

**Izabela Grabowska, Dorota Węziak-Białowolska**

Warsaw School of Economics

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## **DISCRIMINATION AT THE WORKPLACE – FINDINGS FROM THE EUROPEAN WORKING CONDITION SURVEY. TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION PRACTICES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS**

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**Abstract:** The aim of this article is to analyze discrimination at the workplace in the EU. Data used in the analysis comes from the European Working Conditions Survey. Since we assume that discrimination is a latent and discrete phenomenon, in order to classify respondents the latent class analysis is employed. The analysis performed enables to define six distinct groups of employees according to the feeling of being discriminated at the workplace. The general findings are as follows: we recognize types of discriminatory practices that are present in the labour market, we show which discriminatory practices coexist there, we discover that some types of discriminatory practices in the presence of others become more important and some become less important.

**Key words:** discrimination at the workplace, latent class analysis, hierarchical logistic regression.

### **1. Discrimination at workplace – theoretical framework**

The problem of identification and understanding of discrimination connected with employment and especially discrimination at the workplace has been present in academic discourse for a few decades. Initially it was explored by sociologists and legal scholars. Later, it started to be challenging for academics from other fields, such as labour economics, human resource management, workplace medicine or even psychology [Dipboye, Colella 2005]. Literature review on this issue indicates that discrimination was usually analysed in relation to its particular manifestations. Some authors focused on gender and sexuality discrimination [Adkins 1995; Anker 1998; Heilman 2001; Lyness, Judiesch 1999]. The next group focused on age [Branine, Glover 2001; Bytheway 1995; Gregory 2001; Nelson (Ed.) 2004; Palmore Erdman 1999; Villosio (Ed.) 2008] discrimination. Analyses of discrimination due to religion, ethnic background [Davis-Howard, Moore 2001; Katz 2003] or disability [Bergeskog 2001; Hoppengardner 2001; Metts 2000; Millward Brown SMG/KRC 2006; O'Reilly 2003] were also conducted. Currently, the research focuses on a more

complex concept – multiple or intersectional discrimination [The European Commission 2007]. Multiple discrimination occurs when a person is subjected to discrimination on more than one ground but (1) each type of discrimination occurs on separate occasions or (2) the grounds interact with each other in such a way that they are completely inseparable [Makkonen 2002; Itzin, Phillipson 1995].

The authors in this paper focus on the problem of multiple discrimination at the workplace connected with employability and work ability.

Discrimination at the workplace gains high importance especially in times of dynamic changes in the labour market. Moreover, since people more often switch their posts it should be subject to constant monitoring. It is strictly connected with the concepts of work ability and employability. In order to assess the occurrence and magnitude of discrimination practices, it is necessary to define the factors influencing work ability and employability [Gazier (Ed.) 1999].

The prime goal of every policy oriented toward the labour market is to increase labour productivity and employment. Very often, this cannot be achieved by a simple increase in the level of capital per employee or even human capital. The work ability concept, which is similar to the concept of social capital in the economy, stresses the importance of balance between work environment and individual potential. It emphasizes also the role of external environment such as family, friends and relatives but also – looking broadly – factors such as legislation, infrastructure, economy, services, etc. Work ability encompasses also health and functional capabilities, competences but also values, attitudes and motivations. The role of health and competences in an improvement of labour productivity and human capital has been examined broadly in the literature [OECD 2001]. The importance of values, attitudes and motivations, although less recognized, is growing and is likely to grow in the future, especially when one takes into account the need for a more important role in the labour market to be played by people from disadvantaged groups [Dipboye, Colella 2005]. All of them create a broader background for an individual's work ability but also can serve as a base for discriminatory practices. However, it is the workplace where these practices might be present and due to this, it should be of key importance in the analysis.

Other elements of the work ability concept are connected with employees; only the work environment is attributed to the employers. In recent decades, a remedy for the growth in demand for the labour force has been to increase employment and improve labour productivity by increasing human capital. At present, it becomes more evident that, in order to maintain an upward trend in the productivity growth, not only should human capital stay in focus but also should working conditions. Labour force shortages that are likely to occur in following years [EUROPOP 2008], will stimulate employers to use the potential of the disadvantageous groups (i.e. women, older people, and foreigners). Numerous obstacles have to be overcome in order to attract the disadvantageous groups to enter the labour market and fill the gaps caused by the ageing population of society.

The incidents of discrimination, harassment and violence at the workplace are the elements of the workplace features that can negatively influence work ability and employability [Di Martino, Helge, Cooper 2003; Druty 1993; Olgiatti, Shapiro 2002; Walker 1993]. The most recognized reasons for discrimination are age and sex, but there are also other factors such as religion, nationality, ethnicity, disability and sexuality. Discrimination may include various actions like excluding workers from promotion or training and depriving them of benefits. It may also start during recruitment and can be connected with limits for certain groups that are included in advertisements. There are also other incidents of discrimination of a more subtle character such as reduced job responsibilities, imposing an earlier retirement or discouragement from continuation the job beyond the normal retirement age. Such actions reinforce the stereotype that these workers groups are the least important in the labour market [Villosio Ed. 2008], but this is in contradiction with the future market when these groups will be of a much higher importance.

## 2. Research questions and data

Taking into account the role of the work environment in the employability and the work ability of people from disadvantaged groups in the labour market, especially in relation to workplace discrimination practices, in our analysis we search for an answer to the following questions:

- What are the types of discrimination that are there at the workplace and in them, which ones coexist?
- Is age-connected discrimination at the workplace distinguishable?
- Is gender-connected discrimination at the workplace distinguishable?

The hypotheses we want to verify are as follows:

H1. The majority of employees do not feel discriminated at the workplace.

H2. Age-connected discrimination at the workplace is related to the type of discrimination and to the age of employee.

H3. Gender-connected discrimination at the workplace is related to the type of discrimination and to the gender of employee.

Data used in the analysis is taken from the fourth major wave (2005) of the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) – the research undertaken by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. The pooled data set contains 25,277 workers aged over 15 from 31 countries: European Union 27, Norway, Croatia, Switzerland and Turkey. For further analysis, only EU Member States were taken (EU-27).<sup>1</sup>

In the survey, only persons in employment (employees, self-employed – according to the Eurostat definition) took part. In each country, the sample was chosen on the

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<sup>1</sup> The survey is entirely comparable between countries and can be used for international comparisons, however the analysis on the country level are inappropriate due to the small number of respondents subject to discrimination practices in each country.

basis of multi-stage, stratified and cluster design with a “random walk” procedure for selection of the respondents at the last stage, except from Belgium, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland, where the selection at the last stage was done from the phone register. All interviews were conducted personally at the respondent’s household.

In the EWCS, the concept of discrimination is analysed through several statements for which the respondent could answer as yes or no. These are:

*Over the past 12 months, have you or have you not, personally been subjected at work to...?*

*A – threats of physical violence*

*B – physical violence from people from your workplace*

*C – physical violence from other people*

*D – bullying / harassment*

*E – sexual discrimination / discrimination linked to gender*

*F – unwanted sexual attention*

*G – age discrimination*

*H – discrimination linked to nationality*

*J – discrimination linked to religion*

*K – discrimination linked to disability*

*L – discrimination linked to sexual orientation*

These statements generally refer to the following fields of discrimination:

- physical violence (A, B, C, D),
- sexual discrimination (E, F, L),
- discrimination connected with religion or nationality (H, J),
- discrimination connected with age (G),
- discrimination against the disabled (K).

Generally, employees in EU-27 do not feel discriminated against. Taking into regard different types of discriminatory practices or incidents, the ones that occur most often are *bullying and harassment, threats of physical violence and age discrimination*. Nevertheless, the results should be interpreted with caution. On the one hand, we can stress the propensity of being subject to discriminatory practices and on the other – of being aware of the occurrence of such a situation. Although the difference seems to be subtle, the conclusions are completely different. From the former point of view, we identify the groups that are prone to discriminatory practices. From the latter, we also take into account the consciousness of being subject to such practices. Since we cannot distinguish these two possibilities with the data from EWCS, we assume that there is a possibility that some employees do not report discrimination due to the lack of awareness.

### 3. Method

Since the concept of discrimination can be perceived as a latent, complex, multidimensional and fuzzy phenomenon, it cannot be measured using only one questionnaire item. On the contrary, its complexity and latency can be dealt with

using many manifest indicators. In our analysis, we have twelve such manifest indicators (statements) describing the issue of discrimination. As these indices are measured on the nominal dichotomous scale (they are categorized indicators) and we assume that discrimination is a latent and discrete phenomenon (one can be discriminated or not), in order to discover the types of discriminatory practices the latent class analysis (LCA) is employed. This method yields a probabilistic clustering approach [Vermunt, Magidson 2003], which implies that each object is assumed to belong to one class but with uncertainty expressed by an individual's posterior class-membership probability.

Then, in order to identify the characteristics of employees subjected to unjust treatment, the identified groups (divided into two groups – feeling discriminated and not at all feeling discriminated) are described using the following information: (1) socio-demographic situation of respondents, (2) situation connected to the labour market and (3) workplace situation. Since the dependant variable is categorical (group membership), we employ the two-level logistic regression model. The choice of the two-level model results from our belief that the discrimination at the workplace problem should be examined by accounting for the specificity of the country.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Types of discrimination at the workplace

The aim of the analysis is to explore the number of distinct groups that are discriminated in different fields. To achieve it, we fit from two to eight class solutions without any restriction. We compare them using the Akaike information criterion (AIC), the Bayesian information criterion (BIC), the sample adjusted AIC (adj. AIC) and  $G^2$  statistic. Following the suggestion of K.L. Nylund, T. Asparouhov, B. Muthen [2007], we examine especially BIC and adj. BIC. Table 1 reports the resulting AIC, BIC, adj. BIC criteria and  $G^2$ s. The results suggest that the model with 6 classes fits the data the best. This is justified by the lowest values of BIC, adj. BIC and  $G^2$  for this solution.<sup>2</sup>

In order to interpret each of the six classes suggested by the LCA solution, the probability of responding *yes*<sup>3</sup> to each of the twelve statements given for class membership is examined. These probabilities are reported in Table 2. Probabilities lower than 0.4 (in bold) and probabilities higher than 0.6 (underlined) indicate that respondents in a given latent class are respectively less or more likely to be subjected to a certain type of discrimination. The proportion of each class as well as their description is presented in Table 2.

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<sup>2</sup> Although the fit statistics suggest the six-class solution, in order to verify its objectivity the values of  $\rho$ -parameters in four- and five-class solutions are examined. This thorough inspection reveals that the pattern of values of the  $\rho$ -parameters in both of them is similar to that observed in the six-class solution.

<sup>3</sup> *Yes* means to be subjected to a given type of discrimination.

**Table 1.** Goodness-of-Fit for 2-7 class models

Number of classes	AIC	BIC	Adj. BIC	G <sup>2</sup>	df
2	51 016.34	51 219.76	51 140.31	2705.226	4046
3	49 834.54	50 143.74	50 022.97	1749.827	4041
4	49 367.15	49 782.12	49 620.04	1202.992	4025
5	48 993.44	49 514.19	49 310.8	1109.914	4023
<b>6</b>	<b>48 886.92</b>	<b>49 513.45</b>	<b>49 268.75</b>	<b>985.276</b>	<b>4010</b>
7	48 831.29	49 563.6	49 277.58	996.749	3997

Source: own calculations.

**Table 2.** The six-class solution –  $\rho$ -parameters (probability of “yes”)

Statement	Class/Group					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
A	<b>0.001</b>	<b>0.355</b>	<u>0.869</u>	<b>0</b>	<u>0.718</u>	<b>0.077</b>
B	<b>0.001</b>	<b>0.203</b>	<b>0.210</b>	<b>0.014</b>	0.474	<b>0.004</b>
C	<b>0.004</b>	<b>0.220</b>	0.488	<b>0.030</b>	<u>0.629</u>	<b>0.037</b>
D	<b>0.015</b>	0.585	<b>0.330</b>	<b>0.268</b>	<u>0.844</u>	<b>0.171</b>
E	<b>0</b>	<u>1</u>	<b>0.017</b>	<b>0.071</b>	<b>0.355</b>	<b>0.043</b>
F	<b>0.004</b>	<u>0.742</u>	<b>0.079</b>	<b>0.079</b>	<b>0.360</b>	<b>0.005</b>
G	<b>0.004</b>	<b>0.316</b>	<b>0.065</b>	<b>0.228</b>	0.531	<b>0.157</b>
H	<b>0</b>	<b>0.020</b>	<b>0.020</b>	<b>0.038</b>	<u>0.676</u>	<u>0.658</u>
I	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.007</b>	<b>0</b>	<u>0.612</u>	<u>0.724</u>
J	<b>0.001</b>	<b>0.029</b>	<b>0.004</b>	<b>0.010</b>	<b>0.327</b>	<b>0.280</b>
K	<b>0</b>	<b>0.006</b>	<b>0.012</b>	<b>0.034</b>	<b>0.205</b>	<b>0.043</b>
L	<b>0</b>	<b>0.071</b>	<b>0.001</b>	<b>0.001</b>	<b>0.183</b>	<b>0.020</b>

Source: own calculations.

The pattern of  $\rho$ -parameters reveals that the first class consists of people who feel completely not discriminated against. This is the prevailing group. It consists of 90.3 percent of the whole sample. In the second group, there are those who are *subjected at work to sexual discrimination or discrimination linked to gender and to unwanted sexual attention* and they account for 0.5 percent of the whole sample. The third group includes people who, although do not feel discriminated against at work in any field, are subjected to threats of physical violence. There are 5.7 percent of them and it is the second largest group. The fourth group accounts for 2.7 percent of the whole sample. The only difference between respondents from this group and from the first one is the propensity of answering *yes* to all of the questions. Generally, they are a little bit higher but still do not exceed 0.3 percent. The highest probability of *yes*

refers to the statements D and G, i.e., bullying and age discrimination, respectively. Therefore, in the fourth group there are those who felt slightly more discriminated against than those in the first group, especially in the case of bullying and discrimination due to age. The fifth group includes people concurrently subjected to threats of physical violence, physical violence and harassment because of nationality or ethnic background and not discriminated against *due to gender, age, religion, disability and sexual orientation*. However, this is the smallest group – it accounts merely for 0.3 percent of the whole sample. The sixth group includes people discriminated against only because of nationality and ethnic background. Additionally, they are not subjected to physical violence at work from other people, or to threats of physical violence, and do not feel discriminated due to gender, age, religion, disability and sexual orientation. This group accounts for 0.6 percent of the whole sample.

**Table 3.** The six-class solution – class prevalence

Group	Description		Fraction
	Discriminated	Not discriminated	
1	–	not at all discriminated in any field	90.3%
2	subjected at work to sexual discrimination /discrimination linked to gender and to unwanted sexual attention	neither subjected at work to physical violence from other people nor to threats of physical violence; not discriminated due to religion, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic background,	0.5%
3	subjected at work to <b>threats</b> of physical violence only	not subjected at work to physical violence from other people; not discriminated due to gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic background	5.7%
4	-	rather not discriminated	2.7%
5	subjected to threats of physical violence, physical violence and harassment because of nationality or ethnic background	not discriminated due to gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation	0.3%
6	discriminated because of nationality or ethnic background only	neither subjected at work to physical violence from other people not to threats of physical violence, not discriminated due to gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation	0.6%

Source: own calculations.

For clarity in the following part of the text, we have named the classes stressing the field of discrimination (except for the first and fourth class), but the inverse strategy is also possible.

With respect to the research questions that we have posed, it is important to stress that there are six different groups of employees in terms of discrimination at the

workplace. Although the majority of employees do not perceive themselves as being subjected to any discriminatory practices (90.3 per cent), the group of employees that are discriminated due to sexuality is clearly distinguishable. Mostly women are exposed to this kind of discrimination. Adversely, it is not possible to discern from the group of those discriminated against only due to age. This could result from the complexity of different discriminatory practices under investigation. On the one hand, this may mean that age discrimination is not as important as it is suspected to be in comparison with the other types of discriminatory practices. On the other hand, one should remember that the data provides information only about the perception of employees. They may be discriminated against and do not realize it, but also they might exaggerate in their opinions concerning discrimination. Nevertheless, the performed analysis shows that age-discrimination occurs not alone but concurrently with other discriminatory practices that prevail. Namely, there are employees who experience this kind of intolerance among those who are:

- 1) harassed and threatened with physical violence because of nationality or ethnic background (the probability of “yes” to the statement G – 0.531),
- 2) sexually harassed (0.316),
- 3) rather not discriminated against (0.228),
- 4) discriminated against because of nationality or ethnic background only (0.157).

Surprisingly, those who are threatened with physical violence do not feel discriminated against due to age (the probability of “yes” to the statement G – 0.065).

#### 4.2. Profiles of the discrimination groups

In order to identify the characteristics of employees subjected to unjust treatment, the identified groups are described using the following information:

1. socio-demographic situation of respondents
  - a) gender (male and female),
  - b) age group (15–24 yrs, 25–39 yrs, 40–54 yrs, 55 yrs and more),
  - c) level of education (primary or secondary ISCED 0-3, post-secondary ISCED 4, tertiary ISCED 5-6),
2. situation connected to labour market
  - a) type of occupation (white collar ISCO 1-3, blue collar ISCO 4-9),<sup>4</sup>
  - b) type of contract (indefinite time contract, definite time contract, no contract),<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> To white-collar workers we include: legislators, senior officials, managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals (ISCO1-3); to blue-collar workers we include: clerks, service workers, shop and market sales workers, skilled agricultural and fishery workers, craft and related trades workers, plant and machine operators and assemblers, elementary occupations (ISCO4-9); armed forces (ISCO10) are excluded from the analysis.

<sup>5</sup> We exclude from the analysis self-employed persons.



### 3. workplace situation

a) size of an enterprise (micro (2–9), small (10–49), medium (50–249), large (250+), and others, e.g. NGO),

b) employer's sector (public, private),

All analyses were performed for the EU-27.

Since the dependant variable is categorical (group membership), we employ the logistic regression model. Given that our preliminary analysis results in the conclusion that the rather not discriminated group seems hardly distinguishable, we decided to exclude this group from further analysis. We considered combining this group with one of the two others but due to its composition, it was impossible to decide to which one. Consequently, the logistic regression model (with two-categorical dependent variable) with random intercept was employed:

$$\text{logit}(p_{ij}) = \ln\left(\frac{p_{ij}}{1-p_{ij}}\right) = \gamma_{00} + \beta_{1j}X_{ij} + u_{0j},$$

where:  $\gamma_{00}$  – the random intercept coefficient,

$\beta_{1j}$  – the fixed slope coefficient,

$X_{ij}$  – individual level variables and there is no country level variable.<sup>6</sup>

The outcome variable is the group membership with 1 standing for feeling discriminated and 0 standing for not at all feeling discriminated (the group of the rather not discriminated is treated as missing). The choice of the two-level model results from our belief that the discrimination at the workplace problem should be examined by accounting for the specificity of the country.

**Model diagnostics.** In order to justify the application of the two-level model, we estimate the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC). It equals 0.076227 and is below the level of 0.1 [Kreft, de Leeuw 1998]. However, accounting for the average group size (in our analysis – the average size of sample at the country level is 680 respondents, evenly distributed among classes) the calculation of the design effect (Deff) results in the value of 52.749, which is considerably above the value of 2, that strongly justifies the two-level approach we employ. To verify whether the outcome variable can be modelled using the set of five descriptor variables, we estimate two models: the null-model and the model with five explanatory variables. Then, we compare them using the log likelihood ratio-test for nested models, Akaike information criterion (AIC) and Schwarz's Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) (Table 4).

All criteria prove that there is a better fit of the model with the explanatory variables than of the null-model.

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<sup>6</sup> The parameters of this model are estimated using generalized linear mixed model fit by the Laplace approximation.

**Table 4.** Fit statistics

	logLik	deviance	AIC	BIC	N
Null-model M0	-4075	9410	9414	9430	18 357
Final model M1	-3548	7096	7130	7260	15 361

Source: own calculations.

**Model results.** In the next step, the estimates of the two-level random intercept logistic regression model are calculated (Table 5). Investigation of the complex impact of the determinants of discriminatory practices shows that:

**1. Age.** The most prone to or the most aware of discriminatory practices at the workplace are the youngest employees i.e. aged 15–24 and the least – the oldest, i.e.

**Table 5.** Random intercept model for discrimination group membership.

Descriptor	Code	B	exp(B)	S.E.	Sig. lev.
Age group	15–24 yrs	0,28	1,33	0,10	**
	25–39 yrs	ref.			
	40–54yrs	-0,13	0,87	0,08	.
	55 yrs +	-0,51	0,60	0,13	***
Sex	Male	ref.			
	Female	-0,11	0,90	0,07	
Level of education	primary or secondary (ISCED0-3)	ref.			
	post-secondary (ISCED4)	-0,02	0,98	0,17	
	tertiary (ISCED5-6)	-0,34	0,71	0,18	.
Employer's sector	Private	ref.			
	Public	0,85	2,33	0,07	***
	other (e.g. NGO)	0,37	1,45	0,14	**
Size of enterprise	micro (2–9)	-0,23	0,80	0,11	*
	small (10–49)	0,07	1,07	0,09	
	medium (50–249)	-0,12	0,89	0,10	
	large (250+)	ref.			
Type of contract	indefinite time contract	ref.			
	defined time contract	0,26	1,30	0,09	**
	no contract	0,09	1,09	0,13	
Type of occupation	white-collar (ISCO1-3)	ref.			
	blue-collar (ISCO4-9)	-0,14	0,87	0,08	.

Significance coding: '\*\*\*' (0.001); '\*\*' (0.01); '\*' (0.05), '.' (0.1).

Source: own calculations.

aged 55 or more. The employees aged 15–24 have odds of feeling discriminated higher by 33 per cent than employees aged 25–39 (reference group). The employees aged at least 55 have the odds of feeling discriminated lower by 40 per cent than the employees aged 25–39 (reference group). The odds-ratios ( $\exp(B)$ ) are significant for all age groups on the significance level of 0.1 (for the group of 40–54 years old) or less.

**2. Sex.** Men are more prone to or more aware of discriminatory practices at the workplace than women. Although the difference is not significant, we can establish that women have the odds of feeling discriminated against lower by 10 per cent than men (reference group). However, it should be stated that the questions on discriminatory practices in the field of, for example, remuneration or promotions are not included in the EWCS. In our opinion, this could influence the results seriously.

**3. Level of education.** Employees with the lowest possible level of education (at most secondary – up to ISCED3) have a higher probability of feeling discriminated against than better-educated employees. However, the odds-ratio of feeling discriminated against for employees with at most secondary education (up to ISCED3) and post-secondary education (ISCED4) are close to 1 and insignificant. The highest difference in odds of feeling discriminated against is observed for ISCED0-3 group and ISCED5-6 group, namely the worst and the best educated. Employees with higher education have the odds of feeling discriminated against lower by 29 per cent than employees with at most secondary education.

**4. Employer's sector.** Employees from the private sector significantly feel the least discriminated against. The odds-ratios of being discriminated against for both employees from private and other (including nongovernment organizations) enterprises are strongly significant.

**5. Size of enterprise.** Persons employed in microenterprises (with 2–9 employees) have the lowest odds of feeling discriminated against. Compared to the employed in the largest enterprises (reference category) persons from microenterprises have, by 20 per cent, less odds to feel subjected to discriminatory practices. The odds-ratio observed for this group is significant at the level of 0.05. The odds-ratios for employed in small and medium-size enterprises are not significant. However, for the former, we can say that the odds of feeling discriminated is higher by 7 per cent and for the latter lower by 11 per cent than for those employed in the largest enterprises.

**6. Type of contract.** The least discriminated are persons with indefinite time contracts and the most discriminated are those with definite time contracts. The odds ratio for the latter is significant at the level of 0.01 and is equal to 1.30. This means that these employees have the odds of feeling discriminated against higher by 30 per cent than employees with an indefinite time contract (reference category). The odds-ratio for persons without any contract is insignificant but still they have a little bit higher odds of feeling discriminated against (by 7 per cent) than employees with an indefinite time contract.

**7. Type of occupation.** White-collar workers are more aware of the discriminatory practices at the workplace than blue-collar workers. The difference is significant at the significance level of 0.1. We can establish that blue-collar workers have odds of feeling discriminated lower by 13 per cent than white-collar workers (reference group).

## 5. Conclusions

The analysis performed, enables to define distinct groups of employees according to the feeling of being discriminated against at the workplace. The groups are identified with regard to the combination of the discriminatory practices the employee experiences. The general findings from this part of the analysis are as follows:

- 1) We recognize types of discriminatory practices that are present in the labour market,
- 2) We show which discriminatory practices coexist there,
- 3) We discover that some types of discriminatory practices in the presence of others become more important and some become less important.

Referring to the group composition, we manage to distinguish six groups in the terms of feeling discriminated against: (1) not at all discriminated, (2) sexually harassed, (3) threatened with physical violence, (4) rather not discriminated, (5) harassed and threatened with physical violence because of nationality or ethnic background and (6) discriminated against because of nationality or ethnic background. Although a vast majority of workers feels not at all discriminated against (90.3 per cent), those, who feel discriminate, are exposed mainly to threats of physical violence (5.7 per cent). The group that is discriminated against due to gender, although rather small, is clearly distinguishable. Adversely, it is not possible to discern from the group of the discriminated those who feel discriminated against only or mainly due to age. Age-discrimination occurs concurrently with other discriminatory practices that prevail. In our opinion, this results from the lower perceived importance of age discrimination in relation to other types of discriminatory practices.

Analysis of the determinants of discriminatory practices at the workplace reveals that:

- 1) The older the employee is, the lower her awareness of being discriminated against is;
- 2) Men feel more discriminated against than women;
- 3) The higher the education level is, the higher awareness of being subject to discriminatory practices is;
- 4) Employees from the public sector feel more discriminated against than those employees from the private sector;
- 5) There is no straightforward rule of discriminatory practices conditioned by the size of the enterprise. However, persons employed in microenterprises (with 2-9 employees) have the lowest odds of feeling discriminated against.

6) Employees with an indefinite time contract feel the least discriminated against and employees with a definite time contract feel the most discriminated against;

7) White-collar workers are more aware of the discriminatory practices at the workplace than blue-collar workers.

Referring to the hypotheses we formulate, we can state that all three of them (i.e. H1, H2 and H3) appear to be true but with some remarks. Concerning the hypothesis H1, 90.3 per cent of employees do not perceive themselves as being subjected to any discriminatory practices. Concerning the hypothesis H2, the younger the employee is, the more often they report the occurrence of discriminatory practices. However, it could be the result of higher awareness of the existence of such practices among younger employees than of more frequent occurrence of such practices among them. Thus the above conclusion should be treated with caution. Concerning the hypothesis H3, men are more prone to or more aware of discriminatory practices at the workplace than women are, but the difference is not significant. Additionally it should be stated that the question on discriminatory practices included in the EWCS is very general and does not relate directly, for example, to remuneration or promotion. In our opinion, this could influence the results seriously.

Therefore, we stress that all results should be interpreted with great caution. The main reservations are as follows. Firstly, since in the EWCS only workers are interviewed, its usefulness to examine discrimination in the labour market is limited. Secondly, taking into account the low employment rate of older persons (especially in the NMS) and lower employment rate of women than of men both resulting in their underrepresentation in the labour market, the results may underestimate the scope of the discrimination due to a selection bias. Thirdly, data from the EWCS does not provide us with the possibility to distinguish between (1) the absence of occurrence of discriminatory practices and (2) the lack of the awareness of their occurrence. To reduce these drawbacks a study comprising non-working persons and employers is needed.

Despite the aforementioned flaws the identification of the groups prone to the risk of discrimination in the labour market provides useful information in designing and implementing anti-discriminatory policies.

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## **DYSKRYMINACJA W MIEJSCU PRACY NA PODSTAWIE EUROPEJSKIEGO BADANIA WARUNKÓW PRACY – RODZAJE PRAKTYK DYSKRYMINACYJNYCH I ICH CHARAKTERYSTYKA**

**Streszczenie:** Celem artykułu jest zaprezentowanie wyników analiz mających na celu sprawdzenie, jakie praktyki dyskryminacyjne występują na europejskim rynku pracy. Przyjęto, że zjawisko dyskryminacji ma charakter nieostrej, ukryty i dyskretnej. Z tego względu do klasyfikacji respondentów zastosowano analizę klas ukrytych, a do analizy wpływu czynników kontekstowych na fakt bycia dyskryminowanym w miejscu pracy – hierarchiczny model logistyczny. Wyróżniono sześć grup pracowników różniących się ze względu na odczucia doświadczania praktyk dyskryminacyjnych. Wskazano, które praktyki dyskryminacyjne występują na europejskim rynku pracy oraz które z nich współwystępują. Ponadto pokazano, że percepcja doświadczania praktyk dyskryminacyjnych zmienia się w zależności od tego, jakich praktyk doświadcza pracownik.

**Słowa kluczowe:** dyskryminacja w miejscu pracy, analiza klas ukrytych, hierarchiczna regresja logistyczna.