of colour, as well as community dynamics
- Organisations managed by members of marginalised groups have difficulty gaining access to networks and resources of the majority society

Language, Culture and Religion

- Organisations whose staff are very diverse in terms of ethnicity, origin and religion report isolated incidences of intercultural conflict and religious discrimination within a general climate of cooperation.
- When larger parts of the staff speak a language that other staff don't, communication with management and amongst staff is impaired and misunderstandings accumulate.
- When the working language is English, the different levels of language proficiency may lead to impaired communications and misunderstandings.
- Often, it is unclear whether a conflict originated due to differences in norms, habits or due to the language barrier, or causes overlap.
- Another societal conflict witnessed within one of our partner organisations is a conflict between counterculture and mainstream culture. This became visible when the former reflected upon the prejudices and discrimination mechanisms within the latter.

Societal Conflicts related to Discrimination in the Partner Countries

Information below is based on the interviews conducted. The following sections therefore represent the most pressing issues in the eyes of the interviewee, rather than a complete analysis of discrimination in the represented societies.

For the development of the ACCT trainings, the methods and exercises should be able to address the local issues raised for each project locality. Including site visits as part of the ACCT curriculum can ensure that main conflict lines and stakeholders are represented.

Bulgaria

One of the big issues raised is the prevalence of fake news and false information that dominate public discourse in Bulgarian society.

It is interesting to note that there are important conflict lines between the so-called "old minorities" and the new ones: Armenians and Jewish people for instance belong to the so-called old minorities and are more assimilated. A minority which should technically be an "old minority", yet which is continuously marginalised and discriminated against are Roma, as reflected in the statement: "*[Roma are] outsiders, (...) there is a lot of racist attitudes and discrimination against this group.*" All these old minorities are reportedly worried about job security against the background of new migrant groups arriving.

The interview also shows that anti-Romaism or racism against Roma people is prevalent in society as well as amongst NGO workers who work for and with Roma people.

Finally, in terms of sexism and homophobia, a deeply homophobic discourse in the national context is reported. This is especially evident in the debate surrounding the non-ratification of the Istanbul Convention, which would have legally opened the society for non-traditional gender roles and citizens identifying as belonging to the LGBTQ* community.

Denmark

One of the main conflict lines in Danish society runs between Danish nationals and migrants – however with a marked differentiation between migrants marked as “Western” and “non-Western” (see Country Description on Denmark under section 02). The discrimination of the latter is structurally routed, with legal dividing lines between Danish nationals, “Western” and “non-Western” migrants. Racism and discrimination are also reflected in and exacerbated by laws aimed at preventing the “ghettoisation” of areas inhabited by predominantly “non-Western” residents. The laws prevent new “non-Western” migrants from moving into the area, which results in cutting off newcomers from essential networks and from social capital of their communities. The same strategy of cutting off newcomers from networks they may rely upon is evident in the practice of assigning refugees to housing in rural areas during their initial phase in Denmark. Moreover, this potentially causes conflict with the local rural population, exposing newcomers to higher levels of discrimination and stigmatisation, on top of isolating them from networks.

A large urban-rural divide in the composition of Danish society can be observed: The percentage of both western and non-western migrants in rural areas is low, and racism is more prevalent. In the urban areas, where migrants constitute a larger part of society, incidents of racially motivated crimes are however also reported.

Within Danish society, there is an ongoing debate on including non-citizens structurally either through participation rights or through integration into the labour market. The current government clearly chooses the path of labour market integration. Meanwhile, the government has shocked with racist remarks about the labour market participation of migrant women. Moreover, as the designated main path to integration leads through the labour market, women who follow a more traditional, family-oriented gender role have large difficulties gaining access to Danish society in general.

Germany

The partners describe discrimination and racism in society between the dominant parts of society and migrant communities, but also between different migrant communities and even within migrant communities of different generations or cultures.

The urban-rural divide is also present in Germany. Racism is particularly pronounced in rural areas. This is serious to the extent that people of colour choose not to travel to certain rural areas, due to the fear of being victims of racist violence.

Structural and institutional discrimination is an issue in Germany, exemplified in the health sector and the labour market. The labour market is described as highly gender-segregated both sectorial and hierarchical. Women and first-generation immigrants are found predominant in low-paid care and social jobs and underrepresented in managerial positions.

In addition, language proficiency and speaking German without an accent an important asset on the German job market, leading to discrimination of non-native speakers. Due to labour market segregation, people who immigrate often enter the secondary job market, receiving lower wages and insecure, short-term contracts.

Poland

For Poland, the main groups discriminated against are members of the LGBTQ* community, ethnic minorities and women.

Structurally established through the tight relationship between the government and the catholic church, gender norms are highly traditional in Poland. This is furthered through the education system, which has been severed from progressive or non-traditional influences, which are not supported by the government. In the city of the partner organisation, NGOs and stakeholders that have cooperated with schools in anti-discriminatory trainings before are barred from all access to schools. The antifeminist legal developments leading to the criminalisation of abortion have been met with widespread protests by progressive women in Poland.

The rural-urban divide concerning discrimination and racism also exists in Poland, yet it is more differentiated. Towns having an active civil society and NGOs that work against discrimination show lower levels of open discrimination. Here, racist incidents are observed and reported by civil society actors, preventing a culture of impunity. On the other hand, for towns with strong government approval and little civil society activity, the partner reports that for instance, openly racist graffiti are left uncommented, leaving a dangerous climate for marginalised ethnic groups.

Spain

The Spanish partner reports high levels of prejudice and racism. In particular, racism against Roma and Muslims is described as a big problem.

Further, discrimination against people experiencing mental health problems is reported as being an issue. Examples include people in the partners' town Álora being afraid of people experiencing mental health problems or not wanting to sit next to them.

Gender roles are very traditional in Spain. The paternalistic climate in Spanish society makes it difficult for women to run businesses, let alone intervene against discrimination with their activities.

Practices and Interventions

Imagina, Spain

The partner intervenes on various level regarding racism and gender discrimination. Amongst others, the organisation collaborates with a group of Arab women and an organisation for people experiencing mental illness.

In collaboration with an organisation for people experiencing mental illness, Imagina recently organised an event to create more understanding by sharing the points of view and experiences of people experiencing mental illness.

Within the organisation, Imagina have a number of measures in place to combat racism and gender discrimination. They organise trainings for their staff, including trainings on inclusive language, as well as having an equality plan etc. This happens in cooperation with another expert organisation that facilitates these trainings. Now, Imagina are creating their own gender equality plan, which will then replace the general equality plan of the region, which the organisation is using as of now. Moreover, during conflicts, Imagina staff and management can refer to their mission statement to advocate for inclusion within the organisation and when working with others.

ARM-BG, Bulgaria

In terms of interventions, the interview partners describes is as being a difficult field which “[deserves] our attention. And when you ask some people whether it's possible to train, they think that the mission is impossible.”

In terms of positive interventions, the partner describes a remembrance culture workshop conducted with students. The aim was to produce an essay or a video about the history of the Holocaust. The project was organised in cooperation with the local Jewish community. The partner also refers to a past project with the name of Recult they participated in. It included transnational exchanges and local workshops, using art to reflect on hybrid identities with migrants. Finally, the interviewee states that legal support of refugees plays an important role in intervening for the rights of refugees in court.

Crossing Borders, Denmark

The partner describes a number of interventions against discrimination, including multiple projects based on sharing experiences and narratives of migrants and marginalised groups in cultural formats involving storytelling, food or music. The partner also refers to anti-racist trainings at schools on Black Lives Matter and how to combat hate speech, as well as multicultural exchanges increasing the contact between members of different nationalities, backgrounds and cultures.

Dla Ziemi, Poland

The partner organisation works, amongst other things, by addressing prejudice and discrimination at schools, highlighting the benefits of migration to society, such as economic and cultural gains. In addition to this, the partner works in the field of empowerment of women of different backgrounds (including Ukrainian refugees) through cultural activities and education on feminism.

CRN, Germany

Concerning their project-based interventions against racism and discrimination, staff of CRN describe a past project supporting participation of migrants in 5 European cities (INCLUDATE), a project empowering the participation of minorities and people of migrant backgrounds in the climate debate (EU24), a project empowering migrants in 5 European cities through art work on hybrid identities (RECULT). Moreover, CRN have close ties to Iranian and Polish migrant associations and have worked with the group Aufbruch Neukölln on narratives of male migrants.

Perspekt Initiative, Germany

The partner organisation works in schools, with teachers and students, to educate about and combat discrimination in its many forms, including racism. Perspekt Initiative also organises youth exchanges to promote understanding and help broadening young people's horizons. The organisation conducts trainings for employees of NGOs and social enterprises on the topics of anti-racism and anti-discrimination.

Perspekt Initiative staff describe creating networks of support and understanding through their cooperation with various civil society actors, including different migrant and/or female-led organisations.

Stakeholders and Partners in the field of anti-discrimination

All partners in ACCT work with similar types of organisations, namely schools, NGOs (including migrant associations), universities and adult education centres. The partners and stakeholders differ according to specialisation.

CRN has the broadest and biggest base of partners, as the organisation covers many topics through its transnational projects. In the field of anti-discrimination, the main partners mentioned in the interview are migrant associations (NARUD, Aufbruch Neukölln, Iranische Gemeinde Deutschlands und Polnischer Sozialrat e.V.).

Crossing Borders, as a migrant-run organisation, also works with migrant associations and local community locations (e.g. Trampoline House) on the topic of anti-discrimination. The main target group for their anti-discrimination workshops are students in schools. Their activities on sharing migrant narratives are mostly received by migrants or transnational partners in their network, although Crossing Borders express the desire to reach more non-migrant participants in Danish society.

Imagina cooperates with a Muslim women's group, an organisation for mental health, schools and the local municipality on the topic of anti-discrimination.

Dla Ziemi is part of a network of feminist and pacifist organisations in the city of Lublin. Many of their activities are collaborations within the network. They expressed regret, that other towns lack the same level of civil society activities.

ARM-BG cooperates with lawyers and works with governmental institutions to support refugees in Bulgaria. In current projects, they also work with schools and artists.

Perspekt Initiative cooperates with local schools, NGOs and civil society actors in Hamburg and in the region for the purpose of activities related to anti-discrimination. Its network has recently started to extend to countries such as Turkey, Sweden or Greece.

Target groups for the ACCT Training

For the development of the local trainings, the target groups each organisation considers relevant for the ACCT training can be found below. In accordance with the ACCT gender mainstreaming plan and the goal of combining participants from majority and marginalised society groups, a subset of the following groups will be participate in the local ACCT Trainings.

ARM BG, Bulgaria

Relevant target group are lawyers working with the state agency and lawyers working with refugees, as well as civil servants working with migrants and refugees, e.g. police, civil servants in reception centres etc.

Crossing Borders, Denmark

Relevant target groups for ACCT are students or teachers in local schools, migrants and the local community in Nørrebro, Copenhagen.

CRN, Germany

Relevant target groups include members of the Turkish, Iranian and or Polish migrant communities in Berlin.

Perspekt Initiative, Germany

The organisation plans to conduct the local ACCT Training with an international group including young participants with Turkish-German, Turkish and German nationalities.

Dla Ziemi, Poland

The organisation plans to conduct the local ACCT Training with Ukrainian refugees. Considering the rural-urban divide, it may be favourable to participants from rural areas.

Imagina, Spain

The partner plans to conduct the trainings with Arab women and teenagers. The latter may come from two different local high schools (one supporting the inclusion of disabled students and one with a focus on Roma students and international students.)