
Veronika Bajt

**ETHNIC
DISCRIMINATION**
STRATEGIES OF RESEARCH AND MEASUREMENT





Veronika Bajt

ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION:
STRATEGIES OF RESEARCH
AND MEASUREMENT

Ljubljana 2023

Ethnic Discrimination

Strategies of Research and Measurement

Veronika Bajt

Reviewed by Neža Kogovšek Šalamon and Roman Kuhar

Translated from Slovenian by Dean Zagorac

Design, layout and cover design: Jasna Babić

Published by Peace Institute, Metelkova 6, 1000 Ljubljana

Ljubljana, 2023

First online edition

The monograph was published within the framework of the Peace Institute's research programme 'Equality and Human Rights in Times of Global Governance', P5-0413, funded by the Slovenian Research Agency (2020-2023), under contract no. 1000-20-03662; the research was carried out within the framework of three research projects: 'Hate Speech in Contemporary Conceptualisations of Nationalism, Racism, Gender and Migration' (no. J5-3102), funded by the Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS); 'Reducing and Eliminating Discrimination Based on Ethnicity, 'Race', Nationality and/or Religion' (no. V5-1915) co-funded by ARRS and the Advocate for the Principle of Equality; and 'National Integration Evaluation Mechanism - NIEM: Measuring and Improving the Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection' (No. PL/2015/AMIF/SA.1), funded by the European Commission under the AMIF fund.



The contents of this publication do not reflect the official opinion of the European Commission. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in this publication rests entirely with the Peace Institute.



This work is offered under licence Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0).

Kataložni zapis o publikaciji (CIP) pripravili v Narodni in univerzitetni knjižnici v Ljubljani

COBISS.SI-ID 147867651

ISBN 978-961-96019-4-5 (PDF)

Contents

Preface by Miha Lobnik, the Advocate of the Principle of Equality	ix
INTRODUCTION	1
DEFINITION	7
Defining Discrimination	7
Between Social Identity and Attributed Personal Circumstances	11
Terminology	15
The Terminology Quandary	18
THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK	25
The European Union Anti-Discrimination Framework	25
Equality Data	27
The Anti-Discrimination Framework in Slovenia	31
DATA	37
Models of Data Collection	37
Sources of Equality Data in Slovenia	40
The Official Data Sources	40
Survey Research	42
One-off Research	42
EXPERIENCE OF DISCRIMINATION	51
Sample and Finding the Respondents	52
Survey Measurement of Experiences with Discrimination	54
Ethnicity or Citizenship	56
Language	58
Religion	59
Skin Colour	60
Discrimination at Multiple Levels and by Areas	61
Action Against Discrimination	66
Conclusion	69

MEASURING DISCRIMINATION	73
Direct Discrimination Testing with Field Experiments	74
The Situation Testing Method	79
Situation Testing During the COVID-19 Epidemic	82
E-Mail Testing	84
Testing by Phone	86
Test Results by Life Areas	87
Work and Employment	88
Healthcare	92
Access to Goods and Services	94
Education	97
Conclusion	101
PERCEPTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF DISCRIMINATION	105
Qualitative Narratives Research	106
Interviewing During COVID-19	108
The Most Problematic Areas of Discrimination	111
Work and Employment	113
Healthcare	116
Access to Goods and Services	120
Administrative Procedures and State Services	125
Education	127
Hate and Discriminatory Speech	132
Consequences of Discrimination	135
Conclusion	139
CONCLUSION	141
References	147
Index	165
Review by Neža Kogovšek Šalamon	169
Review by Roman Kuhar	171

Graphs and tables

Graph 1:	Discrimination based on personal circumstances / 55
Graph 2:	Discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity or citizenship / 56
Graph 3:	Areas of discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity or citizenship, last 5 years / 57
Graph 4:	Areas of discrimination on the grounds of language, last 5 years / 58
Graph 5:	Discrimination on the grounds of religion / 59
Graph 6:	Areas of discrimination on the grounds of religion, last 5 years / 60
Graph 7:	Areas of discrimination on the grounds of skin colour, last 5 years / 61
Graph 8:	Areas of discrimination (total by category), last 5 years / 62
Graph 9:	Discrimination by areas of life / 64
Graph 10:	How people felt when they last experienced discrimination / 67
Graph 11:	Have you taken any of the following actions in the event of discrimination? / 68
Table 1:	Situation testing of access to the labour market #1 / 89
Table 2:	Situation testing of access to the labour market #2 / 91
Table 3:	Situation testing of access to a general practitioner #1 / 93
Table 4:	Situation testing of access to a general practitioner #2 / 94
Table 5:	Situation testing of access to housing #1 / 96
Table 6:	Situation testing of access to housing #2 / 97
Table 7:	Situation testing of access to education / 99
Table 8:	List of expert interviews / 109
Table 9:	List of interviews with people with migration experience / 110

Preface by Miha Lobnik, the Advocate of the Principle of Equality

The publication before us is a significant contribution to the understanding of the way of researching discrimination in society. It explains to the reader how crucial it is to get information directly from people about ways of exclusion and data about what they experience and how such experience affects their lives. Data, and above all, an understanding of their context, create the conditions in which we can plan measures to reduce such inequalities. This means that only a real understanding of the situation of discriminated social minorities makes it possible to understand when individual measures have been really successful in eliminating an unjust situation.

At the Advocate of the Principle of Equality, the independent state body for protection against discrimination, every year, we receive an increasing number of reports of discrimination. In 2018, we received approximately one hundred new cases for consideration, and in 2021, four hundred.

Data on complaints of discrimination at the Advocate are classified according to the personal circumstances that are the reason for the discrimination and the areas of social life where it occurs. An overview of the received cases is regularly published in the annual report. Nevertheless, based on these data, only a part of the picture is revealed on the situation in the area of discrimination in society.

Indeed, many who have experienced discrimination still do not decide to turn to the Advocate or any other institution for help. Many of those who are actually discriminated against are not even aware of how to successfully deal with it. Therefore, the Advocate strives to describe the extent of discrimination in Slovenia with the help of various other research. For example, every few years it conducts a representative public opinion survey on the state of discrimination in the country and other smaller surveys aimed at specific social groups. Among them, in the years 2020-2021, the Advocate also co-financed the targeted research project "Reducing and Eliminating Discrimination Based on Ethnicity, 'Race', Nationality and/or Religion", which is one of the bases for the creation of this book.

Assessing the actual extent of discrimination in society is undoubtedly challenging, but it is not insurmountable. To achieve this, we need a system of continuous data collection on equality, equal opportunities and equal treatment. Only based on the analysis and interpretation of this data can the

Government or the National Assembly (parliament) prepare measures that can improve the situation of vulnerable groups. Without adequate measurement, we also do not know whether the planned policies achieve the desired effects and results. Ultimately, however, regular monitoring allows us to determine when conditions for people have improved so much that special measures are no longer needed. It would be quite possible, for example, to obtain data on whether the level of educational attainment of Roma children increases with the current measures, but we do not yet have such data. In addition to the Advocate, various international monitoring mechanisms for the protection of human rights have been warning Slovenia about the need to collect data on equality, equal treatment and equal opportunities.

As we have stressed year after year, the collection of data in the country should be regulated systematically as this is the only way to ensure the continuous or periodic collection of official and comprehensive data which would provide an objective insight into the conditions, causes and trends of actual inequalities in society.

It always takes a certain level of courage for a society to face itself in a mirror. We might not like the image we see, and it may not be something we can easily fix. But no matter what we do, only a fresh look in the mirror can tell us if we have made a difference with our work. Therefore, we need as clean and clear mirrors of social reality as possible, and this book can be understood as a welcome contribution in such a process.

Miha Lobnik,
The Advocate of the Principle of Equality

Introduction

Why another book on discrimination? Is discrimination truly such an immense problem in Slovenia that it requires investigation? If we ask employers, they follow all the regulations and do not discriminate. If we ask educators, the Slovenian school system has built-in protection against discrimination, so the topic does not warrant special attention. If lessors were asked why they hesitate to rent out apartments to some people, they would answer that they have every right to decide who their tenant will be. However, research demonstrates an entirely different picture requiring exhaustive research and verification (see, for example, Brezigar 2005, 2017a; Komac and Medvešek 2005; Komac 2007; Kuhar 2009; Hrženjak and Jalušič 2011; Bajt 2021c). Discrimination in Slovenia is a problem affecting various areas of life and at least occasionally affecting each and every one of us. It means unequal treatment prohibited by law, which has no legitimate reason, as people are treated worse than others simply because of a particular personal circumstance. Several different definitions of discrimination exist, from general (social exclusion of individuals or groups) to legal (unequal treatment of an individual or group in relation to other persons and groups based on personal circumstances prohibited by law) and sociological definitions (a form of social practice, which stems from prejudices and stereotypes deeply rooted in the culture of individual society, resulting in formal or informal forms of segregation, marginalisation or social exclusion of individuals or groups).

In recent years, the question of discrimination has become increasingly important. In many countries, research indicates significant differences in the attributed ethnic or racial and religious affiliation of the population affecting several aspects of social and political life. For example, there are

disparities in educational attainment, personal income, access to housing, and particularly marked differences in the proportion of people detained and sentenced (see, for example, Kutateladze idr. 2014; Pettit in Gutierrez 2018). One possible interpretation of such differences is ethnic or racial discrimination. Sara Brezigar cites two reasons for paying close attention to ethnic discrimination, its manifestations and, above all, identifying its possible existence: (1) striving for “ethnically, racially and religiously” neutral mechanisms and procedures related to the processes and techniques of identifying potential terrorists; and (2) attention to the regulation of interethnic relations at the level of the European Union bodies, especially in the field of the labour market, where the reasons have a political and/or economical veneer, as labour diversification enables greater economic growth and, therefore, expected prosperity for all (Brezigar 2005: 169).

At the European level, there have been endeavours to address discrimination as a problematic phenomenon that must be prohibited by law since the 1950s, when the prohibition of discrimination based on gender in employment came into force. However, it was not until 2000 that two directives significantly expanded the scope of non-discrimination legislation in the European Union. The Employment Equality Directive thus prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion, age and disability in employment, and the Racial Equality Directive prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic origin in employment, as well as access to education, goods and services, welfare and social security system.

Applicable legal acts and guidelines require equality data that would credibly represent the factual situation in society. Namely, each of us has an assigned, as Roman Kuhar writes in his book on multifaceted and intersectional discrimination, gender, ethnicity or nationality, citizenship, skin colour, many also religion (2009: 11). In the context of the growing demand for evidence-based social policies, the issue of data collection on Europe’s immigrant and minority populations is also becoming increasingly important. “Both governments and civil society organizations demand information on the numbers and characteristics of migrant and minority groups in order to identify factors relating to their social and economic integration, to help expose discrimination, or to assess measures to combat it” (Wrench 2011: 1715).

In the Republic of Slovenia, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is guaranteed by the Constitution, according to which they shall be granted to everyone, irrespective of “national origin, race, sex, language, religion, political, or other conviction, material standing, birth, education,

social status, disability or any other personal circumstance. All are equal before the law” (URS 1991). In addition to the Constitution, several laws also protect against discrimination, especially the Protection against Discrimination Act (*Zakon o varstvu pred diskriminacijo – ZVarD*), and incitement to discrimination is punishable under the Criminal Code (*Kazenski zakonik – KZ-1*). In 2016, the institution of the Advocate of the Principle of Equality was established as an independent state body, which was set up to promote equal treatment and ensure protection against discrimination. A decade before that, such onerous function had been performed by a single person within the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities as the Advocate of the Principle of Equality had already been established in 2005 on the basis of the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act (*Zakon o uresničevanju načela enakega obravnavanja – ZUNEO*). Therefore, the Advocate is now an independent state body also providing information, advice and advocacy. It should be noted that any injustice that we may perceive as impermissible is not necessarily discrimination as defined by law, and one of the tasks of the Advocate is to investigate this in formal proceedings and determine the existence of unequal treatment.

Despite the above legal bases, research data show that the extent of discrimination in Slovenia is problematic (Komac and Medvešek 2005; Komac 2007; Kuhar 2009; Švab et al. 2008; Hrženjak and Jalušič 2011; Brezigar 2017a; Advocate of the Principle of Equality 2018, 2021; Bajt 2021c). Researchers also stress the lack of data on discrimination, making it impossible to draw clear conclusions about the extent of the phenomenon, as discrimination in Slovenia can be inferred mainly from existing statistics, which are insufficient, or pilot qualitative research with limited scope. Therefore, there is a lack of transparent, disaggregated and credible data on the existence of discrimination, as there are almost no proven cases of discrimination. To deal with discrimination effectively, we need research data where, as many international and European research and organisations stress, the lack of up-to-date information makes it particularly challenging to identify groups and individuals subject to discrimination. For example, the reports for Slovenia highlight Roma, the erased and minorities from the former Yugoslavia, as well as refugees, undoubtedly indicating that the area of discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion is one of the most relevant and sensitive issues for Slovenia. As a result, the formulation of appropriate policies, which should be based on data, has been curtailed and sometimes even prevented, as due to the Personal Data Protection Act (*Zakon o varovanju osebnih podatkov – ZVOP-1*), persistent hesitation exists on the

part of the authorities regarding the collection of disaggregated equality data on vulnerable groups (see, for example, Advocate of the Principle of Equality 2021; ECRI 2022a).

The present publication, therefore, stems from the need to collect just such data, namely to address the issue of “measuring” discrimination in Slovenia beyond official statistics. In this sense, it is breaking new ground in the application of the new methodology of audit studies or situation testing, applied in addition to a systematic review of the existing situation and the implementation of classical research with the help of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. I strive to answer the practical question of whether discrimination exists in Slovenia on the grounds of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality or religion, and which social groups or individuals are the most affected. In addition, I am guided by an additional research question: in which areas of life and in which life situations do people most often experience discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality or religion. Namely, the Constitution lists the personal circumstances of “national origin”, “race”, “language” and “religion”, which, for the sake of simplicity, I refer to as “ethnic discrimination”. The listed personal circumstances are highlighted for two reasons: (1) there is considerable conceptual confusion where ethnic and racial discrimination are often considered together; (2) ethnicity and ethnic origin are understood, measured and treated differently by the applicable regulations and official institutions, often in close connection with “race”, culture, language, etc. The inclusion of several different personal circumstances of “ethnicity”, “race”, “language”, “religion” and also “nationality” or citizenship was, therefore, a deliberate decision. Indeed, in a context where these statistics are not systematically collected, the process of measuring ethnic discrimination is only possible by including several different dimensions that intersect in the understanding of ascribed or experienced ethnicity. Therefore, this volume focuses not only on ethnicity but also on skin colour, religion or “religious affiliation” and nationality. In doing so, it follows the findings of international research that often considers ethnic, religious and national group affiliations together in the context of perceived ethnic discrimination, which is particularly revealing in the case of immigrant and Muslim minorities (see, for example, Maes and Stevens 2014; Ysseldyk et al. 2014; Di Stasio et al. 2021).

The book is composed of six parts. Part one first defines discrimination and breaks down the terminology used by official data sources. As there is often conceptual confusion and a gap in the understanding of statistical categories and attributed minority identities, I also discuss the topic of classification and the processes of social (self)categorisation. Part two

provides an overview of the current anti-discrimination framework both within the European Union and Slovenia. It is a sociological view, not a legal analysis. In part three, the book critically evaluates the prevailing data collection methods and presents the international literature on the methodology for measuring ethnic and racial discrimination. It also presents the existing research in collecting data on ethnic discrimination in Slovenia. Parts four, five and six present the latest data on discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion. I draw most of the data from empirical research conducted in 2021 and 2022. Part four discusses the experiences of discrimination, which were gathered through an online survey. The results are presented by the most relevant areas, with the addition of the respondents’ reports on how they acted and felt when they experienced unequal treatment. Part five takes on the core issue of measuring discrimination by way of a direct field experiment using the method of the so-called situation testing. The results are presented separately according to four areas of life, which coincide with the definitions of the Racial Equality Directive, and whose relevance is also confirmed by the literature: work and employment, social and health care, access to goods and services, and education and training. Part six situates experiences of discrimination and its possible causes in the field of intergroup relations, prejudice and hate speech, illustrated by interviews with professionals and people who have experienced discrimination. It also addresses the issue of the consequences of discrimination. In conclusion, the book summarises the results of the research and offers reflections on the methods used and their usefulness for researching and measuring ethnic discrimination.

*

The book is based on three projects. The majority of data is derived from the empirical research *Reducing and Eliminating Discrimination Based on Ethnicity, “Race”, Nationality and/or Religion* (hereinafter as *Reducing Discrimination*) funded by the Advocate of the Principle of Equality and the Slovenian Research Agency, and the project *National Integration Evaluation Mechanism – NIEM: Measuring and Improving the Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection* (hereinafter as *NIEM*) funded by the European Commission under the AMIF Fund. The theoretical starting points are part of the project *Hate Speech in Contemporary Conceptualisations of Nationalism, Racism, Gender and Migration* funded by the Slovenian Research Agency.

I would like to thank Saša Panić and Ajda Šulc for their invaluable help in data collection and analysis, and Jernej Berzelak for methodological considerations. The field research would not have been possible without the generous commitment of my colleagues at the Peace Institute, whom I would like to publicly thank for their dedicated work and joint reflections on the research of discrimination (listed in alphabetical order): Alaa Alali, Wafaa Alburai, Vlasta Jalušič, Iztok Šori, Iza Thaler and Lana Zdravković. I would like to thank Dragana Galić, Sara Lucu and Anna Pitkänen for their always welcome additional help and Maja Ladić for her encouragement. The excellent mutual cooperation that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have cultivated for many years is also invaluable. Namely, access to direct experiences of vulnerable and marginalised groups is often easier when facilitated by experts and activists who are in daily contact with them. I wish to note that invaluable assistance was provided by Nina Arnuš from the Škofja Loka Zavod tri, Mirna Buić from Koper's PiNA, and above all Manca Vernik Šetinc from the Humanitas association, where the first telephone situation testing in Slovenia in the field of access to housing was carried out. I am grateful to Manca for sharing with me the experience of conducting discrimination testing. Personal experience is a precious data source, so in addition to those explicitly mentioned, I would also like to express my gratitude to all the people who participated in the online survey or interviews. Without their cooperation, research on discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality, and religion would have been severely curtailed, if not entirely impossible.

1

DEFINITIONS

Defining Discrimination

Literature defines discrimination in several different ways. Undoubtedly, it can be described as unequal treatment or inappropriate and impermissible differentiation and separation. It is a concept most commonly defined in national legislation prescribing the conditions required for equal treatment and, as such, falls within the scope of the law. Discrimination as unequal treatment of individuals and specific groups is prohibited by law (in Slovenia, this area is codified primarily—but not exclusively—in the Protection against Discrimination Act, *Zakon o varstvu pred diskriminacijo – ZVarD*). It is the unequal or less favourable treatment of a person (i.e. a different treatment that is less favourable) taking place on the grounds of a personal circumstance. The Act defines various forms of discrimination and regulates the criteria and areas for which it is prohibited and punishable by law.

In addition, the term discrimination is also one of the most commonly used in discussions on human rights, inequality and the protection of minorities (Kuhar 2009: 13). “Discrimination is any discrimination, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or actual effect of preventing or depriving anyone of the equal recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms.” (Murgel 2007: 11). Discrimination is “any practice that prevents certain individuals or groups from enjoying their rights and

freedoms and, compared to other members of a particular political or social entity, puts them at a disadvantage and pushes them to the margins of society physically or symbolically” (Kuhar 2009: 15).

Neža Kogovšek and Brankica Petković emphasise that the concept of discrimination is frequently used to denote any violation of rights, which is incorrect. Namely, discrimination is a “violation of a specific right, i.e. the right to equal treatment in all areas, such as employment, education, access to goods and such” (Kogovšek and Petković 2007: 11). Events that we perceive as impermissible or unfair are often labelled as discrimination. However, not every injustice is necessarily discrimination, as three conditions must be met to recognise (and acknowledge) discrimination: (1) unjustified unequal treatment, the aim or consequence of which is the unequal exercise of human rights, other rights, legal interests and benefits (poor treatment, unfavourable treatment); (2) the reason for the poor treatment is a personal circumstance (for example, ethnicity, skin colour); (3) unequal treatment occurs in an area in which it is prohibited by law. These are all areas of social life (employment, social services, and education), except private relationships between people.

The social science literature uses this term rather frequently without an express definition (see, for example, Silberman et al. 2007; Simon 2012), based on the implicit premise that discrimination is unequal treatment. When providing definitions, it often defines more precisely, depending on the subject matter of the research, whether it deals with ethnic, racial or some other type of discrimination. For example, in a monograph measuring racial discrimination, Blank, Dabady and Citro present a broad social science definition of racial discrimination, which includes two key elements: “(1) *differential treatment on the basis of race* that disadvantages a racial group and (2) *treatment on the basis of inadequately justified factors other than race* that disadvantages a racial group (differential effect)” (2004: 39, emphasis in original). Their understanding of discrimination encompasses legal definitions of discrimination, but they note that the legal dimension should not limit research in the social sciences. This is because not all forms of discrimination—especially the subtle forms—can be easily measured or fall within the scope of illegal activities (ibid.: 41).

Robert T. Carter and Alex L. Pieterse (2020: 40) use the terms racism and racial discrimination to summarise the various terms used by researchers (for example *perceived racial discrimination*, *ethnic discrimination*, *self-reported discrimination*, *perceived racism* and *race-related stress*). The present publication summarises the breadth of this definition, as it is important for the sociological treatment of discrimination to include the personal experiences of people who face discrimination. The

term *perceived discrimination*, namely, is the subjective self-assessment of experiencing barriers when accessing any aspect of social life, attributing these barriers to a discriminatory act or structure in the social environment—whether or not this attribution is actually correct (Lindemann and Stolz 2020: 3).

In addition to definitions of racial discrimination, there are also many definitions of ethnic discrimination. “Ethnic discrimination refers to the adverse treatment of people because of their ethnic or racial origin” (Verhaeghe and De Coninck 2021: 1). We see that the connection between ethnic and racial discrimination is significant and that some authors do not differentiate between the two concepts. Simultaneously, the terminology is often applied without further explaining the meaning of individual concepts used in the definitions. “Ethnic discrimination can be understood as a different and, as a rule, less favourable treatment of a member of a certain ethnic community due to their ethnicity. It occurs in all areas of a person’s life, for example in finding a job, in the working environment, in housing and in access to a wide range of services, including healthcare” (Brezigar 2017: 74).

From the outset of the research on discrimination, it has been stressed in the literature that it is difficult to find evidence of discrimination, as it must be demonstrated that individuals or groups are treated unequally on the grounds of specific (for example ethnic, racial, national, religious) characteristics, rather than on the basis of criteria generally applied in a particular society. At the same time, general criteria applied equally to everyone, regardless of personal circumstances, can also have a discriminatory effect. Thus, although case studies indicate that immigrants in particular suffer from discriminatory practices based on the colour of their skin, it is difficult to assess the overall extent of discrimination or its effects in terms of inequality based on local and case studies (Prandy 1979: 66). Discrimination based on various personal circumstances can be present as institutionalised, that is systemic discrimination, and as discrimination at the level of practising active citizenship (Švab et al. 2008; Kuhar 2009). Systemic discrimination is evident either from the absence of specific policies and legislation or from explicit or implicit mechanisms of exclusion and marginalisation based on personal circumstances when persons are often excluded from equal citizenship as active participation in society (Švab 2008).

In the present publication, I am mainly interested in factual data on the extent to which discrimination is actually present in Slovenia, so it is important to stress that the definition covers both individual and institutional practices. Based on a review of existing diverse theories of

discrimination, Blank, Dabady, and Citro (2004) break down the discrimination types into four main categories, which further guide the determination of appropriate research methods. The first category is intentional and explicit discrimination, including verbal antagonism, avoidance, segregation, physical attacks and extermination. Within these steps, each enables the next. The second category is a subtle, unconscious and automatic form of discrimination. Although these forms of discrimination are often more difficult to understand or recognise as more “obvious,” “subtle” does not mean insignificant. The third category includes statistical discrimination and profiling, where it is assumed that the perceived characteristics of a group also apply to the individual of the very same group. The fourth category includes embedded organisational processes of discrimination, often called structural discrimination (Blank et al. 2004: 55–64). Blank and colleagues also criticise the prevailing debates, which treat discrimination as a phenomenon that occurs at a particular time and place. Instead of such an episodic view, they suggest that discrimination be seen as a more dynamic and cumulative process (ibid.: 68–69).

Simultaneously, the important effects of prior experiences of discrimination, which can be overlooked by experimental methods and surveys, should be emphasised. The interview method can also better address the cumulative impact of social distance, prejudice and discrimination over time, as well as the interaction between the effects of discrimination occurring in one area and at a particular time and events occurring in other areas and at different times. Very little research focuses on the so-called cumulative discrimination, which Blank and colleagues strive to conceptualise in four points:

1. It is a dynamic concept encompassing systematic processes occurring over time and in different areas. Two typical examples are the influence of slavery in the USA and the segregation of the Roma community in Slovenia, which negatively affect the accumulation of property for future generations within this population group in the first case and resistance to the employment of members of this community in the second case;

2. Focusing on episodic discrimination can provide minimal information on the effect of dynamic, cumulative discrimination. Although episodic cases of unequal treatment are small and their effects appear weak, they accumulate throughout life into significant and actual negative consequences of discrimination;

3. Legal standards fail to address this type of discrimination adequately. In legal terms, discrimination is understood as an event that occurs at a specific time and place rather than as an ongoing process, eventually

resulting in cumulative disadvantage. It usually focuses only on different treatment standards in the current situation, and very little importance is attached to prior discriminatory behaviours and practices that have affected previous generations, other areas, or past experiences. Therefore, the concept of cumulative discrimination is not addressed directly by present legal definitions of discrimination;

4. Cumulative discrimination can be transmitted through organisational and social structures. For example, policies and processes that cause inequalities in the housing and labour markets can also lead to disparities in education. Prolonged discrimination and social disadvantage can further push marginalised groups into life decisions in accordance with biased conditions that limit their life prospects and future opportunities (summarised after Blank et al. 2004: 225–227).

In this book, discrimination is considered as unequal treatment on the intersection of at least three additional dimensions: as perceived discrimination, as cumulative discrimination and as a dynamic process, in addition to the prevailing episodic perspective. Chapter 4 focuses on perceived discrimination, Chapter 5 deals with the dominant episodic view of unequal treatment, and Chapter 6 combines a view of discrimination as a dynamic and cumulative process.

Between Social Identity and Attributed Personal Circumstances

In the last quarter of the 20th century, many events and social changes profoundly affected ethnic, racial, national and religious relations around the globe. In the United States, changes in attitudes toward different ethnic and religious groups have been measured by a scale of social distance known by its author as the Bogardus scale (Bogardus 1947). The Bogardus scale measures the distance between social or ethnic groups. The original study, developed around 1920, measured the degree of acceptance Americans feel toward members of the most common ethnic (minority) groups in the United States. It was carried out five times between 1920 and 1977, with very little change in the original research design. In recent years, a new generation of researchers has been working on updating and reusing this social distance measurement scale. For example, Parillo and Donoghue (2005) collected a random sample of 2,916 male and female students following previous iterations and used a social distance scale as a questionnaire. Their findings indicate that the average level of social

distance between all ethnic groups has decreased since 1977. Their study also showed that gender, ethnicity and “race” are important indicators of the level of social distance towards all groups. In Slovenia, too, research uses the concept of social distance, which establishes, for example, an individual’s willingness to let a particular group of people into their work, neighbourhood or family circle, or adapted as a concrete ethnic distance towards immigrants (Zavratnik 2013; Medvešek et al. 2022).

As Walter Lippmann once wrote, introducing the term stereotype into social psychology in 1922: “For the most part we do not first see, and then define, we define first and then see” (Augoustinos and Walker 1996: 209). The research on ethnic or racial discrimination is always contextualised. Individuals and groups constantly attribute different qualities to themselves and others. We are indeed all human beings, but we are incessantly categorising other people and self-categorising ourselves. Such typification is often used when contact arises between “us” and “foreigners”. Others have historically differed in appearance, hair colour, skin colour, language, dress code, etc. (Musek 1994). By distinguishing ourselves from others, however, we define ourselves. This means that identity is not straightforward but must always be discovered and known. Social identity is a characteristic or property of people as social beings (Jenkins 1996). *Identitas* from Latin *idem*, which means “the same,” encompasses two concepts. The first means absolute sameness, and the second is diversity, which presupposes consistency or continuity over time. The notion of identity thus simultaneously establishes two possible relations of comparison between persons or things: similarity (between us) on the one hand and difference (from them) on the other (ibid.: 16–17).

In his research on multifaceted and intersectional discrimination, Roman Kuhar writes about discrimination as a response to a stigmatised identity (2009: 81). The present publication deals with the phenomenon of discrimination according to selected personal circumstances of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion, which are defined in the Slovenian Constitution and other official acts. As such, they are protected from discrimination and, therefore, understood essentially as given, real and living identities of individuals and social groups. Unquestionably, real life is much more complex and cannot be so easily categorised and straightforwardly separated. Our group affiliations are many. They can be mixed, fluid and dialogical, as the question “Who am I?” becomes relevant only in contact with the Other. But just as caution applies in the still ingrained understanding of ethnicity, for example, as *Blut-und-Boden* given, by birth, even biology, even newer approaches to “hybridity” may inadvertently overshadow existing cultural hierarchies and hegemonic

practices. This is pointed out by Floya Anthias (2001), who shows that approaches believing that hybrid social forms result from interculturalism see in them the ability to transcend “old ethnicities”. Anthias agrees that hybridity signifies a notable development that challenges static and essentialist notions of ethnicity and identity but simultaneously brings conceptual and substantive problems, especially at the point where it is expected to represent transgressive cultural formations. Therefore, the basis for addressing “identities” outside the parameters of old ethnic groups is reshaped and a new concept of “translocational” positionality is developed, which she proposes as more appropriate for addressing the issues of affiliation raised by the notion of hybridity. Mojca Pajnik (2011) also questions the validity of the notion of multiple or hybrid identities and points out that such conceptualisation can recreate migrants as Others. Feelings of belonging are not abstract but always “situated and contextualised experiences, while betting on ‘positive’ identities can act as a mask for structural inequalities” (Pajnik 2011: 111).

In the 1990s, the essentialist, limited understanding of culture that defines belonging to an ethnonational community became an established part of everyday life and politics, which in turn justified the exclusion of immigrants and other minorities in Western societies. Simultaneously, academic discussions lack a more detailed analysis of what Dahinden and Korteweg call “culture-as-defining-attribute” (2022), showing that in/visibilisation of power relations is a missing link in current analyses of culture and exclusion.

Among the most persistent criticisms of identity politics in both the academic and political spheres is precisely that they are prone to essentialism, saying that instead of understanding themselves as a collection of heterogeneous and multiple identities, people are encouraged to choose one of their characteristics and join a social movement. Theoretical critiques of identity politics, therefore, argue that identities are social constructions marked by the oppressive conditions that had created them and thus should not be attributed such significance. For instance, also Michael Banton argues that a focus on racial discrimination is a misdirection of efforts for greater equality, as not only does such a definition of discrimination imply very narrow parameters within which competent authorities can deal with discrimination, but it also unwittingly extends the very same logic of racial discrimination that it wants to eradicate (Banton 2002). Vlasta Jalušič also stresses contemporary “racism without race” or “cultural racism” and draws attention to the problematic nature of the lack of political responsibility in the anti-racist policies of the European Union (Jalušič 2015). But for Linda Martín Alcoff and co-authors, identities are a

considerable epistemic resource. They understand identities as real and experiences as epistemically crucial (Martín Alcoff et al. 2006). In research on discrimination, identities must undoubtedly be considered valid at some point, mainly due to the importance of experiences of discrimination reported by individuals or groups. It is possible to use a realistic view of identity, which stresses that the “personal experience” itself is always “socially and theoretically constructed” and that it is in this mediated way that it brings knowledge (Mohanty 1993: 45). The answer to the problems of essentialism on the one hand and anti-essentialism on the other is, therefore, sought by Martín Alcoff and colleagues in new, alternative formulations of identity, i.e. in “post-positivist realism” (Martín Alcoff et al. 2006). Defined as a “method of philosophical, cultural, and literary interpretation” that places “identity” in both a “radical universalist” and a “multiculturalist” view of the world (ibid.: 154–155), it understands identity as both socially constructed and substantively real.

Theories of globalisation, which presupposed the loss of influence of narrowly defined and limiting particular identities, are also increasingly challenged, as are theories of nationalism, which naively expected the end of nationalist particularisms after the creation of the nation-state (Lechner and Boli 2004; Smith 1998). The world is being shaken by the rise of radical movements, while states themselves perpetuate the exclusionary dualisms inherent in welfare state policies, citizenship policies, or migration “management” policies (Bajt 2019). Ulrich Beck (1994) believed that individual identities (for example, ethnic and gender) are losing meaning because they can be rather limiting to people in the global world. Along with the increasing permeation and mixing of material goods, ideas and people that accompany globalisation, there is also a growing individualisation. Traditional territorial identities are increasingly being replaced by various new localisms. People are more attached to their specific lifestyle than to their general ideological affiliation. Namely, the social identity of an individual is related to the groups to which he or she belongs. Each and every one of us is a member of many social groups, from which more or less important social identities arise. Phenomenologists, for instance, believed that all our activities involve a typification process. Schutz’s everyday life world derives from Husserl’s insights into the typicality of the world. However, he believed there is an internally coherent rounded structure of performances in which people are recognisable as types and, according to this structure of types, also act with each other in interactions (see, for example, Ule et al. 2018).

Thus, when we research discrimination based on ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion, we start from the assumption that such identities

or categorisations exist, that they are recognised as such and that they have some impact on people. Namely, we are constantly “categorised and placed under different group common denominators and common names” (Hrženjak and Jalušič 2011: 12). Therefore, the research of discrimination must be based on such typifications, as “clarity and simplicity” are the key to understanding complex social phenomena (Kuhar 2009: 11). This is particularly important for public policies and the legal aspects of unequal treatment, as legal instruments mainly focus on one-dimensional forms of discrimination, and public policies themselves create “categorisations that are usually statistically and professionally supported and thus form the basis for action” (Hrženjak and Jalušič 2011: 12; Kuhar 2009: 10).

Terminology

In the introduction, I stated why the field of discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion is one of the most relevant and sensitive issues for Slovenia. Other areas of discrimination are equally important, but in this publication, I pay attention to the mentioned personal circumstances and thus also indirectly address the problem of reduced opportunities for formulating appropriate policies based on reliable data. A significant shortcoming in the research sphere is the lack of comparable statistics. To determine the share of certain social groups in the population, in addition to longitudinal measurements and data collection, a clear definition of the terminology is by all means necessary. This challenge is particularly significant in the personal circumstances under consideration, as the professional literature often fails to agree on the definitions entirely.

A classic example is terminological questions regarding different definitions of immigration. Until the 2011 Census, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia used the actual place of birth as it was available in the Central Population Register. The 2011 Census introduced the concept of the first residence (mother’s residence at the person’s birth), which used as a source of data the 2002 Census, data on immigrants in the period between the censuses, and data on births between the censuses. Problems arose due to the successor states of the former Yugoslavia because, in the data sources, there were still old data before the emergence of the new states in the area. The Statistical Office also followed the practice of Norway, the Netherlands and Denmark, who derive data on the population with foreign background from registries. However, each of these countries has some specificities and different terms and methodologies, often related

also to citizenship (SURS 2013). The phrase “residents with first residence abroad” later began being used as a better option, whereas the term “immigrants from abroad”, which is established and used in regular annual statistics on international migration, does not refer exclusively to first immigration but also returnees and may, therefore, be misinterpreted. The answer to a seemingly simple question about the share and demographic structure of the immigrant population in Slovenia had therefore just a few years ago meant a very time-consuming search in several different registers and comparing data from several different institutions or ministries.

A brief remark should be added: in the choice of terminology, the book follows official sources where this seems reasonable, although the use of the words “migrants” or “refugees” is never without certain connotations, but I will not address this terminological issue here (for more, see, for example, Bajt 2019: 308; Hamlin 2021). Also, in terms of the personal circumstances that I at least mention when quoting various EU directives and applicable legislation, the word “disabled” is also problematic. The least challenging is understanding the word “religion”, which the Dictionary of the Slovene Literary Language defines as the awareness of the existence of a god or supernatural forces, and its synonym is faith. But even religion is actually difficult to define, emphasises, for example, Giddens, who points out that it is a set of symbols that evoke feelings of respect and are associated with rituals and ceremonies that unite the community of believers (1993: 458). In addition to the word “religion”, which is closer to sociological understanding, the terms “religious affiliation”, “faith” and “belief” are also used in statistics and official documents—this is especially typical for anti-discrimination legislation. The aim is only to identify and measure discrimination based on the personal circumstance of religion, but not to research religiosity or the (self)definition of religious communities, so let this note suffice.

Much more problematic is the use of the word “race,” which hints at the existence of different races in terms of the hierarchy of human groups. Everyday, political and administrative interchangeability and ambiguity in the use of the terms “ethnicity” and “race” also contribute to terminological confusion. The historical use and legacy of otherwise discredited theories of the division of humanity into fundamentally different “types” with individual physical or visual differences continues to convey the idea that groups of people are biologically different (see, for example, Bulmer and Solomos, 1999; Fenton 1999; Back and Solomos 2005). Here, therefore, it seems reasonable to stress that all humans belong to a single species (for

more, see, for example, DeSalle and Tattersall 2018). The term “race”, which is often part of anti-discrimination legislation, is also increasingly problematised in various policy-making documents, as can be seen in the trend to use the term in quotation marks (see, for example, ECRI 2022b: 11). Although I try to avoid using the word “race” in the book by substituting it with “skin colour” or using quotation marks, this does not negate the fact that racism and racialisation have real consequences for people classified as different along the “racial” dimension – regardless of their actual feelings of identity. In fact, the term “race” can have very different and, at the same time, contested meanings, so it must be understood in each historical and social context in which it appears.

Precisely because of the awareness of the importance of terminological clarity, as I discuss a total of four dimensions in this publication—ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion—I pay some additional attention to the selected concepts here. There are two critical reasons for this: on the one hand, these are concepts that frequently overlap or are used in practice as synonyms, and on the other hand, treatment based on these personal circumstances is often multiple and intersectional discrimination. International literature most frequently speaks of racial or ethnic discrimination, which indicates a vague distinction between the terms “race” and “ethnicity”, ethnic group or “ethny”. The decline of the sociological idea of “racial relations” was also irreversible due to the analytical ambiguity of the term “race”, which assumes that there are inevitably different peoples among whom relations are fundamentally problematic. The terms “ethnicity”, “ethnic group” and “ethnic relations” avoid the invalidity of the term “race”, but are themselves flawed due to the assumption that there is a special type of relationship in which ethnic emotions predominate (Fenton 1999: ix).

In Slovenia, ethnicity or ethnic group is discussed mainly in the anthropological literature, in which, more broadly, the focus was primarily on the concept of culture (Repič 2002), which is also not analysed in detail in this volume. In addition, quite a few studies deal with the ethnic question and minority issues (see, for example, Šumi 2000a, 2006; Klopčič 2009) and citizenship research (see, for example, Deželan 2010, 2012; Pajnik 2011a). There is almost no research specifically on religious affiliation (Črnič et al. 2013), and even scarcer are studies discussing ethnicity, citizenship or nationality and religion at the intersection (Bajt 2008, 2011; Kuhar and Pajnik 2022). The purpose of this publication is not to explore these concepts, so the following is only a general overview of the most widespread use of some terms that are important for further addressing discrimination based on ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion. The

most important thing for analysing ethnic discrimination is in which identities people recognise themselves or are recognised.

The Terminology Quandary

The original Greek meaning of the word *ethnos* (people) denoted a fundamental human group, not a subgroup. *Ethnikos* denoted the Others, the faithless, the pagans (Eriksen 1996: 28). And yet the word “ethnic” is used by many authors in terms of linguistic, cultural, religious, or some other minority. Researchers who worked on global comparative studies showed a greater willingness to understand ethnicity in its original meaning (affiliation based on subjective belief in a common origin, ancestors). “Ethnicity means a common ancestry that is either real or presumed, but even in the second case, the myth must be confirmed by several generations who have a common history,” says Pierre L. van den Berghe (1991: 81).

There are two currents in ethnicity research. The first understands ethnicity as something given—following the idea that the state we live in cannot be changed. Anthony D. Smith describes followers of this definition as primordialists. The second current—according to Smith, the Heraclitans—believes that ethnicity itself has become a very changeable and insignificant item (Smith 1991). Primordialists argue that ethnic ties are lasting and that ethnicity is one of those things that recur over different periods of history. There has never been a period in human history when ethnicity has completely disappeared. “Only when we begin to study ethnicity in terms of ethnic myths, symbols, memories and values can we understand the dynamic and expressive nature of ethnic identity and the reason for its long-term impact on human affairs, regardless of whether its content and meaning change” (ibid.: 55). The view that ethnicity is a deep-rooted connection, often labelled primordialist, was first developed by Max Weber. He did not distinguish an ethnic group from a nation, although he stressed that a sense of ethnic solidarity in itself does not make a nation yet. Awareness of ethnic solidarity appears much earlier. The nation is thus a kind of “self-confident ethnic group” (Rizman 1991: 18). The nation recognises itself as such, whereas the ethnic group still needs external Others to distinguish itself from them.

In contrast to the primordialist conception of ethnicity, the “instrumentalist” conception considers it to be something manipulable, changeable, situational and subjective. The leading representative of this

belief is the Norwegian anthropologist Fredrik Barth, and his definition of ethnicity is considered classic (see, for example, Barth 1996). He defined ethnicity subjectively as anything that the “natives” just say it is. He does not assume the solid essence of the group, but is interested in the perception of its members that distinguishes them from other groups (van den Berghe 1991: 83; Armstrong 1991: 41). Barth’s approach implies that “groups do not define themselves by reference to their own characteristics, but by exclusion, that is, by comparison with ‘foreigners’” (Armstrong 1991: 42). Emotions of group identity are exclusive. It depends on the characteristics that the group attributes to others how it will understand itself. Anthropological historians and linguists also mention definition through exclusion.

There is a universal consensus in the scientific community on the decisive position of the 1969 book *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, edited by Fredrik Barth. The general agreement is that this monograph has the status of a founding work, which developed the theoretical paradigm and model of ethnic groups on which the study of ethnicity is based to this day. A recent study, however, argues that this is not the case, as Barth and co-authors merely relied on the previous work of researchers who had published before. Marek Jakoubek (2022) alerts that the theoretical views proposed by Barth and his collaborators in the famous book were not new at all, nor were they considered new by their contemporaries. The *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* was given the status of a turning point, which only later established a new era in the anthropological study of ethnicity—not because of the results that it actually produced, but above all because of the claims made by its editor, Fredrik Barth, in his famous “Introduction” about the contribution of this work to the study of ethnic identity. This conceptualisation of the history of ethnic studies was gradually adopted owing to the enormous influence of Barth’s book, and the results of all the work previously done in the field of ethnic studies have been captured in amnesia that continues to this day (Jakoubek 2022). I make this perhaps seemingly irrelevant remark because of the importance of socio-historical contextualisation for the development of scientific conceptualisations. In an insightful study of the interplay of political power with certain academic positions, Irena Šumi, for example, points out:

“in a way that in some places is a caricature of the Western discourse, the use of terminology in Slovenian minority studies has become established, which simply equates analytical categories, e.g. ‘ethnic groups’ (and even ‘ethnos/ethnie’), ‘ethnic borders’ and ‘ethnic

identity', with the concepts of 'national minority', '(unjust) state border' and 'national consciousness' and also uses them synonymously; the whole issue, the nationality or minority question, was, as said, equated with ethnic studies" (Šumi 2000b: 267).

We can talk about ethnicity when there is at least minimal contact between members of groups (Eriksen 1996). Ethnicity is relational and situational and refers to "the enduring relationship between more or less bounded groups or social categories that perceive themselves as being culturally different from each other" (Eriksen 2012: 1). In everyday use, instead of the terms *ethnie*, *ethny*, *ethnic group* and *ethnicity*, the terms *people* or *nation* or *nationality* are also used, some of which are defined by the Slovenian Constitution as personal circumstances (URS 1991). Here again, we run into the problem of understanding. Nationality is a term that has been appearing in Slovenian language since at least the 19th century when it appeared in connection with the national consciousness and the Slovenian language (see, for example, Cerjak 1899). Nationality, therefore, means belonging to a nation—although, for example, Kovačič defines this word as a national minority within a state (2005: 215). As Kržišnik Bukič writes, "the term *ethnos*" can, therefore, also be a broader concept in terms of content, which is "limited to that potential cultural substance that, under certain social circumstances, develops into a social given, i.e. a long-lasting social phenomenon that we call a nation" (2007: 112).

One of the key theorists of nationalism, Anthony D. Smith, who called himself an "ethnosymbolist", was primarily interested in the analysis of the origins and genealogy of nations. He emphasised the concept of *ethnie* (taken from French and introduced as such into English) and focused on studying "the differences and similarities between modern national units and sentiments and the collective cultural units and sentiments of previous eras, those that I shall term *ethnie*" (Smith 1986: 13, emphasis in original). He saw the difference between *ethnies* and nations in the fact that a delimited territory, a unified legal and economic system, and public culture are elements that nations have, but *ethnies* lack (Smith 1998: 196). For Smith, *ethnies* are cultural groups much older than nations, on which the nations are based. They serve as pre-existing boundaries for the modern nations forming within them. Smith's emphasis on the importance of ethnicity is a response to the modernist approach that has become broadly accepted in recent decades: "Everyone agrees that nations are historically formed constructs" (Brubaker 1999: 15). For the present publication, it is sufficient to conclude that ethnicity is a categorisation or (attributed) identity that defines an individual social group based on a presumed common culture and usually also language.

Rudi Rizman (1991), the editor of the first collection of papers on ethnonationalism in Slovenia and an important co-creator of the academic interpretation of the phenomenon of nationalism, stresses the importance of distinguishing between the concepts. Nation, namely, can be understood as a cultural (ethnic) and/or political (civic) "imagined" community (cf. Anderson 1991). Due to a historic lack of independent statehood, the Slovenian national experience has traditionally been connected to the so-called ethnic, cultural form of nationhood (Sl. *narod*). The absence of statehood in the Slovenian case resulted in the accentuation of cultural elements, reflected in etymologically different terms *nacija* and *narod* that both translate to "nation". Kovačič (2005: 220–221) states that both *nacija* and *narod* are "collective identities" but have different criteria for the inclusion of members. In *nacija* "the criterion for inclusion is formal and can be legally regulated", while for *narod* different supposedly objective criteria are important, for example, language and common culture (for more, see Bajt 2010).

In Slovenian language, we find ourselves facing an additional dilemma of distinguishing between the ethnic group and the nation in the sense of *narod*, as the theories of nationalism, the publications of which predominate in Anglo-Saxon languages, distinguish merely between *ethnie* and nation. Smith's *ethnie* could be perceived as *narod*, a social group convinced of its specific cultural identity, however not yet expressing a claim for a separate statehood. The term *nacija* is related to the state, the political dimension of nationalism and the time period of modernity. For example, in English, there is no clear distinction between nation and modern nation-state, which reflects the historical experience of nation-building that followed the territorial, political principle. For what is usually called *narod* in Slovenian, less often ethnic group, the French word *ethnie* (or its English version *ethny*) is most often used in international literature (see Smith 1986; van den Berghe 1987). Yet other languages, such as German, differentiate between compound words *Staatsnation* and *Kulturnation* (see, for example, Meinecke 1970), as well as *Volksnation*, which is supposed to mean community cohesion based on myths of common origin. *Kulturnation* is an expression of imagining a particular community through the myth of a common culture. However, *Staatsnation* is based on citizenship (Yuval-Davis 2000). This difference is also of basic importance in Slovenian language, which contains several terms for describing group affiliation: "people", "*etniija*", "nation" (both *narod* and *nacija*). In fact, they are slovenised foreign words, as both *etniija* and *nacija* express a reflection from other linguistic environments. Yet the word *narod* reflects the origin of group namings of imagined communities, which are

supposed to share some common features and peculiarities that are “innate”, “given by nature”, “natural”, and this makes it impossible to recognise “belonging” to “newcomers”. While nations in the sense of *nacija* are created through the functioning of the nation-state and its institutions, through a common political life within the same political system—nation-state affiliation is, therefore, elective, nations in the sense of *narod* are understood as a community spirit based on a common territory, heritage, language, religion, history, culture, etc.; affiliation is thus “given” (Bajt 2010). I wish to add that such dualistic understanding of supposedly ethnic and political nations is problematic and has been for the most part discarded in recent nationalism theory. However, understanding the terminology helps one pinpoint that Slovenian nationalism lies precisely in the fact that, although all essential elements of Slovenian national identity can be “acquired” (language is the best example), meaning that in their essence they are potentially civic in nature, “foreigners” are nevertheless never truly recognised as “true Slovenians,” because the idea of *Slovenianness* is still archaically ethnic (*ibid.*).

The word nationality also has a double meaning. On the one hand, it is a matter of citizenship, as nationality describes to which country someone “belongs”. On the other hand, nationality can also be understood as “a social group that considers itself an ethnic minority and demands nothing but the position of an autonomous community” (Alter 1991: 233). Therefore, it is struggling for a political and cultural autonomy in the already existing country in which it lives.

It is crucial to emphasise that none of the concepts discussed has a single definition, but academics may even be on entirely opposite shores in their understanding. To understand the processes of exclusion and unequal treatment, the definition of a nation as an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991) is useful, but even more so is understanding that “what ultimately matters is not *what is* but *what people believe is*” (Connor 1994: 93, emphasis in original). In other words, a “subconscious belief in the group’s separate origin and evolution” is an important component of “national psychology” and with this Walker Connor emphasises that the essence of a nation is indefinable and incomprehensible, yet it is a strong psychological bond that connects and separates “members” from other nations. Connor’s description can also be used to define the notions of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality, and religion discussed here. Even a precise scientific substantiation for the need to transcend narrowly defined and exclusive classifications and typifications cannot deny the fact that most people still identify in terms of “belonging” to a particular ethnic, cultural, national and linguistic community or that individuals are discriminated

against on the basis of ascribed group identities. And because science is (or can be) racist (Eze 2005; Marks 2019), collecting data on inequality based on these personal circumstances is a tough nut to crack.

2

THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The European Union Anti-Discrimination Framework

“The European Union is founded on the principles of the free movement of people, capital, goods and services. However, the implementation of these principles is hampered if the rules of equality or non-discrimination are not respected in the Member States. If people are treated differently on the grounds of personal circumstances and are consequently discriminated against, then the free movement of people, capital, goods and services is no longer possible. That is why the European Union has adopted a series of anti-discrimination measures binding on all members, including Slovenia.” (Kogovšek and Petković 2007: 32)

At the European level, there have been precursors since the 1950s, when the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms was adopted in 1950 and contains Article 14 on non-discrimination. The prohibition of discrimination on the basis of gender in employment was first enforced. Protection against discrimination therefore began to develop on the dimension of equal opportunities for women and men, and this was the basis for the new directives, which followed the structure that was set for the gender dimension, adding new personal circumstances. The year 2000 was an

inflexion point in the fight against ethnic discrimination at the European Union level, with the adoption of two anti-discrimination directives, which are still considered to be the legal pillars of anti-discrimination in its Member States. The first was *Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin* (Racial Equality Directive), and the other *Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation* (Employment Equality Directive). The Racial Equality Directive has a broader scope, as it prohibits discrimination based on “racial or ethnic origin” in several areas of life. In addition to employment and work, discrimination is prohibited in, *inter alia*, education, social security, including healthcare, and access to goods and services available to the public. The basis for these two directives is the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which states in Article 10: “In defining and implementing its policies and activities, the Union shall aim to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.” In the following years, there were attempts to adopt a horizontal directive that would prohibit discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief, disability, age and sexual orientation in other areas of life as well, but so far, these efforts have not yielded results.

In Slovenia, with the aim of transposing both directives into domestic law, in 2002 first the Employment Relationships Act (*Zakon o delovnih razmerjih – ZDR*) was adopted in order to partially transpose both Directives. Then in 2004 the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act (*Zakon o uresničevanju načela enakega obravnavanja – ZUNEO*) was adopted, fully transposing the Directives, which was replaced in 2016 by the Protection against Discrimination Act (*Zakon o varstvu pred diskriminacijo – ZVarD*). In both cases, the Slovenian legislator decided to adopt horizontal regulations, and thus discrimination on the grounds of any personal circumstance in various areas of social life is prohibited in Slovenia. The legislation prohibited direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, instructions for discrimination, incitement to discrimination, victimisation, as well as serious forms of discrimination, including multiple discrimination, mass discrimination, long-term or recurrent discrimination, and discrimination containing or likely to contain irreparable consequences for a discriminated person in terms of causing damage to their legal position, rights or obligations, especially if committed in relation to children or other vulnerable persons.

As early as when adopting the above-mentioned anti-discrimination directives in 2000, the promotion of measures to prevent and combat

discrimination began at the European Union level. In the same year, the EU Council adopted a six-year term action programme to combat discrimination, which also included among its objectives the improvement of understanding “of issues related to discrimination through improved knowledge of this phenomenon and through evaluation of the effectiveness of policies and practice” (OJ 2000). To achieve the objectives, the measures also included the analysis of discrimination-related factors, including through research and the determination of qualitative and quantitative indicators and standards, in accordance with domestic law and practice, and the evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of anti-discrimination law and practice and effective dissemination of the results.

At the European Union level, studies on methodological approaches and sources of information and data that can shed light on the situation of individual social groups and the possible impact of discrimination on their position in individual areas of life and consequently on their position in society have been promoted since the beginning of anti-discrimination legislation. Discussions also cover the utility of such data and analysis in planning more effective policies and measures to prevent discrimination, taking specific measures to improve the situation of social groups exposed to discrimination, and monitoring the effects of policies and measures adopted (see, for example, Krizsán 2001; Simon 2004; Mannila 2005; Makkonen 2007a, b).

Collecting data on racial or ethnic discrimination is particularly important for sensitising the public and policymakers about the extent and nature of discrimination and related injustices, as well as for planning positive action and other anti-discrimination measures. In addition, the data can help different organisations ensure that their policies are in line with equal treatment legislation and are also used in court proceedings to prove or disprove allegations of discrimination (Wrench 2011: 1716).

Equality Data

For data that are important for protection against discrimination, including on the grounds of ethnicity, skin colour, national or religious affiliation, and monitoring the situation of individual vulnerable social groups, the phrase equality data has been established at the European Union level. There is also The European Handbook on Equality Data, aimed at the general public, and in particular, those involved in combating discrimination and promoting equal treatment, supported by reliable and high-quality data, including decision-makers, civil servants, equality bodies, non-

governmental organisations and, of course, social groups exposed to discrimination (Makkonen 2016). The handbook defines equality data as any information that can be useful for describing and analysing equality, and the information can be quantitative or qualitative. The emphasis is on equality statistics, i.e. aggregated data that can reflect inequalities and their causes or effects in the society. Data otherwise collected for other purposes may also be used for monitoring equality. As defined in the Handbook, equality data can have several purposes, namely:

1. *Policy development and implementation*: relevant and reliable data are needed to identify inequalities in individual areas of social life and to develop measures to address these inequalities, which can include legislative changes as well as the introduction of policies and measures that effectively address existing inequalities;
2. *Assessment of whether discrimination has taken place*: the prudent use of high-quality and reliable empirical data in the operation of public bodies and the judiciary can be the basis for concluding the existence of discriminatory effects of individual measures or less favourable position of individuals or groups, which can be a consequence of policies and measures adopted;
3. *Monitoring of the realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms across the equality grounds*: quality and reliable data are a necessary tool for assessing the situation of individual social groups and the situation in individual areas of social life for national authorities, national specialised bodies such as ombudspersons and equality bodies, as well as for international bodies set up to monitor the realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
4. *Wider benefits*: Reliable data are needed by organisations, such as businesses, government agencies and trade unions, which want to ensure that their policies and practices comply with the equal treatment laws, as well as for all those who want to design awareness and communication activities based on quality scientific research and data, as these are a reliable basis for drawing attention to inequalities in society and for the effective implementation of such activities (Makkonen 2016: 19–22).

Equality data sources can be of different types and based on different data collection methods. Depending on who collects the data, they can be classified into official data collected and processed by various public

authorities and agencies and informal data collected by, for example, trade unions, employers, research or non-governmental organisations. Ideally, to determine the dimension of direct discrimination in society, social groups most exposed to discrimination, and the areas of social life where discrimination is most prevalent, a single source or a single type of source would be sufficient, namely information on complaints received and dealt with by the competent state authorities (for example, equality bodies, ombudspersons, inspectorates or courts), provided that all cases of discrimination are also reported and dealt with appropriately. This is not the case for various reasons, and the number of complaints, therefore, fails to reflect the actual scale of discriminatory practices in society. It is possible, for example, that people who have been discriminated against are not convinced of the existence of discrimination, do not know which body to turn to, or do not trust these same bodies, have low expectations and accept that belonging to a particular social group also includes unequal social status. After all, the treatment of cases of discrimination by competent authorities may also reflect prevailing societal opinions or prejudices against vulnerable social groups (see, for example, Wrench 2005: 61; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2012). In such cases, unofficial data on specific cases of discrimination collected by other organisations, including non-governmental organisations, is a very useful instrument and complement to official ones, as in many cases, people who have suffered discrimination find it easier to trust NGOs and decide to report to them (see, for example, ZARA 2019).

However, the discriminatory effects of unequal treatment practices on members of specific social groups are often not the result of singular actions of individuals, but the reasons for the disadvantaged position of social groups are in complex social processes and are structural in nature. Therefore, methodological pluralism is recommended for observing and understanding complex processes and their effects, which undoubtedly include the field of discrimination, especially due to the frequent invisibility and inability to observe discriminatory practices in everyday life. This means the use of different methods of collecting and analysing equality data—both quantitative and qualitative. Both the former and the latter methodological type have their advantages and disadvantages. For example, quantitative methods are characterised by the capture of a larger number of observation units, the possibility of generalisation, repeatability and verifiability (i.e. the reliability of the obtained data), but these do not necessarily capture the inherent “truth” or “meaning” of the observed process. Qualitative methods, on the other hand, are characterised by an in-depth focus on a smaller number of observation units. Here, the possibility

of generalising the obtained data is significantly reduced, but the emphasis is on the interactions between individuals and their interpretation of the meaning of interactions in concrete life practices (i.e. obtaining valid data). Quantitative methods can thus give a numerical value to individual experiences of discrimination, for example in employment or rental housing: a certain number (share) of people reported discrimination in a certain population and in a certain period. However, these methods, in contrast to qualitative procedures, find it difficult to establish that possible discriminatory practices can also be carried out by employers or homeowners who are otherwise in favour of certain social groups (for example ethnic minorities, refugees), but their practices reflect the fear of losing customers or receiving dissatisfaction from neighbours (Payne 2004; Wrench 2005).

In terms of quantitative data, the most important official sources, which include data on racial, ethnic or religious affiliation of individuals, or at least indirect variables such as country of birth or citizenship status, include: population censuses; administrative registers (for example, the population register, the register of unemployed persons and other databases maintained by public authorities and agencies); official surveys (for example, Labour Force Surveys are conducted at the EU level and thus also in Slovenia, and Statistics on Income and Living Conditions); administrative registers of complaints received and cases handled (Makkonen 2016: 32–33). The official data thus collected can be used for several purposes, such as the design of samples for specialised research; to construct and monitor equality indicators that measure the position of individual groups in different areas of social life, and the effects of policies and measures (socio-economic statistics can be used for this, such as data on activity or inactivity, unemployment, education, poverty risk); to investigate (in)equalities utilising regression analyses and other research methods (ibid.: 51). When it comes to constructing and monitoring the indicators, they can be constructed as process indicators or outcome indicators, as proposed by the Office of the United Nations High Representative for Human Rights. The first are indicators that enable monitoring of the implementation of individual measures (for example, the number of persons involved in individual measures, the number of implemented activities), and the second type of indicators refers to the results of measures and the actual position of individual social groups in individual areas of life (for example, reducing unemployment within a social group covered by measures, higher educational attainment, and the like) (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2012).

Among the surveys conducted at the EU level and involving Slovenia also important are surveys on discrimination within the Eurobarometer polls and the specialised survey on minorities and discrimination in the European Union, which has already been conducted twice by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA 2017). Such surveys, which investigate perceptions of discrimination, and in particular the latter, which includes research on exposure to discrimination or victimisation, are also very important within the corpus of tools for researching the extent of discriminatory practices in society.

The Anti-Discrimination Framework in Slovenia

As in other European countries, in Slovenia, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is guaranteed by the Constitution, according to which they shall be granted to everyone, irrespective of “national origin, race, sex, language, religion, political or other conviction, material standing, birth, education, social status, disability or any other personal circumstance” (URS 1991). As practice has shown that the Constitution protects against discrimination only formally, several laws have been adopted in recent years, including the Protection against Discrimination Act (*Zakon o varstvu pred diskriminacijo – ZVarD*), which aims to prevent and eliminate discrimination on the grounds of all personal circumstances enshrined in the Constitution.

Some other laws also ensure equal treatment of certain groups or focus on one personal circumstance. The Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act (*Zakon o enakih možnostih žensk in moških – ZEMŽM*) is intended to ensure equality between men and women, and its objectives explicitly state the improvement of the position of women. The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities Act (*Zakon o poklicni rehabilitaciji in zaposlovanju invalidov – ZZRZI*) prohibits discrimination on the grounds of personal circumstances of disability and provides for several positive measures, such as quotas for the employment of disabled persons. Moreover, the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Act (*Zakon o izenačevanju možnosti invalidov – ZIMI*) covers a number of areas, pertains to accessibility, includes definitions of discrimination and partially transposes the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In addition, some laws provide equal treatment in certain areas of social life. The Employment Relationships Act (*Zakon o delovnih razmerjih – ZDR-1*) protects against discrimination in the

selection of candidates for and during employment and provides for exceptional cases when unequal treatment is allowed on the grounds of personal circumstances, if this is necessary for the performance of work, i.e. if an individual personal circumstance is an essential and decisive condition for work (such an example would be, for instance, the Jewish religion for the position of a rabbi or knowledge of the Romani language in kindergartens for Roma children). Furthermore, discrimination or violation of equality is punishable under the Criminal Code (*Kazenski zakonik* – KZ-1), and certain discriminatory offences are sanctioned under Article 20 of the Protection of Public Order Act (*Zakon o varstvu javnega reda in miru* – ZJRM-1).

There is no special legal framework for collecting data on equality in Slovenia. The current Personal Data Protection Act (*Zakon o varstvu osebnih podatkov* – ZVOP-1), which regulates the collection and processing of personal data, defines data on racial or ethnic origin and religious belief as sensitive personal data that can only be processed in certain cases. Among other things, they may be processed if the individual has given their explicit personal consent, which is usually in writing but also determined by law in the public sector, as well as if another law so provides for the exercise of public interest. In Slovenia, therefore, the regulation is very restrictive, and data may not be processed in the public sector without an explicit legal basis, but this prohibition does not apply outside the public sector when an individual explicitly consents to data processing. It should be noted that at the time of writing, ZVOP-1 is still in force but ZVOP-2, which will allow for the collection of equality data (through the processing of personal data, for example through anonymisation), has already been sent to the legislative procedure.

In a comparative perspective, the practices of obtaining data on equality in the Member States of the European Union appear to be differently developed. A 2017 survey examining the legal framework and mechanisms in place to collect such data in the EU28 showed that the United Kingdom has the best and most complex infrastructure for collecting equality data, followed by Finland and the Netherlands. These are also the only countries identified as having successful equality data collection systems. They are followed by Ireland and Portugal with solid data collection mechanisms. In general, only nine countries are ranked above the EU28 average, with Slovenia recognised as one of the three countries with the weakest equality data collection systems (Huddleston 2017: 3). The unsatisfactory situation confirmed by the research mentioned above has been stressed for years by international bodies that monitor the exercise of human and minority rights. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

was among the last to comment on this in its 2019 report on the situation in Slovenia, pointing out that the authorities have strong reservations about collecting disaggregated equality data for the purpose of combating racial discrimination. But ECRI has also found that

“Despite this, some research projects by NGOs and academia, benefiting from public funding, were able to collect some detailed data, even if anonymised, on vulnerable groups. This shows that protecting personal data while still collecting disaggregated data is possible just as data on gender, age and other characteristics are obtained by the authorities in their censuses or through other means.”

Therefore, ECRI reiterated its recommendation:

“[T]hat the authorities gather disaggregated equality data for the purpose of combating racial discrimination. If necessary, the authorities should propose legislative clarification to ensure that data is collected in all cases with due respect for standards on data protection, including principles of confidentiality, informed consent and voluntary self-identification.” (ECRI 2019: 21)

The Personal Data Protection Act (ZVOP-1) was adopted in 2004 and thus the 2002 Census is the last major statistical survey that recorded the ethnic or religious affiliation of individuals in the Republic of Slovenia. For example, this Census was the last time data on economic activity and education were obtained according to ethnic and religious affiliation (Šircelj 2003). Silberman and colleagues (2007: 6) describe in the case of France how “the spirit of Republicanism pervades state practices to the extent that government data contain no questions about ethnic or racial self-classification, in strong contrast to U.S. census practices.” Simultaneously, as part of the implementation of anti-discrimination policies, the European human rights institutions are calling for a reconsideration of the choice of “colour-blind” statistics (Simon 2012), of which Slovenia is also a part. The most documented case is the absence of statistics on the Roma population, while recently more and more voices have been heard about the lack of monitoring of immigrant children’s (under)performance in schools (see, for example, Sedmak et al. 2022).

There is little data on equality, including the extent of discrimination on racial, ethnic, national or religious grounds, in Slovenia. This also applies to areas where policies and measures are being taken to improve the situation

of individual groups of the population. As an example, the *National Programme of Measures of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Roma* (NPUR) for the period 2017–2021 is a key national document of action policies aimed at improving the position of members of the Roma community in Slovenia in various areas of life (for instance, education, employment, living conditions and access to housing). It is also the only document in the country that addresses the needs of an individual ethnic community. This document states that some institutions (for example, the Employment Service of Slovenia, schools, and social work centres) have some data, but in Slovenia, “concrete data that would show progress in the field of the position of members of the Roma community and their greater social inclusion since the adoption of the NPUR 2010–2015 until today, we do not have them and in accordance with the constitutional regulation and legal norms in the field of personal data protection we do not collect them” (Vlada Republike Slovenije 2017: 6). The evaluation of the first year of implementation of the measures from the mentioned programme thus emphasised the lack of adequate data for comprehensive monitoring of the situation of the Roma population and measurement of the effects of the implemented measures. As far as the indicators envisaged in the programme are concerned, the evaluation found that process indicators mostly prevail, which monitor, for example, the number of people involved in an individual measure or activity or the number of implemented activities (training, workshops, consultations). However, indicators of the second type are missing (impact or outcome indicators), which measure the change in the actual situation of the Roma population in individual areas of life and thus also the effects of individual measures. The evaluation also drew attention to the fact that relevant data are particularly needed to monitor the situation of groups facing complex inequalities and social exclusion in most areas of life. As unfavourable conditions in different areas interact, without good data, it is significantly more challenging to assess the effects of individual measures (Mirovni inštitut 2018: 10–14).

Since 2011, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia has been conducting registry population censuses, obtaining data on citizenship or possible immigrant background of residents (the first residence of a person or one of the parents abroad) (Žnidaršič 2022). Such data are useful as proxy data for monitoring the situation of this population group, but they can in no way completely replace data broken down by ethnic or religious affiliation. The loss of the latter, for example, makes it impossible to monitor the social position of specific ethnic and religious communities. In general, it can be noted that the Statistical Office also in its other important surveys, such as the Labour Force Survey and the Statistics on Income and Living

Conditions, processes data according to the citizenship or possible immigrant background of the respondents, but it was not possible to observe that the data obtained in this way would be further analysed by research organisations in Slovenia for the purpose of identifying possible indications of discrimination against immigrants or persons with foreign citizenship (cf. Brezigar 2017b).

3

DATA

Models of Data Collection

Discriminatory practices are challenging to observe directly and even more difficult to measure. Hence, reasoning about the existence of unequal treatment practices and the prevalence of such practices in society requires considerable research skills (Blank et al. 2004), which also depend heavily on available data. To the extent that they exist, the data always include the construction of ethnic, racial or religious categories that can be used for different purposes and always reflect the social and political dynamics of a particular time and space. Thus, to measure discrimination, researchers need to answer the question of what would happen to an individual person X if they were of other ethnicity, skin colour, religion, and the like. In statistics, counterfactual analysis is the dominant causal paradigm, and a hierarchy of data collection approaches exists when it comes to causal inference. Randomised controlled design is at the top of the hierarchy in terms of rigour and control. Next in the hierarchy are observational studies, which may contain data from a single sample survey, multi-wave sample surveys, detailed case studies and other types of data. As any causal link in discrimination is difficult to prove, Blank and colleagues suggest using a combination of different methods (ibid.: 77–85). The combination of methods is also at the core of this publication.

Ways of counting ethnic, national, religious, etc. “affiliation” and classification systems vary considerably among countries. Namely, the statistical constructions of ethnic categories refer to many different situations that transcend the framework of state borders, which makes any

attempt to generalise more difficult. The reasons lie mainly in historical and social peculiarities and in political dynamics, which all shape racial or ethnic, national and religious stratification. Territorial conquests, annexations, redefinitions of borders or migration have historically placed certain groups in a minority position. Simon, Piché, and Gagnon (2015) offer a comparative and global perspective of the production and use of ethnic statistics and seek to answer questions about who counts and for what purpose. They emphasise the link between population censuses and identity politics and argue that measuring ethnic and racial affiliation is a tremendous challenge. Measurement problems are not only technical but are related to competitive claims within society (Simon et al. 2015: 2).

Simon and colleagues proposed a typology that includes six methods of counting based on ethnicity in official statistics. In the case of the first two types of counting or collecting such data, there is no such data, as ethnicity is not part of the official statistical production. The first type involves the absence of counting associated with the nation-building process, where the homogenisation of the population is conceived as a condition for national cohesion (see, for example, Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990), and ethnic fragmentation is understood as a threat to national cohesion. Ethnic “particularisms” are belittled as unwanted signs of fragmentation and should disappear in the inevitable process of assimilation or be preserved only in an unaffirmed representation of society. Ethnic categories are avoided by statistics for the same reason ethnic communities are considered to threaten the cohesion of the nation-state (Simon et al. 2015: 3). The second case is the absence of counting in the name of multiculturalism, where the absence of such a practice is not conditioned by processes of national unification but by a positive evaluation of the mixing of cultures. The third type, counting for dominance, is associated with the notion of ethno-cultural superiority and the processes of colonialism and imperialism. The fourth type is a mirror image of the second type, where the counting is performed in the name of multiculturalism or a positive evaluation of the culture mixing and diversity. In the fifth type, counting for survival, vulnerable minorities use statistics to demand greater social power that can enable them to preserve their cultural specificities. In the sixth type, which historically appears only recently, the counting takes place for justifying positive action, and this type represents the opposite of the racist and discriminatory perspective characteristic of the third type. In the latter type, data collection practices based on, for example, racial or ethnic categories, which may also have arisen in another context, are embedded in a broader policy of ensuring the

equality of social groups (Simon et al. 2015: 3). Individual listed practices may co-exist in a particular country or follow each other historically.

At the EU level, the adoption of anti-discrimination directives has begun to promote data collection practices of the last, sixth type. Within the High-Level Group on Non-Discrimination, Equality and Diversity, the Subgroup on Equality Data was established in 2017. In 2018, it published Guidelines to improve the collection and use of equality data, stating that, for historical reasons, the collection of personal data disaggregated by personal characteristics of individuals, such as racial or ethnic origin, is a particularly sensitive issue in many European countries. However, the Subgroup recalls that equality data is an important tool in monitoring the implementation of legislation and policies to promote equality and non-discrimination and progress on the ground. A similar group has been set up under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Slovenia.

Statistics on ethnic (and racial) affiliation are broadly used in many countries across the world but not in the western part of Europe. According to an article reviewing the collection of ethnic statistics in Europe, this discrepancy can be explained by legal prohibitions related to personal data protection, and the reasons are also the political unwillingness to recognise and emphasise ethnic diversity in official statistics (Simon 2012: 1366). Data that reveal ethnic origin or religious affiliation are prohibited from being processed, but there are several exceptions. General Data Protection Regulation (OJ 2016) provides, for example, that the data subject may give their explicit consent to the processing of personal data for one or more specific purposes, except where European Union law or the law of a Member State provides that the data subject may not derogate from the general prohibition. The processing of sensitive data is also permitted for reasons of overriding public interest under EU law or the law of a Member State, which is proportionate to the objective pursued, respects the essence of the right to data protection and provides appropriate and specific measures to protect the fundamental rights and interests of the data subject. It makes sense to emphasise the existence of exceptions due to the existing narrow explanations, also in Slovenia, which understand the ban on the processing of data on the grounds of skin colour, ethnicity or religion as absolute or non-exclusive. To the extent that data on discrimination on racial, ethnic or religious grounds exist, they are primarily obtained from surveys conducted at the EU level (Eurobarometer, EUMIDIS survey on minorities and discrimination in the European Union by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights), from individual surveys of researchers and research organisations in Slovenia, and more recently also from the Advocate of the Principle of Equality.

Sources of Equality Data in Slovenia

In this section, I present an analysis of Slovenia's equality or discrimination data sources covering the period up to 2020. Counting or not counting ethnicity always brings epistemological and methodological dilemmas (Simon 2012). As already mentioned, the European Commission emphasises the key role that statistics play in activating anti-discrimination policies and increasing their capacity to ensure social cohesion and promote diversity and equality. The advantage of official data sources is that they are collected in a long-term and methodical way, thus enabling comparisons and conclusions about trends, which pilot studies can in no way do.

The Official Data Sources

Within the regular, periodic and longitudinal data collection framework, the Central Population Register is undoubtedly in first place among official sources in Slovenia. It is an administrative register in which data is collected systematically and continuously and it is managed by the Ministry of the Interior. The Register is a computer-controlled database made up of individual records. In the Register, population data are collected, processed, stored and used centrally to monitor the situation and population movements for the needs of state bodies and other users that need to perform prescribed tasks or to manage databases, and to conduct statistical, socioeconomic and other surveys, for which they have a legal basis. It is the central database on citizens who have permanent or temporary residence in the Republic of Slovenia and foreign citizens who have a permanent or temporary residence permit in the Republic of Slovenia. It also contains data on citizens who are permanently or temporarily absent for more than three months; and persons who do not have a permanent or temporary residence permit in Slovenia but have certain rights or obligations in the field of pension and disability insurance, taxes, for humanitarian reasons or in another field, if so provided by law. Therefore, the Register also contains data on the migrant population and persons with international protection, i.e. refugees. The data kept by the Central Population Register are, for example, the unique personal identification number; place of birth, name and surname, citizenship, residence and type of residence, marital status, education, and identifiers

for linking to administrative databases in public sector management in the areas, such as statistics, home affairs, health and health insurance, employment and monitoring of the workforce, justice, education and social protection. The Register contains personal data of individuals that can be used for further statistical and research purposes. For example, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia uses the Register as one of the key data sources during the implementation of the administrative census of the population and households in Slovenia. The Register is also used as a model framework for important research, such as the European Social Science Survey, which is regularly conducted at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana, or the European Union Minority and Discrimination Survey (EUMIDIS), which has been carried out twice by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency. From the perspective of equality monitoring, data on place of birth and citizenship contained in the Register are important, but do not include data broken down by ethnicity or religion.

Another important official data source is the Register Census of Population, Households and Dwellings. It is an administrative census based on existing administrative sources, such as the Central Population Register, the statistical register of the working population, the household register and the real estate register. The provider of the statistical survey is the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. The data are collected periodically every four years. Even the Register Census does not provide data that would be broken down by ethnicity and religion. The last census, which collected data on the religious, linguistic and ethnic composition of the population, was in 2002 (see, for example, Širčelj 2003). From the perspective of equality data, the relevant data are broken down in the Register Census by citizenship, first residence (where the person's mother had her residence at birth) and status of the person (residents with immigrant background, i.e. immigrant and direct descendant of immigrants).

The Statistical Office also collects data on the situation and changes in the labour market on a continuous, quarterly basis, where the key statistics are unemployment rate, labour force participation rate, the number of unemployed and the number of persons in employment (see, for example, Tomažič and Zaletelj 2021). As in other surveys, in the Labour Force Survey, from the perspective of equality, relevant data are broken down by citizenship and country of birth, but the data obtained are not broken down by ethnicity and religion. The same applies to the Living Conditions Survey, which publishes data on the quality of life of various socio-economic categories of persons and households in Slovenia in terms of the distribution of disposable income among households, relative poverty and

social exclusion, with emphasis on those most at risk of poverty, material deprivation and unemployment. Important published statistics are, for example, the at-risk-of-poverty threshold, the at-risk-of-poverty rate, the at-risk-of-social exclusion rate, and so on.

An important data source for research on discrimination are the annual reports of the Advocate of the Principle of Equality published once a year, with a quantitative review of cases of alleged discrimination in individual areas of social life and according to individual personal circumstances that were the basis for alleged discrimination. The Advocate collects data on cases dealt with by inspectorates, the Ombudsperson and the Police and monitors the situation regarding discrimination in the country in general. In 2017, the Advocate carried out a national survey on perceptions and experiences of discrimination. The findings of the opinion poll show that respondents most often understand discrimination as unequal treatment due to skin colour or race (19 per cent), unequal treatment in general (16 per cent) and unequal treatment due to religion (15 per cent). In doing so, a single answer could be placed in more than one category (Advocate of the Principle of Equality 2018: 40). Once a year, the Ombudsperson also describes in a report the situation in the field of human rights in Slovenia, including the topic of discrimination or equal opportunities, as follows from the considered cases regarding race and ethnicity. The Ombudsperson's reports contain quantitative and qualitative data (statistics on cases dealt with, descriptions of individual relevant cases, assessment of the situation in a particular area) (see, for example, Varuh človekovih pravic 2022).

Although the Government of the Republic of Slovenia reports on the situation of the Roma community in Slovenia on an annual basis, data that could indicate the actual situation of the Roma community (for example employment rate, unemployment rate, education, school success, dropout rate, etc.) are not broken down by ethnicity (see, for example, Vlada Republike Slovenije 2021). Similarly, the reports of the Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) focus on only one minority community. Namely, the Foundation publishes its annual report with qualitative data on Islamophobic incidents. As the name suggests, the European Report on Islamophobia focuses on the Muslim religious community (see Frank 2020).

Survey Research

The Centre for Public Opinion Research and Mass Communications (CJMMK) at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana has

been conducting the Slovenian Public Opinion (SJM) survey for a number of years, and is part of important international longitudinal research, such as European Social Survey (ESS), European Values Study (EVS), World Values Survey (WVS) and the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). It is a quantitative sample study from which the scientific literature often draws. From the perspective of equality data, for example, measurements of social distance are relevant (questions such as "Who you would not want as a neighbour?") as well as attitudes of respondents towards immigration, refugees, Roma, and in some instances, surveys also measure experiences of discrimination or belonging to groups exposed to possible discrimination (for example, belonging to an ethnic and religious minority, immigrant population).

Data for Slovenia are occasionally and to a more or less limited extent also included in various international statistical databases. One of the best known is the European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EUMIDIS) used by scientific research on ethnic discrimination (see, for example, Wrench 2011). This is a periodic survey of the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), which has been carried out twice so far, in 2008 and 2015/16, and is being carried out at the EU level. In Slovenia, selected minority communities were included in the survey of perceptions and experiences of discrimination and hate crimes, namely in 2008 Serbs, Bosniaks/Muslims (in terms of ethnicity), and in 2015/16 recent immigrants, i.e. persons who immigrated from countries outside the EU or EEA/EFTA in the ten years before the survey, including a special analysis of members of the Muslim religious community. EUMIDIS is the largest and only survey at the EU level that focuses on perceptions and experiences of discrimination against members of minority communities. Unlike other surveys, such as the Slovenian Public Opinion (SJM), which have a sample of the general population of individual countries, here, the sample is composed exclusively of a minority population. The survey examines perceptions of the prevalence of discrimination in each country, experiences of discrimination against minority communities in various areas of social life (employment, education, access to housing, access to health services, access to other services such as restaurants, hotels or nightclubs), hate-crimes experience, contacts with the police and awareness of rights in case of violations.

Among the quantitative sample surveys, special Eurobarometer surveys on discrimination commissioned by the European Commission should also be highlighted. Eurobarometer surveys have been conducted periodically since 2002 and measure perceptions of the prevalence of discrimination and the experience of discrimination against the general

population in the individual Member States, according to different personal circumstances. A regular part of the survey is also a survey of respondents' opinions on equal employment opportunities. Individual surveys include specific thematic sets (the 2012 and 2019 surveys, for example, also focused on perceptions of the Roma population and measures aimed at improving their social situation). It also includes a survey of the willingness of respondents to consent to collecting their personal data, if this would contribute to anti-discrimination efforts.

Important sources of data for research on discrimination are also reports of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the reports of the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, the shadow reports of the European Network against Racism (ENAR), the Reports of the European Network of Legal Experts on Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination and the conclusions of the United Nations (UN) committees: The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the UN Committee on Human Rights, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

One-off Research

In addition to the listed data sources collected longitudinally, several unique surveys and projects can be used as a data source for research on discrimination based on ethnicity, skin colour, nationality or religion in Slovenia.

Despite the above legal bases, research data show that the extent of discrimination in Slovenia is high. A survey by the then Office for Equal Opportunities showed that among 1,820 respondents, 8.31 per cent of men and 5.14 per cent of women were harassed due to ethnic or racial affiliation, while 2.61 per cent of men and 2.65 per cent of women were harassed because of their religious affiliation (Urad za enake možnosti 2007). A survey conducted among employers and politicians on attitudes towards discrimination (Žagar 2007) showed that both groups of respondents believe that in Slovenia, the most widespread discrimination is based on sexual orientation, followed by discrimination based on age. These forms are followed by discrimination based on ethnicity and then religion. Among employers, for example, the majority (74 per cent) of respondents stated that they do not give priority in employment based on national or ethnic affiliation, but a third would still give preference to Slovenians. Three-

quarters of respondents had no experience of employing Roma, but 34.3 per cent of employers thought that the statement that Roma are irresponsible and unreliable was mostly true and 11.1 per cent thought it was completely true. Only 7.1 per cent of employers thought it was mostly not true and 1 per cent thought it was not true at all. More than half of the respondents also believed that members of other religions (not Catholic) should adapt to the holidays in Slovenia or that it does not make sense to encourage the display of religious affiliation at work. Most employers claimed that all workers in their company were treated equally, regardless of religious belief, but disagreed that religious affiliation should be demonstrated in the work environment. A third of them said that their organisation adjusts to the diet or regular annual leave that workers of other religions can take on their religious holidays (Žagar 2007).

A survey of Muslim women and men in Slovenia showed that 34 per cent of respondents perceived their environment as intolerant of Muslims and that 60 per cent of respondents experienced one of the forms of adverse reaction to their religious affiliation (Bajt 2008). Another study presented the experiences of covered Muslim women living in Slovenia. Interviewees believe that Islamophobia has increased in recent years, both indirectly in political and media discourse and online, as well as directly because they perceive distance in interpersonal communication, on the street, when visiting shopping malls or healthcare facilities, and report employment restrictions (Pucelj 2017).

Research among immigrants (Komac 2007) showed that 41 per cent of respondents experienced discrimination in the workplace, 31 per cent in job search and 20 per cent by the police (cf. also Pajnik and Bajt 2011). The shadow report of the coalition of non-governmental organisations on economic, social and cultural rights in Slovenia highlighted discrimination and social exclusion of the Roma population, infringement of the rights of migrant workers, the precarious position of the erased and the lack of regulation in the field of protection against discrimination (Ramšak et al. 2014).

In the 2017 *Perception of discrimination in Slovenia – Public Opinion Poll*, carried out by the Advocate of the Principle of Equality, according to respondents, the most widespread discrimination in Slovenia is based on ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and social status, with the most common targets being Roma, followed by homosexuals, refugees and members of the lower social class. The survey also examined experiences of discrimination, willingness to report unequal treatment, and awareness of the existence of legislation in the field of protection against discrimination and of equality bodies (Advocate of the Principle of Equality

2018). The Advocate upgraded these results with another public opinion poll on discrimination *Perception and Experience of Discrimination in Slovenia in 2020*, which was again performed on a representative sample (Advocate of the Principle of Equality 2021). Compared to the results of the 2017 Public Opinion Poll, there is a very high tolerance for a work colleague who would be a foreigner and would speak Slovenian language well, and in supporting their child's marriage to a person of another ethnicity or skin colour. These results are consistent with findings on the attitudes of the majority population towards immigration and immigrants, which also showed the importance of acquired language skills, or attributing greater importance to cultural rather than socio-economic threat (Medvešek et al. 2022). Compared to 2017, the survey of the Advocate of the Principle of Equality shows higher tolerance towards the Roma. In the first place, among the personal circumstances, which according to the respondents are the most common reason for discrimination, are again race or ethnic origin—treated together (45 per cent), followed by sexual orientation (39 per cent) and political belief (25 per cent). According to as many as 70 per cent of the population of Slovenia, discrimination is most widespread in work and employment, followed by judiciary and social security with 38 per cent and police procedures with 36 per cent. According to respondents, the most common targets of discrimination are homosexuals (24 per cent) and Roma (24 per cent), followed by the poor (21 per cent), foreigners (20 per cent) and women (19 per cent) (Advocate of the Principle of Equality 2021: 135–137).

Most research, which primarily demonstrates a rather worrying situation, has so far been conducted on the situation of the Roma population, which according to the constitutional order in Slovenia, has the status of a special community but is not recognised as a national community—a recognition afforded to Italian and Hungarian minorities. A report by Amnesty International (2011) covers cases of discrimination against Roma and reports that members of Roma communities are regularly prevented from buying or renting housing outside their settlements. In addition, Roma families face barriers to accessing non-profit housing, including a lack of relevant information, prejudice and different criteria for allocating non-profit rental housing. The Amnesty International report also found that the competent authorities had failed to ensure effective monitoring and institutional mechanisms to combat discrimination and adequate remedies for victims. The United Nations Special Rapporteur Catarina de Albuquerque, who visited Slovenia in 2010 and emphasised the vulnerability of the Roma population in terms of access to safe drinking water and sanitation, stressed that this further

contributes to perpetuating discriminatory stereotypes about the Roma population. Roma are perceived as dirty and are not welcome in public places. A special report by the Ombudsperson on the living conditions of Roma in south-eastern Slovenia also found that the situation in Roma settlements hinders the exercise of human and special rights of the Roma community (Rovšek 2012). According to the Ombudsperson, several municipalities, which are otherwise responsible for regulating the situation in these settlements, are not efficient enough, and the reasons include the resistance of the majority population and the complexity of the procedures. In addition to living conditions and prejudices, discrimination against the Roma community is also evident in the education system. For example, a teacher survey showed that schools mostly lack didactic material in the Romani language and that such material is also of relatively poor quality (Vonta 2011). A 2006 survey of almost half of the Roma population aged 15–45 found that a substantial majority (85 per cent) of respondents failed to complete primary education. Almost a third of respondents from the Kočevje area never went to school, which is twice as many as in Dolenjska, and 11 per cent of respondents from Bela Krajina attended special programme schools—a much higher level than elsewhere. At the time of the survey, only 7 per cent of respondents were employed. 31 per cent cited a lack or low level of education as the reason for unemployment, while 28 per cent cited belonging to the Roma community (Babič Ivaniš 2006). Another research—based on many years of fieldwork in collaboration with Roma families—found that “children's educational paths end in predictable ways: with feelings of rejection and incompetence in children, learning difficulties, attributed special needs, segregation and early school leaving” (Klun and Bartol 2021: 66). Although we read about the principle of inclusion in laws and government strategies, Roma culture is constructed as insurmountably different, and “Romaness” as a problem that must be solved or a deficit that must be eliminated (*ibid.*).

Therefore, rich literature and research in Slovenia exist on discrimination in various fields, such as law, sociology, psychology, social work, history and education. We can find different definitions of discrimination. Kogovšek and Petković (2007: 11), for instance, stress that discrimination can arise due to active or passive behaviour:

“In the first case, we commit an act that discriminates against someone, and in the second case, we abandon certain actions that could prevent discrimination. Discrimination can also occur in cases where different persons or groups are treated in the same way, without taking into account differences that require different treatment.”

Discrimination can occur directly or indirectly, at the individual or institutional level but is most often multifaceted and covers different social levels and personal circumstances (see, for example, Kuhar 2009; Kuhar and Pajnik 2022). The first major study on intersectional discrimination in Slovenia demonstrated that situations of multiple discrimination are not the result of a lack of “luck” or individual shortfall but are the consequences of the social division of power and relations of domination, which the mainstream social groups keep unchanged through institutions, practices, norms, relationships and knowledge (Hrženjak and Jalušič 2011: 115). In the case of the Roma, discriminatory and exclusionary processes based on racism, culturalisation and Balkanisation work in different ways. The Roma are a social group predominantly exposed to absolute poverty and poor housing conditions that are far below the standards of the European average. In addition, they often find themselves in precarious legal statuses due to frequent migration, poverty, low literacy rates and integration into the prevailing culture (ibid.: 63–64).

Discrimination is usually deeply rooted in the culture of a society in the form of stereotypes, prejudices, intolerance and hatred. Several authors (Kuzmanić 2002; Ule 2005) emphasise that modern prejudices and stereotypes differ from traditional ones, as they are now mainly based on culture and cultural differences (education, cultural level, religion, physical and mental health, lifestyle, etc.). Discrimination is also associated with a lack of information about certain social groups, fear of the unknown, and a striving to overcome one’s sense of inferiority. Since the 1991 proclamation of independence from federal Yugoslavia, one of the main (political) frameworks for justifying discrimination in Slovenia has been related to placing Slovenian national identity in the context of Europe (i.e. progressiveness, democracy) and separating it from everything related to Yugoslavia, the Balkans (i.e. backwardness, primitiveness). Moving away from the Balkans is associated with the desire to “cleanse” the nation, i.e. the separation of “true Slovenians” from “southerners”, the erased, Muslims, which in everyday life creates discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, “race” and religion (Pajnik et al. 2018). One of the more important studies in this field is still the 2005 research by the Institute for Ethnic Studies *Perceptions of Slovenian Integration Policy* (Komac and Medvešek 2005), which pointed to the “existence of discriminatory behaviour of Slovenians towards members of ethnic communities from the former Yugoslavia” (ibid.: 284). Yet it also stressed that “there is no completely open discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity,” thus “these relations belong to the area of subtly disguised ethnic intolerance and/or discrimination. However, these phenomena are difficult to detect and even more difficult to prove” (ibid.: 233).

Research by institutions monitoring the phenomenon of racism and intolerance, such as the European Network against Racism, shows that migrants belonging to ethnic and religious minorities are more likely to be employed in lower-paid jobs and are usually paid less than their colleagues who are representatives of the majority population (ENAR 2014). This discrepancy is particularly evident for Roma and non-EU immigrants. Similar findings are made by scientific research (Bajt 2008; Medvešek and Bešter 2010; Medica and Lukić 2011; Pajnik and Bajt 2011; Brezigar 2012, 2015, 2017a, b; Zdravković 2015; Cukut Krilić 2016), which add Muslims to the most discriminated groups, whose exclusion is often the result of intersection, as they are more often immigrants and simultaneously members of a minority ethnic, national and religious group. A review of the literature (Dragoš 2003, 2004; Pašić 2005; Zalta 2005, 2006a, 2006b; Vrečer 2006; Kalčić 2007; Bajt 2008; Bobnič and Vezovnik 2013; Pucelj 2017) shows that despite the growth of literature in recent years, the position of Slovenian Muslims remains on the fringes of academic research. However, official statistics show that the share of Muslims in Slovenia has risen since the last census, making Islam the second-largest religion. To understand the elusive practices of religious discrimination and the processes of ethnic exclusion, researchers emphasise that the treatment of Muslims is not only racist and burdened with orientalist and sexually discriminatory misconceptions, but their position in Slovenia is further intertwined with ethnic prejudice (Dragoš 2003, 2004). Research confirms the marginalisation of Muslim men and women and their social, economic and symbolic exclusion (Bajt 2011).

At a time of global transnational migration and the crisis facing Europe, research on the phenomena of exclusion based on ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion is essential, which is reflected in the growth of such literature in Slovenia (cf. Bajt 2008, 2016; Cukut Krilić 2008; Kralj 2008; Medvešek and Bešter 2010; Medica and Lukić 2011; Pajnik and Bajt 2011; Kogovšek Šalamon and Bajt 2016; Stropnik et al. 2016; Kogovšek Šalamon 2017; Zavrtnik and Cukut Krilić 2018). Research suggests a rise in nationalist economic protectionism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, homophobia, hate speech, and racist attacks on foreigners and minorities (Frank and Šori 2015; Bajt 2021b). Several studies have confirmed the exclusion and discrimination of persons with citizenship outside the European Union, the so-called third-country nationals (Medvešek and Bešter 2010; Medica and Lukić 2011; Pajnik and Bajt 2011). Medvešek and Bešter note that in their research, some interviewees confirmed that they face harassment and discrimination, with African immigrants in a particularly worrying situation, who face racist outbursts in the work

environment due to the colour of their skin. The research also showed that it is challenging to land a job without knowledge of Slovenian, and lack of language proficiency is also a key obstacle to the inclusion of immigrant children in the education system. Half of the interviewees faced discrimination and exploitative practices from potential landlords when looking for their first apartment and further relocations. The authors also note that the area of access of third-country nationals to healthcare is neglected in public policies and that overt or covert discriminatory attitudes of healthcare professionals towards patients, often due to language barriers, exacerbate real problems and lead to inequalities between immigrants and the local population in access to health services (see, for example, Lipovec Čebren 2021).

We can conclude the review and analysis of previous research and relevant literature in the field of discrimination on the personal circumstances under investigation by declaring that in Slovenia, there are mainly data on attitudes (for example, public opinion polls) and various in-depth, qualitative analyses related to discrimination, xenophobia, racism, Islamophobia, etc. However, there is a lack of data directly derived from the experiences of individuals. Therefore, based on real needs, the present publication addresses this shortcoming. By analysing the situation from the available sources, it is thus possible to identify the areas of life from which the highest probability of discrimination arises against persons based on ethnicity, skin colour, nationality or religion. These areas are work and employment, social and health care, education, and access to goods and services. These areas of life also coincide with those highlighted in the already mentioned Racial Equality Directive.

4

EXPERIENCE WITH DISCRIMINATION

Experiences of discrimination are often studied through surveys usually conducted cross-sectionally or longitudinally to observe relations and changes over time. Surveys can provide helpful information on intergroup relations, beliefs, and attitudes. However, they do not measure discrimination. In addition, results can be influenced by many factors, such as the form and wording of the questions and the various nuances of understanding of discrimination (see, for example, Brown 2001). Therefore, a number of authors suggest the simultaneous use of several different methods to boost the validity of research results (Blank et al. 2004: 165–172; cf. Hlebec and Mrzel 2012).

Methodological literature advises to use available government administrative data for research, which are often publicly available and usually do not burden researchers with additional cost. However, such data also have several limitations, as they are collected within the framework of legal requirements and for administrative purposes, but not for social science research. Researchers in Slovenia still lack such data, as official statistics are not broken down by ethnicity and religion.

Another possible source of data cited by the relevant literature for discrimination research is in-depth interviews, which often provide a rich set of information, although this is non-representative and has only a limited reach (Blank et al. 2004). Also, in the NIEM study, we determined the experience of discrimination based on interviews with persons who

had been victims of discrimination on the grounds of one or more of the discussed personal circumstances, i.e. ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion, whereas in the Reducing Discrimination research an online survey and expert interviews were used. Data based on interviews are presented in Chapter 6, and here, we analyse the data obtained from the online survey. The responses of the surveyed persons give us an insight into the dimension of experiential or perceived discrimination. We do not generalise the results of the survey and treat them only as an additional dimension that assists in revealing experiences of unequal treatment while maintaining openness to different interpretations (cf. Uhan 2002).

Sample and Finding the Respondents

The survey questionnaire was designed and published on the 1ka.si website, with an introductory note in which the purpose of the research was presented, and the concept of discrimination was explained. The online survey was active from 16 July to 30 September 2021. During this time, the 1ka online panel system registered 1,676 clicks on the introductory note, of which 824 people started filling out the survey. Ten submitted a blank survey, while the rest either completed it fully (513) or only partially (305). There was a total of 818 relevant units. These responses were treated equally regardless of whether the survey was completed or not (n values above the graphs represent the number of valid responses to each question).

The people who responded to the questionnaire and provided their demographic information were, on average, 43.6 years old, the youngest was 16, and the oldest was 78. The majority of the respondents answered that the highest level of education they had attained was university (36.1 per cent), then four-year secondary school (21.8 per cent), master's degree, doctorate or specialisation (19.5 per cent), and short-cycle college or institution of higher education (17.7 per cent). Only a few individuals had lower education. Just under half of those who answered the question about their employment status were employed on a permanent basis (49.3 per cent). There were much fewer other categories, of which there were more temporary employees (12.8 per cent), self-employed (10.7 per cent), retired (9.2 per cent), unemployed (8.7 per cent), and students (6 per cent). The respondents' net monthly incomes were distributed approximately normally, with the most represented category from 901 to 1,200 euros (23.5 per cent), while the frequencies of higher and lower amounts

gradually decreased. The exceptions were the lowest ("I have no income of my own") and the highest ("more than 2,400 euros"), where the number of answers slightly increased. Regarding the type of settlement the respondent comes from, most of them were from a large city, i.e. Ljubljana or Maribor (39.5 per cent), less from a small town (22.1 per cent), a rural settlement (21.2 per cent) and a small town (17.2 per cent). A significant majority of respondents lived in the Central Slovenian Statistical Region (45.7 per cent), followed by Podravska (12.1 per cent), Gorenjska (7.9 per cent), Savinjska (7.1 per cent), Obalno-Kraška (6.7 per cent), Southeastern Slovenia (5.8 per cent), Goriška (4.6 per cent), Carinthia and Pomurska (2.5 per cent each), Primorje-Notranjska (2.1 per cent), Posavska (1.9 per cent) and Zasavska (1 per cent). Of those respondents who answered the gender question, the majority were women (77.7 per cent), much fewer men (21.4 per cent), and five people who defined themselves as non-binary, trans woman, trans-gender person and one invalid and one missing answer.

89.3 per cent of the participants were born in Slovenia, and 10.7 per cent were born elsewhere—mainly in the countries of the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia). Other countries mentioned by respondents as their country of birth were Barbados, Congo, France, Germany, Great Britain, Iraq, Italy, Liberia, Nigeria, Poland, Russia and Ukraine. The same percentage (10.7 per cent) of respondents did not speak Slovenian as their mother tongue. 8.2 per cent spoke two mother tongues. The share of those whose parents were born in other countries was higher, namely 27.1 per cent for the father and 21.4 per cent for the mother. Most of the respondents who provided information on the country of birth of their parents, mentioned the countries of the former Yugoslavia and some others (in addition to the ones mentioned above, the USA, Kosovo and Austria).

818 people answered whether they belonged to any potentially underprivileged social groups (it was possible to choose more than one). Of these, the majority self-categorised as belonging to a national or ethnic minority (9.5 per cent), slightly fewer chose religious minorities (7.6 per cent), the disabled (7.1 per cent) and sexual minorities (6.8 per cent). One person applied for asylum in Slovenia, and one had the status of a refugee.

When asked about religious or worldview beliefs, almost half (47.9 per cent) indicated atheism. There were considerably fewer other beliefs, namely Catholic (17.4 per cent), agnostic (12.6 per cent), Muslim (4.6 per cent), Orthodox (2.2 per cent), Buddhist (1.5 per cent), Hindu (1.3 per cent) and Protestant (0.9 per cent). 11.5 per cent chose something else.

Since we operated with a non-representative sample, in what follows we can only give a description and conclusions based on this specific

survey, but we cannot generalise the results. However, a comparison with the Slovenian Public Opinion data and a recent study (see Medvešek et al. 2022) indicates that the sample is relatively close to the actual population of Slovenia, at least regarding age structure and employment status and partially in terms of religion. According to official statistics, the largest proportion of the population in terms of age is in the middle generation between 36 and 55 years old, the largest number are full-time employees, the most numerous religion is Catholicism, and in second place Islam, yet the proportions of atheistic and agnostic belief in our survey were much higher than in the general population. Simultaneously, the survey also roughly reflects the structure of the foreign nationals share in the entire population, as the majority of immigrants in Slovenia come from the countries of the former Yugoslavia (Bajt and Pajnik 2014; Medvešek et al. 2022). As is often the case in online surveys, there was a much higher proportion of women than men among the respondents, the Central Slovenian region dominated and higher levels of education than in the general population.

The prevalence of discrimination cannot be determined utilising an online survey. However, one can determine whether life in Slovenia is more difficult for individual groups in individual areas. The entry condition for completing the survey was not that someone had been discriminated against, nor were the personal circumstances of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality or religion. Thus, the initial question was deliberately broad enough, as we were interested in additional dimensions to identify possible intersections. Nevertheless, the information about the online survey, in addition to the general population, was disseminated in a targeted manner in the sense of an attempt to reach all minority communities across the country, i.e. we attempted to spread the word about the research in a targeted manner among potential victims of discrimination, depending on the personal circumstances under consideration (the Roma community, the immigrant community, both officially recognised national minorities and other minority communities, including the community of members of the nations of the former Yugoslavia, the erased, asylum seekers and refugees, the African community, various cultural and similar associations, etc.). Therefore, stratified sampling and the snowball method were used, and the survey was also promoted as an advertisement with increased reach (for more, see Bajt 2021c).

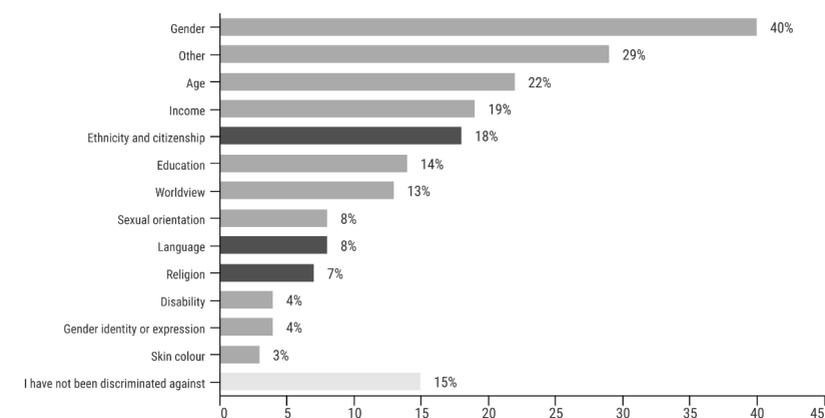
Survey Measurement of Experiences of Discrimination

The survey asked about discrimination experiences both without a specified period (i.e. about such experiences at any time) and specifically for

the past five years. Simultaneously, an explanation was given that discrimination is “poorer treatment or putting people in a worse position because of their personal characteristics, such as gender, age, nationality, state of health, disability, etc.” After that, the circumstances of the discrimination by which it could be identified were additionally stated: “Think of situations where you were not treated the same as others because of any of these characteristics and were put at a disadvantage, for example, when looking for work or housing, in offices or other institutions, with a doctor, in a shop or elsewhere”.

A large part of the respondents, as much as 84.2 per cent, indicated that they had been discriminated against in Slovenia on the grounds of at least one of the possible characteristics. From Graph 1, it can be seen that the most common circumstance of discrimination was gender (39.9 per cent of all respondents). Slightly fewer answered with “other” (29 per cent), followed by age (22 per cent), financial status (19.1 per cent), ethnicity or citizenship (17.8 per cent), education (13.6 per cent), worldview (13.2 per cent), language and sexual orientation (7.6 per cent each), religion (6.5 per cent), disability (3.8 per cent), gender identity or gender expression (3.5 per cent), and skin colour (2.6 per cent). The respondents could choose several answers at the same time. 15.3 per cent of the respondents answered that they had never been discriminated against in Slovenia. Four people did not answer this question.

GRAPH 1: Discrimination based on personal circumstances (n = 814)



Source: Reducing Discrimination.

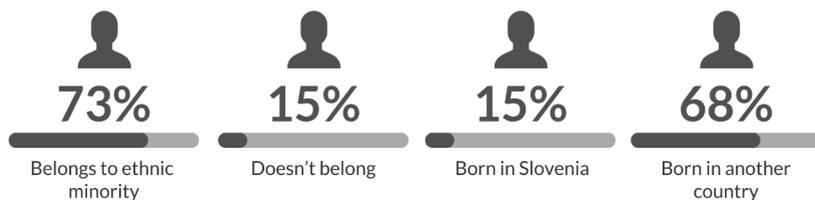
Among those who indicated in the first question about general experiences with discrimination that they had already experienced it and who continued to fill in the survey, 79.6 per cent had been discriminated against (also) in the last five years, which is 65.8 per cent of all the surveyed.

Since not all persons in the sample had all the personal circumstances that would have potentially exposed them to discrimination on the grounds of all the considered categories, we were mainly interested in the experiences of those with such circumstances. Therefore, we analysed the answers in relation to the corresponding personal circumstances that the person expressed in the answers to the demographic questions. Here, we considered only those persons who actually answered these questions and did not stop filling out the survey. Since the book focuses on ethnic discrimination, we present the results below by categories that best express this type of unequal treatment.

Ethnicity or Citizenship

Persons who stated that they belonged to a national or ethnic minority experienced discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity or citizenship significantly more often (chi-square test, $p = 0.000$), namely in 73.2 per cent of cases (see Graph 2). Among those not belonging to a national or ethnic minority, they were discriminated against less (14.9 per cent). A similar relationship can be seen in comparing the shares of persons according to country of birth ($p = 0.000$). Of those persons born in a country other than Slovenia, more indicated that they had already experienced discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity or citizenship (68.1 per cent) than those born in Slovenia (15.1 per cent were discriminated against).

GRAPH 2: Discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity or citizenship (n = 410, n = 419)

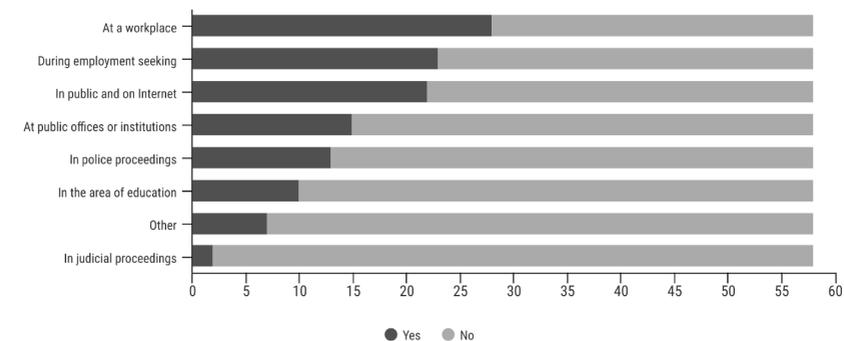


Source: Reducing Discrimination.

Men were slightly more often ($p = 0.032$) discriminated against on the grounds of ethnicity or citizenship (28.9 per cent of men) than women (18.3 per cent of women). There are also significant differences depending on the size of the settlement in which the person lives ($p = 0.014$). The largest proportion of people discriminated on the grounds of ethnicity or citizenship (29 per cent) was among those living in a smaller city, less among people living in a big city (22.5 per cent), in a small town (18.7 per cent), and the least among those living in a rural settlement (10.2 per cent of them were discriminated against). On the grounds of age ($p = 0.318$) and income ($p = 0.472$), no significant differences could be found in experiences with this form of discrimination.

These findings do not reflect the results of a recent survey by the Institute for Ethnic Studies on the attitudes of the majority population towards integration, immigration and immigrants, which showed that people living in rural areas have the most negative attitudes towards immigration and immigrants, while the least disapproving are persons living in urban and suburban environments (Medvešek et al. 2022). In our survey, the rural settlement appears to be the place where the respondents least experienced discrimination. Although research shows that the degree of urbanisation of the place of residence affects the attitudes of the majority population towards immigrants, and therefore the inhabitants of cities should have more positive attitudes, simultaneously, the village environment can also mean more opportunities for contacts that are not only transitory but more formative in terms of mutual cooperation, which is the real foundation of overcoming prejudice and social distance (see for example Pettigrew and Tropp 2011).

GRAPH 3: Areas of discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity or citizenship, last 5 years (n = 58)



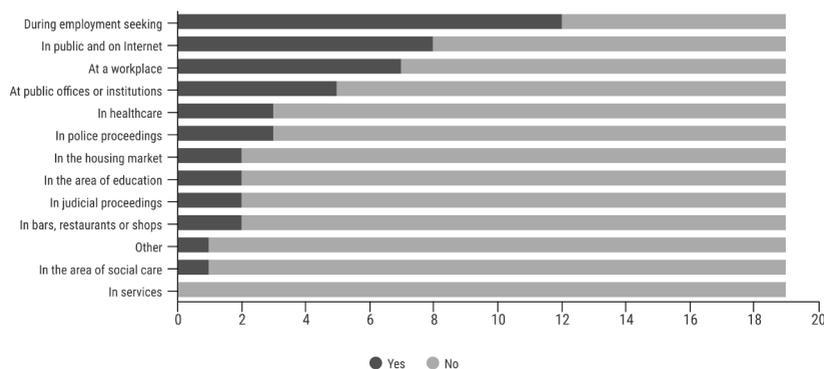
Source: Reducing Discrimination.

Persons who had been discriminated against on the grounds of their ethnicity or citizenship in the last five years reported that the discrimination most often occurred at the workplace (48.3 per cent), and slightly less when seeking employment (39.7 per cent) and in public or on the Internet (37.9 per cent). Only two people indicated that they had been discriminated against in legal proceedings because of this characteristic (see Graph 3).

Language

Language is understood as one of the key characteristics of ethnicity or national identity. Therefore, we treat this dimension as an important part of potential ethnic discrimination. Especially in the Slovenian context, language has a central role in promulgating national identity and thus defines the attitude towards Others (see, for example, Bajt 2016; Brezigar 2017a; Medvešek et al. 2022). Among people who speak a mother tongue other than Slovenian, 27.7 per cent experienced discrimination based on language. Two-thirds, however, indicated that they were not discriminated against on the grounds of their foreign mother tongue. The share was only slightly smaller among those who speak two mother tongues (21.1 per cent) and, as expected, much smaller ($p < 0.001$) among persons whose mother tongue is Slovenian (3.3 per cent).

GRAPH 4: Areas of discrimination on the grounds of language, last 5 years (n = 19)



Source: Reducing Discrimination.

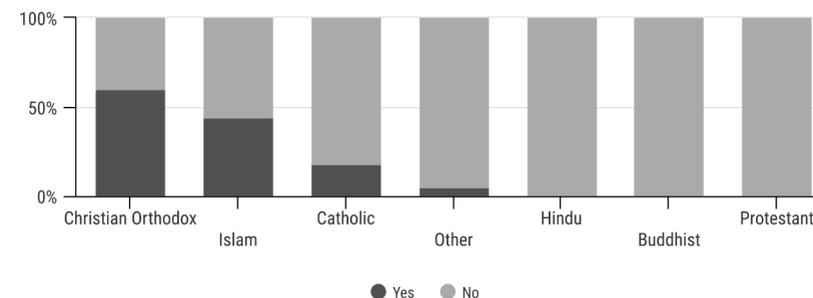
For the respondents, language was the most common reason for discrimination in the last five years when seeking employment (63.2 per cent), in public or on the Internet (42.1 per cent) and at the workplace (36.8 per cent). No person has had such experiences with services (see Graph 4).

To analyse the influence of other personal characteristics, the category of discrimination on the grounds of language is too small and may yield distorted results, so we did not perform these analyses. The same applies to the categories below, where further detailed analyses are limited due to the small number of relevant answers.

Religion

In 40.7 per cent of cases, persons who identified themselves as members of a religious minority stated that they had already been discriminated against on this basis (n = 16). The largest share of discrimination based on religion was experienced by people of the Orthodox faith (60 per cent, n = 10), followed by Muslims (56.3 per cent, n = 16), Catholics (17.9 per cent, n = 56) and people with different beliefs (5.1 per cent, n = 39). One person who identified as an agnostic (2.1 per cent, n = 48) and two as atheists (1.2 per cent, n = 172) also answered that they were victims of discrimination on religious grounds. All persons who defined themselves as (albeit rare) Buddhists (n = 5), Hindus (n = 4) and Protestants (n = 3) answered that they had never been discriminated against based on religion (see Graph 5).

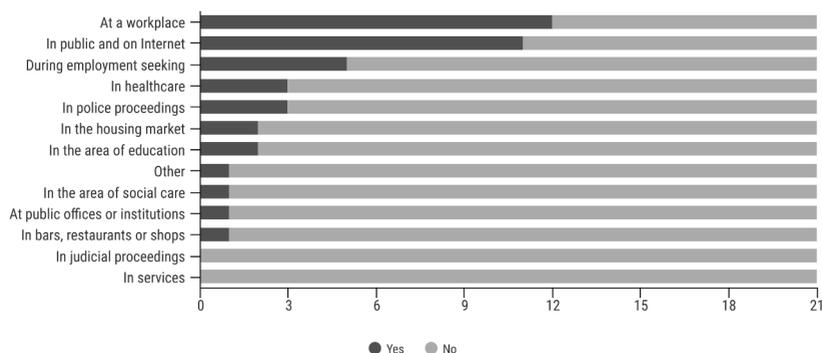
GRAPH 5: Discrimination on the grounds of religion (n = 353)



Source: Reducing Discrimination.

Because of religion, in the last five years, people were discriminated against mainly at the workplace (57.1 per cent) and in public or on the Internet (52.4 per cent), but significantly less elsewhere. Because of religion, no person was discriminated against in services or in legal proceedings (see Graph 6).

GRAPH 6: Areas of discrimination on the grounds of religion, last 5 years (n= 21)



Source: Reducing Discrimination.

Skin Colour

Due to the problematic nature of the concept of “race”, the questionnaire did not directly ask about skin colour, so it was impossible to determine what proportion of people whose skin colour is different from the majority social group was discriminated against on these grounds.

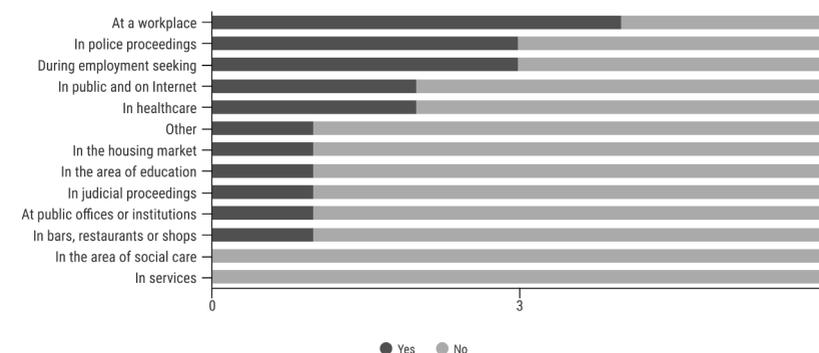
Of the 41 persons who confirmed in the questionnaire that they belong to an ethnic minority and answered this question, 12.2 per cent responded that they had already been discriminated against on the grounds of skin colour (compared to 1.6 per cent of those who do not belong to an ethnic minority).

More persons who were discriminated against on the grounds of skin colour were born in Slovenia (7 or 63.6 per cent) than in another country (4 or 36.4 per cent). Among those born in another country, the vast majority were not discriminated against on the grounds of skin colour (91.5 per cent).

Among the persons discriminated against on the grounds of skin colour, more of them stated that their father (7 persons, or 63.6 per cent) or mother (6 persons, or 60 per cent) were born in a country other than Slovenia.

The number of people who answered the question about areas of discrimination on the grounds of skin colour in the last five years was small, but it is still considered relevant. Above all, it can be observed that these people were most often discriminated against at the workplace (66.7 per cent), and half of them were discriminated against when seeking employment and in police procedures. Here, the latter category especially stands out, as it does not appear so high in the other personal circumstances. None of the interviewed persons experienced discrimination in services and social care in the last five years due to skin colour (see Graph 7).

GRAPH 7: Areas of discrimination on the grounds of skin colour, last 5 years (n = 6)



Source: Reducing Discrimination.

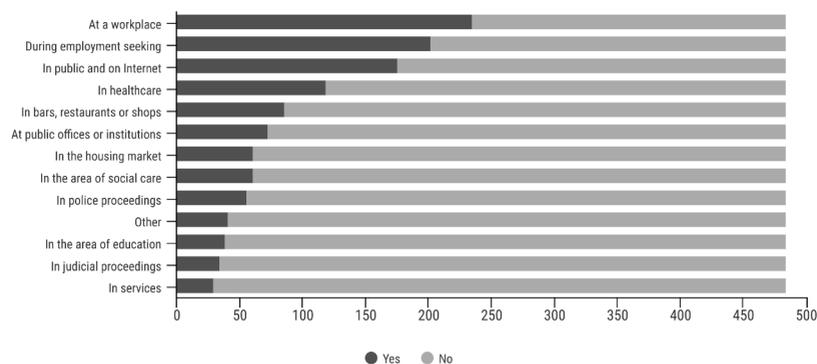
Discrimination at Multiple Levels and by Areas

For discrimination based on ethnicity or citizenship, skin colour, language and religion, we also checked whether it is multifaceted and simultaneous discrimination in which a person is a victim of various forms of such unequal treatment. People who experience discrimination on the grounds of skin colour, language and religion more often also experience discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity or citizenship—61.9 per cent of those who experience it because of skin colour, 69.4 per cent of those who

are discriminated against because of language and 60.4 per cent because of religion is also discriminated on the grounds of ethnicity or citizenship. This indicates simultaneous, intersectional discrimination (Kuhar 2009; Kuhar and Pajnik 2022) or “complex inequality” (Hrženjak and Jalušič 2011). It is important to stress here that it is much more than just the sum of these personal circumstances, as people experience “authentic new realities of discrimination that is established at the intersection” (Kuhar and Pajnik 2022: 12).

Regardless of the categories of discrimination, people discriminated against in the last five years (due to any personal circumstance) most often stated that it happened at the workplace—this answer was chosen by 48.6 per cent (of all those who have been discriminated against in the last five years due to at least one of the characteristics), or when seeking employment in case of 41.7 per cent of the respondents (see Graph 8). Only a few percentage points less experienced discrimination in public or on the Internet (36.4 per cent). This is followed by healthcare (24.6 per cent), bars or shops (17.8 per cent), offices or public institutions (15.1 per cent), the housing market and social care (12.6 per cent each), police procedures (11.6 per cent), other areas (8.5 per cent) and finally education (8.1 per cent), legal proceedings (7.2 per cent) and services (6.2 per cent). For different areas, a person could have answered several times (if they indicated that they were discriminated against due to several characteristics—for each characteristic separately).

GRAPH 8: Areas of discrimination (total by category), last 5 years (n = 484)



Source: Reducing Discrimination.

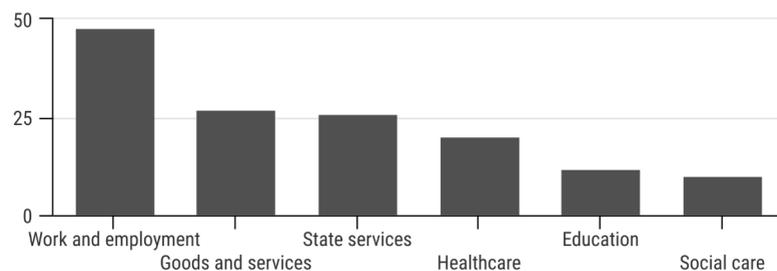
If a person chose one of the options “during employment seeking”, “at a workplace”, or “in healthcare”, a sub-question popped up inquiring about sectors in which they were discriminated against—in the private, public or non-governmental sector. The respondent could have chosen several answers. The respondents most often chose the private sector for discrimination when looking for employment and/or at the workplace (total frequency), and the public sector only slightly less. The non-governmental sector was chosen significantly less often. When it comes to discrimination in healthcare, those who had already experienced it most often answered that it happened in public healthcare, substantially less in private healthcare, or in both cases. It is expected that people have much more direct experience in public healthcare and that private healthcare services are used less often in Slovenia.

The answers to the question about experiences with discrimination by areas of life in which people were discriminated against were further analysed in greater detail only for those who reported discrimination based on the discussed personal circumstances (n = 109). Since 37 people stopped filling out the questionnaire already at the first question about areas of life, and in various proportions failed to answer some questions, due to the diverse number of invalid and missing answers to various questions within one category, we below present the answers about areas of life in frequencies, not with percentages. We grouped the most relevant areas of life into the following categories: work and employment, social care, healthcare, education, access to goods and services, and state services or administrative procedures. Graph 9 shows the frequencies of responses in all areas for discrimination based on ethnicity or citizenship, skin colour, language or religion.

We understood that the person was discriminated against in the field of *work and employment* if they answered affirmatively that they were discriminated against (because of ethnicity or citizenship, skin colour, language or religion) when looking for employment and/or at the workplace (to at least one of these two answers). Among those persons who were discriminated against due to these circumstances, as many as 48 were discriminated against in work and employment. In the online survey, ten people responded they had been discriminated against in the field of *social care* because of their ethnicity or citizenship, skin colour, language or religion (for example, at the social work centre). In the field of *healthcare*, 20 persons who experienced discrimination based on the circumstances discussed were discriminated against. In the field of *education*, 12 persons were discriminated against due to the circumstances under consideration. To the category of *access to goods and services*, we grouped people who reported discrimination (due to the personal circumstances in question) in

at least one of the following areas: in bars or shops, in services or in the housing market. There were 27 such discriminated persons. In the last category, we combined questions from the fields of *state services* and *administrative and other official procedures*. 26 persons with experience of such discrimination responded they had been discriminated against in offices or public institutions, police procedures or court proceedings based on personal circumstances of ethnicity or citizenship, skin colour, language or religion (see Graph 9).

GRAPH 9: Discrimination based on ethnicity or citizenship, skin colour, language or religion by areas of life



Source: Reducing Discrimination.

The following paragraphs also refer to some other areas of discrimination and the observation of other persons' victimisation. These questions were also answered by persons who had not experienced discrimination on the grounds of the analysed circumstances. For the majority of people who were employed, their colleagues were aware of their religious or worldview beliefs—55.5 per cent answered that most or all of them had been aware. 10.1 per cent of them answered that none of their colleagues had been aware of this, and 34.4 per cent said that only some of them had been aware ($n = 317$). 85.3 per cent of respondents indicated that most or all co-workers had been aware of their ethnicity. In 10 per cent of cases, only a few people had been aware, and in 4.7 per cent of cases nobody had been aware. Those who answered the latter mostly did not belong to a national or ethnic minority. For members of such a minority, colleagues had been aware of their ethnicity in almost all cases (96.2 per cent). 320 people answered this question.

The majority of respondents who did not identify as Catholic—which is the majority religion in Slovenia—but some other religion, could mostly take time off during religious holidays at work if they chose to (47.2 per

cent), while slightly fewer could always do so (27.8 per cent). 13.9 per cent of people in the survey responded they could never take a vacation, while the rest mostly could not take it (11.1 per cent). 36 people answered this question. Differences between different religious affiliations for this question were not statistically significant ($p = 0.084$). The sample of people who answered these questions is small and poorly diverse, so comparisons between groups are very limited. Of the four people of the Buddhist religion who answered this question, three answered that they always or mostly could, and one said that they mostly could not take time off on religious holidays. Two Hindus answered that they could and one that they never could. Out of 9 Muslims, 7 said that they could always or mostly take a vacation, and one person responded they could never. The same number of people of the Orthodox religion answered this question, 8 of them chose that they could always or mostly take a vacation, and one said they could never. The only person of the Protestant religion answered that, for the most part, they could not take leave on religious holidays.

Employed persons also answered whether they knew of any cases where discrimination against employees had occurred in their work organisation because of religion, ethnicity, citizenship or skin colour. Respondents were mainly unaware of such cases (73.6 per cent). Those who noticed at least one of these forms of discrimination most often reported discrimination based on ethnicity or citizenship (22 per cent), less often based on religion (13.3 per cent) and skin colour (7.3 per cent).

Similar questions to those for employees were also posed to university and secondary-school students (in an otherwise small sample, $n = 32$). Most of them answered that most or all of their classmates knew what their ethnicity was (65.6 per cent). In 21.9 per cent of cases only some people knew, and in 12.5 per cent, nobody knew. None of these persons belonged to a national or ethnic minority. All persons belonging to such a minority responded that their classmates had known about it. Also, to this question, 32 people responded. Fewer classmates knew the religious or worldview beliefs of the surveyed persons ($n = 32$). 43.8 per cent answered that most or all of them had known; 40.6 per cent that some people had known, and the least that no one had known (15.6 per cent). Differences between religious or worldview beliefs could not be identified due to the small and non-diverse sample.

Only slightly more often than employees in work organisations, university and secondary-school students in educational institutions witnessed discrimination due to ethnicity or citizenship, religion or skin colour. Even in these cases, this happened most often because of ethnicity or citizenship, which was noted by 29 per cent of the schooling

respondents, then because of religion (25.8 per cent) and least because of skin colour (12.9 per cent). 62.5 per cent of those in education answered that they had not witnessed this.

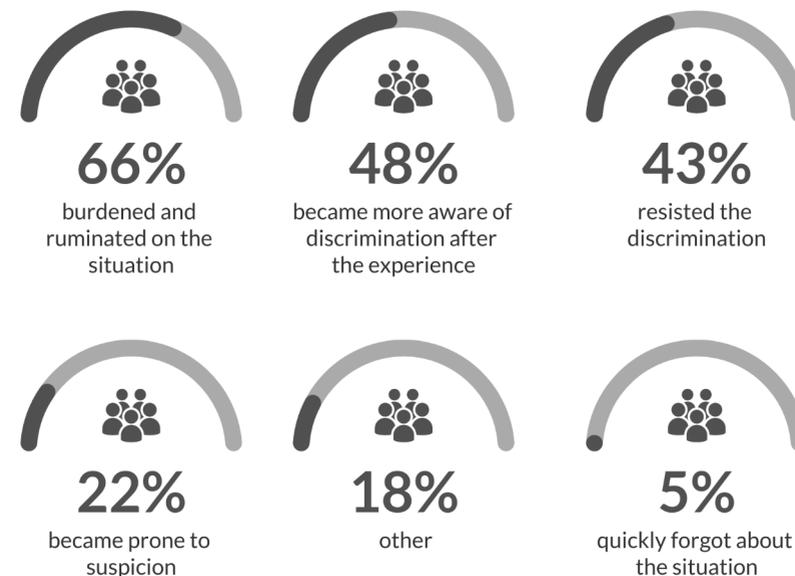
Only respondents who indicated they had minor children (33.6 per cent of respondents) answered additional questions about discrimination against their children. Of these, 18.6 per cent remembered that their minor child had been insulted because of language, ethnicity, citizenship, religious affiliation or skin colour. Most of the others responded that this had not happened yet (64.5 per cent), while the rest did not know (16.9 per cent). 7.6 per cent of respondents with children answered that their child had been treated worse by teachers because of language, ethnicity, citizenship or religious affiliation. This did not happen to 70.8 per cent of parents, and 21.6 per cent did not know whether it had happened or not. Most of the children of the surveyed parents did not need a diet adapted to their religious beliefs (70.6 per cent) or did not attend kindergarten or school (4.7 per cent). Those attending kindergarten or school and who would have needed such an adapted diet had it guaranteed (11.8 per cent), and those who did not (12.9 per cent) in a similar ratio.

Action Against Discrimination

When asked how the person felt about the last case when they had been discriminated against, the most frequently chosen answer was: “The situation burdened me, so I thought about it a lot”, with which agreed 66.4 per cent of those who answered this question (see Graph 10). Somewhat less often, after this experience, people became more attentive to discrimination (47.7 per cent) or resisted it (43.2 per cent). Fewer of them became suspicious (22.2 per cent), and the least of respondents quickly forgot about the situation (only 4.5 per cent). Respondents could choose several answers. 18 per cent of those who answered this question also marked the category “other”, and in the open question, some of them described in more detail how they felt. They mainly mentioned anger, sadness, depression, withdrawal, feeling of shame, feeling of inferiority and the like. Some open-ended responses also refer to feelings of helplessness.

35.2 per cent of the respondents (n = 579) answered that someone close to them (family or friends) had been the target of discrimination because of ethnicity, citizenship, language, skin colour or religion in the last five years. This is considerably less than the share of persons who themselves felt they had been discriminated against in the last five years (65.8 per cent). Therefore, the respondents perceived their own

GRAPH 10: How people felt when they last experienced discrimination (n = 333)



Source: Reducing Discrimination.

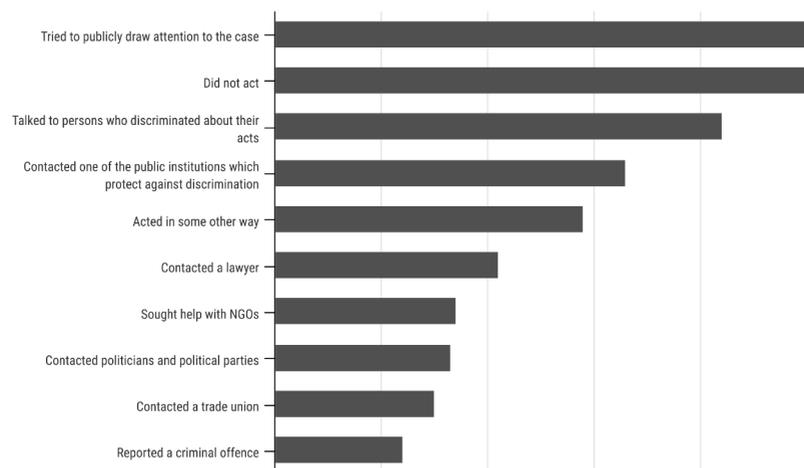
discrimination more often—either they had actually been discriminated against several times, or they did not know about the discrimination of those close to them, which suggests confirmation of the research findings that discrimination is hidden and often difficult to prove.

Some respondents (49.5 per cent of those who answered the question) also reported that, due to their personal circumstances, they had been discriminated against during measures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 epidemic in Slovenia, for example, when crossing the border, getting vaccinated, through termination of employment, offensive comments or physical attacks. This has also been shown by existing research (see, for example, Bajt 2021b). The largest proportion of people questioned (62 per cent of those discriminated against during the measures based on at least one of the circumstances) indicated that they had been discriminated against during these measures based on other circumstances, which they specified under an open-ended question. Almost all of them explained that it had been discrimination due to the failure to fulfil the recovered/vaccinated/tested rule in various social areas, (not) wearing masks or the introduction of other measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as

movement restrictions (crossing of the state border and moving between municipalities, the so-called curfew), control, conditions at workplaces and schools, etc.

Those who, in the last five years in Slovenia, have been discriminated against due to any personal circumstance reacted to this in different ways (see Graph 11). They could choose several answers simultaneously. Most of them (32.3 per cent) tried to warn about the case publicly, and only one less person decided not to take action (31.9 per cent). A good quarter (26.8 per cent) tried to talk to the person or persons who discriminated against them about their actions, and slightly fewer (21.1 per cent) turned to one of the state institutions that protect against discrimination, for example, the police, the Ombudsman, the Advocate of the Principle of Equality, the Representative of Patient Rights, etc. 18.5 per cent of them acted differently, 13.4 per cent sought legal advice, 10.9 per cent sought help from non-governmental organisations, and 10.5 per cent from the political sphere. The fewest persons contacted a trade union (9.6 per cent) or filed a criminal complaint (7.7 per cent).

GRAPH 11: Have you taken any of the following actions in the event of discrimination (n = 313)?



Source: Reducing Discrimination.

If the person answered that they had taken action in one of the listed ways or otherwise, we were also interested in whether, in any of the cases where they had taken action due to discrimination in Slovenia in the last five years, the situation was resolved in their favour (n = 177). For only 18.6 per cent of those who responded, the situation had been resolved in their favour, while for 81.4 per cent, it had not.

Conclusion

The quantitative data analysis based on the survey questionnaire shows that a large part of the respondents—84 per cent—experiences some form of discrimination in Slovenia and believes that they have already been discriminated against based on at least one personal circumstance. Most often, it was discrimination on the grounds of gender, which is experienced significantly more by women than men, and non-binary people have all been discriminated against. The next category, in terms of frequency, with the answer “other”, mainly covers respondents’ reporting of discrimination due to government measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, primarily due to the tightening of the recovered/vaccinated/tested rule.

A more detailed examination of discrimination based on ethnicity, skin colour, citizenship and religion reveals that such behaviour is experienced by a large proportion of persons with personal circumstances that potentially make them belong to a minority social group. Almost three-quarters of those belonging to a national or ethnic minority were discriminated against in Slovenia because of ethnicity and citizenship, and only a slightly smaller proportion of persons born in another country. Members of the Christian Orthodox or Islamic faith also report experiencing discrimination on the grounds of religion in more than 55 per cent of cases. This shows that discrimination on the grounds of skin colour, language and religion is often strongly associated with discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity and citizenship, which means that a person experiences at least two types of discrimination simultaneously. Therefore, a new reality of discrimination is being established at the intersection, and although complex inequalities are not the subject of this publication, it is still worth noting and highlighting this aspect.

The open-ended answers from the online survey also provide additional valuable insight into discrimination experiences, further confirming the research findings. There were 521 answers to open questions about experiences of discrimination in the online survey, and

they are thus a relevant additional source of data. We cite only a handful of the most illustrative examples, which should accompany the analysis based on interviews in Chapter 6, as they confirm the relevance of the obtained data.

- *When looking for a rental, Slovenians say on the phone: "I don't rent to Čefurs [derogatory term for nationals of the former Yugoslav republics]".*
- *When they found out that we were looking for an apartment for foreigners, they made it clear that they did not rent to foreigners.*
- *Discrimination due to ethnicity and religious affiliation in the case of applying for an advertised position. I later found out about inappropriate comments from recruiters.*
- *I received a notification to the unselected candidate stating that I was not selected because they decided for a person who was Slovenian.*
- *Promotions were possible only for surnames that did not have ancestry from Bosnia and Herzegovina.*
- *Regarding the public administration, specifically the administrative unit, I have the feeling that I am not welcome. Whatever I'm looking for in terms of documents, the clerk stands up to me so badly, for example: "You know nothing, everything has to be drawn for you!" etc. It really feels awful, instead of explaining nicely. I have been in Slovenia for 18 years, I work, I pay taxes to the state, I live with my family here, but I have a feeling that they would like to get rid of us.*
- *Mainly, it was insulting and humiliating, in the sense that as an individual, I am something less or worthless because of my ethnicity, because we are stupid, which is why we don't understand basic matters and such people are only suitable for physical work, where it is not necessary to have a brain. It is a general and repeated practice or discrimination in various fields, both in official institutions and in general society, but in official institutions, they try to hide it, which they do not always succeed in the best way.*
- *Although I speak Slovenian extremely well, I occasionally use a Croatian word. The lady at the counter treated me disrespectfully but had no problem with the English-speaking foreigner in front of me.*
- *When I talk to others in my native language in public (on the street, in a shop, on the bus), I often receive insulting comments saying that I should go home, that I should learn Slovenian, that I should speak Slovenian in Slovenia.*
- *Since ethnicity is based on language, culture and religion, children in kindergartens cannot exercise the right to choose their diet (except in case of medical indication) and are thus "ethnically discriminated against".*

- *If I use public transport and wait at a city bus station, my identity can be checked even several times in the same hour.*
- *The police stopped me several times, saying they thought I was a migrant.*
- *My daughter is mocked and insulted at school because of her slightly darker skin colour; that she is a gipsy.*
- *The sons are mulatto and experience pressure and discriminatory behaviour daily.*
- *I never got a serious job. With my name and surname, there is no chance for a serious and good job [...], because I am Gipsy.*

Regardless of personal circumstances, the most common areas of life in which people experience discrimination are the workplace, employment seeking, and in public or on the Internet. Discriminated persons somewhat less often reported discrimination in healthcare, bars or shops, offices or public institutions, and on the housing market.

Similarly, in the context of discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion, the field of work and employment stands out, where by far the most significant number of persons were discriminated against. This is least evident in the field of social welfare and education, only slightly more so in healthcare.

5

MEASURING DISCRIMINATION

I have already stressed the difficulty of measuring discrimination, as it is a phenomenon that can rarely be observed directly. Researchers are thus faced with the challenge of determining when the discrimination occurred and whether unequal treatment actually resulted from a particular personal circumstance. I rely on selected international literature for a more detailed review of experimental methods for evaluating discrimination. In a Committee on National Statistics study, Blank and her colleagues analysed two experimental methods used to draw causal conclusions about racial discrimination in the United States: laboratory and field experiments. Researchers emphasise that at the core of evaluating discrimination is always “a causal inference problem” (Blank et al. 2004: 90). Different life outcomes relating to ethnic disparities can result from explicit or subtle prejudices, which are, therefore, a possible cause of discrimination. Determining precisely what is the actual occurrence of discrimination and what is a personal choice or other related or unrelated factors, therefore, requires the ability to make clear causal inferences (ibid.).

Laboratory experiments are performed in a controlled environment, trying to minimise the influence of external factors. They include (1) an independent variable that can be manipulated, (2) random assignment to treatment conditions, and (3) controlling external variables that may affect the results (ibid.: 92–93). The advantage of this method is that it is possible to achieve a high level of internal validity for inferring causal effects and

allows for a significant degree of control over the environment. It is also a suitable method for isolating a single variable of interest. When studying discrimination, laboratory experiments lend themselves particularly well to studies of psychological processes (such as prejudice or stereotyping) and have often shown that even minor environmental changes can noticeably affect the results. Establishing a positive difference is also the basis for intergroup discrimination. For example, studies in the field of social psychology are well-known (see, for example, Judd et al. 1995), and various experiments have indicated that discrimination even occurs in entirely ad hoc groups, such as the so-called minimal groups (Ule 1997). However, laboratory experiments are often limited in time and measurement, so they do not measure more extended periods. In addition, one of the limitations is the risk of bias or the occurrence of limitations in the experimental environment (Blank et al. 2004: 92–102).

Field experiments allow more generalisation than laboratory experiments and can be classified in the dominant aspect of discrimination measurement—the so-called episodic view. A field experiment is any completely randomised research design in which the observed units are subjected to treatment and control conditions in a natural environment. Among field trial methods for measuring the degree or frequency of discrimination in the labour market or the housing market, Blank, Dabady and Citro focus on the most commonly used survey method of “audit” or “paired testing” (2004: 104). The paired testing method has been criticised mainly due to issues related to accuracy and validity, as the heterogeneity of the tester (also referred to as auditor) and reference (also referred to as control) person makes it difficult to say whether the difference in treatment is related to discrimination or caused by other factors. So let us see what it is all about.

Direct Discrimination Testing with Field Experiments

Audit studies or correspondence or situation testing is one of the important experimental methods for data sourcing on equality or the existence of discrimination. The method was developed in the 1960s in the US by public and private agencies that advocated fair access to housing to prove the existence of discrimination against racial or ethnic minorities in access to housing. In the early 1970s, many groups for equality already used the method, and with the help of the obtained data, they demanded protection against discrimination in the courts. In the 1990s, the US authorities

financed the implementation of situation testing for research purposes and to verify specific complaints of discriminated against persons. Situation testing was then extended to access to employment or services (for example, access to restaurants and nightclubs) and performed by creating experimental pairs (applicants for employment or renting an apartment, restaurants or nightclubs patrons), which are the same with regard to all personal circumstances except the circumstance observed, which may be the basis for discrimination. If one member of the couple is treated unequally (for example, the owner of the apartment rejects an applicant with a certain personal characteristic with the excuse that the apartment is already rented and the other person, who arrives a little later and does not have this personal circumstance, is offered the apartment tour), this can be evidence of the existence of discrimination (Rorive 2009). Some researchers express reservations about this method, as it artificially creates a discriminatory event, whereby one member of the couple, who is otherwise a member of a social group already exposed to unequal treatment in everyday life, can suffer experimentally created discrimination (Essed 1991), but the situation testing expanded to Great Britain, and later also to some EU Member States, where it was also successfully used in court cases as a method of obtaining data (evidence).

Historically, audit studies first focused on racial, ethnic and gender discrimination. The first studies almost exclusively used real people who posed as real candidates (for housing or employment) as testers and reference persons. The first studies responded to concrete violations of equality enforcement regulations and did not have a research purpose (Gaddis 2018). Over time, however, live paired testing has slowly been replaced by phone and e-mail audit testing, especially with the increase in Internet use and the multitude of online advertisements (for apartments, vacancies, etc.) in recent years.

Although discrimination is prohibited, in most countries, many studies have documented ethnic or racial discrimination against minority groups in the labour and housing markets (Rich 2014; Zschirnt and Ruedin 2016). Mostly, these studies rely on audit or correspondence testing to measure discriminatory behaviour in the real world. In their meta-analysis of racial discrimination in employment in Great Britain, covering field experiment studies published between 1969 and 2017, Heath and Di Stasio cite an important methodological caveat about the first 1967 study. The study included in-person tests but was excluded from their research because the testers were only sent to companies that had previously been accused of discrimination. Hence, the study likely overestimates the risk of discrimination compared to later studies that tested more representative

samples of firms. The first subsequent study is from 1969 and was the first to use the correspondence test method. Coordinated written applications for vacancies were used instead of personal applications (Heath and Di Stasio 2019). Today, correspondence tests are considered the “gold standard” for measuring discriminatory behaviour, but their main limitation is that they only show levels and patterns of ethnic discrimination and fail to discover mechanisms that could explain it (Verhaeghe and De Coninck 2021). Since the 1960s, a methodological tool has hence been used, which researchers call by different names, such as audit study, correspondence test or situation testing. In recent years, this methodology has become increasingly popular (Gaddis 2018: 3).

Discrimination is usually hidden, and modern forms of discrimination can simply be more subtle and obscured, making them less likely to be discovered and less aware of by the general public (Pager 2007). Simultaneously, discrimination is widespread, as it has deep social, economic, political, historical and cultural causes intertwined. Proving discrimination is an immense challenge, as in many cases no clear and unambiguous evidence exists. Furthermore, politicians, civil servants, employers, trade unions, researchers and journalists still often assume that discriminatory practices are a thing of the past. Therefore, it is difficult to expect people to recognise and accept that they and their colleagues may violate the principle of equal treatment. Due to the widespread denial of discrimination, proving discrimination is generally difficult. The situation testing is usually used as an experimental method allowing researchers to determine discrimination on the spot. With this method, practices can be revealed in which a person with a certain characteristic is treated less favourably than another person in a comparable situation who lacks the same characteristic (see, for example, Rorive 2009: 42; Gaddis 2018; Heath and Di Stasio 2019). One successful example of a situation testing is, for instance, using pairs of people to test access to nightclubs. A couple consists of a person who is an “immigrant” and a person who is a “native”. The only significant differences between them relate to ethnic or racial markers such as skin colour or hair texture. Such tests have been held in many European jurisdictions, providing courts with sufficient insight into the situation to determine whether discrimination has occurred (Rorive 2009: 7).

The audit or situation testing method is suitable for simple and immediate exchanges, so it should be avoided in applications that are subject to a complex selection process (for example, applying for social housing, which can take several years, or selecting a candidate for employment only at the conclusion of a long process of interviews and tests, etc.). In practice, situation testing is usually only used after the

individual has already reported discrimination. Ideally, it should be performed shortly after the discrimination has occurred. Any proactive testing needs to be thought through very carefully, as it can fan the flames of the opponents who stress that it operates in the spirit of Big Brother, thus discrediting the method. In any case, this depends on the individual circumstances. If the number of complaints in one sector is substantial, NGOs may decide to launch a campaign to test the situation to raise public awareness and initiate legal action in cases of discovered discriminatory practices. In the *Reducing Discrimination* research, the purpose of situation testing was only research data collection (for more, see Bajt 2021a). The implementation of situation testing was a key and certainly the core task of the research since—in addition to the survey and interviews—it brings novel relevant data for ethnic discrimination analysis. In addition, the practice in this discrimination research field in Slovenia is scant (for a rare exception, see Šetinc Vernik 2016), so we are conducting pioneer work in this field of discrimination research. In the existing international literature, however, it is a research methodology that has already become remarkably sophisticated, as the history of such research internationally is extensive and branched. For the study of ethnic and racial discrimination in employment, field experiments have been used for five decades, with a high level of discrimination against minority and immigrant candidates being consistently established, regardless of the time, location, or minority group tested (Zschirnt and Ruedin 2016). Most such studies have been conducted in various European countries and Australia, less so in the US (Riach and Rich 2002). Therefore, many so-called correspondence studies have already examined discrimination against ethnic, religious and racial minorities in the labour market. In a meta-analysis that included 17 countries and conducted 67 discrimination field experiments, Judith Rich (2014), for example, found significant and persistent discrimination in all areas of life and high levels of discrimination against ethnic minorities.

In the research process of a field experiment or correspondence study, comparable applications are sent by fictitious candidates for genuine vacancies, but the characteristics that are the subject of research (for example, ethnicity) are changed. Different levels of the so-called callbacks constitute causal evidence of discrimination (Pager 2007). Correspondence studies have already demonstrated in many cases that candidates are treated unequally despite the same characteristics in terms of relevance for productivity, thus undoubtedly proving the existence of discrimination in the labour market (Koopmans et al. 2019: 234).

Despite their prevalence in the international literature and their usefulness in measuring discrimination, correspondence studies are much

less suitable for investigating the reasons for discrimination. In our research, we use a combination of different methods, which is also in line with the latest recommendations of academic literature (see, for example, Blank et al. 2004; Carter and Pieterse 2020). For example, studies have shown that Turkish people in Germany are discriminated against, but critics of the method warn that it remains unclear whether this discrimination is based on assumptions about the productivity of Turkish people or anti-Turkish attitudes. Furthermore, it is not clear whether this is a general anti-immigrant bias, where people of Turkish ethnicity are discriminated against in the same way as other immigrant groups, or whether there is some specific bias—and if so, whether this is related to their alleged Muslim religion or phenotypic differences (Koopmans et al. 2019: 234). The literature using the field experiment method also often defines the methodology rather vaguely. It is thus unclear whether they applied to the same ads twice and compared the responses separately for the tester and reference profile, as we did in the *Reducing Discrimination* research. Most of the international literature analyses the reactions of potential lessors and employers only in aggregate (see, for example, Carlsson and Eriksson 2016; Koopmans et al. 2019). Considering the substantial sample of some researches (i.e. around 6,000) or the high number of tests carried out, we can understand that the tests were carried out in such a way that only one inquiry was sent to lessors for each advertisement, with approximately half of the inquiries using the typical “foreign” (for example, immigrant) name and half a typical “native” name (Carlsson and Eriksson 2016). In the sections below, with a more detailed description of the situation testing method, we demonstrate how demanding and time-consuming a correct and accurate implementation is. Although new information and communication technologies are used for correspondence studies, which make it possible to carry out thousands of tests in a relatively short time, the basis for the methodology of such research must be designed and prepared very subtly and prudently, and above all, it must take into account all ethical aspects (Bajt 2021a).

In our research, we conducted situation testing, with which we checked the existence of discrimination for persons with personal circumstances of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion in four areas of life: (1) work and employment, (2) social and health care, (3) education, and (4) access to goods and services. It is a pilot study, which does not allow for statistically significant data, but we made sure that for each test, enough repeated experiments had been provided, which also allows at least partially confirmatory conclusions on a broader level (for a more detailed description of the method and the course of situation testing, see Bajt 2020; 2021a, b).

The Situation Testing Method

Regardless of the international literature trend, which conducts correspondence studies following the latest methodological guidelines and theoretical knowledge, we decided in our research to follow the implementation of discrimination testing, which non-governmental organisations most often use in their work. There are at least two critical reasons for this. The first reason is that no such studies exist in Slovenia (the exception is the already mentioned study on access to housing for LGBT persons; for more, see Šetinc Vernik 2016) and, therefore, the present publication is the first to undertake in-depth field research on discrimination in four different areas of life according to a very carefully thought out and outlined methodology of the so-called situation testing. The second reason is the fact that when designing the research, we planned to carry out live paired testing in the field, where the role of the tester would be taken over by intercultural mediators. Yet due to measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the research was conducted entirely by e-mail and phone, placing it alongside international surveys that no longer conduct field testing in person.

Conducting a discrimination or situation testing consists of submitting two comparable profiles for the same request by changing only one characteristic or personal circumstance (for example, ethnic, national or religious affiliation) that can potentially expose them to discrimination. The first test is always performed by the tester (who is a member of a potentially discriminated group), and the second test is performed by a reference person (who does not differ from the tester in anything other than a potentially discriminated personal circumstance). Both profiles must meet all the requirements of the place and the situation (for example, what is sought by the job provider; the lessor, etc.). If the test reveals a differentiated response between the reference profile and the tester profile, we can assume that this indicates unequal treatment or the assumption of discrimination. Before going to the field, it is crucial to determine the methodology that will be used in situation testing (Bajt 2020, 2021a). This is the only way to neutralise variables that could otherwise falsify the analysis or discredit the testing. The essential elements in the organisation of situation testing are (summarised from Rorive 2009: 51–54):

1. Ensuring full comparability

If convincing results are to be obtained, testing conditions require the highest possible degree of similarity between the group likely to be

discriminated against and the control group. The control group must be the same as the study group except for the tested characteristic. This means that the person responsible for testing must compile a list of all the different elements that could influence the decision of the person whose conduct is being tested. For example, pairs of testers participating in ethnic discrimination testing at the entrance to a nightclub should have precisely the right type of clothing and hairstyle, which should be similar in each case. Of course, they must also be in the same age range and of the same gender (because, for example, women are usually admitted to nightclubs more easily than men). They must not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. They must behave politely and reasonably towards the gatekeeper or security guard. They must not be acquainted with any of them beforehand. They must try to enter the club on the same evening and around the same time, etc.

2. Ensuring fairness and credibility

The participants should not have any emotional connections to avoid bias in situation testing. This means, for example, that no tester may be related to a discrimination victim. The tester also must not hold prejudices against the person being tested. In addition, such a person must carefully control their behaviour to avoid provocation.

3. Ensuring representativeness

Ideally, situation testing should be based on a representative sample and at least on more than just a single pair of testers. Otherwise, we must confirm the results with other means of proof (for example, personal testimony) to shift the burden of proof. That is why we supplemented the situation testing method in our research with interviews and a survey.

4. Ensuring accurate planning and documentation

Accurate planning of situation testing is vital as it enables comparability, fairness and representativeness. Ideally, planning should follow a five-step process:

1. The person responsible for the situation testing must be clearly identified. This person must have expertise in discrimination and be aware of the relevant legal issues. The test organiser must not have a conflict of interest regarding the discrimination victim or the alleged perpetrator. They should also be aware that testing could lead to legal proceedings lasting years, and, therefore, they must be prepared to appear as a witness in court. Hence, it is important that the test organiser is a credible person or that it is such an institution.

- The test organiser's presence at the scene is not required, mainly because of the risk that they will be recognised. *We entirely fulfilled this step, although reports of suspicions of unequal treatment to competent authorities were not part of the research plan.*
2. The test organiser must draw up a protocol describing the purpose of the testing and the procedure to be followed. The protocol should include various elements that must be considered to ensure full comparability and should be designed to guarantee representativeness. Audio and video recordings have been proven to play an instrumental role in supporting testing. Their use must be specified in the protocol. Since the judicial admissibility of such recordings varies between the jurisdictions, the protocol should be discussed in advance with local legal experts. In our research, we did not use video or audio recordings in the situation testing, but we conscientiously and continuously recorded everything in a table and a field diary. *Thus, we have fully met the second point criteria.*
 3. The person responsible for the testing should ensure that the testers are not related to the victim or suspect of discrimination and that they are well aware of how to behave during the testing to avoid provocation. Testers or auditors should not be minors unless it is necessary. Like the test coordinator, testers need to be aware that testing could lead to legal proceedings that can last for years and that they may have to appear as witnesses in court. *This part was not relevant to our research.* In addition, they should be prepared for discrimination and be able to respond neutrally. Testers should be provided with a copy of the situation testing protocol and clear guidelines for conducting the test. *We have fully met these step criteria.*
 4. Shortly after the testing is performed (but not in plain sight), each tester must fill out a form summarising the testing. In our case, we filled out the table on the fly or immediately after the testing, and simultaneously there was constant communication with the test coordinator. *We have fully met these step criteria.*
 5. The person responsible for testing must compose a general report on the results of the situation testing. This person should keep various documents (protocol, individual reports of testing and reference persons and a general report) to make them available to the competent authorities, should an official procedure based on situation testing be initiated. In our research, the purpose of the pilot situation testing was only to collect data on discrimination. However, *we entirely followed all implementation steps and recommendations listed here.*

The *Reducing Discrimination* research identified discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion. Since in situation testing, it is challenging to examine discrimination based on religion, which is a very intimate choice of each individual, we focused on ethnicity, citizenship and skin colour, while religion is present indirectly (for example, in the frequent assumption that citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina or some African or Asian countries are of the Islamic faith, although this may not coincide with the actual situation, as it is a matter of deeply rooted stereotypes and prejudices). In most cases, even “race” or skin colour was only assumed in relation to the country of birth or citizenship of an individual in the situation testing, as the tests were not carried out in person due to the COVID-19 epidemic.

When we tested individual areas, we purposely did not test those cases where more foreigners, migrants are sought (for example, certain employment sectors, regarding the labour market or renting out rooms only to migrant workers), as the research could show a distorted picture. In other words, some employers prioritise hiring foreign workers, who, due to their greater vulnerability, enable the firms to maximise profit at the expense of more exploitation (Medvešek and Bešter 2010; Medica and Lukić 2011; Pajnik and Bajt 2011). The same applies to renting out rooms or even just beds to migrant workers.

Situation Testing During the COVID-19 Pandemic

As already stressed, the situation testing method was initially used as an experimental method allowing researchers to determine discrimination on the spot (Gaddis 2018; Heath and Di Stasio 2019). It is, therefore, an episodic aspect of unequal treatment. Paired testing is still used in their work by non-governmental and minority organisations, which thus collect data on unequal treatment and can also collect evidence for possible initiation of procedures at the competent authorities. Due to the objective circumstances of the COVID-19 epidemic, the implementation of the research required additional considerations and subsequent adjustments in the fieldwork due to the governmental lockdown measures and limited interpersonal contacts (Žerdin 2021). These adjustments mainly meant a focus on telephone and e-mail testing, as in-person testing was inconceivable due to epidemic containment measures. Focusing on online communication via e-mail instead of physical appearance emphasised the importance of using language, and proper and geographical names, which could be interpreted as expressing individual ethnic or “racial” or national

or religious affiliation. Emphasis was placed on the use of digital online platforms and a focus on telephone communication, in which the call of a Slovenian-speaking (reference) person and a person who speaks Slovenian with a noticeable foreign accent or in a foreign language (tester) is alternately used, or a Slovenian-sounding (reference profile) and a foreign-sounding name (tester profile), etc.

In a context where there was no physical contact, we formulated the following assumptions about the potential trigger of discrimination:

1. **NAME:** the assumption was made that racial, ethnic, national and religious discrimination occurs already based on the name and surname (for example, assuming that a person is connected to the Balkans if the surname ends in -ić and if the name is “Muslim-sounding”, “Arabic”, “Middle Eastern”, “Albanian”, “Roma”, etc.). Since the testing was performed by phone or e-mail, the first and last names were key. In general, the name is one of the so-called ethnic markers, which, according to some studies, affects discrimination against persons even more than their skin colour (Silberman et al. 2007).
2. **LANGUAGE:** in addition to the name and surname, it plays an important role in the assessment and triggering an unequal treatment (Lipovec Čebren 2021) when it comes to a certain accent in a conversation (when a person speaks Slovenian and it sounds like Slovenian is not their mother tongue, or maybe they do not speak Slovenian at all, but some other language). When we tested via e-mail, minor grammatical errors replaced the accent.
3. **COUNTRY OF BIRTH:** ethnic discrimination also occurs based on a person’s country of birth or residence. Similar to the first and last name, information about the “country of origin” or place of birth or country of permanent residence or citizenship (the frequently asked question, “where are you from?”) usually appears in the communication that is part of the situation testing. For example, suppose someone introduces themselves as an African (for example, “I’m from the Congo”). In that case, darker skin colour is usually assumed, just as, for example, in the case of a European (“I’m from Slovenia”), who is stereotypically white or Caucasian. Similarly, the Muslim religious affiliation is also assumed in typifications with respect to certain countries or regions. This dimension (i.e. the country), therefore, in accordance with our predictions, potentially gave rise to unequal treatment of some persons based on their supposed ethnicity, “race”, nationality or religion.

E-Mail Testing

To perform tests by e-mail, we previously created e-mail accounts and prepared tester and reference profiles. As part of the preparation for the testing, we first looked for and searched advertisements (for jobs) or searched relevant websites (for lists of available general practitioners or lists of educational institutions) and thus prepared a list of all relevant contacts for tests.

First, we always sent the application or request by the person allegedly exposed to discrimination (i.e. the tester profile), and then later the message for the reference profile. If the employer, employment agency, service provider, health centre, educational institution, etc., for example, responded only to the reference profile, the testing pointed to discrimination.

E-mail testing process:

1. *We selected ads and prepared all the necessary information for both profiles;*
2. *The e-mail was sent first by the tester;*
3. *We saved the message and any response (for example, took a screenshot);*
4. *After a few hours or the next day (depending on the field), the reference person sent the same message to the same address, but with only one modification, which should have indicated the personal circumstances in question;*
5. *We saved the message and any response (for example, took a screenshot);*
6. *The collection of answers for testers (recorded in the table) was ongoing.*
7. *The collection of responses for reference profiles (recorded in the table) was ongoing.*

The e-mail message was concise, and we followed the prescribed script for both profiles. We took great care in saving screenshots of the ad. We recorded every step of sending or saved a copy of the correspondence and all interactions.

Tester or auditor profile:

To test access to the labour market and access to a general practitioner, we created two (in effect four) different fictitious “type” profiles, respectively, for a man and a woman who presented themselves as having obtained primary, secondary and (if necessary) higher and university education in another country and recently moved to Slovenia. We chose the names and surnames in such a way that, even at first glance, in each of the comparable pairs, they sounded different from the supposedly “Slovenian” names and that they gave the impression of another country or another cultural milieu, which also includes a hint of another religion. With the name itself, we wanted to establish some obvious difference in ethnic and spatial meaning immediately, i.e. something that could lead to unequal treatment based on perceived ethnicity, nationality, skin colour and religion. In the case of testing access to the labour market, we used either the male or female version, depending on the advertisement and specific requirements. We used only the female version to test access to the general practitioner.

Reference or comparative (i.e. control) profile:

For Slovenian names in the reference profile, we chose common names. The same gender was used in both—tester and reference profiles.

The two identities were thus separated by name, e-mail address (two different, previously created accounts on the Google Gmail platform with undefined names) and somewhat by the method of communication, whereby the tester presented slightly worse Slovenian, but again not too unreasonable, since in employment advertisements, knowledge of Slovenian was often a requirement, so methodologically we should not have risked that a person would have been rejected just for that reason.

An example of a tester profile:

*Hello,
My name is [insert name]. They told me that you are taking new patients. I have not been in Slovenia for a long time, and I need a doctor. I am insured. Please take me.
Many thanks.
Signature:*

An example of a reference profile:

*Dear Sir/Madam,
I have health insurance, my previous general practitioner has retired,
and I am now without one. Could you please let me know if you are still
accepting new patients? Can I just send you my health record?
Thank you and kindest regards,
Signature:*

Testing by Phone

To carry out the testing over the phone, we previously purchased SIM cards and coordinated the timing of a pair of people for the tester and reference profiles who carried out the testing. An intercultural mediator helped us in the role of the tester. As part of the preparation for testing, we first searched for existing ads, selected suitable ones and made a list with all the necessary information. Simultaneously, it was important to ensure that the testing was carried out as soon as possible after the list was prepared. Otherwise, the ads would have been already outdated, and the testing would have failed.

The telephone testing procedure:

1. *We selected the ads and prepared all the necessary information: a screenshot of the ad, the name and phone number/contact were inserted in the table;*
2. *The tester called first—immediately after the call, we entered the result and comments in the table. Unreachable numbers were marked in the table and were not called by the reference person;*
3. *After half an hour or an hour, the reference person called—immediately after the call, we entered the result and comments in the table;*
4. *We cancelled all arranged apartment tours and thanked the lessors.*

The basic text for a phone call (with variations depending on the type of ad):

“Hello, [NAME] here. My husband/wife and I are looking for an apartment, and we saw your ad for rent. Is the apartment still available? I/we are interested in a long-term lease. Would it be possible to come and check it out?”

We also prepared a scenario of possible questions and answers in advance to ensure a match between the two profiles. If the question was “Are you employed?”, both profiles replied yes. If the question was about smoking, both profiles were non-smokers. If the question was about pets, both profiles were pet-free. Both also answered they were childless and single or in a serious relationship or married—adjusted according to the type of ad. The conversation was short, we followed the prescribed script. We took great care to write down all the useful information and details of the conversation. We let the interlocutor speak without interrupting them. Immediately after the conversation, we filled in the table and took note of all the information. Ultimately, we always cancelled all the arranged tours and thanked them for the opportunity.

Test Results by Life Areas

We carried out 435 cases of situation testing (almost 800 individual tests) under four different areas of life:

1. Work and employment: access to the labour market was tested. We performed 152 tests (i.e. 152 x 2 replications = 304);
2. Social and health care: access to a general practitioner was tested. We performed 103 tests (i.e. 103 x 2 replications = 206);
3. Access to goods and services: access to rental housing was tested. We performed 160 tests (i.e. 100 x 2 replications = 200 + 60 tests according to the adapted method = 260);
4. Education: access to schooling was tested. We performed 20 tests using the adapted method.

To make it easier to understand, we should reiterate that every situation testing (that is discrimination test) consisted of a tester and a reference test, both of which must have been successfully performed for the situation testing to be considered in the analysis. In the adapted method for additional tests in access to housing, we conducted the test only for the tester, so there was no repetition for the reference profile (for more, see, for example, Učkur 2016). We also used such an adapted test for the field of education.

Work and Employment

We tested *access to the labour market*. The procedure was carried out following the already described methodology. First, we followed the advertisements for vacancies at the Employment Service of Slovenia. We looked at the most sought-after employment posts, not niche positions. We also included highly skilled jobs in the sample (importance of class differentiation in the occurrence of discrimination). We selected the employment advertisements according to the thematic areas in which there are the most vacancies for each field: healthcare, nursing, social services; mechanical engineering, metalwork, vehicle repair; construction, architecture, geodesy, spatial planning; hospitality and tourism; cleaning and maintenance; administration; etc., as well as some advertisements in the field of social sciences and humanities.

We prepared everything necessary for sending applications, designed several versions of CVs and adapted them for the tester and reference profile. Both CVs had to be comparable but not identical. The only criterion differentiating was the personal circumstances we tested (we used a different name, surname or nationality, place of birth, etc., for the tester and reference profiles). The difference between the tester and reference profile was, therefore, in the name and different languages and country of birth.

100 tests were planned. When we searched for information about vacancies online, we prepared a list of contacts for a minimum of 100 advertisements throughout Slovenia. We noted each advertised vacancy (location, contact), assigned it a serial number (#1 – #100) and entered contact information (e-mail address and, just in case, phone number) in the table.

The situation testing took place electronically (by e-mail). First, the tester sent an inquiry or interest in the job, and after a few hours or the next day, the reference person did the same. If we received a reply in both cases (for the tester and reference profile), we considered the test successful and further compared whether an invitation to a personal interview followed or not, and what the tone of the message and the information provided were (Was it the same? Was it shorter or longer? Etc.). If the tester was rejected or failed to receive a reply, and the reference person was invited to an interview for a position, the test indicated unequal treatment or the assumption of discrimination.

We performed 304 tests (i.e. 152 x 2 replications = 304). The situation testing took place via e-mail in the period from May 2021 to January 2022 (tests were carried out on 24, 26, 27 and 31 May; 1–3 July; 25–26 November and 8–10 and 20 December 2021; 20–21 and 24–27 January 2022).

TABLE 1: Situation testing of access to the labour market #1 (by e-mail)

	Number	%
Number of tests performed	102	100
Number of tests excluded from the analysis	0	0
Number of tests analysed	102	100
No unequal treatment	77	75,49
Unequal treatment (both profiles, sum)	25	24,51
Manifestly unequal treatment of the tester profile	7	6,86
Potential unequal treatment of the tester profile	8	7,84
Unequal treatment of the tester profile, sum	15	14,70
Unequal treatment of the reference profile	10	9,80

Source: Reducing Discrimination.

The first situation testing was performed in May–July 2021. Based on 102 conducted tests, we found 7 manifest cases of discrimination against the tester profile, who was not invited to an interview, while the reference profile received an invitation (7 per cent). To this, we could add 8 cases where the tester profile was immediately rejected, and the reference profile received additional questions and requests for additional information. Some employers requested additional means of proof (although this was not recorded in the advertisement). We can definitely conclude that those who asked for a phone number were interested in talking. If we add up manifest cases of unequal treatment and cases where a qualitatively evaluated additional review of testing also indicates unequal treatment, there were 15 per cent of potential cases of discrimination in testing access to the labour market or employment.

It is also interesting to note that in 4 per cent of cases, only tester profiles were invited to the interview, but not reference ones. This share rises to 10 per cent if we also consider cases where employers rejected the reference profile and turned to the tester profile with additional questions (see Table 1). A more detailed analysis shows that the occupations involved were service assistant, pizza baker, post office worker, and cleaner, although also for higher qualified positions.

It is also worth mentioning that ethnic discrimination occurred in all professions related to intimacy, for example, personal assistant, nurse, etc. Avoidance or distance from intimate contacts with Others is following the existing literature based on social distance. Simultaneously, the literature on care work comes to similar conclusions, even though in international care chains, the most intimate care work is increasingly performed by migrant women (see for example Hrženjak 2018).

For the tester profile, the most questions were about where (and how long) they lived in Slovenia and whether they had a recognised education. The difference between the two profiles that we noticed was that some responded to the tester profile regarding employment in BCS languages (i.e. Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian), even though the tester wrote in the Slovenian language in the application for the ad. We noticed, although only in one case, that for the waitressing job, the female tester received the response to send a photo and a phone number, while the female reference person did not receive a request for a photo but only a phone number. The potential sexualisation of female employment seekers with the discussed personal circumstance is indicated in some sectors of the labour market, but we have insufficient data to draw conclusions based on situation testing alone. Existing literature, however, confirms this type of reasoning (see, for example, Pajnik and Bajt 2011).

The second testing of access to employment was carried out from November 2021 to January 2022. Separately, we conducted another 50 tests for access to the labour market. We wanted to check whether unequal treatment in accessing employment is indeed accentuated for persons with international protection, i.e. refugees, as has been indicated by the rest of the results of our research and the existing literature (Ladić et al. 2022). For this purpose, we have slightly adapted the content of the e-mail, for example:

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Ahmed Khaled. I am applying for the advertised position in production. I have various experiences. I am hardworking, I learn quickly, I am fast at work. I was born on 03/05/1995 in Deir-ez-Zor, Syria, where I also went to secondary school. I speak and understand the Slovenian language fluently—I passed the Slovenian language exam. I live in Slovenia, I have refugee status since 2018. I also have a Slovenian driving licence.

*Looking forward to hearing from you.
Kind regards, Ahmed Khaled*

TABLE 2: Situation testing of access to the labour market #2 (by e-mail)

	Number	%
Number of tests performed	50	100
Number of tests excluded from the analysis	25	50
Number of tests analysed	25	50
No unequal treatment	10	40
Unequal treatment (both profiles, sum)	15	60
Unequal treatment of the tester profile	12	48
Unequal treatment of the reference profile	3	12

Source: NIEM.

The situation testing confirmed that the potential discrimination in the labour market for refugees in Slovenia is indeed extensive, since in as many as 48 per cent of cases, there was a manifest unequal treatment of the tester profile. This has proven even for professions with a significant labour shortage, such as a server in a home for the elderly or a waiter—even here, the unequal treatment of the tester profile was shown, while the reference profile received an invitation to an interview for the workplace. We could otherwise guess that this is an expression of distance due to personal contact with people in these professions, but the reasons for discrimination were not at the forefront of our research.

An additional point of interest in the second part of the situation testing of access to employment was the unequal treatment in three cases when it came to the reference profile. Namely, it was an invitation to an interview with a tester (i.e. a refugee) and not a reference person (i.e. a person with a Slovenian-sounding first and last name). All three jobs were for unskilled and physically demanding production and assembly line work. Although, in our research, the tester and reference profiles were not necessarily educated more than was necessary to occupy the position, this data nevertheless adds to the literature that highlights the problem of deskilling in persons with international protection or the migrant population in general (Pajnik and Bajt 2011; Ladić et al. 2018, 2020, 2022). In migration

research, the term deskilling is often used to describe situations in which people with higher education qualifications work in jobs that do not require such qualifications. Deskilling is also discussed within the framework of racial and ethnic prejudices about lower knowledge and skills, which lead to a situation where migrants accept jobs that do not utilise their resources and competences in the same way as the “native” population (Korzeniewska and Bivand Erdal 2021). Although the status of persons with international protection is the same as citizens, and they have free access to the labour market, their reality is characterised by prejudice and discrimination, which they encounter very often. The conditions in the labour market prevent them from getting a job in accordance with their education or qualifications, so they are forced to look for employment in low-skilled jobs.

Healthcare

Access to a general practitioner was tested. First, we searched for information about available general practitioners on the website of the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia and searched for their contacts on the websites of various health centres throughout Slovenia. We prepared a list of contacts of 100 general practitioners and medical practices across Slovenia. We entered each formal vacancy in a table (first and last name of the general practitioner, location, contact), assigned a serial number (#1 – #100) and entered the contact information corresponding to the serial number (e-mail address and, just in case, phone number) into the table.

The situation testing took place electronically (by e-mail). First, the tester sent an addressed question by e-mail, whether they were still accepting new patients and inquired whether they could register or bring their health records if they would have been accepted as a patient. After a few hours or a day later, the reference person sent the same inquiry. If we received a reply in both cases (for the tester and reference profile), we considered the test successful and further compared whether there was an invitation to bring the health record or whether the answer was that the general practitioner was still accepting new patients or not, and what was the tone of the message and the information provided (Was it the same? Was it shorter/longer? Etc.). If the tester was rejected and the reference person was invited, the test indicated a presumption of discrimination.

The test is based on first and last name, and both people have health insurance, which was highlighted. The difference between the tester and reference profile is, therefore, in the name and different languages and

country. In the event of an explicit refusal, we recorded any reasons that were provided in the explanation. 100 tests were planned (i.e. 100 x 2 replications = 200). We performed 103 tests. Testing of access to a general practitioner took place by e-mail from 22 to 24 June 2021.

From the total number of all performed tests, we first eliminated 44 tests in the further analysis, which were unsuitable for analysis for several different reasons, most often due to lack of data. Of the 59 tests suitable for inclusion in the analysis, we analysed the situation testing after a more detailed data analysis on the example of 51 performed tests, where we could undeniably compare the results obtained for the tester and reference profile (see Table 3). The analysis of 51 conducted tests shows that in none of the tested situations can we talk about the occurrence of discrimination. In two cases, the practice staff actually made more of an effort with additional questions and guidance for the patient in the tester profile than in the reference profile.

TABLE 3: Situation testing of access to a general practitioner #1 (by e-mail)

	Number	%
Number of tests performed	103	100,00
Number of tests excluded from the analysis	52	50,49
Number of tests analysed	51	49,51
No unequal treatment	51	100,00

Source: Reducing Discrimination.

However, it is important to also analyse the 8 cases that were otherwise excluded from the analysis (see Table 4 showing an alternative way of interpreting the results). In these 8 cases, which could potentially be included in the analysis, the test failed in the case of the tester profile, but the test could be performed for the reference profile. In other words: the tester profile failed to receive any response from the practice (not even an automated reply, which is quite unusual), whereas the reference profile received a positive response in 6 out of 8 cases that she could be registered and that she could bring the health record. In the remaining two cases, the response indicated this possibility (in one case: “Dear Madam, for information call on Tuesday from 8-11 a.m.” and in another case: “Hello. We accept new patients only for residents who have a permanent residence in [place deleted]”).

TABLE 4: Situation testing of access to a general practitioner #2 (by e-mail)

	Number	%
Number of tests performed	103	100,00
Number of tests excluded from the analysis	44	42,72
Number of tests analysed	59	57,28
No unequal treatment	51	86,44
Potential unequal treatment	8	13,56

Source: Reducing Discrimination.

We have insufficient data to conclude that these were potential cases of discriminatory treatment of the tester profile. However, there is a strong suspicion that in 14 per cent of the cases, the patient may have been treated unequally based solely on personal circumstances. In any case, it is an interesting result that points to the need for further elaboration of the methodology for cases of electronic situation testing. In other words: sometimes the non-reply may be a reply. This reflection led to the conclusion that in the analysis of situation testing, it is reasonable to treat such situations as cases of a potentially unequal treatment since there are differences between the tester and reference profile.

Access to Goods and Services

Access to a rental apartment was tested with private providers. First, we searched for information on private offers for letting apartments on the Internet (on the website www.nepremicnine.net). Then, we prepared a list of at least 100 offers throughout Slovenia, as we were interested in the geographical dimension of potential discrimination. Finally, we saved each offer (screenshot), assigned it a serial number (#1 – #100) and entered the contact information (phone number) corresponding to the serial number into the table.

The situation testing took place over the phone, in pairs. First, the tester made a phone call; about 15 to 30 minutes (or a few hours at most) after the tester, a reference person called the same number. Both of them asked if

they could come and see the apartment. If the tester was rejected and the reference person was invited, the test indicated a presumption of discrimination. If the call was not accepted during testing, we blocked the number or deleted it from the list, and the reference person did not call it (see Šetinc Vernik 2016).

We also compared the tone and the information provided (Was it the same? Was it shorter/longer? Etc.). In the event of an explicit refusal, we recorded any reasons that were provided in the explanation. The difference between the tester and reference profile was in the name, accent and country. Otherwise, in both cases, the person always said that they were looking for an apartment in accordance with what was advertised (for example, they live in a couple without children, or they are single without children). Both people also said that they do not smoke, have no pets, are tidy, reliable and have full-time employment.

All communication took place only by phone, so after the testing, we cancelled all the arranged visits and thanked the lessors. 100 tests were planned (i.e. 100 x 2 replications = 200). We performed 100 planned tests and an additional 60 tests using the adapted method.

The first testing was conducted by telephone on 24, 25 and 26 May 2021. Out of 100 tests performed, 51 were excluded from further analysis due to inappropriateness following the methodology (for example, telephone numbers to which the lessors did not answer during the testing). There remain 49 cases for analysis, of which, in 10 cases, the tester profile received the reply that the apartment was no longer available, while the reference person received a response that it was (see Table 5).

The data show that in over 20 per cent of cases, we can talk about unequal treatment in access to renting an apartment. The refusal of the tester usually took place in the sense that the apartment was already rented. The tester received additional questions in a few cases and was instructed to call the following week. The reference person was invited for a viewing and was told by the lessor that “they didn’t just let everyone in.” In at least one case, the reference profile also reported that the lessor told them that he “wants a Slovenian and doesn’t like southerners”.

Although our hypothesis before entering the field was that the worst discrimination in the area of finding an apartment for rent would be in the area of Ljubljana or Koper, where the offer is already limited in view of the high demand, the situation testing did not confirm the geographical outliers and the cases of potential discrimination are distributed throughout Slovenia (Ljubljana, Duplica, Hrušica, Koper, Jesenice, Kamnik, Lenart).

After an internal evaluation of the course of the fieldwork, we decided to repeat the situation testing of access to housing with the adapted method

TABLE 5: Situation testing of access to housing #1 (via telephone)

	Number	%
Number of tests performed	100	100,00
Number of tests excluded from the analysis	51	51,00
Number of tests analysed	49	49,00
No unequal treatment	39	79,59
Unequal treatment	10	20,41

Source: Reducing Discrimination.

(Učkur 2016; see also the subsection on education below). One person made the calls and first inquired whether the apartment was still available. This person was a reference profile. For ethical reasons, we no longer included a tester with the discussed personal circumstance at this stage. After receiving a reply, if it was positive, the reference person said they were, in fact, looking for an apartment for a friend. In the conversation, they then said that their friend came from another country or that they had international protection status (i.e. they were a refugee).

The second testing was conducted on 7 July 2021. 60 tests were performed according to the adapted method (see Table 6). Of the 60 cases, 21 were uncompleted tests (they did not answer or wanted to be called back at another time or day, so they were excluded from the testing according to the methodology). 39 tests were carried out (someone answered), of which 10 apartments were already rented or had already been arranged for viewings. Therefore, 29 tests remained suitable for analysis. Of these, 18 cases involved the absence of unequal treatment. We identified 11 potential cases of discrimination, of which 7 cases involved undisputed unequal treatment, and another 4 cases involved potential discrimination.

Therefore, when we carried out situation testing in which the potential tenant was a foreigner or a person with refugee status, discrimination occurred in as many as 24 per cent of cases, and potential unequal treatment was as high as 38 per cent. Explanations for refusal varied from simple rejections that “I wouldn’t do that” and “I’m not in the mood for that” because “we really wouldn’t deal with it” and that they “really didn’t want trouble” (while usually adding “don’t get me wrong”) to gruff: “A refugee? No, not a refugee!”

TABLE 6: Situation testing of access to housing #2 (via telephone)

	Number	%
Number of tests performed	60	100
Number of tests excluded from the analysis	31	51,67
Number of tests analysed	29	48,33
No unequal treatment	18	62,10
Undeniably unequal treatment	7	24,14
Potential unequal treatment	4	13,80
Unequal treatment, sum	11	37,93

Source: NIEM.

Education

In the *area of education*, it was impossible to perform classical situation testing, so we also used the adapted method. The reasons for this are ethical, as due to the COVID-19 epidemic, this area was extremely burdened. In addition, the reasons are also objective: (1) formally, access to education is provided to everyone, and in fact, research also confirms that it is one of the least problematic areas (see, for example, Ladić et al. 2022), (2) the timing of the situation testing did not correspond to the enrolment deadlines, and (3) such testing due to the necessity of presenting personal data, tax numbers, etc. was not possible.

To cover this dimension in terms of testing the phenomenon of discrimination, however, we conducted qualitative testing using an adapted method that follows the method of situation testing but does not use two different profiles (see Učkur 2016). We tested the possibility of enrolling for people who supposedly immigrate to Slovenia just before or during the start of the school or academic year and have some problems with the Slovenian language but are otherwise successful (i.e. have good grades).

We prepared a list of 20 educational institutions for testing throughout Slovenia and sought contacts: five elementary schools, five secondary schools, five gymnasiums and five universities throughout Slovenia (different regions). We sent an inquiry regarding enrolment to all schools by e-mail. Subsequently, we also called all the schools by phone during the predetermined period to conduct the testing. We qualitatively analysed and compared the responses: we carefully recorded the manner, tone, amount, speed of communication and information given, and then analysed and compared the responses (friendliness, amount of information, accessibility).

We addressed the following inquiries to educational institutions:

PRIMARY SCHOOL:

Hello, Maja on the phone. My husband has a colleague, and based on family reunification, his wife and child are coming to Slovenia from Kosovo.

1. *I am interested in the procedure for enrolling a ten-year-old child in your primary school.*
2. *I am interested in the inclusion process, given that the child does not speak the Slovenian language. Will he get any additional assistance since the child only speaks Albanian?*
3. *I wonder if he will be the only child from abroad (will the other children accept him considering that he comes from elsewhere and speaks a different language)?*
4. *Is enrolment possible this year or only next year?*

SECONDARY SCHOOL and GYMNASIUM:

Hello, Maja on the phone. My husband has a colleague, and based on family reunification, his wife and child are coming to Slovenia from Kosovo.

1. *I am interested in the procedure for enrolling a boy in the first year.*
2. *I am interested in the inclusion process, given that the child does not speak the Slovenian language. Will he get any additional assistance since he only speaks Albanian?*
3. *I wonder if he will be the only child from abroad (will the other children accept him considering that he comes from elsewhere and speaks a different language)?*
4. *Is enrolment possible this year or only next year?*

UNIVERSITIES:

1. *I am interested in the procedure for enrolling a friend in the first year.*
2. *I am interested in the inclusion process, given that she does not speak the Slovenian language. Will she get any additional assistance since she only speaks Albanian and English?*
3. *I wonder if she will be the only student from abroad (will the other students accept her considering that she comes from elsewhere and speaks a different language)?*
4. *Is enrolment possible this year or only next year?*

TABLE 7: Situation testing of access to education (e-mail and telephone)

Type of educational institution	Primary school	Secondary school	Gymnasium	University
Number of all tests performed	5	5	5	5
Number of tests excluded from the analysis	0	3	5	0
Number of tests analysed	5	2	0	5
%	100	40	0	100
No unequal treatment	5	/	/	4
Unequal treatment	0	/	/	1
%	0	/	/	20

Source: Reducing Discrimination.

Testing in the field of education took place on 27–30 September and 21–22 October 2021. Out of the 20 tests performed, 8 were not valid, and we excluded them from the analysis (we did not receive a reply or they wanted to be called back at another time or day, so they were excluded from the testing). Thus, 12 tests were included in the analysis (someone answered, and we got enough information for qualitative analysis), of which 5 were in

primary schools and universities, and 2 were in secondary schools (see Table 7). Unfortunately, none of the tests we administered in gymnasiums was suitable for analysis. A detailed analysis of the obtained results indicates that in none of the tested situations can we talk about the occurrence of discrimination, except potentially at the universities.

Primary schools:

The most information in the entire sample of educational institutions was obtained from primary schools. In three of the five primary schools we analysed, we were referred to the counselling service for more detailed information and to a psychologist in the remaining two cases. Immediate enrolment at the school was made possible everywhere, and they also had additional assistance for foreign pupils. Except in one case, the tone of communication was friendly and helpful; everywhere, they gave us a lot of information or told us all the necessary things. In one case, they sent us additional information by e-mail (i.e. that we needed a certificate of residence (permanent or temporary), a medical examination (if there was no health insurance, they recommended a free clinic, and they also added contact information), a certified copy of school certificate, personal data of the pupil and parents (personal identification number, date of birth) and that we could attach copies of personal documents). Given all this information, we cannot talk about unequal treatment. The field of access to education at the primary school level is also highlighted in research as the brightest point of integration of immigrants in Slovenia.

Secondary schools:

Of the two secondary schools we analysed, we were referred to the counselling service for more detailed information. Immediate enrolment was not possible in any school, and information was very scarce, even regarding the enrolment process itself. The tone of communication was neutral to friendly. No school had an integration programme. One school offered additional assistance to international students, which means a team or a person oversees such cases. They advised us to call again in March next year and submit the application then. At the other school, they did not offer any assistance for international students. We were dismissed very quickly there too. Due to the small sample and very little information, we cannot conclude about (un)equal treatment.

Universities:

No tested university offered immediate enrolment. Instead, they all redirected us to the faculty administration, where we obtained more

information. Only one of the universities offered assistance with the Slovenian language, while two out of five offered Slovenian language courses. Three universities did not have one, but two had an integration programme for international students. One university had a tutor who was usually an international student. At all five tested faculties, the tone of the conversation was friendly. Three universities only provided basic information about the fact that we should pay attention to the publication of the call for applications and deadlines. Two universities provided three essential pieces of information: (1) that we must pay attention to the publication of the call for applications and the application deadline, (2) that we must submit a school certificate and (3) where to apply. Of these, one university stressed that they were “checking credibility” (but did not explain this further). Here they also clearly showed unequal treatment, as they directly told us that the (fictitious) person (presented in the test with a personal circumstance) “unfortunately cannot enrol in this faculty because of the Slovenian language”. The issue of language is, of course, crucial if a person cannot follow the lessons or lectures in Slovenian during the education process. Based on this information alone, we can conclude that it is an unequal treatment based on language, citizenship, or ethnicity. Since it is a tiny sample, we cannot generalise that this applies to 20 per cent of all higher education institutions in Slovenia. However, in connection with data from other sources, a potential unequal treatment in this sphere of education is indicated, which should be further tested in the future.

Conclusion

Situation testing demonstrated a total of 15 per cent of potential cases of ethnic discrimination in access to *the labour market or employment*, while for refugees in as many as 48 per cent of cases very clear unequal treatment was shown—even for professions with a large labour shortage. In the area of housing for rent, unequal treatment based on name and language occurred in 20 per cent of cases. This share increased to 38 per cent of potential ethnic discrimination when the tenant was a foreign national or a person with refugee status, and we even heard an explicit refusal: “A refugee? No, not a refugee!” Although research shows that the majority of the population in relation to immigrants emphasises their qualifications or competences more than their ethnicity (Medvešek et al. 2022), our analysis showed that refugees are strongly stigmatised, which contributes to increased social distance and negative attitudes and prejudices towards

this population. In *healthcare* and *education*, we have too little data to draw conclusions about ethnic discrimination. However, a closer inspection suggested that in 14 per cent of cases, there may have been unequal treatment of the patient simply based on ethnicity. In any case, it is an interesting result, which in the future indicates the need for additional elaboration of the methodology for cases of electronic situation testing in a way that sensibly treats situations of the absence of a response to the tester profile with the simultaneous presence of a particular reaction to the reference profile as cases of unequal treatment.

The results of the situation testing unequivocally showed two effects: (1) ethnic discrimination in Slovenia is most evident in the area of work and employment and (2) in the area of housing. In the concluding part, in addition to summarising the obtained data, I also comment on the implementation of situation testing and the method's applicability. For the fields of education and health, the situation testing data did not definitively show unequal treatment, but this does not mean that discrimination does not occur in these areas, rather, it turned out that under the given conditions, the situation testing method is not entirely suitable for determining potential discrimination. There are several reasons for this, but in particular, it concerns objective circumstances, especially:

1. The research occurred during the COVID-19 epidemic when the imperative to establish physical distance was applied, most activities and personal contacts moved to a virtual environment, and direct communication was replaced by e-mail.
2. When checking access to a general practitioner, it turned out that the research is taking place during the dismantling of the public health system, when many patients in Slovenia face difficulties accessing a general practitioner.
3. In the field of education, in the formal sense, access is the same for all children regardless of status, but simultaneously, many documents are required for enrolment. Therefore, the method of situation testing does not correspond to the verification of potential discrimination in access to education (ethical issue of falsification of personal data).

Situation testing requires substantial preliminary preparation, which is very time-intensive. Searching and choosing suitable ads for apartments and general practitioners is less problematic, although it is time-consuming since the information is scattered. But in situation testing of access to employment, in addition to searching and selecting job advertisements,

sending job applications is particularly challenging. For each ad, it is necessary to adjust the application slightly (in terms of education, work experience, language skills, etc.) and then coordinate the tester and reference application. Additional information on how existing studies with samples of a few thousand performed tests address this problem would be welcome (see, for example, Carlsson and Eriksson 2016; Koopmans et al. 2019). Ruud Koopmans, Susanne Veit and Ruta Yemane write in the inventory of the methodology in their research on discrimination in the labour market in Germany: "Our applications not only included a motivation letter and a CV, but also full copies of vocational training certificates and secondary school diplomas. Further, it is customary to include letters of reference from previous employers and, importantly, a photograph of the applicant" (2019: 237). Since it was unclear how the research team accomplished this, I searched for additional materials and found that a programmer was hired, stock photos and Photoshop used for creating photos, as well as software created to run the experiment (see Veit and Yemane 2018 for further details). We did not have sufficient funds for such an elaborate discrimination testing but we also did not wish to engage in such a process due to ethical reasons. Methodological concerns are especially justified, as there are known cases where researchers were even arrested for fraud during testing and accused of making false claims (Heath and Di Stasio 2019).

Attention should also be paid to the fact that this method can cause personal unease for researchers or all participants in the testing. The moral aspect of the testing was problematic, namely a sense that we might be causing harm by misrepresenting ourselves, that we are dishonest. An unpleasant feeling, especially when invitations to job interviews came, and we did not respond, means we wasted people's time. This was especially pronounced when testing access to healthcare, as healthcare institutions reacted as positively as possible. During the epidemic, when people already had such difficulty getting to a general practitioner, we had a terrible feeling that we were depriving the healthcare workers of valuable time and energy "just because of research".

Yet the most difficult challenge is facing discrimination for persons who themselves have a personal circumstance and, when conducting situation testing, actually relive the processes of exclusion (Rorive 2009). This can happen despite all preparations and prior discussions on this topic. Unfortunately, this also happened in our case. Due to such pressure, we were forced to withdraw from the continuation of the paired situation testing and adjust the method.

Despite several months of preparation for carrying out discrimination situation testing and several meetings of the team that performed the testing, even before the fieldwork started, we all had quite a few ethical problems when implementing the method. It was especially difficult for the tester, a person with the discussed personal circumstances. After 100 telephone tests, in line with the internal evaluation we did not want to burden them with additional tests and hence partially adapted the method according to the research needs.

6

PERCEPTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF DISCRIMINATION

When we inquire about the origins of discrimination or why this phenomenon occurs in the first place, one of the reasons can be found in the lack of knowledge about what discrimination is and the consequent lack of awareness that it is a criminal practice that should not occur in society at all. Discrimination, as the unequal treatment of individuals and specific groups, is closely related to the occurrence of social and individual prejudices, as well as a lack of awareness that such behaviour is unacceptable. Indeed, research shows that for people who experience discrimination, it is very stressful, and in some cases, the psychological burden is so significant that it amounts to trauma (Carter and Pieterse 2020). Simultaneously, the misunderstanding in the environment or its failure to recognise complex inequalities can further potentiate the feeling of discrimination.

Research in Slovenia also confirms the increase in hate speech and negative attitudes towards immigrants (Kogovšek Šalamon and Bajt 2016; Pajnik et al. 2018), which can have actual negative consequences on their lives, as they experience discrimination (Waisman and Larsen 2008). For example, a study in Sweden recently found that immigrants earn less in municipalities where the majority population has a very negative attitude towards immigrants (Schilling and Stillman 2021). Even in Slovenia, the latest research indicates that, for example, the social distance towards immigrants is increasing and that the majority of the population expects from them mainly adaptation to Slovenian society, but not cooperation in

the co-creation of common social norms and values (Zavratnik 2013; Jalušič and Bajt 2020; Toš 2021; Medvešek et al. 2022). Therefore, the majority of the population fails to understand integration as a two-way process of adaptation both on the part of the immigrants and on the part of the majority society, but the integration policy primarily requires the adaptation of immigrants, where the state plays the role of setting the conditions, and the immigrants play the role of adapting to these conditions (Medvešek et al. 2022).

Similar processes are also found in research of other minority and marginalised groups (see, for example, Babič Ivaniš et al. 2006; Klopčič 2010; Bešter and Pirc 2020; Frank 2020; Ladić et al. 2022), as Slovenia remains a rather ethnocentrically closed society (Bajt 2010, 2016, 2021b), which, both at the macro level of state policies and at the micro level of individual prejudices, has yet to achieve the matching of equality proclamations with actual implementation in everyday life. After I have demonstrated what people's experiences with discrimination are and how much this phenomenon is present in individual areas of life, I am also interested in how people understand and experience discrimination and its consequences. In this section, therefore, I focus on narratives and personal experiences of discrimination representing the last discussed dimension of discrimination in this book, namely the dynamic and cumulative view.

Qualitative Narratives Research

Qualitative research is increasingly applied not only in sociology, anthropology and communication science but also in other social sciences, for example, in cultural geography, discursive psychology, feminist studies, cultural studies, health and care studies, organisational and educational research (Atkinson 2005). Qualitative studies are also part of other disciplines, for example, architecture, medicine or mechanical engineering (Knoblauch et al. 2005). The biographical approach is also considered to transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries between sociology, anthropology, psychology, linguistics, history, social work or pedagogy and is thus an important example of transdisciplinarity (Riemann 2003). In recent decades, there has been a noticeable increase in methodological literature and the growing use of qualitative research in various disciplines, which leads to the fragmentation of approaches to data collection and analysis. Certain types of data are gaining increasing validity, such as

personal narratives, life histories and other life documents, and spoken discourse (Atkinson 2005: 2). With the widespread use of biographical material in social science research, considerable uncertainty can be observed regarding the analysis of such data, as it is impossible to handle it with the help of standardised analytical procedures. Some authors (for example, Riemann 2003: 3) point out that analytical procedures often remain hidden when working with biographical material. In scientific and professional texts representing biographical material, a discussion of the process of working with data, the process of drawing conclusions, and producing theoretical conclusions is usually missing. The process of reaching conclusions often remains obscured, analytical procedures are not evaluated, and this increases the risk of misunderstandings and misconceptions about the data or the method itself. In the present publication, we strive to bridge this gap with a reinforced critical and analytical treatment of selected research methods and by simultaneously emphasising some of the theoretical and practical challenges of such research.

For example, the biographical method, which derives from the interpretive paradigm tradition developed by the Chicago School of Sociology in the 1920s, experienced a "renaissance" in sociology, history, social psychology, and anthropology in the 1970s and 1980s (Renner 1993; 1996), and flourishes in European social science, especially in German sociology (Apitzsch and Siouti 2007). Although the method was gaining ground in the 1980s, it was still marginalised and often the subject of critics who problematised the mythologising of the narrative, stating that it was impossible to judge how much of the narrative was true and how much the result of imagination. Doubts about the validity of the method also arose in connection with the question of the (im)possibility of generalising research findings (Apitzsch and Inowlocki 2000: 56). Since the 1970s, the theoretical and practical importance of biographical research has been established, especially under the influence of French (post)structuralism, British sociology and German phenomenology, which co-created the method as we know it today (Chamberlayne et al. 2000: 5–9). These influences sharpened the importance of subjective experience in the method, and they started from the assumption that biographies co-create society and are not simply something that society shapes, as it is a matter of mutual influence (Pajnik and Bajt 2009). Despite the growth of literature in this field, the danger remains that the goal of qualitative research is merely the reproduction of the personal experiences of individual participating persons, while a broader reflection of the narrative is lacking. To avoid simply reproducing narratives, an important emphasis of the biographical

approach since the 1990s has been the conception of biography as a social construct (Apitzsch and Siouti 2007).

The biographical approach puts the interviewees in the foreground and enables a more detailed insight into their specific experiences of discrimination. In contrast, a standardised interview carries the risk of loaded questions and co-forms the answers when composing the questionnaire. The biographical method provides an insight into the social, economic, political and legal conditions in various life situations to which the respondents have to respond and which they try to manage. Therefore, it enables the study of such conditions. It also indicates how they intersect and what the interactions between them are and reveals the experiences and views of members of different social groups. Personal narratives are relevant for analysing social phenomena, they represent the multifaceted nature of social action and enable the redefinition of concepts, so they must be analysed and critically reflected upon (Atkinson 2005). Therefore, the biographical approach is instrumental in the research of discrimination because it enables an empirical treatment of the complexity, diversity and variability of the processes of exclusion and differential treatment by emphasising individual experiences.

Interviewing During COVID-19

Despite the initial assumption that we would conduct a narrative interview, we adjusted the implementation of the fieldwork in the given objectively limiting conditions due to the epidemic. We still insisted on the method of a qualitative research approach, in which we replaced the narrative unstructured in-depth interview by the method of an in-depth semi-structured interview. The former assumes a situation in which the interviewees, as partners in communication, are encouraged to tell their (life) story, where fundamental purpose is the reconstruction of social events from the interlocutors' perspective, who tell the story most directly. Switching from unstructured to semi-structured interview, we were aware that by wording the questions in a specific language (Bauer 1996), even semi-structured schemes can often be based on pre-existing conclusions that form the research questions. Therefore, we tried to avoid this by using critical reflection and extensive consideration of the most appropriate way to conduct fieldwork in the form of interviews.

We looked for ways to minimise the role of the interviewer while simultaneously creating a situation allowing for the most authentic

narration from the interviewee's perspective. We have retained the narrative interview imperative, which, by using a specific type of everyday communicative interaction that includes story-telling and listening, enables a less forced and, therefore, more authentic telling of the story. That is why attentive listening was essential, meaning the role of the interviewer as an active listener who did not intervene in the narrative in any way until the interviewee clearly indicated the end of their narrative (see Pajnik and Bajt 2009). Due to the emphasis on narration, the language was also of considerable importance, the choice of which had to be left to the interviewee. They should be given the opportunity to express themselves in the language that suits them best. When researching discrimination, it is indispensable that the participants are not excluded based on language but that the research team adapts to the needs in the field. A few interviews were thus conducted in a combination of different languages, mainly BCS and English, although most were conducted in Arabic and Slovenian. The use of interpreters was not necessary, as the interviews were also conducted by two intercultural mediators.

The initial question that the interviewer always asked all interviewees was: "Do you (personally or your clients) notice the phenomenon of discrimination in connection with the personal circumstance of ethnicity, 'race', nationality and/or religion?" Simultaneously, we let them define the

TABLE 8: List of expert interviews (anonymised)

No.	Date	Organisation	Region
1.	12. 8. 2021	Society A	Central Slovenia
2.	17. 8. 2021	Institute B	Central Slovenia
3.	18. 8. 2021	Society C	Gorenjska and beyond
4.	18. 8. 2021	Institute D	Gorenjska and beyond
5.	18. 8. 2021	Society E	Primorska
6.	18. 8. 2021	Community F	Styria
7.	19. 8. 2021	Institute G	Ljubljana
8.	23. 8. 2021	Association H	Slovenia
9.	31. 8. 2021	Association I	Prekmurje
10.	16. 9. 2021	Centre J	Slovenia
11.	24. 9. 2021	Society K	Slovenia
12.	27. 9. 2021	Association L	Maribor
13.	27. 9. 2021	Society M	Maribor
14.	22. 9. 2021	Activist	Slovenia
15.	29. 9. 2021	Expert	Slovenia

Source: Reducing Discrimination and NIEM.

relevant “identity” or “identities” (i.e. personal circumstances relevant to them). If they asked what discrimination was, we first waited, and after a pause, we helped with an explanation:

“Discrimination means unequal treatment prohibited by law, which has no justified reason: people are treated worse than others simply because of a certain personal characteristic (for example, skin colour, ethnicity, religious belief, etc.). Behaviour at issue hinders or deprives them of various rights and everyday opportunities.”

Table 9: List of interviews with people with migration experience (aggregated)

		Number	Share
Gender	Male	29	69 %
	Female	13	31 %
	Total	42	100 %
Age Group	Under 18 years	1	2 %
	18–25	7	17 %
	26–35	20	48 %
	36–45	6	14 %
	46–55	5	12 %
	56–65	0	0
	66 and more	1	2 %
	Unknown	2	5 %
	Total	42	100 %
Status	Asylum seeker	3	7 %
	Refugee status	33	79 %
	Subsidiary protection	0	0
	Family reunification	6	14 %
	Total	42	100 %

Source: NIEM.

If they answered yes to the initial question, we asked them to explain specifically what it was about or if they could describe a specific example. Simultaneously, we added that we are interested in their experiences as close as possible to the present and said that we are particularly interested in the discussed personal circumstances or ethnic discrimination. Just in case, we also prepared an additional set of sub-questions, which we asked as additional guides in the narration of the interviewees if needed.

Between 12 August and 29 September 2021, 15 in-depth semi-structured expert interviews were conducted (see Table 8). Between 10 June and 29 September 2021, 14 semi-structured interviews were conducted with male asylum seekers and persons with recognised international protection or refugees. Between 1 and 29 September 2021, 18 additional discussions with refugees were held, and between 1 November 2021 and 20 May 2022, ten more in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with refugee women. Combined, 42 individual conversations were held with people with migration experience between June 2021 and May 2022. As it is an extremely marginalised population, asylum seekers, in particular, are in very precarious situations, Table 9 lists only aggregate basic demographic data.

The Most Problematic Areas of Discrimination

Selected excerpts from the interviews, which most straightforwardly illustrate problematic areas of discrimination or describe the most frequent victims of discrimination, are listed verbatim in the transcript of the conversations below. A transcript was made for almost all interviews, and they were then qualitatively analysed using textual analysis (thematic and structural analysis method; see, for example, Rosenthal 1993; Inowlocki 2007; Pajnik and Bajt 2009). By revealing the textual elements in relation to the general direction of the narrative, the aim was to gain insight into encounters with discrimination and the specific experience of the interviewees through the analysis of each interview. The interviewees often moved between different areas of unequal treatment in their narratives and pointed to intersectional discrimination. They also illustrated that the topic under discussion is inextricably linked on the one hand with the subjective feelings of persons who experience discrimination themselves and on the other hand with allegedly objective circumstances, which, upon closer examination by the competent institutions, could also point to systemic inequalities.

In the interviews, the persons reflected several times that discrimination was a hidden and difficult to prove phenomenon and wondered about the definition of discrimination:

“Yes, talking about discrimination is a very ungrateful thing. It is very concealed sometimes.” (Interview #8)

“What can be seen is a great, I believe, growing intolerance towards certain groups. Towards certain ethnic groups and nationalities living here. Regardless of whether they have traditionally moved to this environment [Istria], they have been living here for a long time, or have just recently moved. Islamophobia is also on the rise, of course. It is noticeable. Of course, this is also noticeable on a micro level. What our clients, colleagues and others notice is that [...] in educational institutions, or when entering the labour market, there is discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, religion [...] What still surprises me is that in the school environment, teachers can also discriminate based on these personal circumstances. This [...] always amazes me. Another thing is also in official procedures when official persons sometimes treat their, I will say, clients, these target groups, people very inappropriately. Some people very clearly, very explicitly express their intolerance towards other ethnicities, religions, origins, nationalities [...] Now I will not say that this is true on a daily basis [...], but these are matters that at institutions such as administrative units, or social work centres should not be happening.” (Interview #5)

The results reveal the situation through the words of our interlocutors, which we cite as an illustration of the situation in Slovenia. In some cases, the narratives refer more to certain minority groups—precisely following the field of work in which the individual interviewees are engaged or concerning their personal experiences with discrimination. However, the interviews are not limited to a particular personal circumstance. We were looking for interlocutors who can summarise the broader situation in the area of ethnic discrimination in relation to the personal circumstances under consideration. The interlocutors also stressed that whether a person is treated unequally because of (alleged) citizenship, ethnicity, religion, or skin colour is often difficult to find out. It may, for example, result in unequal treatment due to language, which often actually refers to, and thus crosses, several personal circumstances.

The data in this chapter, which the research obtained through interviews, are the result of a qualitative method, where people's narratives

do not necessarily show “objective truth” and do not allow for generalisations. However, they do help to explain the important experiences and feelings that cases of unequal treatment represent in society regarding the personal circumstances in question (i.e. ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion). Although not all interviewees emphasised the same experiences and highlighted the same areas of life in the same way, some clear trends emerged in the narratives, which are summarised and illustrated by the quotes in this section. Above all, they point out that discrimination in Slovenia is a problem, and with particular emphasis, they highlight which areas of life and which groups of the population experience unequal treatment more often. Below, excerpts from the interviews illustrate the most key life situations in which people reveal experiences with discrimination. After thematic analysis, we grouped the life situations highlighted in the narratives into the six most common categories: work and employment, healthcare, access to goods and services, administrative procedures and state services, education, and hate speech. The categories based on the interviews thus also reflect the already highlighted areas from the situation testing and the online survey, with a particularly new highlighted dimension of hate and discriminatory speech, which came to the fore here. Since discriminated persons often feel that they are not heard, we purposefully pay attention to them in this place and give space to their narratives.

Work and Employment

The interviews showed results comparable to the other two data collection methods presented in this publication, i.e. survey and situation testing. Indeed, all of them emphasised unequal employment or workplace treatment. Simultaneously, the interviews emphasise various personal circumstances, from citizenship, religion, to skin colour or ethnicity.

“It seems to me that this is still too much left to the enlightenment or benevolence of employers instead of being aware of the principles and obligations of ensuring equal opportunities and non-discrimination. Of course, the problem is not only prayer (of members of any religious community) or, for example, a place to calm down, reflect, which could also be very useful for all other employees because stress and hardships do not arise only at airports or hospitals. The first question is whether it is even guaranteed in Slovenia that people can legitimately expect to be able to celebrate at home and not be at work during their major

religious holidays. The problem can be whether they will get leave, not to mention that they would not be assigned to work then, for example.” (Interview #1)

“Discrimination is present throughout. Even though it is legally regulated that the Roma community should have guaranteed conditions for equality. In practice, it appears that there is still a lot of discrimination in the field of employment, also in the field of education [...] However, the fact is that [...] the degree of discrimination varies across Slovenia [...] Where the institute of the Roma counsellor, in cooperation with the municipality or mayor, has this dialogue so that basically this can be resolved [...] When it comes to hiring, it is not a matter of clear prejudice in the sense of the employer because it must be understood that the employer is looking for a vacant position; since he has a vacancy, he chooses the candidate he thinks is the best. We are talking about the private sector, of course, and here, of course, he chooses the best candidate, in his opinion, who will very rarely or almost never be a Roma. That is to say, it is not about some kind of discrimination in the sense of direct discrimination, but rather the staff choices. Therefore, we are trying to create some new jobs that will contribute to additional employment. And then indirectly quashing this prejudice towards discrimination, however [...] I have direct experience. I was employed at the Employment Service as a coordinator in the search for new job opportunities for Roma, and we had [...] [T]he employer was choosing 10 vacancies from among 30 candidates. And in the group of 30, there were 4 Roma. I knew them. They presented themselves perfectly, and met the conditions for being invited to an interview. And when this started, then the employer selected 10 out of those 30, and of course, I had no influence, but I had the opportunity to be there: and the employer selects and comes to 9. He chose 9 of them and not a single Roma. And then, before he selects the 10th, I say: ‘Why not now the tenth one to be Roma?’ ‘No.’ A direct ‘no.’ I said: ‘Do you have a reason, an explanation?’ He knew nothing. Then he says: ‘Well, only if you will vouch for him.’ Indeed, one of them was very good, I knew him, and I suggested him, and he selected him. He selected him. But later, among those 10, this Roma was the best worker. Then he admitted to me: ‘Yes, look, earlier, look, thank you for the selection’ [...] But, I want to say, you really do have to do some convincing. But he decided exclusively, he saw by the appearance, he recognised by the last name that this was a Roma and there was no chance. He wouldn’t, he wouldn’t.” (Interview #9)

“It should be pointed out that some jobs are also formally inaccessible by law, for example, due to an unjustified condition of citizenship.” (Interview #1)

“I see discrimination in accessing the labour market [...] They cannot access any job because they simply do not have the right visa in the eyes of employers and this is because they are from elsewhere and this is discrimination based on nationality [...] To me, this [discrimination] seems to be the strongest. Not being able to enter the labour market because you are from another country and despite the fact that there is a shortage of workers. Even though we know there are vacancies, they’re simply not selected.” (Interview #4)

“The case with my former student. She completed the programme with us and did her internship at the school [...] She was doing well, and they were delighted with her and used her in all possible [ways]; I mean at parents’ meetings, when pacifying the children, for translating, many things at school. She was really the right hand of every teacher at that school. And then she finished her internship, and we asked this school if they would hire her for, say, an assistant there, or at least as an intercultural mediator [...] ‘Yes, we’ll see...’ Although they had seen it already; she has proven that she was the staff that was actually needed in that school. And now recently there was a vacancy, and they didn’t invite her. There was a call for just such a job. They were looking for someone who would work through public works. She met all the requirements, but they said there was too much competition to take her. Now tell me, if that’s not discrimination, I don’t know what is. The lady is right for the job because they said it themselves, and she proved it. Here, this is one such example that seems to me, personally, it seems to me to be pure discrimination [due to ethnicity, citizenship, foreign status].” (Interview #5)

“I was employed in a company [...], and at some stage, I actually felt discrimination. But in such a way that it was impossible to prove it. Namely, it was about the fact that I, as the team leader, had a certain method, a certain methodology that I used, which they wanted to be used more widely. But instead of choosing me to do it, they selected someone else—a white person. At that time, I actually really felt discriminated against and, because this person, not only did they took things over, but they actually came to me to ask me how to do it, and I didn’t feel good at all [...] In short, someone else took over the position

that I should have actually got, and I would have done it well, or in any case better, and they also knew it [...] But now it is difficult to prove it.” (Interview #7)

“It seems to me that language is the main problem. If the accent is felt, you will definitely be perceived differently. But if it is felt as if you were born here and you speak Slovenian like a native Slovenian, that you have such an origin, then it is much less so [...] In our institution [...], we talked about it, and some thought that because of their first and last name, they did not get the position that appertained to them in terms of expertise and everything else. That it was just that [...] Or that they are being harassed at work because they have the wrong first and last name.” (Interview #10)

Language and, above all, the assumption of ethnicity in relation to the surname are also often mentioned in the literature. For example, perceived more negative implicit (but not explicit) attitudes were associated with greater discrimination against job applicants who had “Middle Eastern” names (Rooth 2010). As one of the essential identity markers, which is supposed to indicate the presumed ethnic origin of candidates, names are also often used in correspondence tests, where, for example, test candidates have typical Moroccan names, and control candidates have typical Belgian names (Verhaeghe and De Coninck 2021). Research has also shown that many respondents believe ethnic markers, such as their name, are even more responsible for the discrimination they face than skin colour. Data from the Generation 98 survey, for example, show an interesting comparison between Muslim and other non-European immigrants. Only among North African men is skin colour the primary explanation for the discrimination they experience. Otherwise, the main explanation seems to be the ethnic (and, by implication, religious) specificity of their name (Silberman et al. 2007).

Healthcare

When describing potentially unequal treatment in healthcare, the interviewees often revealed the complexities of intersectional discrimination. In this area, too, the personal circumstances of citizenship, foreigner status, ethnicity, skin colour and religion intersect, especially in the interdependence with a lack of knowledge of the Slovenian language.

“My acquaintance friend, who is [...] not at all tight-lipped, but friendly, tidy, educated, employed. But something was not right, the doctor had such comments. An older gynaecologist, something probably didn't sit well with her: why did she marry a Slovenian? and such, you know [...] her husband also said that the doctor discriminated, as did her mother-in-law [...] they say that something was wrong.” (Interview #2)

“As far as discrimination in healthcare is concerned, I have witnessed several cases, I don't know if it is prejudice or if it was the current mood of the doctor; but it happened several times that when I was translating for certain ladies, the doctor in a very inappropriate way [...] I don't know, she raised her voice at the patient, or she scolded her, why do you come to Slovenia if you don't even know a word or you just come to suck our system. At that time, because this lady in the case in question was heavily pregnant and only then came to Slovenia; when she was heavily pregnant, she was in Kosovo. She said: ‘You just come to give birth in Slovenia, and there is nothing else of you!’ As a rule, the doctors address or talk to me because the patient does not understand. But they disregard the fact that a person communicates mostly through facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice, and a tiny percentage is actually in speech. And as an intercultural mediator, you try to calm these emotions, or rather you act as a buffer to convey what you have to say to one and the other. The doctor really should have said that to the patient in a gentler way. But she understood what it was all about. I mean, she understood everything. It wasn't even necessary for me to translate for her.” (Interview #6)

A common thread in narratives about experiences with healthcare staff revolves around language and prejudice. There is little research that addresses stereotypes and prejudices in a linked way. The research on cognitive bias, called illusory correlation, significantly impacted the cognitive explanation of stereotyping. Indeed, many studies substantiate the fact that illusory correlations in intergroup perception are a fairly common phenomenon. Strange, special, different things remain in our memory, and we tend to perceive positive or negative connections between events (objects, etc.), even though, in reality, there is no connection between them. In 1976, Hamilton and his colleagues found in experiments that people overemphasised the rare behaviours of a numerically diverse group. In the experiment, the smaller (less numerous) group was described more negatively than the larger (more numerous), although the ratio of negative to positive behaviours was the same for both groups. This alerts us

how illusory correlations can create negative stereotypes about minorities. Although the behaviour of members of minority groups is no worse than the behaviour of members of the majority group, such errors can lead to prejudice (Oakes et al. 1994: 45). We look for the causes of negatively evaluated actions directly in the members of the other group (“that’s just the way they are”), and for our own group we find an explanation in objective circumstances (“unfortunate coincidence”, “we were provoked”, for example).

In the health field, the interviews revealed that individuals with refugee status are particularly often subjected to unequal treatment, as language is a common barrier to communication for them (see, for example, Lipovec Čebren 2021; Ješe Perković 2022).

“When they come to the doctor, they are turned away because they don’t know the language. They also specifically say to their face: ‘This is Slovenia. Slovenian is spoken here.’ They behave inappropriately, shout [medical staff]. The other day I was accompanying someone, the nurse was giving him [the refugee] instructions on how to prepare, and she was sputtering. He tried to understand a little. But because it was too fast, he said: ‘I don’t understand, I don’t understand,’ and she started yelling. And I said: ‘He can hear well, but speak to him more slowly. The problem is that you are too fast.’ Maybe she calmed down a bit, but [...] Realistically, many people don’t want to accept them if they come alone. They are basically saying they will not be able to treat the patient correctly because they will not understand. But if someone is scheduled for a medical examination because of work, because he has to go to the job the next day, they refuse him?! Then [...] you know how it is [...], and he has to have this examination to go to the job the next day, to start working. I mean, it’s such baseless reasons that they reject them and yell at them all over the waiting room.” (Interview #12)

“The most discrimination against the clients themselves, as well as us, who also accompany them and are professional colleagues and consultants, is within the health system, and I am saying this broadly in the entire system—access to doctors. We have already noticed that even if some doctor said that they are either already too full, that they are no longer accepting patients—but on their official website, according to the list, as far as they have, we see that this is not the case. And we have already had cases where, say, a Slovenian citizen was still taken by the doctor in question, but they claimed that they no longer take patients because we sent a list of persons with international

protection. So, discrimination within the health system starts right at the beginning: from choosing a doctor, then to visiting doctors to appointments, arranging appointments, to consulting with clients. So, the communication between the doctor and the refugee. It is true that we are all aware that there is a language barrier. A doctor often says: ‘No, I can’t now, make another appointment and come with a translator.’ We agree, but sometimes certain things are not like that, I will say important, deep, I don’t know, now if someone just comes to the laboratory—he doesn’t need to communicate much. Already here, things can go wrong. Let alone if we send the clients somewhere by themselves, even though they are already independent, that they know the system, that they know what the appointment is, they know where they need to go, they also know the basic things, how to say or show a sheet.” (Interview #13)

The interviewees stressed the unfriendliness and unresponsiveness of the staff in healthcare institutions, which cannot be said to be unequal treatment, but is entirely in line with already existing research in the field of integration in healthcare, which mainly highlights language barriers in communication (Huber et al. 2020) and language as a trigger for hate speech and racist prejudice (see for example Lipovec Čebren 2021; Ladić et al. 2022). Examples of employees in healthcare institutions who use offensive and insulting language towards people who do not speak Slovenian are at least as well-known as comparable prejudices of employees in the public administration (Medvešek and Bešter 2010; Pajnik and Bajt 2011).

A refugee from Lebanon described her experience with the healthcare system as follows: “Before I got my indefinite duration residence entitlement, I faced several incidents while seeking medical services. The most common was that they always left me waiting for a very long time. Even when I had a brain tumour, once, they let me wait for 13 hours, even though I was in severe pain at the time.” Long waiting times are a regular occurrence in the Slovenian public health system. Therefore, we cannot conclude from the quote that unequal treatment occurred. It would also be difficult to argue that there was discrimination in the case of a refugee from Syria who said: “The gynaecologist was terrible. A few years ago, I was pregnant and bled for two months. The baby was alive, but then I had a miscarriage. She treated me very badly and rudely. After two months, I went to a hospital [elsewhere]. And there they told me: ‘Why didn’t you come here earlier?’” But if we add the information that both women were Muslim, that both were refugees who did not yet speak Slovenian fluently,

and that the Syrian lady was veiled and wore a hijab, the image of potential intersectional discrimination emerges, which places people in a completely new reality of unequal treatment due to several simultaneous personal circumstances.

Apart from cases of explicit discrimination, the interviews also emphasise the already mentioned difficult conditions in healthcare in general and look for reasons for such behaviour in the overload of medical staff or personal stereotypes and prejudices:

“However, it may have happened two or three times that at the doctor, there was this entry point where the nurse was so rude. But this question again, yes [...] all possible stereotypes come to light. But we know it’s also hard to call them up—getting to a doctor [is] almost science fiction.” (Interview #5)

“The first thing is that healthcare for asylum seekers has been severely cut. So, there is a doctor in the asylum centre, but they are often unavailable. Medical care, however, is limited to paracetamol. Otherwise, there is care that is a pro bono clinic with a consulting room. However, even there, the services they can provide are quite limited. Another thing, of course, is what is a problem for the general population. This is the lack of medical and dental clinics, which of course is also felt by people with international protection status.” (Interview #15)

Access to Goods and Services

“Last time, a colleague surprisingly explained that they never let him into one nightclub, which is otherwise known for being open to diversity. Of course, because of his looks, because he’s from the Middle East.” (Interview #1)

“Periodically, they refuse entry to clubs to foreigners, actually people who look like foreigners. I was allowed to enter once, but my two friends from Pakistan were not allowed to enter the premises.” (Interview #14)

“In shops, bars, restaurants, clubs or other services, they don’t let me into the club because I’m a migrant, a refugee. When I’m standing in

line and waiting at the cash register, I get harassed, especially by older people.” (Interview #18)

The interviews showed some examples of denying access to clubs, as was illustrated by the quotations above. In their narratives, the interviewed persons also connected this phenomenon with police profiling based on skin colour, which is discussed separately in the section below on administrative procedures and state services due to the suspicion of systemic discrimination.

In the field of access to goods and services, the interlocutors mainly touched on access to those basic goods and services that do (not) enable a person to function normally in everyday life. Access to housing and banking services was most often emphasised in the interviews, as it is an area of existence that concerns basic questions, such as where someone will live, what the quality of life will be, and how they can manage their finances enabling survival.

“We have a lot of immigrants from Kosovo and Albania. For example, there is also a big gap in communication here. In terms of amenities, of course, it is difficult to find an apartment [...] The problem is in Ljubljana, my colleague told me. More numerous families where there are 3 children and more do not get apartments at all. I mean, I don’t know, because of the kids or something. Some people still have this [idea] that then, for example, you cannot evict a person, or what if there are children. Or that their apartment will be wrecked. I don’t know what reasons [they have]. In general, it is challenging for families to get an apartment.” (Interview #12)

“I experienced it first-hand; otherwise, not for myself, but for one of my former students or persons in care. She is looking for an apartment, and I am calling everywhere on her behalf because she was left alone with her child [...] She just couldn’t find it anywhere. As they hear that she is alone, that she is Albanian, there is simply no apartment for her, and I call one relevant person, it was an older person. Otherwise, this is not discrimination at the state level, but it also happens in society, right. Well, the gentleman offers an apartment suitable for this lady, and I talk to him: ‘I heard that you have an apartment, you rent it out. I saw it on the net, but I’m wondering if it’s still available?’ and he said: ‘Yes, for such and such price,’ and I discussed everything with him. ‘And now,’ I said: ‘One more piece of information. I don’t need this apartment for myself, but for one lady who lives alone with a child, etc.’ I said. ‘What nationality is she, what is her situation?’ I couldn’t lie to a man

about her situation [...] ‘Oh,’ he said, ‘madam, no, no, no, that’s completely out of the question.’ He said: ‘I don’t like to have problems. I want peace, I don’t want to deal with these people.’ ‘Well,’ I said, ‘sir, on what basis is this now?’ He said: ‘No, no, no, these are problematic people, these are violent.’ Mostly, he throws a couple of such prejudices at me because he has heard them, or maybe he has experienced them at some point. I can’t know. He said: ‘I don’t want to have any problems with it.’ I said: ‘Good, but would you give me this apartment?’ ‘Yes, right away,’ he said. I said: ‘And you, sir, do you know that I am also Albanian?’ And yes: ‘I don’t know that. Where did you learn Slovenian so well?’ and I don’t know what. Then he started talking to me a little differently [...], and I stopped. I simply said goodbye to this gentleman. And I experienced first-hand how they are rejected. They simply don’t get that chance and opportunity to prove themselves. You can’t lump everyone together based on some prejudice!” (Interview #5)

Existing research also corroborates the difficult situation in the field of access to goods and services. Immediately after receiving the status, for example, persons with recognised international protection are challenged, as they must take care of all the basic needs for life and survival. The main and one of the most challenging obstacles is housing, as they sometimes spend several weeks looking for suitable accommodation, often with the help of not one but two or three volunteers and friends and non-governmental organisations (Ladić et al. 2022: 42). The lack of affordable housing is a big problem in Slovenia in general, also because a significant share of renting takes place within the shadow economy. Rents have risen in recent years (mainly in Ljubljana and on the coast), and it is difficult to afford a suitable place to live with average or even lower wages or financial assistance from the state. The problem is also that persons with recognised international protection must submit a rental agreement for financial aid from the state, and many property owners do not sign a rental agreement at all or do not specify the actual rent in the agreement to avoid paying taxes (although by doing so they violate the law). An additional problem is landlords’ discrimination, who refuse to rent out to third-country nationals in general and to refugees in particular (ibid.). As with access to health services, the interviews also here showed that unequal treatment is most pressing for persons with international protection (i.e. refugees) and asylum seekers:

“Certainly, the most pressing issues are housing—people find it difficult to lease an apartment to a foreigner, let alone a refugee or an asylum

seeker—and the labour market [...] The problems of the entire NGO sector, which provides support finding suitable accommodation for people with a refugee experience, as this is really necessary due to the dismissive attitudes of landlords. They can’t accomplish anything by themselves.” (Interview #1)

“[Have you ever experienced that someone who would rent out an apartment, after finding out that it was for refugees, would say that they would not rent it?] Yes, that too, yes: ‘But who is it about? For refugees... Ah, no, I’ll think about it,’ or: ‘No, not that.’ Or: ‘I’ll call again,’ but then the call is never returned. Yes, yes.” (Interview #12)

“I changed five houses in a year and a half, and nobody wanted to return the amount I paid in advance as security or guarantee. For example, I paid 1,200 euros for the first house, but after a week, the owner changed his mind and told us to leave the house, and he refused to refund me the 1,200 euros. The second house was in the centre. The owner asked me to pay 300 euros every month for the expenses (electricity, water, heating, etc.) and it’s really expensive because it’s just my children and me, but he didn’t want to show me the bills, so I decided to leave the apartment. I paid 1,000 euros for the third house, and when I moved there, I met five other families [refugees or migrants] who also moved there and paid 1,000 euros each, and we found out that the owner was a fraud, and for a year we are still waiting for the court’s decision to give us back our money.” (Interview #18)

Problems with banks were also repeatedly mentioned as a pressing problem, as foreign nationals still face rejection of the possibility of opening an account, which is a particularly pressing problem for applicants for international protection (see also Ladić et al. 2018, 2020, 2022; Ješe Perković 2022; Učakar 2022):

“The best-known cases are when persons with international protection failed to open bank accounts. This was also pointed out by the Advocate of the Principle of Equality and the Ombudsperson. What help is it if they say that we have a problem in society, but as far as we know, not to a single individual did they say that he was right in a specific case? There are always some circumstances that are supposed to justify the ‘misunderstanding’, precisely the culture of looking for excuses.” (Interview #1)

“Banks present many problems with asylum seekers because they do not allow opening bank accounts or make it conditional on a regular income, such as employment or obtaining any form of state social assistance.” (Interview #15)

“We have, I would say, systemic discrimination. Systemic discrimination is included in the system, for example, access to a bank account. You can’t open a bank account, but it’s difficult to prove it, and the fact didn’t go through that, for example, the banks were warned by the Advocate of the Principle of Equality regarding equal treatment. Well, but this is still happening. There, they also have parallel legislation on the prevention of money laundering and corruption, and the answer is time and again—and this is also sometimes a substantiated answer, a professional answer—that certain security processes are required and necessary because of this law, and that’s it. Then there are these trivial situations where a bank is suspicious of someone and cannot open an account because someone else from the same country has laundered money. This is still a huge problem. We are still constantly faced with this.” (Interview #12)

“Certain banks already started tightening their conditions years ago. But now, I don’t know if this is for the entire population of their clients, i.e., the citizens of Slovenia, or only for foreigners. Let’s not forget that certain countries belong to risk groups due to the possibility of money laundering. So, the banks are very consistent in this. The bank sets its own conditions regardless, and they don’t need to explain to us why the bank has its policy. Institutions such as the Association Odnos, the Advocate of the Principle of Equality, the Legal Information Centre, all have already written official complaints and letters that banks should not discriminate against whom they open a basic bank account. This should be accessible to everyone, but this is not the case [...] Currently, in Maribor, only NLB is willing to open basic accounts for persons with international protection. With means of proof, of course [...] This is then a problem because they don’t have, the centre for social work, when we submit the first application, we also state that the user does not have a bank account yet, as the bank does not open it until the user receives the first decision. Fine. The user will then receive the first decision, but the transfer, the first money social assistance, will not be able to go to the bank because all this has not yet been arranged. It is received on a postal order, which then the user is deprived of 20, 25 or 27 euros, as much as the postal order costs, to receive monetary social

assistance from the postal employee in cash on hand. And they don’t get a refund on that cost!” (Interview #13)

Administrative Procedures and State Services

In addition to discrimination, the interviews often revealed too many bureaucratic hurdles. All official procedures became even more perplexing during the COVID-19 epidemic when they were supposed to be carried out only online or were postponed, which is why there were delays and access to administrative units was difficult. Before the COVID-19 epidemic, administrative units had office hours when people could access them in person. Even before the epidemic, for example, there were considerable delays at the Department for Foreigners of the Ljubljana Administrative Unit. But the COVID-19 epidemic has dramatically affected access to administrative units. It was impossible just to walk in, as each customer had to first make an appointment over the phone. Overburdened and inaccessible administrative units were a challenge for all inhabitants of Slovenia, but they were a particularly significant obstacle for third-country nationals, and especially for persons with international protection, who are often not yet proficient in communicating in Slovenian (Ladić et al. 2022).

“They don’t want to talk in English in administrative units or other public institutions. Once at the administrative unit the lady didn’t want to talk to me in English and since I still don’t speak Slovenian fluently, she told me to go and learn it and: ‘Only when you speak Slovenian fluently, come here!’” (Interview #19)

In official procedures, equal treatment of all parties is imperative, but interviews show that official procedures and the conduct of state or civil servants can quickly make equal treatment difficult for persons with personal circumstances of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion. I, therefore, highlight this aspect separately:

“All processes, such formal ones, which are easier for a citizen to obtain, are more difficult for them [foreigners, refugees]. I am angered by such injustice because they are afforded social rights, just like citizens. But they cannot enjoy them. Wherever they go to these public institutions, administrative units, centres for social work, doctor. There are always

some obstacles that you have to fight through. I mean, it angers me that there are such differences. Double standards.” (Interview #12)

“I saw that they were discriminated against again based on foreigner status and based on refugee or asylum seeker status. I have witnessed how they are mistreated at the administrative unit, even though they are obliged to follow a certain procedure [...] In the administrative unit, the centre for social work, I have also witnessed how they argue, and then we arrange it with our attendance. But so, let’s say, if one woman went alone, if one family went alone and they would say: ‘We want to arrange...’ [the response would be:] ‘That won’t work.’ It’s not going exactly as it should. If one organisation, one person doesn’t represent them, things cannot be done.” (Interview #2)

The expert interviews showed exceptionally well how “migrants as a social group are politically powerless” (Učakar 2022: 57). Not only is there no general awareness of the existence of specific vulnerable groups in Slovenia, as Učakar writes, a priori in a worse social position, and “we, as a society, are, therefore, obliged to provide them with specific systemic solutions that would at least to some extent eliminate these vulnerabilities” (2022: 58), the interviews also revealed very problematic cases of ethnic profiling by the police. As was already evident from the answers in the online survey, for example: “If I use public transport and wait at a city bus station, my identity can be checked several times in the same hour,” the interviews also confirmed. Some people’s identities are much more often checked simply because of their appearance or based on their skin colour and, therefore, the attributed status of a foreigner. Ethnic profiling takes place in such a way that certain people are targeted on the street, for example, simply because of the attributed status of a foreigner. Cases similar to ethnic profiling by the police also occur at public events with accusations of theft and the like: “However, not so much by the state authorities as by the local population” (Interview #15). It has also happened several times that the police have been called to bars to check certain patrons. Another aspect in close connection with ethnic profiling, namely, is the increase in the phenomenon of criminalisation of migration in general (for more, see, for example, Kogovšek Šalamon 2017).

“Various forms of discrimination do occur, but they depend on individual cases. For example, the person being dealt with by a police officer; we detected cases where a person was directly targeted based on their skin colour. This happened during the COVID-19 epidemic

when in an area where several people were without a mask, a policeman treated two dark-skinned people and also fined them.” (Interview #15)

“[Colleagues with refugee experience] also have many negative experiences with the police, which we consider unacceptable ethnic profiling. For example, several times, they were the target of ‘random’ stops on the street while walking around the city simply because of their ‘foreign’ appearance, and it also happened several times that the police were called to bars to check if a patron was an ‘illegal migrant.’” (Interview #1)

“I used to go to the home every now and then to renew my rent support, and every time I was stopped by the police and asked a series of questions such as: Why are you here?, and they talked to me badly. Yet another example: I once crossed the road on a pedestrian crossing, and the light was green to cross, but in the middle of my crossing, it turned red, so I continued to cross because I was in the middle of the road. I was suddenly stopped by a policeman and fined 50 euros. I started to explain to him in English while he was checking my ID, and then he said: ‘You have a permanent residence in Slovenia, so you must speak Slovenian and not English.’” (Interview #18)

Education

Also, in the field of education, the interviews showed the complexity of intersectional discrimination. Above all, they revealed the often-challenging distinction between actions that indicate unequal treatment due to some personal circumstance and actions that “merely” express the prejudices of individuals or may be a mirror image of current legislation that reflects broader systemic inequalities.

“And they were talking to each other in Albanian [...], and the teacher was yelling, literally yelling at him. When I came along, she calmed down. The children even more, and it was a very heated situation. I came there and I said: ‘What’s the problem?’ These children, who otherwise trust me, say: ‘The teacher scolds us, why are we talking in Albanian here in the corridor. That I have no right to be here, that I should disappear from here, and she attacked us.’ [...] I heard it from a

distance. And then the teacher tells her point of view. She said they were loud, that: 'I don't understand what they are talking to each other, because they are in a Slovenian environment, they should talk in Slovenian so that we can all understand them.' She also felt threatened in a way. I understand her point of view in a way, and I also understand the children. I don't know, but here was an adult, a teacher, and she should have found some more suitable way to somehow calm the children down or to tell them the right way. This was one such case; now you be the judge whether this is discrimination or not." (Interview #5)

"My older child is 17 years old. When we were in Lebanon, he was a soccer player and was getting medals. When he came to Slovenia, he started playing again, but he didn't continue because the other players kept beating him. Even some teachers, not all, are racist." (Interview #18)

In the field of education, systemic inequalities were emphasised in the interviews, which were especially strongly expressed during the COVID-19 epidemic and the closure of public life, primarily in educational and care institutions:

"This was especially highlighted now during the epidemic when schooling was held at a distance, and it was at this time that we, the representatives of the Roma community, noticed that the situation of Roma children had worsened, and this is where this exclusion of the Roma community at all levels was revealed." (Interview #9)

"The main problem is that when there were now these lockdowns that parents do not know the language. They simply cannot help, and immediately this child of immigrants is in a subordinate position, that is, he cannot, he is not treated the same as a child with Slovenian parents because they cannot help him. Nor, as I can see, are teachers, many of them are not sensitised to these cases of children who come from somewhere and do not have the same opportunities as Slovenian children have." (Interview #10)

In the field of education, the interviews mostly covered problems with discrimination in schools or the issue of unequal treatment in access to kindergarten, but they also pointed to potential discrimination in higher education:

"The biggest problem still seems to me to be the hopeless situation of asylum seekers in Slovenia. This means; they are not second-rate, they are third-rate, fourth-rate. That's how I experience it. I mean, because basically, that's what happens. What happens is that if an asylum seeker is a single mother. But she can't go [to work] because the kindergarten is not accessible. Not to her child because she doesn't have enough money to pay the full amount. Who can afford it? She can't send the child to kindergarten. Now there are some fast programmes. We refer. But they all start at 4 pm. Where can she take the child herself? And [kindergarten is] great for the child, for socialisation, but you don't give such mothers the opportunity to go to school or to look for a job and get a job [...] so, here I see one form of discrimination [...] they don't have tax number or residency. They are not tax residents and can send their child to kindergarten—but they have to pay the full amount themselves, from 350 to 400 euros per month, I don't know. Of course, they don't have that money." (Interview #2)

"At the time, I didn't speak Slovenian because I had just arrived in Slovenia and wanted to take a couple of exams for my doctorate, and when I asked the professor, he said: 'You need to learn Slovenian to pass this exam.' I said yes: 'Yes, I will do it in Slovenian,' and he looked at me a little strangely, and I really studied for half a year, but I passed it. But then, when I went to Skopje, he met one of my professors from Skopje because I was a researcher at the faculty, and he said: 'You know what, there is a Macedonian woman. She has this idea that she'll have an exam with me,' and this professor replied to him: 'Ah, she is very serious.' As if he wanted to, he thought that I actually wanted to use this as an Erasmus trick to make it easier to take the exam abroad! [...] And so, it hurt me a little that someone was making conclusions about what I was like, even though I came with a scholarship, already an adult, 27 years old. Yes, so... It hurts a little. But [...] such an attitude! Then I had another exam with the same professor, and there were also students from Italy. But I saw that they passed it a little easier [...] You can feel it. You can feel it. I mean, I can't prove it now, nor do I want to. [If I understand correctly, you had to take the exam in Slovenian, the others took it in English?] Yes. They have such a different friendly attitude. More like ... I mean, yes, like that, a little different. As long as it's not something, you know. And I felt that, even that look. I studied hard in the library, the way when he sees you, if he comes in, you know, like that—a kind of look, like you don't belong here, you understand? I felt

it, I mean I know it. Even non-verbal communication says a lot, but he obviously looks at you like ...” (Interview #2)

Here I also provide a longer extract from the interview, which brings to the fore the situation of potential unequal treatment in secondary school regarding the completion of compulsory school practice. The interview expresses a strongly present feeling of discrimination in the educational system of a particular religious community due to clothing practices:

“We, our association, are very often, too often, approached by desperate mothers who have their children, daughters in secondary schools and wear a headscarf, and as part of the school curriculum, it is necessary to complete an internship. A huge problem has arisen at secondary medical schools, where these people, female students, have to do compulsory work practice in hospitals. And the hospitals clearly and loudly and explicitly emphasise that, unfortunately, this practice cannot be carried out with a headscarf [...] Of course, this is packaged in one wonderful decent response, that due to epidemiological measures, due to high hygiene standards, due to imaginary rules of aesthetics, etc., that this is actually not possible. This, in turn, greatly affects the self-esteem of these young girls. As a result, it also affects failure because without completing the mandatory practice, then the year is also incomplete. In short, women are faced with an extremely, extremely high level of discrimination, to which they do not know how to react and then resort to some legal means, which otherwise takes too long, and we try to solve the matter in a humane, civilised, tolerant way. Then primary school, now considering that Slovenia has accepted quite a few refugee families, especially from Afghanistan, and that these little girls, who are 8, 10 years old, I don’t know, also practice the Islamic way of dressing and wear this headscarf, they are facing big, big problems in primary schools, where until now they have not had this intercultural dialogue based on a specific case. Then there are big language barriers and this headscarf, which somehow hinders the education process, especially in physical education classes. So, we really don’t want people to throw away that religious belief and that religious way of life and dress because they come across that first hurdle, which is difficult. Moreover, with some joint agreements and professional support that we can offer, we listen to schools, families, and children. But no one’s listening. They are very rigorous in their decisions. Yes, actually, well, because, as I said before, this answer is always packaged as child care, that in consequence it’s a potential

disruption of classes, etc. In short, there is no room for manoeuvre for discourse. I warned about this a couple of years ago, that it would be necessary to solve it at the professional level, at the political level, that there will be more of these children and that, once we have these guidelines drawn up, that we will actually get rid of the many existing discriminatory practices that leave very, very negative consequences on society [...] In short, it is an encroachment on one human right or freedom, which we express through visualisation, and that’s when discrimination is the easiest. In other words, we discriminate against people through some visual effect because we have created certain prejudices in our heads. And children are a very vulnerable group, and they don’t know how to defend themselves [...] This can actually go so far that girls are ready to transfer to other schools. This is because it is very utopian to expect someone to throw away their clothing practice and code because it was impossible to complete an internship. But, as I said, this discrimination nowadays has a name and a surname, and the institutions actually tell you very publicly, very vividly and without any hesitation that this is unacceptable for them and that they will not deviate from it. These letters are very much supported by various statements of directors, and principals. In short, they are legally protected. All victims of discrimination are actually pushed to the edge, and many other questions arise here. A question of education, a question of general existence, human rights and freedoms.” (Interview #3)

The personal circumstance of religion was rarely mentioned in the interviews, or it was contained in the intersection with citizenship or foreigner status, where individual religious communities were not mentioned by name:

“Discrimination, yes, certainly in all areas of social life, namely ethnicity, also religion. Especially these two personal circumstances.” (Interview #12)

However, it turned out that the unequal treatment regarding the personal circumstance of religion in the interviews is mainly emphasised in the specific connection to the Islamic religious community in Slovenia. It is a problem that remains unaddressed (Bajt 2008; Zalta 2022).

“I do not see particularly obvious and pressing cases of discrimination based on the personal circumstances of religion [...] in Slovenia. The

only signs that could indicate this kind of problem are the calls of the Islamic community in the RS [Republic of Slovenia] for the more systematic spiritual care of their members in prisons and hospitals, as well as their repeated requests for a more systematic provision of pork-free school meals.” (Interview #15)

Hate and Discriminatory Speech

Finally, we provide interview excerpts that explicitly state hate or discriminatory speech examples. Hate speech can be defined as offensive and discriminatory speech directed against minorities. It is a speech of subjugation and oppression directed against groups lacking political power in society, and it further deepens the inequality of social groups that have historically been more exposed to discrimination. In 2020, the Advocate of the Principle of Equality included “groups facing hate speech, racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia and misogyny” among the groups perceived to be most at risk of discrimination, with special emphasis on the impacts due to the COVID-19 epidemic (Advocate of the Principle of Equality 2021: 152). Based on the research, the most potentially discriminated groups are the Roma, the erased, asylum seekers and refugees, veiled Muslim women and immigrants from the so-called third countries (ibid.).

“[Discrimination] is felt every day, especially in connection with skin colour and/or ethnicity. Colleagues with refugee experience, for example, told us about many experiences with discrimination, some of which we reported directly to the Ombudsperson and the Advocate of the Principle of Equality. A colleague from Eritrea also faces daily remarks—hate speech—because of his skin colour, which we found particularly troubling. He says there isn’t a day that goes by that he doesn’t walk around town and hear negative comments and hate speech directed at black people. Let me add that this is happening in Maribor.” (Interview #1)

“One client told me she was from Iran. Nice lady, I mean, she doesn’t wear a headscarf [...] But she has a little darker skin. And she said herself that she got lost once in the centre of Maribor, and she asked someone for help, but he turned her down so rudely. Well, she said, she told me herself, that maybe he thought she was Roma: ‘Maybe he thought I was a gipsy, and that’s why he did it.’” (Interview #12)

“In particular, this hate speech [...] I also speak from practice directly, without hearing from elsewhere. Last year, I taught Albanian to Albanian children in the primary school in Celje [...] This was agreed with the Ministry of Education. It is stipulated in the law. That’s all according to the curriculum. We also have our own curriculum for that. Everything was in line with the law. There was nothing that wouldn’t be. And the parents’ council got together and wrote such a letter that it was unheard of that they were now offering the Albanian language in primary school. So, what is this, Albanianisation was even mentioned, and it was also published, I don’t know, on some educational site and below [in online comments] it was... I mean, nothing was left unsaid against the Albanian-speaking community. Nothing!” (Interview #6)

At the same time, it is necessary to reiterate the difference between the assertion of a feeling of discrimination on the one hand and the discrimination determined by the competent institutions on the other hand. Judging when it was a (criminally prosecutable) occurrence of hate speech or discrimination and when it was not is, of course, a matter for competent institutions. The fact is that the people who participated in our research reported personal feelings they had been discriminated against and had been victims of hate speech. It is about experienced or perceived discrimination (Carter and Pieterse 2020).

“I have had several incidents. The first happened at the bus stop when I was with my husband, and a lady approached me and said: ‘You will be more beautiful without a hijab.’ I told her that I have to keep my beauty to myself and that I am a Muslim, so I wear a hijab, but she started cursing me and saying bad words, which I didn’t understand, but my husband understood, so he answered her. The second incident happened in Tivoli Park when I was playing with my child, and suddenly a lady came and started cursing and spitting on me for no reason. I didn’t understand exactly what she was saying, so I started crying, grabbed the kid and went home. The third incident happened on a bus. I usually silence my phone on the bus, but I forgot that day, so my phone suddenly alerted me to the ‘Athān’ prayer time. Then an older man started shouting and cursing at me, to which I could not answer even a single word.” (Interview #18)

Ultimately, the discrepancy between different understandings of discrimination, or the ignorance of what discrimination is, can also result

from a lack of public discussion and public awareness. Namely, the research also showed the problematic ignorance, insensitivity of civil servants and their lack of knowledge of some basic facts, categories, regulations and procedures:

“One lady told me this herself when I said ‘person with international protection, refugee.’ And she said: ‘What’s that? I don’t understand that, tell me, what... How can I handle him.’ Oh, well, I said: ‘The same rights, right? He has insurance like everyone else,’ and she said: ‘Aha, aha.’ They don’t know what that means! [...] At a centre for social work, there are some, I don’t know how to say... Some people are not qualified for their position. They issue illegal decisions because they are not correct. And now the practice was that they did not complain officially, but a social worker was called, and that was how it was resolved [...] The same is true in the administrative unit. It’s, I think it’s peculiar, really. It’s like an alien from outer space comes before them, and they don’t know how to treat the guy. It’s like they no longer know what their job duties are. They simply don’t know. And they [refugees] really can’t manage almost anything on their own. Nothing, because they also chase them away. You know from the administrative unit—especially in Maribor, they just chase them out! They don’t want to handle them because they should make a little effort regarding language. A person comes there and says exactly what he needs. But there must always be someone next to him as if vouching for that person. Even at the bank, many times.” (Interview #12)

Even examples of good practices already in place are not always utilised, which requires consideration of different approaches that would enable the system to function better:

“I believe that absolutely intercultural mediation is one means with which we can also face or overcome discrimination or discriminatory treatment in healthcare, specifically if we are now talking about this area [...] But [the intercultural mediator for the Albanian language in the healthcare centre] told us and explained, presented her experience that the medical staff itself, the doctors failed to use this institute, this option as often as they could have. Because it was actually a burden for them. They are so busy that basically [they thought]: ‘Who needs this on top of everything else.’ But it was so valuable that they had one person [...] working there just for them actually [...] it was such a valuable resource, but they weren’t taking advantage of it. It’s this lack

of awareness, especially about the importance of intercultural mediators in general, in the local environment, in such institutions, what it means at work.” (Interview #5)

“Possibilities of reasonable adjustments [...] are not regulated in employment legislation. And in this sense, I wonder what the diversity management policies are in Slovenia. Are these fads that only relate to multinationals? Is it just a pose? Are these just different ‘certificates’ that are then hung on the walls without the real content behind them? Without the right foundations, that is real confrontation and anti-discrimination measures, we can’t even begin to talk about diversity management.” (Interview #1)

Consequences of Discrimination

The use of the narrative method made it possible for the data from the interviews to capture nuances and examples from everyday life that paint a picture of discriminatory practices and, above all, the consequences that unequal treatment has for the community as a whole and for the individual experiences of people who encounter it. Simultaneously, the interviewees listed anger and rebellion, but also hiding their own identity, shame, discomfort, and above all, the feeling of inequality or second-class status and the fact that they cannot realise their full potential.

“I think that in Slovenia, there are two categories of people. One is the category that has citizenship. Mostly autochthonous. So, Slovenians [...] And the second category are foreigners. And then these foreigners are divided [...] whether they are Muslims, whether they are Serbs..., i.e. Orthodox, or they are xy of a different religion and so on. I look at discrimination in such a way to divide it. There are two types of discrimination with which we operate, we work in this field. The first one is structural. The other is the everyday one, and the two are intertwined, of course. It is not that one excludes the other or that the two are separate. They are always intertwined. But as a foreigner in Slovenia, you are basically discriminated against from the very start, because you have absolutely no right to certain services. You have fewer rights than someone who holds a Slovenian passport, and according to the Foreigners Act, the Citizenship Act, and the International Protection Act, it gives you time to accumulate certain

rights so that you can then reach this level [...] All the time, all of us foreigners probably have the feeling that we are not yet worthy. That we still don't have all these rights, which are taken away from us from the very start because we have to earn citizenship. We have to live [in Slovenia] for 10 years, of which 5 years continuously. We must have continuous income. We have to prove every day of our residency and so on." (Interview #11)

The quotation above is a remarkable illustration of the “borderline, liminal state” (Učakar 2022: 57), in which non-citizens are kept, especially persons from “third countries”, i.e. outside the European Union. In the system of continuous conditioning of statuses and the resulting rights that are limited in various ways, the “status of foreignness” often denies the migrant population the very right of access to areas in which discrimination could even occur (ibid.).

“The consequences are that you hide your identity, are ashamed, do not feel good in society, and cannot realise your potential. Everything that you could, just because you are not Slovenian. These are the consequences and the fact that [...] you approach people with mistrust, thinking they will look at you differently because of this, though there are also some who may not. You already think in advance that they will, and then you have the feeling that you didn't understand, that you are underprivileged [...] And you shut yourself in this ghetto of yours, and then you only hang out with people who are the same as you and you have a hard time opening up. That is to say, this definitely affects the poor integration of society. Because you feel different, isolated, that you are not accepted, and you then feel good only in the company of equals. That's why we also have some, I don't know, like some parts of Ljubljana, where there are only immigrants from the former Yugoslavia, for example, and then we have the fact that they have a hard time learning the language and so on. Everything, everything ... how you react, and how, I don't know, it's more so individual. Some try harder, I don't know, that they are as equal as possible, while others close themselves off and go into this ghettoization.” (Interview #10)

The interlocutors not only listed where and when they experienced discrimination, but also shared with us their feelings, opinions and descriptions of why such treatment occurs and why such actions are directed against them. Emphasis was mainly on ethnicity and nationality. Discrimination on the grounds of language and first and last name was

highlighted, which some interviewees called “ethnic and cultural discrimination” (Interview #10). This is consistent with the current domestic and international research (Brezigar 2017a; Medvešek and Bešter 2010; Pajnik and Bajt 2011; Carlsson and Eriksson 2016; Verhaeghe and De Coninck 2021).

The interviews also showed a difference in the treatment of the first and second generation of immigrants, which they associate with the knowledge of the Slovenian language, which—with rare exceptions—is usually the reason for discrimination due to accent or errors in written expression:

“Specifically, because of the language as well. The fact that they come [at the workplace] and only explain something to you in Slovenian and don't make an effort and know that you don't speak that language [...] Except now I see the second generation [of immigrants] sitting in the administrative units, being [employed there], Bosnians and Serbs. I see many people signed, so you know, that feeling when you get a decision from the centre for social work or something and someone gives you a very nice answer [on the level of language knowledge] A1. Most of the surnames are—from the former Yugoslavia. So, the second generation. But this is another generation. We are toasted [the first generation].” (Interview #11)

Hate speech online and latent discrimination in public life and the workplace were also frequently mentioned. Among exposed groups of the population that experience unequal treatment, the interviews showed that it is most commonly immigrants from the republics of the former Yugoslavia, discrimination against Roma, unequal treatment of asylum seekers and persons with international protection status (i.e. refugees), and particularly pressing is the unequal and racist treatment of people based on skin colour, which is also experienced by citizens and their children. On these dimensions, unequal treatment in schools was also mentioned several times, although education is highlighted as the least critical in Slovenia according to the current research (see, for example, Dežan and Sedmak 2020; Ladić et al. 2020, 2022; Sedmak et al. 2022).

Roman Kuhar (2009) notes the sad reality that discrimination does not dry up. After more than a decade, we can only agree with his findings, as our research also does not indicate that discrimination in Slovenia is a thing of the past. In conclusion, I provide three more excerpts from the interviews, which speak in general about the most exposed problems in the field of unequal treatment and where are the possible causes of the current situation in this area in Slovenia:

"I think that employment is primarily [a problem in Slovenia]. It is very difficult to get a job. It's not only about this discrimination but also about social capital because if you come as an immigrant, you don't know anyone, you don't have any connections, nothing. Then it will be more difficult for you to get a job than if you were born here and you have primary school friends, secondary school friends, and I don't know who else. So, I think this is a problem for employment and promotion. It is also considered for occupying some very responsible positions that bring status and very good pay. At least that's my impression based on personal experience and experience in the association. It is considered whether you are Slovenian or not. In that sense, I think it has an impact." (Interview #10)

"The problem is that their ID card says 'refugee' in big letters [...] Basically now anyone who looks at their card [can] ask: 'How come you're a refugee? When did you arrive? What happened to you?' But these are some very complex stories. Is it blood revenge, or is it something like the LGBT scene, for example, and this seems to me to be a huge stigma that every security guard, every possible nurse who looks at your card, official person questions you. Because I understand that people are interested in this, but they feel very distressed [...] Does every professor at the university really have to find out that this person is a refugee? Does every security guard need to know this? Something that is supposed to help this person is actually harming them, isn't it? It actually puts them in a discriminatory position. It doesn't say anything like that about me on my card, they don't have anything to ask me when they meet me." (Interview #2)

"People who deal with certain groups of the population who are in an unequal position and neglected, we know their stories, hardships, reactions. In general, however, these topics are incredibly underrated. There is not enough talk about things that concern not only them but all of us in the general public, there are not enough systematic awareness campaigns on these topics, systematic education against prejudices and stereotypes in schools, and at the same time, hate speech is increasingly spreading and normalising in society, some people can even in the media openly incite every day. The state should provide space and opportunities for raising awareness and combating discrimination, it should firmly stand behind this, with its own example, but it has not been doing this concretely and systematically since the non-discrimination department of the Ombudsperson of the

Republic of Slovenia was dissolved. Now and then, a glimpse or a small project, but otherwise everything is left to the NGO sector." (Interview #1)

Conclusion

The dynamic and cumulative view discussed here represents the last dimension of discrimination analysed in the book. The narratives on personal experiences of unequal treatment, prejudice and hate speech confirmed the data from the survey and situation testing on the problematic presence of ethnic discrimination in Slovenia. In addition to the already highlighted discriminatory areas of the labour market and access to housing, the interviews in this section also revealed controversial treatment in the areas of services, administrative procedures, health and education, and the narratives further shed light on ethnic profiling and hate speech. Although the perception of discrimination does not necessarily mean that discrimination in the sense of a violation of the law has actually occurred, the direct experiences and narratives of the feelings and consequences of unequal treatment are crucial to understanding the broader social effects of complex inequalities. To address the problem of discriminatory treatment, regulations and laws alone—which are, of course, necessary—are not enough, as education and awareness-raising are also paramount.

7

CONCLUSION

There is a lack of transparent, detailed and credible data on ethnic discrimination in Slovenia. For historical reasons, the collection of personal data disaggregated by individual characteristics, such as “ethnic origin”, is a sensitive issue in many European countries, while equality data are an important tool in monitoring the implementation of legislation and policies to promote equality and non-discrimination and progress on the ground. In Slovenia, there is a lack of data on experiences with discrimination obtained directly from members of minority groups, which would enable the identification of the most problematic areas of life. There is also a lack of data that would directly prove discrimination. The purpose of the monograph was hence to present the first dedicated empirical research on how persons with personal circumstances of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion in Slovenia experience discrimination. Including several different personal circumstances was intentional, since measuring ethnic discrimination in a context where these statistics are not systematically collected is only possible with the incorporation of several different dimensions that intersect in the understanding of ascribed or experienced ethnicity. This follows the findings of international research, which in the context of perceived ethnic discrimination, often consider ethnic, religious and national group affiliations together, which is especially evident in the case of immigrant and Muslim minorities. The existing research on discrimination in Slovenia also highlights the unequal position

of the Roma community, immigrants, refugees, and the erased, which confirms that the field of discrimination based on ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion is one of the most relevant and sensitive issues.

Discrimination is a phenomenon that negatively affects the people subjected to it. It systematically pushes the communities that are discriminated into positions that prevent the course of their life paths in the desired directions. In the legal sense, discrimination is understood as an event that happens at a certain time and in a certain place. The book focused on a broader, sociological understanding of discrimination. Although individual instances of unequal treatment may seem small and their effects weak, they accumulate over life courses into significant and real negative consequences. Therefore, instead of merely reviewing individual cases, I followed the recommendations of international literature to treat discrimination as a more dynamic and cumulative process. As a consistently present and long-lasting process, discrimination can eventually lead to a cumulative disadvantage transmitted through organisational and social structures. Policies and processes that cause inequalities in one area of life sooner or later also generate inequalities in other areas.

In the book, therefore, in addition to the dominant episodic view (i.e. an event that happens at a certain time and in a certain place), which is characteristic of the legal aspect, discrimination is considered as unequal treatment at the intersection of at least three other sociological dimensions: as perceived discrimination, as cumulative and as a dynamic process. It is important for the sociological treatment of discrimination to include the personal experiences of people who encounter discrimination. Therefore, I used the concept of perceived discrimination, which means the subjectively assessed experience of an obstacle. The latter is attributed by the person to a discriminatory act or structure in the social environment, regardless of whether this attribution is actually correct or not. All types of discrimination, especially subtle forms, are often not easily measurable and usually do not even fall within the realm of the illegal. Recognising that discrimination is crippling society is a fundamental first step to properly addressing this problem. Discrimination is usually hidden but also widespread, as it has deep social, economic, political, historical and cultural causes intertwining with each other. In addition, there is a belief that discriminatory practices are a thing of the past, making it difficult to expect the recognition of one's own discriminatory behaviour and face the fact that we ourselves may sometimes violate the principle of equal treatment. Due to the widespread denial of discrimination, proving discrimination is generally very difficult and subject to various challenges.

For many years, international literature has dealt with ethnic or racial discrimination with the help of the concept of social distance, which is measured with the help of official statistics. In Slovenia, with the abandonment of the population census in 2002, the systematic and longitudinal collection of data on ethnicity and religion was lost. Therefore, researching discrimination based on the dimensions of ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion is a challenge that the present publication aimed to tackle. Proving discrimination is difficult, as in many cases, no clear and unambiguous evidence exists. To be able to determine the share of particular social groups in the population, in addition to longitudinal measurements and data collection, a clear definition of the terminology is by all means necessary. This challenge is particularly significant in the personal circumstances under consideration, as the professional literature often fails to agree completely with the chosen concepts. The phrase "ethnic group," for example, avoids the invalidity of the term "race," but at the same time, it is itself flawed by the implicit assumption that there is a special kind of relationship dominated by ethnic sentiments. That is why I stressed that the most significant aspect of the topic of discrimination under consideration is in which identities people recognise themselves or are recognised, whereby this covers both individual actions and institutional practices.

Despite the necessary move away from the essentialisation of group identities, I tried to show why in researching discrimination, at some point, it is necessary to treat identities as real—namely because of the importance of experiences with discrimination reported by individual persons or groups. Arguments against data collection disaggregated by ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion include, for example, theoretical critiques of identity politics, which argue that identities are social constructions marked by the oppressive conditions that created them and should, therefore, not be attributed such great importance. Based on theoretical discussions, the book justified the view of identities as an important epistemic source. Although "personal experience" is socially and theoretically constructed, it is in this mediated way that it brings knowledge, which is why the book treats identity as both socially constructed and substantively real.

Based on a preliminary review of the existing literature, I posed two research questions, guided by the goal of obtaining valid data: (1.) how much and in which areas ethnic discrimination is present in Slovenia and (2.) whether ethnic discrimination is a phenomenon, which affects certain minority groups more, such as immigrants. Both research questions can be answered in the affirmative. The results of the research methods are

mutually supportive; the data obtained using the situation testing method confirm the findings based on the online survey and interviews, as a combination of different research methods was used. The quantitative method of situation testing thus gives a numerical value to individual experiences of discrimination in interviews, and the answers from the online survey are at the intersection of quantitative and qualitative data since in addition to statistics, the book also provides selected open answers about experiences with discrimination.

The main conclusion of the monograph is that ethnic discrimination is an issue in Slovenia, particularly in employment and the workplace and is also noticeable in healthcare, in access to services, especially in the housing market and administrative procedures. It should also be noted that some jobs in Slovenia are already inaccessible purely formally, i.e. by law, for example, due to the condition of Slovenian citizenship. Unequal treatment is usually accompanied by two other dimensions regardless of the area under consideration: prejudice and the language barrier. Prejudice affects discriminatory practices and inhibits equal treatment, while poor knowledge or lack of understanding of the Slovenian language often prevents people from accessing equal treatment despite formal rights. Of course, the discussed personal circumstances do not mean that in cases of unequal treatment it is necessarily a case of foreign nationals, as persons born and living in Slovenia are also discriminated against solely based on their first and last name, skin colour, ethnicity, religion or language. The data show that discrimination is most often experienced by persons perceived and treated as foreigners by the majority population. It is especially strongly present in relation to applicants for international protection and refugees, who also report experiences with police ethnic profiling. This is done so that people are stopped on the street and questioned for identification simply because of their appearance as a "foreigner", e.g. based solely on their skin colour and consequently attributed status as a foreigner. It has also happened several times that the police have been called to bars to check whether a patron is an "illegal migrant". Some people actually experience negative comments in public and hate speech online daily. Cases similar to police ethnic profiling also occur at public events with accusations of theft and the like.

The attitude towards the Roma population also shows the persistence of discriminatory practices, even though law formally prescribes that the Roma community should have guaranteed conditions for equal development. In practice, it appears that there is still a significant amount of discrimination in the field of employment and education. This was especially evident during the COVID-19 epidemic with distance learning.

The situation of Roma children worsened, and the exclusion of the Roma community at all levels was demonstrated (see, for example, Bešter and Pirc 2020). As can already be seen from the annual report of the Ombudsperson (Varuh človekovih pravic 2021), data from the field also confirm that when schools were closed, especially during the first wave of the COVID-19 epidemic, in the field of distance education, children from the so-called vulnerable groups (for example, children with a migrant background, children from economically weaker backgrounds, Roma children, children with special needs) were discriminated against, especially regarding access to information and communication technologies (see, for example, Gornik et al. 2020). There were differences in gaining knowledge, which hampered their academic progress and, consequently, the exercise of their right to education. The Advocate of the Principle of Equality also assessed that when distance learning was introduced with the help of computer technology during the first wave of the epidemic, not all students had the same opportunities (Advocate of the Principle of Equality 2020). In the area of access to education, in 2021, due to the amendment to the Aliens Act, the issue of restricting studies for international students was also relevant, which would disproportionately affect students from countries with a relatively lower standard, especially countries of the global south or the so-called developing countries (Bajt 2021). The situation testing of access to education partially indicated the problem of foreigners being educated at the universities in Slovenia, and interviews and open answers in an online survey also showed negative experiences with unequal treatment by some university professors.

In the field of religion, the abolition of the Office for Religious Communities in 2021 and the dissolution of the Council of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Dialogue on Religious Freedom in 2020, indicate systemic discrimination and a violation of the constitutional principle of equality of religious communities, which should be monitored more thoroughly in the future and the impact this will have on (non)equal treatment of all religious communities in Slovenia. The profession is otherwise reserved on this issue, although with the abolition of the administrative area of religious freedom, the emphasis is shifted to special rights and privileges and no longer to religious freedom. In 2021, the government wanted to establish a new Office for Religious Communities directly under the Prime Minister's Office, and only time will tell what will happen in the area of discrimination based on religion. The data from the survey and interviews about unequal treatment in the field of religion showed above all that a significant public taboo remains the headscarf of Muslim women, especially when it comes to the issue of compulsory school

practice, as they feel discriminated against. This is also confirmed by all the studies published on the position of Muslims in Slovenia (Bajt 2008; Pucelj 2017; Zalta 2018; Frank 2020).

One of the key problems that contribute to the emergence of discrimination based on ethnicity, citizenship, skin colour or religion in Slovenia are also certain media and implicitly nationalistic public discourse. Although media content and the discriminatory discourse and treatment present there were not the subject of this research, it is an important dimension, as the media co-shapes the public debate and influences the creation or confirmation of already existing prejudices. Hate speech is often present with public figures as well. This is particularly problematic when political rhetoric contains hate and discriminatory speech—and is ultimately dangerous, as hate speech can turn from inflammatory rhetoric to violent acts. The systematic spread of prejudice and discriminatory rhetoric has become normalised, while Slovenia still lacks a strategy to combat discrimination and racism. There is also a lack of public discussion on this topic and professional discussion on the possibilities of data collection based on the personal circumstances in question. In particular, non-governmental and minority organisations warn that the resources available for data collection are insufficient to carry out credible and representative research. The experience in the field shows that the resources for this purpose are too modest; therefore, the resulting research can only take small steps in the direction of data collection. The data presented here are just a piece in the mosaic of various one-off analyses, which cannot compete with the planned and longitudinal methodology of equality data collection, which can only be implemented institutionally and supported by official institutions. Therefore, the key would be for the state to support the collection of equality data in Slovenia as well, meaning for it to be established as sustainable and standardised, thus enabling long-term longitudinal comparative results and the reliability and validity of the data.

In the research presented here, ample amounts of high-quality quantitative and qualitative data were obtained so that the results can provide the basis for more effective treatment and recognition of discrimination against people based on ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion. Furthermore, with a precisely defined methodology for acquiring qualitative and quantitative data directly from persons with the personal circumstances in question, the results can also contribute to the practical work of competent authorities and institutions. Although intersectionality was not at the heart of the book, the data show the presence of simultaneous and complex inequalities, which indeed call for continued research on this topic and the implementation of new empirical studies.

References

- Advocate of the Principle of Equality (2018) Annual Report 2017. Ljubljana: Advocate of the Principle of Equality.
- Advocate of the Principle of Equality (2020) Ob morebitnem ponovnem zapiranju šol: priporočilo Zagovornika o zagotavljanju vključujočega izobraževanja. Available at: <http://www.zagovornik.si/ob-morebitnem-ponovnemzapiranju-sol-priporocilo-zagovornika-o-zagotavljanju-vkljucujocegaizobrazevanja/>.
- Advocate of the Principle of Equality (2021) Annual Report of the Advocate of the Principle of Equality for 2020 – Systemic overview. Ljubljana: Advocate of the Principle of Equality.
- Alter, P. (1991) Kaj je nacionalizem? In Študije o etnonacionalizmu. Rizman, R., ed. Ljubljana: Krt, 221–237.
- Anderson, B. (1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso Edition.
- Anthias, F. (2001) New Hybridities, Old Concepts: The Limits of ‘Culture’. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24(4): 619–641.
- Amnesty International (2011) *Vzporedna življenja: Romom v Sloveniji nista zagotovljeni pravici do ustreznega bivališča in vode*. London: Amnesty International.
- Apitzsch, U. and L. Inowlocki (2000) Biographical Analysis: A ‘German’ School? In *The Turn to Biographical Methods in Social Science*. Chamberlayne, P., J. Bornat and T. Wengraf, eds. London: Routledge, 53–70.
- Apitzsch, U. and I. Siouti (2007) Biographical Analysis as an Interdisciplinary Research Perspective in the Field of Migration Studies. *The York University Papers in Integrative Research Methods*. Research Integration project.

- Armstrong, J. A. (1991) Pristop k nastanku narodov. In Študije o etnonacionalizmu. Rizman, R., ed. Ljubljana: Krt, 39–50.
- Atkinson, P. (2005) Qualitative Research – Unity and Diversity. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung* 6(3).
- Augoustinos, M. and I. Walker (1996) *Social Cognition: An Integrated Introduction*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Babič Ivaniš, N., Š. Urh, V. Klopčič and M. Adamič (2006) Raziskava izobraževalnih in poklicnih interesov Romov. In *Poklicno informiranje in svetovanje za Rome – PISR*, Črnomelj, N. Žagar and V. Klopčič, eds. Črnomelj: Zavod za izobraževanje in kulturo, 197–242.
- Back, L. and J. Solomos (eds.) (2005) *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Bajt, V. (2008) Muslims in Slovenia: Between Tolerance and Discrimination. *Revija za sociologiju* 39(4): 221–234.
- Bajt, V. (2010) More Than Administratively Created “Foreigners”: The Erased People and a Reflection of the Nationalist Construction of the Other in the Symbolic Idea about “Us”. In *The Scars of the Erasure: A Contribution to the Critical Understanding of the Erasure of People from the Register of Permanent Residents of the Republic of Slovenia*. Ljubljana: Peace Institute, 195–217.
- Bajt, V. (2011) The Muslim Other in Slovenia: Intersections of a Religious and Ethnic Minority. In *Muslims in Poland and Eastern Europe: Widening the European Discourse on Islam*. K. Górak-Sosnowska, ed. Varšava: Faculty of Oriental Studies, 307–326.
- Bajt, V. (2016) Who ‘Belongs’? Migration, Nationalism and National Identity in Slovenia. *Razprave in gradivo* 76: 49–66.
- Bajt, V. (2019) The Schengen Border and the Criminalization of Migration in Slovenia. *Südosteuropa* 67(3): 304–327.
- Bajt, V. (2020) Metodološki priročnik. Internal document of the project “Reducing and eliminating discrimination based on ethnicity, ‘race’, nationality and/or religion”. Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.
- Bajt, V. (2021a) Situacijsko testiranje – protokol. Internal document of the project “Reducing and eliminating discrimination based on ethnicity, ‘race’, nationality and/or religion”. Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.
- Bajt, V. (2021b) Virus strahu: nacionalizem in pandemična družba. *Monitor ISH XXIII/2*: 50–77.
- Bajt, V. (2021c) Zmanjševanje in odpravljanje diskriminacije na podlagi etničnosti, »rase«, nacionalnosti in/ali vere: zaključno poročilo. Ciljnoraziskovalni projekt v okviru Ciljnega raziskovalnega programa »CRP-2019«. Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.
- Bajt, V. and M. Pajnik (2014) Slovenia. In Triandafyllidou, A. and R. Gropas (eds.) *European Immigration Sourcebook*. London: Ashgate, 327–338.
- Banton, M. (2002) *The International Politics of Race*. Oxford: Polity Press.
- Barth, F. (1996) Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. In *Ethnicity*. Hutchinson, J. and A. D. Smith, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 75–82.
- Bauer, M. (1996) The Narrative Interview: Comments on a Technique for Qualitative Data Collection. *Papers in Social Research Methods, Qualitative Series No. 1*, LSE: Methodology Institute.
- Beck, U. (1994) *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. London: SAGE.
- Bešter, R. and J. Pirc (2020) Impact of Remote Learning during the COVID-19 Lockdown on Roma Pupils in Slovenia. *Razprave in gradivo* 85: 139–164.
- Blank, R. M., M. Dabady and C. F. Citro (eds.) (2004) *Measuring Racial Discrimination*. Washington: The National Academies Press.
- Bobnič, R. and A. Vezovnik (2013) Diskurz o islamu ali dispozitiv izjav in objekta. *Časopis za kritiko znanosti* 41(251): 34–53.
- Bogardus, E. S. (1947) Measurement of Personal-Group Relations. *Sociometry* 10(4): 306–311.
- Brezigar, S. (2005) Etnična diskriminacija na trgu delovne sile. *Razprave in gradivo* 47: 168–189.
- Brezigar, S. (2012) Do Third Country Nationals in Slovenia face Prejudice and Discrimination? *Dve domovini* 35: 149–161.
- Brezigar, S. (2015) Critical Reflections on Managing Cultural Diversity in Workplaces in Slovenia. *Andragoška spoznanja* 21(4): 69–82.

- Brezigar, S. (2017a) Etnična diskriminacija med šolanjem v RS: stanje in izzivi. *Andragoška spoznanja* 23(2): 73–88.
- Brezigar, S. (2017b) Slovenia. In *Analysis and Comparative Review of Equality Data Collection Practices in the European Union – Legal Framework and Practice in the EU Member States*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 157–162.
- Brown, T. N. (2001) Measuring Self-perceived Racial and Ethnic Discrimination in Social Surveys. *Sociological Spectrum* 21: 377–392.
- Brubaker, R. (1999) *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bulmer, M. and J. Solomos (eds.) (1999) *Racism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Carlsson, M. and S. Eriksson (2016) Do Attitudes Expressed in Surveys Predict Ethnic Discrimination? *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40(10): 1739–1757.
- Carter, R. T. and A. L. Pieterse (2020) *Measuring the Effects of Racism: Guidelines for the Assessment and Treatment of Race-based Traumatic Stress Injury*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Cerjak, J. (1899) O slovenski narodnosti. *Slovenski gospodar* 33(48).
- Chamberlayne, P., J. Bornat and T. Wengraf (2000) Introduction: The Biographical Turn. In *The Turn to Biographical Methods in Social Science*. Chamberlayne, P., J. Bornat and T. Wengraf, eds. London: Routledge, 1–30.
- Connor, W. (1994) *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Cukut Krilić, S. (2008) Izkušnje migrantk v Sloveniji pred in po njeni osamosvojitvi. *Dve domovini* 28: 73–92.
- Cukut Krilić, S. (2016) Ko pa govorimo o Romih, to pa je čisto drugačna kultura. *Socialno delo* 55(1/2): 55–65.
- Črnič, A., M. Komel, M. Smrke, K. Šabec and T. Vovk (2013) Religious Pluralisation in Slovenia. *Teorija in praksa* 50(1): 205–232.
- Dahinden, J. and A. C. Korteweg (2022) Culture as Politics in Contemporary Migration Contexts: The Invisibilisation of Power Relations. *Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship Seminar*, 14. 6. 2022.
- DeSalle, R. and I. Tattersall (2018) *Troublesome Science: The Misuse of Genetics and Genomics in Understanding Race*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Dežan, L. and M. Sedmak (2020) Policy and Practice: The Integration of (Newly Arrived) Migrant Children in Slovenian Schools. *Annales* 30(4): 559–574.
- Deželan, T. (2010) Naproti evropskemu federalizmu? Evolucija ideje državljanstva od mestnih republik do federalne države in konfederalnih struktur. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede.
- Deželan, T. (2012) In the Name of the Nation or/and Europe? Determinants of the Slovenian Citizenship Regime. *Citizenship Studies*. 16(3/4): 413–429.
- Di Stasio, V., B. Lancee, S. Veit and R. Yemane (2021) Muslim by Default or Religious Discrimination? Results from a Cross-National Field Experiment on Hiring Discrimination. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 47(6): 1305–1326.
- Dragoš, S. (2003) Islam in suicidalno podalpsko pleme. In *Poročilo skupine za spremljanje nestrpnosti št. 02*. R. Kuhar, T. Trplan, eds. Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.
- Dragoš, S. (2004) Islamofobija na Slovenskem. In *Poročilo skupine za spremljanje nestrpnosti št. 03*. T. Trplan, S. Autor, R. Kuhar, eds. Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.
- ECRI (2019) *ECRI Report on Slovenia (fifth monitoring cycle)*. Strasbourg: ECRI.
- ECRI (2022a) *ECRI Conclusions on the Implementation of the Recommendations in Respect of Slovenia Subject to Interim Follow-up. Adopted on 7 December 2021, Published on 3 March 2022*. Strasbourg: ECRI.
- ECRI (2022b) *ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 5 (revised) on Preventing and Combating Anti-Muslim Racism and Discrimination*. Strasbourg: ECRI.
- ENAR – European Network against Racism (2014) *Racism and Discrimination in Employment in Europe: ENAR Shadow Report 2012–2013*. Brussels: ENAR.

- Eriksen, T. H. (1996) *Ethnicity, Race, Class and Nation*. In *Ethnicity*. Hutchinson, J. and A. D. Smith, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 28–31.
- Eriksen, T. H. (2012) *Ethnicity*. In *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Globalization*. Ritzer, G., ed. Wiley. DOI: 10.1002/9780470670590.
- Essed, P. (1991) *Understanding Everyday Racism: An Interdisciplinary Theory*. London: Sage Publications.
- Eze, E. C. (ed.) (1997) *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Fenton, S. (1999) *Ethnicity: Racism, Class and Culture*. London: Macmillan.
- FRA – European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2017) *EU MIDIS II. Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey Main Results*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2017/second-european-union-minorities-and-discrimination-survey-main-results#TabPubCountrydata1>.
- Frank, A. (2020) *Islamophobia in Slovenia: National Report 2019*. In *European Islamophobia Report 2019*. Bayrakli, E. and F. Hafez, eds. Berlin: SETA, 721–736.
- Frank, A. and I. Šori (2015) *Normalizacija rasizma z jezikom demokracije: Primer Slovenske demokratske stranke*. ČKZ XLIII(260): 89–103.
- Gaddis, S. M. (2018) *An Introduction to Audit Studies in the Social Sciences*. In *Audit Studies: Behind the Scenes with Theory, Method, and Nuance*, Gaddis, S. M., ed. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 3–44.
- Gellner, E. (1983) *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Giddens, A. (1993) *Sociology*. 2nd edition. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gornik, B., L. Dežan, M. Sedmak and Z. Medarić (2020) *Distance Learning in the Time of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Reproduction of Social Inequality in the Case of Migrant Children*. *Družboslovne razprave* 36(94/95): 149–168.
- Hamlin, R. (2021) *Crossing: How We Label and React to People on the Move*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Heath, A. and V. Di Stasio (2019) *Racial Discrimination in Britain, 1969–2017: A Meta-Analysis of Field Experiments on Racial Discrimination in the British Labour Market*. *The British Journal of Sociology* 70: 1774–1798.
- Hlebec, V. and M. Mrzel (2012) *Metodološke dileme in njihove rešitve v raziskovalnem načrtu z zaporedno uporabo kvantitativnih in kvalitativnih metod – model izbire udeležencev*. *Teorija in praksa* 49(2): 245–263.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. (1990) *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hrženjak, M. (ed.) (2018) *Razsežnosti skrbstvenega dela*. Ljubljana: Sophia.
- Hrženjak, M. and V. Jalušič (2011) *Vrata niso baš odprta: Kompleksne neenakosti, interseksionalnost, rasa, etnija, spol, javne politike*. Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.
- Huber, I., U. Lipovec Čebren and S. Pistotnik (2020) *Neenakosti in ranljivosti v zdravju v Sloveniji: kvalitativna raziskava v 25 okoljih*. Ljubljana: Nacionalni inštitut za javno zdravje.
- Huddleston, T. (2017) *Analysis and Comparative Review of Equality Data Collection Practices in the European Union: Equality Data Indicators: Methodological Approach – Overview per EU Member State: Technical annex*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Inowlocki, L. (2007) *Manual on the Research Design*. Internal document of the FeMiPol project. Frankfurt am Main: J. W. Goethe University.
- Jakoubek, M. (2022) *A Breakthrough of Ethnic Groups and Boundaries – Reality or a Myth? (On Amnesia in Ethnicity Studies)*. *Ethnicities* 22(2): 177–195.
- Jalušič, V. (2015) *Rasizem, ideologija in sovraštvo: poskus razumevanja sodobnega rasizma in EU antirasističnih politik v luči teze o rasizmu brez rase*. *Časopis za kritiko znanosti* 43(260): 28–43.
- Jalušič, V. and V. Bajt (2020) *A Paradigm Shift framed by a Crisis: Recent Debates on Immigration and Integration in Six EU Countries*. *Annales. Series historia et sociologia*. 30(4): 517–530.
- Jenkins, R. (1996) *Social Identity*. London: Routledge.

- Ješe Perković, A. (2022) Večkratna diskriminacija. In *Interseksionalnost: perspektive strukturne, politične in reprezentacijske neenakosti*. Kuhar, R. and M. Pajnik, eds. Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani, 167–184.
- Judd, C. M., B. Park, C. S. Ryan, M. Brauer and S. Kraus (1995) Stereotypes and Ethnocentrism: Diverging Interethnic Perceptions of African American and White American Youth. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 69(3): 460–481.
- Kalčič, Š. (2007) Slovenski muslimani: kdo so, organiziranost in državnopravno normiranje v antropološki presoji. *Dve domovini* 26: 7–29.
- Klopčič, V. (2009) Načelo enakosti in pozitivna diskriminacija v pravnem urejanju položaja manjšin. *Razprave in gradivo* 58: 108–125.
- Klopčič, V. (2010) Romi v Evropi, ljudstvo brez doma in brez groba. *Ars & Humanitas* 4(1–2): 183–202.
- Klun, L. and M. Bartol (2021) Pojmovanja romskega otroka in starša v pedagoškem kontekstu. *Sodobna pedagogika* 72(1): 66–87 in 144–170.
- Knoblauch, H., U. Flick and C. Maeder (2005) *Qualitative Methods in Europe: The Variety of Social Research*. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung* 6(3).
- Kogovšek, N. and B. Petković (2007) *O diskriminaciji: priručnik za novinarke in novinarje*. Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.
- Kogovšek Šalamon, N. (2017) Mass Migration, Crimmigration and Defiance. *Southeastern Europe* 41: 251–275.
- Kogovšek Šalamon, N. and V. Bajt (eds.) (2016) *Razor-Wired. Reflections on Migration Movements through Slovenia in 2015*. Ljubljana: Peace Institute.
- Komac, M. (ed.) (2007) *Priseljenci: študije o priseljevanju in vključevanju v slovensko družbo*. Ljubljana: Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja.
- Komac, M. and M. Medvešek (eds.) (2005) *Percepcije slovenske integracijske politike: zaključno poročilo*. Ljubljana: Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja.
- Koopmans, R., S. Veit and R. Yemane (2019) Taste or Statistics? A Correspondence Study of Ethnic, Racial and Religious Labour Market Discrimination in Germany. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 42(16): 233–252.
- Korzeniewska, L. and M. Bivand Erdal (2021) *Deskilling Unpacked: Comparing Filipino and Polish Migrant Nurses' Professional Experiences in Norway*. *Migration Studies* 9(1): 1–20.
- Kovačič, G. (2005) *Zagate z nacijo. Foreword in Anthony D. Smith Nacionalizem: teorija, ideologija, zgodovina*. Ljubljana: Krtina.
- Kralj, A. (2008) When Ć becomes Č: Discrimination of Unrecognized National Minorities in Slovenia. *Revija za sociologiju* 39(4): 235–250.
- Krizsán, A. (ed.) (2001) *Ethnic Monitoring and Data Protection: The European Context*. Budapest: Central European University Press.
- Kržišnik Bukič, V. (2007) Terminološke dileme ob vsebinski aplikaciji atributov narodni in nacionalni v povezavi s sintagmo slovenska identiteta. *Anthropos* 39(3/4): 205–221.
- Kuhar, R. (2009) *Na križiščih diskriminacije: večplastna in interseksijska diskriminacija*. Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.
- Kuhar, R. and M. Pajnik (2022) *Na lastni koži: interseksionalna diskriminacija in neenakosti*. In *Interseksionalnost: perspektive strukturne, politične in reprezentacijske neenakosti*. Kuhar, R. and Pajnik, M., eds. Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani, 5–40.
- Kutateladze, B. L., N. R. Andiloro, B. D. Johnson and C. C. Spohn (2014) Cumulative Disadvantage: Examining Racial and Ethnic Disparity in Prosecution and Sentencing. *Criminology* 52(3): 514–551.
- Kuzmanič, T. (2002) Post-socialism, Racism and the Reinvention of Politics. In *Xenophobia and Post-socialism*. M. Pajnik ed. Ljubljana: Peace Institute, 17–36.
- Ladić, M., V. Bajt, V. Jalušič, and N. Kogovšek Šalamon (2018). *National Integration Evaluation Mechanism: Slovenia. Report for 2016*. Ljubljana: Peace Institute.
- Ladić, M., V. Bajt and V. Jalušič (2020) *National Integration Evaluation Mechanism: Slovenia. Report for 2018*. Ljubljana: Peace Institute.
- Ladić, M., I. Thaler and V. Bajt (2022) *National Integration Evaluation Mechanism: Slovenia. Report for 2020–2021*. Ljubljana: Peace Institute.

- Lechner, F. J. and J. Boli (eds.) (2005) *The Globalization Reader*. 2nd edition. Padstow: Blackwell Publishing.
- Lindemann, A. and J. Stolz (2020) Perceived Discrimination among Muslims and Its Correlates: A Comparative Analysis. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 44(2): 173–194.
- Lipovec Čebren, U. (2021) Language as a Trigger for Racism: Language Barriers at Healthcare Institutions in Slovenia. *Social Sciences* 10(125): 1–17.
- Maes, M., G. W. J. M. Stevens and M. Verkuyten (2014) Perceived Ethnic Discrimination and Problem Behaviors in Muslim Immigrant Early Adolescents: Moderating Effects of Ethnic, Religious, and National Group Identification. *Journal of Early Adolescence* 34(7): 940–966.
- Makkonen, T. (2007a) *European Handbook on Equality Data*, 1st edition. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Makkonen, T. (2007b) *Measuring Discrimination: Data Collection and EU Equality Law*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Makkonen, T. (2016) *European Handbook on Equality Data – 2016 Revision*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Mannila, S. (ed.) (2005) *Data to Promote Equality: Proceedings of the European Conference*, Helsinki: Finnish Ministry of Labour, European Commission.
- Marks, J. (2019) *Je znanost rasistična?* Maribor: Aristej.
- Martín Alcoff, L., M. Hames-García, S. P. Mohanty and P. M. L. Moya (2006) *Identity Politics Reconsidered*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Medica, K. and G. Lukič (2011) *Migrantski *circulus vitiosus*: Delovne in življenjske razmere migrantov v Sloveniji*. Koper: Annales.
- Medvešek, M. and R. Bešter (eds.) (2010) *Državljan tretjih držav ali tretjerazredni državljani? Integracija državljanov tretjih držav v Sloveniji*. Ljubljana: Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja.
- Medvešek, M., R. Bešter and J. Pirc (2022) *Mnenja večinskega prebivalstva Slovenije o priseljevanju, priseljencih in integraciji*. Ljubljana: Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja.
- Meinecke ([1907], 1970) *Cosmopolitanism and the National State*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Mirovni inštitut (2018) *Letna evalvacija uresničevanja Nacionalnega programa ukrepov Vlade Republike Slovenije za Rome za obdobje 2017–2021: Končno poročilo o vmesnem vrednotenju (obdobje od sprejema dokumenta dne 25. 5. 2017 do 1. 6. 2018)*, Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.
- Mohanty, S. P. (1993) The Epistemic Status of Cultural Identity: On 'Beloved' and the Postcolonial Condition. *Cultural Critique* 24: 41–80.
- Murgel, J. (2007) *Vodnik po pravicah žrtev diskriminacije na etnični in verski podlagi v Sloveniji*. Maribor: ISCOMET.
- Musek, J. (1994) *Psihološki portret Slovencev*. Ljubljana: Znanstveno in publicistično središče.
- Oakes, P. J., S. A. Haslam and J. C. Turner (1994) *Stereotyping and Social Reality*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2012) *Human Rights Indicators: Guide to Measurement and Implementation*. Geneva: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- OJ – Official Journal of EU (2000) Council Decision of 27 November 2000 establishing a Community action programme to combat discrimination (2001 to 2006) (2000/750/EC). *Official Journal L* 303, 02/12/2000, 23–28.
- OJ – Official Journal of EU (2016) Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation). *Official Journal of the European Union L* 119/1, 4. 5. 2016.
- Pager, D. (2007) The Use of Field Experiments for Studies of Employment Discrimination: Contributions, Critiques, and Directions for the Future. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 609: 104–133.
- Pajnik, M. (2011a) Marshall in državljanstvo. *Časopis za kritiko znanosti* 39(246): 169–181.
- Pajnik, M. (2011b) *Narrating Belonging in the post-Yugoslav Context*. Dve

domovini / *Two Homelands* 34: 111–125.

Pajnik, M. and V. Bajt (2009) Biografski narativni intervju: aplikacija na študije migracij. *Dve domovini / Two Homelands* 30: 69–89.

Pajnik, M. and V. Bajt (2011) 'Third Country' Migrant Workers as 'Third Class Non-Citizens' in Slovenia. In *Precarious Migrant Labour across Europe*. M. Pajnik and G. Campani, eds. Ljubljana: Peace Institute, 97–118.

Pajnik, M., R. Kuhar and I. Šori (2018) Populism in the Slovenian Context: Between Ethno-nationalism and Re-traditionalisation. In *The Rise of the Far Right in Europe: Populist Shifts and 'Othering'*. G. Campani, G. Lazaridis and A. Benveniste, eds. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 137–160.

Parrillo, V. N. and C. Donoghue (2005) Updating the Bogardus Social Distance Studies: A New National Survey. *The Social Science Journal* 42: 257–271.

Pašić, A. (2005) *Islam in muslimani v Sloveniji*. Ljubljana: Učila International.

Payne, G. and J. Payne (2004) *Key Concepts in Social Research*, London: Thousand Oaks.

Pettigrew, T. F. and L. R. Tropp (2011) *When Groups Meet: The Dynamics of Intergroup Contact*. New York: Psychology Press.

Pettit, B. and C. Gutierrez (2018) Mass Incarceration and Racial Inequality. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 77(3–4): 1153–1182.

Prandy, K. (1979) Ethnic Discrimination in Employment and Housing: Evidence from the 1966 British Census. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2(1): 66–79.

Pucelj, M. (2017) Islamophobia and Xenophobia in Slovenia through the Eyes of Covered Muslim Women. *Poligrafi* 22(85/86): 155–174.

Ramšak, A., M. Šetinc Vernik and B. Vernik Šetinc (eds.) (2014) *Parallel Report By the Coalition of NGOs on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Slovenia on the 2nd Periodic Report of the Republic of Slovenia to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*. Ljubljana.

Reiner, T. (1993) Biografska metoda in spolna struktura vsakdanjega

življenja. Od ženskih študij k feministični teoriji. *Časopis za kritiko znanosti, special edition*: 156–163.

Reiner, T. (1996) Avto/biografije v sociologiji in v ženskih študijah. *Teorija in praksa* 33(5): 759–763.

Repič, J. (2002) O etničnosti za splošno in posebno rabo: pregled antropoloških konceptualizacij etničnosti. *Traditiones* 31(1): 211–225.

Riach, P. A. and J. Rich (2002) Field Experiments of Discrimination in the Market Place. *The Economic Journal* 112(483): F480–F518.

Rich, J. (2014) What Do Field Experiments of Discrimination in Markets Tell Us? A Meta Analysis of Studies Conducted Since 2000. *IZA Discussion Papers* 8584.

Riemann, G. (2003) A Joint Project Against the Backdrop of a Research Tradition: An Introduction to 'Doing Biographical Research'. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung* 4(3).

Rizman, R. (ed.) (1991) *Študije o etnonacionalizmu*, Ljubljana: Krt.

Rooth, D. O. (2010) Automatic Associations and Discrimination in Hiring: Real World Evidence. *Labour Economics* 17: 523–534.

Rorive, I. (2009) *Proving Discrimination Cases – The Role of Situation Testing*. Brussels and Stockholm: MPG and the Centre for Equal Rights.

Rosenthal, G. (1993) *Reconstruction of Life Stories: Principles of Selection in Generating Stories for Narrative Biographical Interviews*. *The Narrative Study of Lives, Volume 1*, eds. Ruthellen Josselson and Amia Lieblich. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE, 59–91.

Rovšek, J. (2012) *Posebno poročilo o bivanjskih razmerah Romov na območju jugovzhodne Slovenije*. Ljubljana: Varuh človekovih pravic RS.

Schilling, P. and S. Stillman (2021) *The Impact of Natives' Attitudes Towards Immigrants on Their Integration in the Host Country*. CESifo Working Paper No. 9308. Munich: CESifo.

Sedmak, M., F. Hernández-Hernández, J. M. Sancho-Gil and B. Gornik

- (2022) Reflection on Migrant Children's Integration and the Role of Education. In *Migrant Children's Integration and Education in Europe: Approaches, Methodologies and Policies*. Sedmak, M., F. Hernández-Hernández, J. M. Sancho-Gil and B. Gornik, eds. Koper: Annales ZRS and Barcelona: Ediciones Octaedro, 17–36.
- Silberman, R., R. Alba and I. Fournier (2007) Segmented Assimilation in France? Discrimination in the Labour Market against the Second Generation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30(1): 1–27.
- Simon, P. (2004) Comparative Study on the Collection of Data to Measure the Extent and Impact of Discrimination within the United States, Canada, Australia, Great Britain and the Netherlands. Medis Project, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Simon, P. (2012) Collecting Ethnic Statistics in Europe: A Review. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35(8): 1366–1391.
- Simon, P., V. Piché and A. A. Gagnon (2015) The Making of Racial and Ethnic Categories: Official Statistics Reconsidered. In *Social Statistics and Ethnic Diversity: Cross-National Perspectives in Classifications and Identity Politics*. Simon, P., V. Piché and A. A. Gagnon, eds. London: Springer, 1–14.
- Smith, A. D. (1986) *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Smith, A. D. (1991) Genealogija narodov. In *Študije o etnonacionalizmu*. Rizman, R., ed. Ljubljana: Krt, 51–77.
- Smith, A. D. (1998) *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism*. London: Routledge.
- Stropnik, N., S. Cukut Krilić and N. Kump (2016) Možnosti za izboljšanje slovenskih podatkov o migracijah in migrantih. *IB revija* 50(2): 29–35.
- SURS (2013) Zapisnik (Registrski popis 2011). Internal document, 25. 1. 2013. Ljubljana: Statistični urad RS.
- Štenc Vernik, M. (2016) Situacijsko testiranje ('testing') pojava diskriminacije pri najemu stanovanj. In *LGBT-pravice (sociološka raziskava, monitoring, situacijsko testiranje ter gradiva za odvetnice in odvetnike)*. Blažič, M., ed. Ljubljana: Društvo informacijski center Legebitra, 36–41.
- Šircelj, M. (2003) Verska, jezikovna in narodna sestava prebivalstva Slovenije: Popisi 1921 – 2002. Ljubljana: Statistični urad Republike Slovenije.
- Šumi, I. (2000a) Kultura, etničnost, mejnost: konstrukcije različnosti v antropološki presoji. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU.
- Šumi, I. (2000b) Slovensko narod(nost)no vprašanje: akademska tradicija ali ideologija? *Časopis za kritiko znanosti* 28(198/199): 257–271.
- Šumi, I. (2006) Raziskovanje odnosov etničnosti in manjšin v Sloveniji. *Razprave in gradivo* 50/51: 122–131.
- Švab, A. (2008) Overlooked, Neglected and Denied: Practices of Discrimination based on Personal Circumstances in Slovenia. *Revija za sociologiju* XXXIX(4): 217–219.
- Švab, A., T. Žakelj, R. Kuhar, V. Bajt, M. Sedmak, A. Kralj, Ž. Humer and R. Boškic (2008) Posledice diskriminacije na družbeno, politično in socialno vključenost mladih v Sloveniji. Analiza glede na spol, spolno usmerjenost ter etnično pripadnost: zaključno poročilo. Ciljno-raziskovalni projekt v okviru programa Konkurenčnost Slovenije 2006-2013. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede.
- Tomažič, M. and T. O. Zaletelj (2021) Aktivno in neaktivno prebivalstvo: metodološko pojasnilo. Ljubljana: Statistični urad RS.
- Toš, N. (ed.) (2021) Vrednote v prehodu XIII: Slovenija v mednarodnih in medčasovnih primerjavah ISSP 2017–2019, ESS 2018, SJM 2018–2020. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, IDV, CJMMK.
- Učakar, T. (2022) Stopenjska diskriminacija: izzivi prepoznavanja diskriminacije tujcev. In *Intersekcionalnost: perspektive strukturne, politične in reprezentacijske neenakosti*. Kuhar, R. and M. Pajnik, eds. Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani, 41–63.
- Učkur, P. (2016) Hvala za klic! *Radio Študent*, 19. 12. 2016. Available at: <https://radiostudent.si/dru%C5%BEba/puko-u%C4%8Dkur/hvala-za-klic>.
- Uhan, S. (2002) Izrekanje, razumevanje in interpretacija. *Družboslovne razprave* 18(41): 53–61.
- Ule, M. (1997) *Temelji socialne psihologije*. Ljubljana: Znanstveno in

publicistično središče.

Ule, M. (2005) Predsodki kot mikroideologije vsakdanjega sveta. In Mi in oni: o nestrpnosti na Slovenskem. Leskošek, V., ed. Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut, 21–40.

Ule, M., T. Kamin and A. Švab (2018) Predgovor. In Zasebno je politično. Kritične študije vsakdanjega življenja. Ule, M., T. Kamin and A. Švab, eds. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, Založba FDV, 12–35.

Urad za enake možnosti (2007). Spolno in drugo nadlegovanje na delovnem mestu.

URS (1991) Ustava Republike Slovenije. Uradni list RS, št. 33/91-I, 42/97 – UZS68, 66/00 – UZ80, 24/03 – UZ3a, 47, 68, 69/04 – UZ14, 69/04 – UZ43, 69/04 – UZ50, 68/06 – UZ121,140,143, 47/13 – UZ148, 47/13 – UZ90,97,99, 75/16 – UZ70a in 92/21 – UZ62a

van den Berghe, P. L. (1987) *The Ethnic Phenomenon*. New York: Praeger.

van den Berghe, P. L. (1991) Biologija nepotizma. In Študije o etnonacionalizmu. Rizman, R., ed. Ljubljana: Krt, 79–107.

Varuh človekovih pravic (2021) Letno poročilo Varuha človekovih pravic Republike Slovenije za leto 2020. Ljubljana: Varuh človekovih pravic Republike Slovenije.

Varuh človekovih pravic (2022) Letno poročilo Varuha človekovih pravic Republike Slovenije za leto 2021. Ljubljana: Varuh človekovih pravic Republike Slovenije.

Veit, S., in R. Yemane (2018) *The ADIS Study: A Large-scale Correspondence Test on Labour Market Discrimination in Germany*: Technical Report. WZB Discussion Paper SP VI 2018-103.

Verhaeghe, P.P. and D. De Coninck (2021) Rental Discrimination, Perceived Threat and Public Attitudes towards Immigration and Refugees. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*: 1–23, DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2021.1939092.

Vlada Republike Slovenije (2017) Nacionalni program ukrepov Vlade Republike Slovenije za Rome za obdobje 2017–2021.

Vlada Republike Slovenije (2021) Osmo poročilo Vlade Republike Slovenije o položaju romske skupnosti v Sloveniji. 30. 6. 2021. Vonta, T. (2011) Nacionalna evalvacijska študija uspešnosti romskih

učencev v osnovni šoli: zaključno vsebinsko poročilo. Ljubljana: Pedagoški inštitut.

Vrečer, N. (2006) *The Mosque Debate and Anti-Muslim Sentiment in Slovenia*. In *Islam and Tolerance in Wider Europe*. Budapest: Open Society Institute.

Waisman, G. and B. Larsen (2008) *Do Attitudes Towards Immigrants Matter? The Stockholm University Linnaeus Center for Integration Studies (SULCIS)*. Working Paper 2008: 5.

Wrench, J. (2005) *The Measurement of Discrimination: Problem of Comparability and the Role of Research*. In *Data to Promote Equality: Proceedings of the European Conference*, Helsinki: Finnish Ministry of Labour, European Commission.

Wrench, J. (2011) *Data on Discrimination in EU Countries: Statistics, Research and the Drive for Comparability*. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34(10): 1715–1730.

Ysseldyk, R., M. Talebi, K. Matheson, I. Bloemraad and H. Anisman (2014) Religious and Ethnic Discrimination: Differential Implications for Social Support Engagement, Civic Involvement, and Political Consciousness. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* 2(1): 347–376.

Yuval-Davis, N. (2000) *Gender and Nation*. London: SAGE Publications.

Zalta, A. (2005) Muslims in Slovenia. *Islamic Studies* 44(1): 93–112.

Zalta, A. (2006a) Evropski 'Drugi': turški islam in njegova evropska perspektiva. *Teorija in praksa* 43(3-4): 557–566.

Zalta, A. (2006b) Muslimanska identiteta v času globalizacije. *Annales*, 16(1): 69–76.

Zalta, A. (2018) (Ne)vidnost pokritih žensk. *Javnost / The Public*, 25: S52–S64.

ZARA – Civil Courage & Anti-Racism Work (ZARA – Zivilcourage & Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit) (2019) *Racism Report 2018: Individual Case Reports on Racist Attacks and Structures in Austria*. Vienna: ZARA.

Zavratnik, S. (2013) Sosedje in tujci: (globalne) migracije in nezaželene družbene manjšine. *Razprave in gradivo* 70: 73–89.

Zavratnik, S. and S. Cukut Krilić (2018) Addressing Intersectional Vulnerabilities in Contemporary Refugee Movements in Europe. *Družboslovne razprave XXXIV(87)*: 85–106.

Zdravković, L. (2015) Meje identitete. *Razprave in gradivo (74)*: 41–59.

Zschirnt, E. and R. Didier (2016) Ethnic Discrimination in Hiring Decisions: A Meta-Analysis of Correspondence Tests 1990–2015. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 42(7)*: 1115–1134.

Žagar, N. (ed.) (2007) *Sprejemanje različnosti – korak do pravične družbe*. Črnomelj: Zavod za izobraževanje in kulturo Črnomelj.

Žerdin, A. (2020) *MMXX: Leto nevarne bližine. Kaj je šlo v Sloveniji narobe med epidemijo koronavirusa*. Ljubljana: UMco.

Žnidaršič, M. (2022) *Registrski popis prebivalstva, gospodinjstev in stanovanj: metodološko pojasnilo*. Ljubljana: Statistični urad RS.

Index

A

Advocate of the Principle of Equality 3–4, 39, 42, 45–46, 68, 123–124, 132, 145

audit study / test 4, 74–76. *See also* discrimination testing, correspondence study / test, situation testing

auditor person / profile 74, 81, 85. *See also* tester person / profile

B

biographical method, approach, research 106–108

Bogardus scale 11. *See also* social distance

C

Census 15, 33, 41

Central Population Register 15, 40–41

Citizenship 2, 4, 9, 14, 16–17, 21–22, 30, 34, 40–41, 49, 55–58, 61–66, 69, 82–83, 101, 112–113, 115–116, 131, 135, 144, 146. *See also* nationality, country of origin, country of birth

Constitution (of the Republic of Slovenia) 2–4, 12, 20, 31

control group 80, 116

correspondence study / test 74–79, 116. *See also* discrimination testing, situation testing, audit study / test

country of birth 30, 41, 53, 56, 82–83, 88. *See also* nationality, citizenship, country of origin

country of origin 83. *See also* nationality, citizenship, country of birth

COVID-19 67, 69, 79, 82, 97, 102, 108, 125–126, 128, 132, 144–145

Criminal Code 3, 32

D

discrimination 1–8, 10–17, 25–33, 35, 37, 39–52, 54–59, 61–71, 73–82, 84, 87–97, 100–106, 108–122, 124–128, 130–131, 133, 135–136, 138–139, 141–146
cumulative (discrimination, perspective, view) 10–11, 106, 139, 142
dynamic (discrimination, perspective, view) 10–11, 106, 139, 142
episodic (discrimination,

- perspective, view) 10–11, 74, 82, 142
 intersectional discrimination 2, 12, 17, 48, 62, 111, 116, 120, 127, 146 *Also* multiple, multifaceted.
 perceived discrimination 9, 11, 52, 133, 142
 structural discrimination 10
- discrimination testing 6, 74, 79–80, 103
- E**
- ECRI 4, 17, 32, 44
- education 2, 5, 8, 11, 26, 30–31, 33–34, 40–43, 47–48, 50, 52, 54–55, 62–63, 65–66, 71, 78, 85, 87, 90, 92, 96–97, 99–103, 113–114, 127–128, 130–131, 137–139, 144–145
- employment 2, 5, 8, 10, 25–26, 30–31, 34, 41–46, 50, 52, 54, 58–59, 61–63, 67, 71, 75–78, 82, 84–85, 87–92, 95, 101–102, 113–114, 124, 135, 138, 144. *See also* labour market
- Employment Equality Directive 2, 26
- Employment Relationships Act 26, 31
- Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act 31
- Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Act 31
- equality data 2, 4, 27–29, 32–33, 39–41, 43, 141, 146
- erased 3, 45, 48, 54, 132, 142
- ethnicity, ethnic group, ethnic affiliation, *ethnie*, *ethny* 1–6, 8–9, 11–20, 22, 27, 30, 33–34, 37–46, 48–49, 51–52, 55–58, 60–66, 69–71, 77–78, 82, 84–85, 101–102, 109–110, 112–113, 115–116, 125, 131–132, 136, 141–144, 146. *See also* narod
- EUMIDIS 39, 41, 43
- European Union (EU) 2, 5, 13, 16, 25–27, 30–32, 39, 43, 49, 75, 136
- F**
- faith 16, 59, 69, 82. *See also* religion
- field experiment 5, 73–75, 77–78
- G**
- Gipsy 71, 132. *See also* Roma
- H**
- hate speech 5, 49, 105, 113, 119, 132–133, 137–139, 144, 146
- healthcare 9, 26, 45, 50, 62–63, 71, 88, 92, 102–103, 113, 116–117, 119–120, 134, 144
- housing 2, 6, 9, 11, 30, 34, 43, 46, 48, 55, 62, 64, 71, 74–76, 79, 87, 95–97, 101–102, 121–122, 139, 144
- I**
- identity 12–14, 17–20, 22, 48, 55, 58, 71, 110, 116, 126, 135–136, 143
 identity politics 13, 38, 143
 social identity 11–12, 14
- illusory correlation 117–118
- Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act 3, 26
- international protection 5, 40, 90–92, 96, 111, 118, 120, 122, 124–125, 134–135, 137, 144. *See also* refugee
- interview 4–6, 10, 51–52, 70, 76–77, 80, 88–89, 91, 103, 108–123, 125–132, 134–139, 144–145
- L**
- laboratory experiment 73–74
- labour market 2, 11, 41, 74, 77, 82, 85, 87–92, 101, 103, 112, 115, 123, 139. *See also* employment
- language 2, 4, 12, 16, 20–22, 31–32, 46–47, 50, 55, 58–59, 61–64, 66, 69–70, 82–83, 88, 90, 92, 97–99, 101, 103, 108–109, 112, 116–119, 128, 130, 133–134, 136, 144
- M**
- migrant 2, 13, 16, 40, 45, 49, 71, 82, 90–92, 120, 123, 126–127, 136, 144–145
- minority 2, 4, 11, 17–20, 22, 32, 38, 41–43, 49, 53–54, 56, 59–60, 64–65, 69, 75, 77, 82, 106, 112, 118, 141, 143, 146
- N**
- nacija 21
- narod 21. *See also* ethnicity, ethnic group, ethnic affiliation, *ethnie*, *ethny*
- nation 18, 20–21
- nation-state 14, 21–22, 38. *See also* state
- nationality 2–6, 12, 14–15, 17, 20, 22, 44, 49, 52, 54–55, 71, 78, 82, 84–85, 88, 109, 113, 115, 122, 125, 136, 141–143, 146. *See also* citizenship, country of origin, country of birth
- O**
- ombudsperson 28–29, 42, 47, 123, 132, 138, 145
- P**
- paired testing 74–75, 79, 82
- Personal Data Protection Act 3, 32–33
- prejudice 1, 5, 10, 29, 46–49, 57, 73–74, 80, 82, 92, 101, 105–106, 114, 117–120, 122, 127, 131, 138–139, 144, 146
- profiling, ethnic, racial 10, 121, 126–127, 139, 144
- Protection against Discrimination Act 3, 7, 26, 31
- Protection of Public Order Act 32
- R**
- race 2, 4–5, 7–8, 12–13, 16–17, 31, 42, 46, 48, 60, 82, 84, 109, 143. *See also* skin colour
- Racial Equality Directive 2, 5, 26, 50
- reference profile 78–79, 83–89, 91–96, 102 *Also* control person / group
- refugee 3, 16, 30, 40, 43, 45, 53–54, 90–91, 96, 101, 110–111, 118–120, 122, 125, 127, 130, 132, 134, 137–138, 142, 144. *See also* international protection
- religion 2–6, 12, 14–17, 22, 26, 31–32,

37, 39, 41–42, 44–45, 48–49, 51–52, 54–55, 59–66, 69–70, 78, 82 84–85, 109, 112–113, 116, 125, 131 135, 141–146. *See also* faith

Roma 3, 10, 32–34, 42–49, 54, 83, 114, 128, 132, 137 142, 144–145. *See also* Gipsy

S

situation testing 4–6, 74–83 87–97, 99, 101–104, 113, 139, 144–145. *See also* discrimination testing, correspondence study / test, audit study / test

skin colour 2–6, 8, 12, 14–15, 17, 22, 27, 37, 39, 42, 44, 46, 49, 52, 54–55, 60–61, 63–66, 69, 71, 76, 78, 82–83, 85, 110, 112–113, 116, 121, 125–126, 132, 137, 141–144, 146. *See also* race

social care 61–63

social distance 10–11, 43, 57 90, 101, 105, 143. *See also* Bogardus scale

state 14–15, 18, 20–21, 29, 37, 40, 63–64, 68, 70, 75, 106, 113, 121–122, 124–126, 138, 146. *See also* nation-state

Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia 15, 34, 41

stereotype 1, 12, 47–48, 82, 117–118, 120, 138

survey 5–6, 10, 30, 32–34, 37, 39–47, 51–52, 54, 56–57, 63, 65, 69, 74, 77, 79–80, 113, 116, 126, 139, 144–145

T

tester person / profile 74–75, 78–81, 83–96, 102–104. *See also* auditor person / profile

third-country nationals 49–50, 122, 125

V

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities Act 31

Review by Neža Kogovšek Šalamon

Housing ads excluding refugees and foreigners. Remarks by colleagues at the workplace due to the colleague's immigrant background. The more frequent stopping and verifying the identity by the police on the street and racial profiling. Stricter airport security checks due to Arab origin. Racist attacks, tinged with slurs because of skin colour.

Racial and ethnic discrimination are persistent phenomena that people with a migrant or minority ethnic background are exposed to daily. At the United Nations level, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was adopted in 1966. One would expect that since then, the situation in terms of equality, regardless of race or ethnicity, would have been largely eliminated or at least significantly weakened. Since this is not the case, it is important that this phenomenon remains the subject of research to reveal different, even new and subtler, ways of exclusion, which are a reflection of modern society.

While there is already a substantial amount of literature on racial and ethnic discrimination, this book brings a fresh perspective to the issue. The topic is tackled primarily through a methodological perspective. The focus of the volume is the research method—how to find out how much discrimination exists in society, who is most exposed to it, in which areas, who discriminates and what are the consequences? These are all relatively standard research questions that can be approached and investigated in various ways, both through quantitative methods (such as surveys and representative opinion polls) and qualitative methods (such as interviews, focus groups and case studies) or combinations of both, such as situation testing. One of the key strengths of this book is the analysis of the effectiveness and utility of the situation testing research method. It is based on the author's and her research team's first-hand experience of implementing it. The book offers a unique and innovative perspective by presenting the first experiential analysis of this research method in Slovenian science, including insights into previously unknown aspects of the method based on the author's experiences with it. Other reports that present data obtained through situation testing tend to focus on the content of the data obtained, rather than on the deconstruction of the method itself. In contrast, this book delves into the details of the research method to provide a more nuanced understanding of its capabilities and limitations. This is the strongest point of the monograph, and its ability to engage and hold the attention of readers, even those who are well-versed in issues of equality, discrimination and exclusion.

With a clear emphasis on the study of methodologies, the book does not neglect the substantive aspect either. The author offers essential information for familiarisation, necessary for understanding discrimination and the types and nature of personal characteristics that expose individual groups to discrimination ("race", ethnicity, religion or belief). She also describes the basic milestones of the legal regulation of the prohibition of discrimination at the EU level and in Slovenia, including the institutional development of protection against discrimination. In this sense, the book also functions as a textbook for those who have not yet delved into discrimination as a field of study. It also offers more data on the experience of discrimination from the survey. The latter is not representative, but it can offer insight into the extent of feelings of discrimination according to people's testimonies. At the same time, it is necessary to note that the feeling of discrimination does not necessarily mean that discrimination in the legal sense (that is, in the sense of a violation of the law) has actually occurred. People often confuse discrimination with behaviour that they themselves feel is unfair, whereby it is not even necessary that the worse treatment to which they were exposed actually occurred or that it occurred due to some personal circumstance of the individual. The reason could be elsewhere. Therefore, it is important to interpret this data with the awareness that it reflects the subjective experiences and perceptions of discrimination held by the individuals who responded to the survey, which may not necessarily align with the definitions of discrimination outlined in the regulations. It is different for the data obtained based on situation testing. Situation testing involves using a tester and a reference person to objectively demonstrate the existence of discrimination in specific areas, such as employment and housing, by minimising the influence of personal beliefs about discrimination held by those participating in the testing.

In conclusion, I can say that the book is undoubtedly an important contribution to knowledge about discrimination in Slovenia. The book's special value is that it focuses on a relatively narrow circle of personal circumstances. It works in a focused way and does not try to cover the problem of social exclusion as a whole. The book may also be of interest to an international audience if it is translated into English, as the European Union has a centralised system for addressing racial or ethnic discrimination and the prohibition of such discrimination is strongly protected at the EU level.

Given that this type of discrimination is also prohibited by the aforementioned international Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which encourages countries that have ratified the Convention to monitor and address instances of racial discrimination, this book's contribution is also significant on a global scale.

Assist. Prof. Neža Kogovšek Šalamon, PhD

Review by Roman Kuhar

Veronika Bajt's book "Ethnic Discrimination: Strategies of Research and Measurement" is by far the most comprehensive and, in terms of methodology, undoubtedly the most sophisticated modern research in Slovenia in the field of discrimination based on ethnicity, skin colour, nationality and religion, which the author combines into a single concept ethnic discrimination. The research findings are not surprising for those who meet various social minorities in Slovenia daily. It is undeniable that discrimination, including ethnic discrimination, exists, but the data presented in this book is likely to be shocking even to readers who are already aware of these issues. However crumbled our perceptions may be of the tolerant and inclusive society in which we live, the fact is that the data from the present book further shake them and are bound to elicit a response of disbelief: "How is this possible?"

Why am I talking about a scientific monograph in emotion-based terms? The answer seems obvious to me: despite legal anti-discrimination mechanisms, despite institutions charged with preventing discrimination and sensitising society to this issue, and despite threatened penalties for discrimination, I believe that the fundamental response to discrimination is through personal, rather than systemic, efforts. Systemic persecution of discrimination will always be at least partly ineffective, thus the key to creating a more inclusive society in the long term is cultural change; that inclusive culture in which we ascribe the same value to our fellow humans as to ourselves regardless of differences such as gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, skin colour and other personal circumstances that should not play any role in the "judgment" of our fellow human being.

Veronika Bajt starts her discussion and analysis of the data obtained as part of three research projects by asking two starting questions: how much and in which areas is there ethnic discrimination in Slovenia, and does this phenomenon affect some minority groups more? The answers to both questions are affirmative and based on a solid empirical basis, which was obtained through the triangulation of methodological approaches of online survey, interviews and situation testing. Especially the latter, which has hardly been used in Slovenia yet, brings clear and verifiable data about discrimination, which—if we indulge in some (political) naivety—will stop intolerant and populist political speech about Slovenia. Despite the cynicism just expressed, the results of the present research should not be

underestimated. This book provides policymakers, researchers on discrimination and human rights, educators, journalists, and others with valuable data and insights into the practices of discrimination and complex inequalities in Slovenia. While it may not be able to stop populism, which thrives on intolerance and exclusion of marginalised groups, it can serve as a useful resource for those working to promote tolerance and inclusivity.

One of the unique strengths of this book is its comprehensive nature. Namely, the author addresses the issue of discrimination from a range of perspectives, including theoretical, terminological, and methodological, as well as the consequences of discrimination and the prevalence and forms of discrimination. In addition, the book is based on new empirical data collected by the author. In chapter one, the author discusses different possible approaches to understanding and defining discrimination and explains the frequent confusion between statistical categories and social (self)categorisation of discriminatory episodes due to different definitions. Chapter two provides an overview of the current legislative framework of anti-discrimination legislation in Slovenia and the EU, while chapter three addresses different methodologies for measuring, recording and analysing discrimination. It is on the basis of this critical analysis that the author sets up the empirical part in chapters four, five and six, in which she presents the results of three studies that were carried out with the help of a classic online survey, interviews with people who have experienced discrimination and with experts in this field and using the method of situation testing. In addition to the research findings, the book includes valuable self-reflection on the methodological approaches and experiences of the author, which can be useful for other researchers who may adopt these methods in the future. The author notes that they often encountered ethical dilemmas while conducting nearly 800 tests using the situation testing method. However, this innovative aspect of the research is also the most convincing, as it highlights systemic elements of discrimination rather than individual instances. This makes it particularly important for policymakers who are seeking to address discrimination. In the final chapter, the author examines the consequences of discrimination and its root causes, exploring the intersection between intergroup relations, prejudice, and hate speech.

Upon reading this book, which holds up a critical mirror to Slovenian society and reveals uncomfortable truths about discrimination and hatred, we must confront the fact that people are still stopped on the streets because they look foreign, that the police are called to bars to verify the immigration status of guests, that people are subjected to verbal abuse and slurs on the streets, and that headscarves and certain surnames can lead to discriminatory treatment. As a society and as individuals—especially those in

power positions with disproportionately more power to either prevent or promote hatred, it is our responsibility to address these issues. These stories of discrimination are familiar to us and require a response. The authorities and institutions that are responsible for addressing discrimination must take action based on the evidence presented in this book, and each individual must also take responsibility for addressing these issues.

Prof. Roman Kuhar, PhD

Veronika Bajt holds a PhD (University of Bristol, UK, 2003). In 1998, she graduated in Sociology from the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), and in 1999 she obtained her master's degree from the Central European University in Warsaw (Poland). She completed her postdoctoral studies at Masaryk University in Brno (the Czech Republic, 2005-2006). The areas of her research include studies of nationalism and racism, migration, hate speech, discrimination, and the construction of national identities—she has also lectured on these topics at the Masaryk University and the International University Institute for European Studies (IUIES) in Italy. Since 2006, she has been a researcher at the Peace Institute in Ljubljana.



9 789619 601321