

Discrimination in the European Union

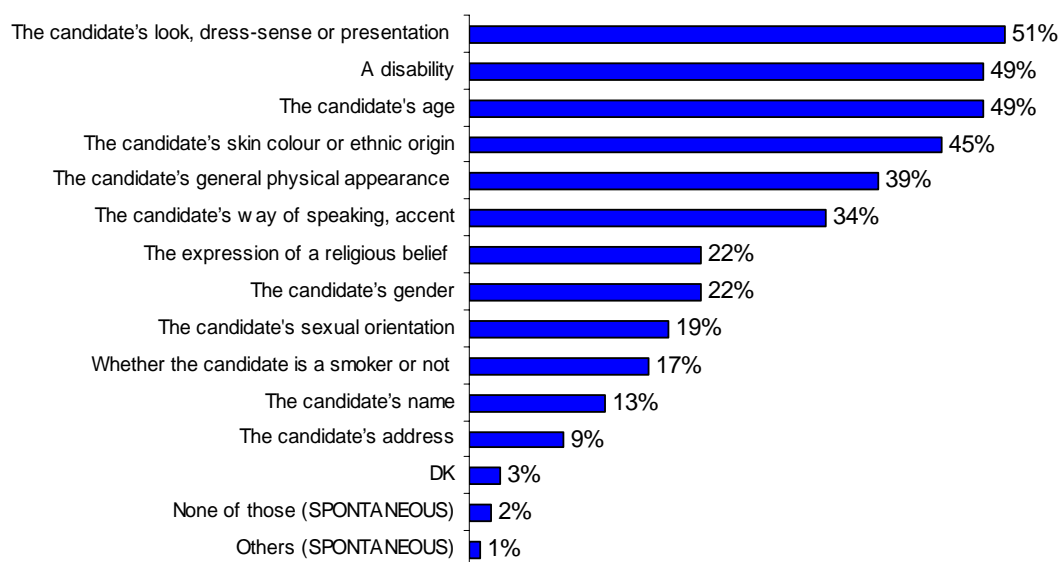
Fieldwork: June – July 2006

Publication: January 2007

This survey was requested by the Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and coordinated by the Directorate-General Communication.

This document does not represent the point of view of the European Commission.
The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

Q5 - Criteria which may put people at a disadvantage when a company can choose between two candidates with equal skills and qualifications EU25 (%)

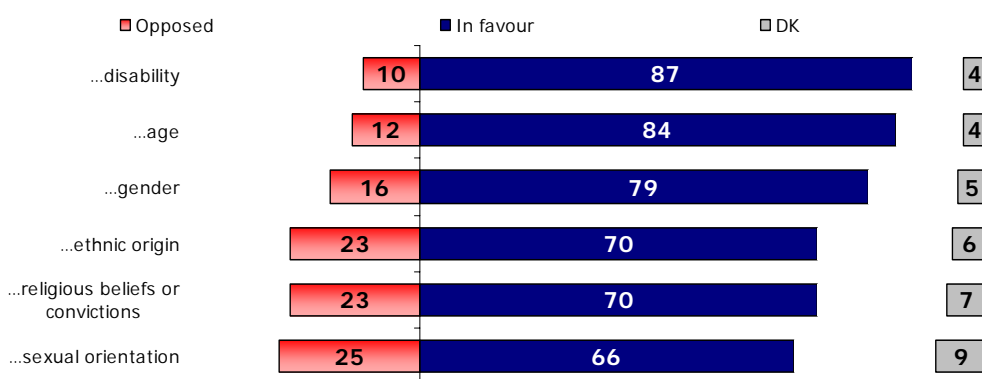


Comparing the responses of the former EU15 countries with the ten new Member States shows that whilst the top three most frequently mentioned criteria are quite similar, the rank order is not the same. In the former EU15 countries, the candidate's look, dress-sense and presentation is mentioned most frequently (52%), followed by a disability (48%) and the candidate's age and skin colour or ethnic origin (both 47%). In the 10 new Member States, the candidate's age is mentioned most frequently (60%), followed by a disability (54%) with the candidate's look, dress-sense and presentation in third place (43%).

2.3 Support for measures to provide equal opportunities in employment

There is **broad support among European Union citizens to adopt measures that provide equal opportunities for everyone in the field of employment**¹⁸, ranging from **87%** for specific measures for disabled people and older people to **66%** when it comes to adopting specific measures depending on people's sexual orientation.

Q9 Measures being adopted to provide equal opportunities for everyone in the field of employment
In favour of or opposed to measures depending on ...?
 EU25 (%)



Analysis of the results of the **former EU15 countries and the ten new Member States reveals slight differences in opinion, particularly when it comes to adopting measures on the basis of sexual orientation, religious beliefs, gender and ethnic origin.**

Q9 In favour of specific measures being adopted to provide equal opportunities for everyone in the field of employment	Comparison on EU averages		
	EU25	EU15	NMS10
Disability	87%	87%	88%
Age	84%	83%	88%
Gender	79%	78%	87%
Ethnic origin	70%	69%	75%
Religious beliefs or convictions	70%	69%	79%
Sexual orientation	66%	67%	63%

¹⁸ Q9 Would you be in favour of or opposed to specific measures being adopted to provide equal opportunities for everyone in the field of employment? Specific measures for people depending on their...

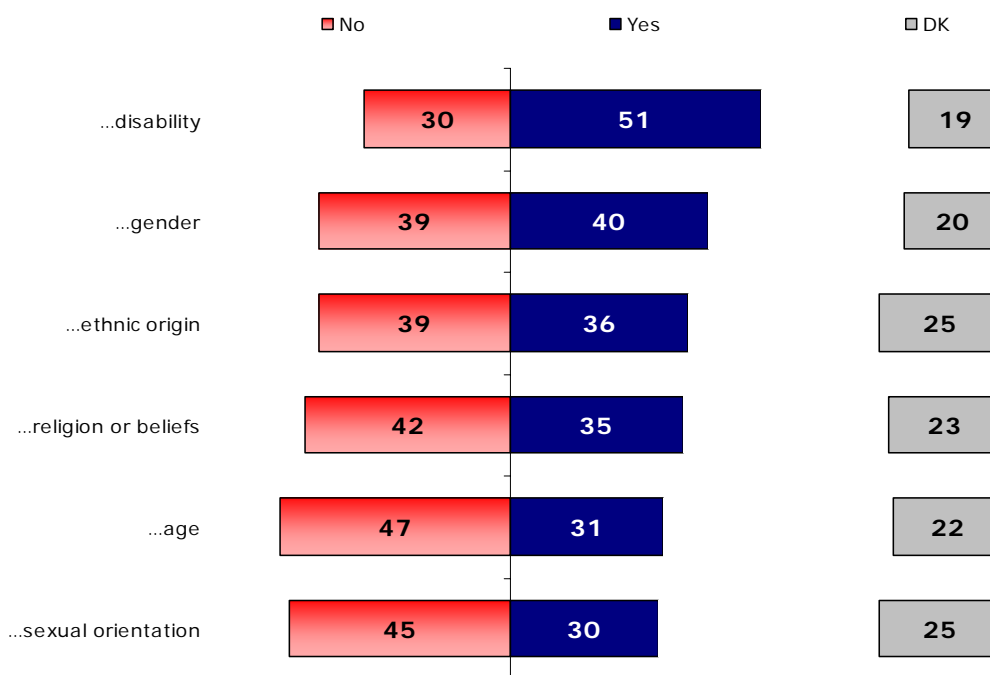
4. Raising awareness

In this chapter, the focus is on people's awareness of anti-discrimination legislation, their knowledge of who can help should they fall victim to discrimination and knowledge of their legal rights as citizens of the European Union.

4.1 Awareness of the laws prohibiting discrimination

On average, awareness of the existence of anti-discrimination laws is quite low in the European Union²². Disability is the only type of discrimination which more than half of the European public knows is prohibited by law when hiring new employees (51%). Four out of ten citizens or fewer know that discrimination on the basis of the other five strands is also prohibited by law. The public is least aware of legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (30%) and age (31%).

Q12 Does country have a law prohibiting discrimination when hiring new employees on the basis of... EU25 (%)



Awareness levels vary greatly between the former EU15 nations and the ten new Member States. The lower awareness levels in the new countries are not surprising as they only had to incorporate the rules in their national laws upon joining the European Union.

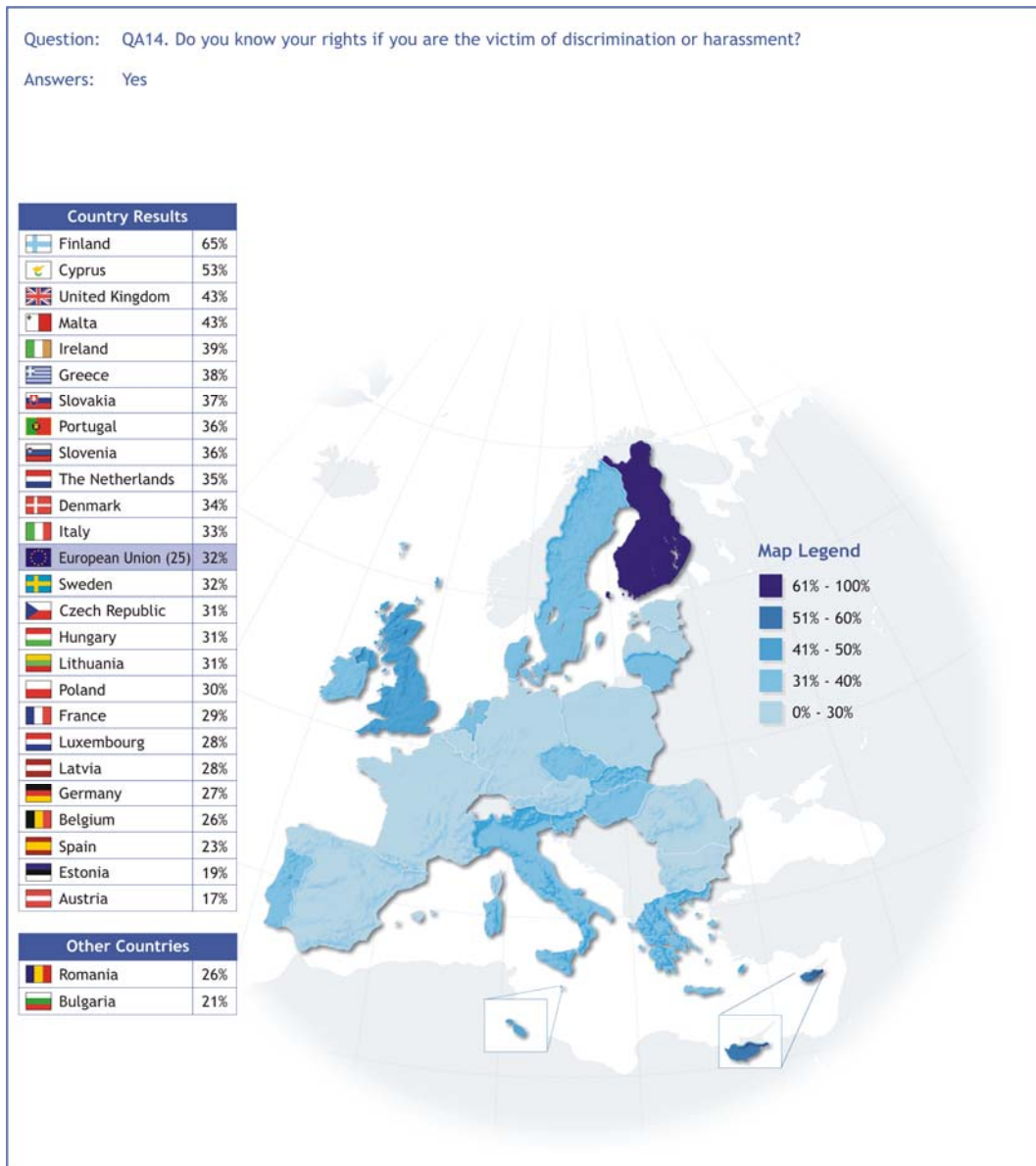
²² QA12 Please tell me whether, in your opinion, in (OUR COUNTRY) there is a law which prohibits the following types of discrimination when hiring new employees. Discrimination on the basis of...

4.3 Knowledge of one's right as a victim of discrimination

On average only one third of European Union citizens claim to know their rights should they be the victim of discrimination or harassment (32%).

However, the national results show very large variations. Finland stands out, with 65% of respondents indicating that they know their rights. Cyprus is the only other country where over half of the respondents answered the question affirmatively. At the other extreme, the survey shows that less than a quarter of people in Austria (17%), Estonia (19%) and Spain (23%) feel they know their rights.

With scores of 26% in Romania and 21% in Bulgaria, awareness levels in the two acceding countries are also below the European Union average.



8. Discrimination on the basis of age

8.1 The perceived extent of discrimination



46% of Europeans think that discrimination on the basis of age is widespread. At the country level, we find that this view is most widely held in Hungary (66%) and the Czech Republic (63%) and least so in Ireland (30%) and Luxembourg (31%). On average, people in the 10 new Member States are slightly more inclined to feel that age discrimination is widespread than are people in the former EU15 countries (49% vs. 45%).

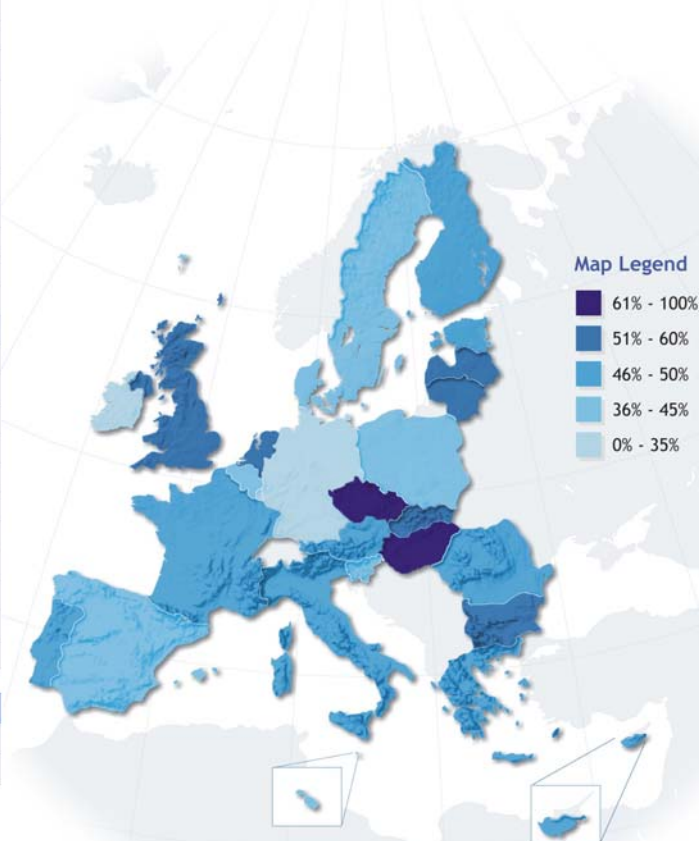
Question: QA1_4. For each of the following types of discrimination, could you please tell me whether, in your opinion, it is very widespread, fairly widespread, fairly rare or very rare in (OUR COUNTRY)? Discrimination on the basis of...

Option: Age

Answers: Widespread

Country Results		
	Hungary	66%
	Czech Republic	63%
	Latvia	55%
	The Netherlands	53%
	Lithuania	53%
	Slovakia	53%
	United Kingdom	51%
	France	50%
	Italy	49%
	Finland	49%
	Portugal	48%
	Cyprus	48%
	Estonia	48%
	Greece	47%
	European Union (25)	46%
	Austria	46%
	Spain	45%
	Belgium	42%
	Slovenia	41%
	Poland	40%
	Malta	39%
	Denmark	37%
	Sweden	36%
	Germany	34%
	Luxembourg	31%
	Ireland	30%

Other Countries		
	Bulgaria	51%
	Romania	46%





Question: QA3_3. Please tell me whether you personally totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree with each of the following statements.

Option: In (OUR COUNTRY) people over 50 are often considered as being no longer capable of working efficiently

Answers: Agree

Country Results	
 Portugal	78%
 Slovakia	73%
 Germany	71%
 Poland	69%
 Latvia	68%
 Austria	67%
 Czech Republic	65%
 Spain	64%
 Hungary	61%
 Greece	60%
 European Union (25)	57%
 Malta	56%
 Italy	52%
 Slovenia	52%
 Finland	51%
 Lithuania	51%
 France	50%
 Estonia	49%
 Belgium	45%
 United Kingdom	44%
 Ireland	43%
 Sweden	43%
 Luxembourg	40%
 The Netherlands	37%
 Cyprus	36%
 Denmark	35%

Other Countries	
 Bulgaria	79%
 Romania	71%

