

European partnership charter to promote the prevention of and fight against discrimination

Preamble

European directives recognize six discrimination criteria: age, disability, origin, religion, gender and sexual orientation. The population as a whole could therefore be at risk of discrimination.

Discrimination constitutes psychological violence for the individuals who experience it, and jeopardizes social cohesion. It also has economic consequences, to the extent that it interferes with the fluidity of the labor market. For companies, discrimination is detrimental to their human resources management and to the quality of their corporate management.

Those participating in employment, integration and training programs may face more discrimination, because they are seeking employment or training, or be more affected by it, as data have shown that such people are generally in a more precarious social position.

In response to these findings, Europe has made preventing and fighting employment discrimination a Community priority.

There are, therefore, many reasons to fight discrimination. First, from a general point of view, discrimination is a crime and undermines the founding principles of democracy. The signatories to this Charter, who are implementing public policies at the European level, cannot remain indifferent to these violations of equal treatment.

Who are the signatories to the European partnership charter to promote the prevention of and fight against discrimination?

As part of a Leonardo Da Vinci transfer of innovation project relating to anti-discrimination issues, the French association Uni-Est joined forces with other European employment counseling players in an initiative to promote the sharing of equal treatment practices. This involved helping them develop their professional expertise in the prevention of and fight against discrimination through training: anti-discrimination awareness and a thorough examination of possible actions in this area, work on professional practices, and the development of a toolbox based on the one created and implemented by Uni-Est).

This innovative methodology, which addresses the specific characteristics and problems associated with the professional practices of players active in training, integration and employment, was part of the skills transfer that took place from October 2011 to September 2013 between **Uni-Est (France)** and the following European partner entities:

Hope in the Community (HITC), England

Scuola Centrale Formazione, Italy

AID, Belgium

CSC, Belgium

Fundacio Privada Trinijove, Spain

All the partners in the project belong to the same network, the Comité Européen de Coordination (CEC), which brings together entities with a professional and social inclusion mission.

The project highlighted the findings shared by the French, Belgian, Italian, Spanish and English partners with respect to discrimination. Common priorities resulted from these findings:

- People face numerous types of discrimination (based on age, gender, race, etc.) in their access to both employment and training opportunities, and the professionals who counsel them need to be educated in order to better identify and handle potential instances of discrimination;
- Professionals should be encouraged to think about and question their own professional practices and the risks of being party to discrimination (stereotyping, guiding individuals toward a particular career path or training program based on preconceptions).

The goals of the project have therefore led to:

- A sharing of practices among the different European partners, through an analysis and comparison of the different political and legislative environments and the development of possible transfers of the best practices identified;
- The partners' transmission and adoption of a training methodology to educate professionals from the different entities working in the integration, training and employment fields;
- The continued use and distribution of tools transmitted and adapted to the different national environments so they can be disseminated to other national and European entities.

In the end, the project enabled all the partners to better:

- Understand the roots of discrimination and identify its causes, under European legislation and the various national legislations.
- Comprehend Europe's challenges in fighting discrimination, and the practices used by the project's other partner countries.
- Develop a framework for analyzing and improving these practices: the players are better able to substantiate their positions, and are better equipped and informed, particularly in light of the experience gained by the other players.
- Educate the partner entities' professionals on how to take the discrimination issue into account, handle different situations and implement preventive practices to improve the services provided to their users.
- Extend this skill set to other professionals, other missions within the entity and beyond with the support of partners, such as businesses.
- Inspire new practices, new content or tools.

All the partners that have signed the charter would like this project to have a lasting impact, and undertake to:

1) Respect the principle of non-discrimination

- Internally with respect to the employees of their respective entities
- By supporting those who seek employment and training counseling
- In the relationships between the local partners of each of the countries concerned (unions, public players, associations, businesses, etc.)

2) Promote the principle of non-discrimination

- Internally by analyzing and modifying their own practices, where necessary
- By providing information on and raising awareness of the challenges of the principle of equal treatment and by providing non-discrimination training to their employees, those seeking employment counseling, and all the economic and social partners that are signatories to this charter
- By supporting and facilitating the efforts of those who may have experienced discrimination so that they can assert their rights if necessary by referring cases to the competent European or national authorities

3) Visibly demonstrate their commitment to respect and promote the principle of non-discrimination:

- By highlighting the non-discrimination actions they have taken in their annual reports, and
- By emphasizing their impacts and the results obtained.

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