

(In)Equality of Opportunity in the World's Happiest Country?  
Investigating Cumulative Discrimination and its Implications on the Labour Market  
Outcomes of Migrants in Finland

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## **Abstract**

In Finland, due to the aging population, how to attract a foreign workforce is an increasingly important question. However, migrants continuously experience discrimination and racism - 42 percent of migrants reported experiencing discrimination in 2016 as reported by the Finnish Health Institute. Experiences of discrimination may accumulate across domains, within domains, and across generations, and furthermore may hinder the full societal participation. The following research attempts to investigate the extent to which perceived discrimination in different social domains such as in the housing market, when looking for work or at work, in the public realm and the healthcare system, can cumulatively affect the labour market participation of Sub-Saharan African migrants, which is one of the largest migrant groups in Finland. Furthermore, this study attempts to investigate how awareness of rights in terms of antidiscrimination may alter the relationship between perceived discrimination and labour market participation.

Employing quantitative methods and using the Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey, this study suggests that Sub-Saharan Migrants perceive discrimination especially based on skin colour and ethnic origin, especially in the domains of looking for work and in the public realm such as in public transport and shops. Furthermore, this study suggests that perceived discrimination during the job search process has negative implications for the labour market participation of Sub-Saharan African migrants. Notably, even minor instances of discrimination can hinder the full labour market participation of migrants. Finally drawing on policy recommendations, it is suggested to create more awareness about discrimination and its implications by for example social media campaigns targeted at youth, and to create job-application processes that focus on the skills and experience of migrants rather than on the individual level factors such as the name of the applicant.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A country with a single language, culture, and ethnicity. This is the Finnish myth. The history of Finland has been remarkably whitewashed even though for centuries the country has been a home for several minorities such as the Sámi, Swedish, Russian, Karelian, and Roma (THL, 2023). Additionally, in recent years populations of for example Russians, Iraqis, Somalis and Indians have migrated to the country. In fact, due to the ageing population, the growth in the number of people of working age largely depends on immigration (Ministry of the Interior, n.d.a).

As in several countries today, the subject how immigrants fare economically is a heated debate also in Finland, where the discussion is dominated by the current right-wing government. The conversations in Finland revolve around attracting skilled workers as well as tightening the rules for asylum seekers, migrants, and refugees (Ministry of the Interior, n.d.b). For example, Jussi Halla-Aho, the former leader of the right-wing Finns party highlights that Finland wants to build a society in which only those who want to integrate into Finland are welcome (Sivac & Siljamäki, 2023).

Indeed, what is integration? It is the process where newcomers become an “accepted part of the receiving society and of accepting the receiving society’s general rules and values” (Jesse, 2016. Ch.2). For example, strong residence status, equal treatment, right to family reunification, and access to the labour market are key for integration (Groenendijk, 2004). To actively participate in the host society, there must be equality of opportunity and absence of discrimination on grounds of ethnic and national origin. Thus, to achieve integration, there must be mutual respect and openness of the receiving population (Jesse, 2024).

Labour market integration is viewed as the key path to social inclusion in Finnish society. However, as researched by Ahmad (2019), even with identical educational background, experience, and language skills, those with a foreign-sounding name have up to four times worse chances of receiving an invitation to a job interview than those with a Finnish-sounding name. As the historical baggage of exclusion, discrimination and forced assimilation has become transgenerational in Finland, The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (2024) reports, that 42 per cent of migrants reported having been discriminated against, and 75 per cent of them estimate the discrimination to be originating based on their ethnic origin or skin colour. Sub-Saharan African (SSA) migrants report the highest rates of discrimination at 63 percent, and they constitute 11 percent of the total immigrant population in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2019). Experienced discrimination has several implications, as it can reduce the welfare of groups and individuals, as well as negatively affect the feelings of safety and sense of belonging to the Finnish society. Individually perceived discrimination can foster social exclusion by restricting full participation in the educational, economic, political and social institutions of society (Fibbi et al., 2021, p. 66). Fortunately, Finland scores top-10 in the anti-discrimination policy indicators in the Migration Integration Policy Index (MIPEX, n.d.). Ziller (2014) argues that anti-discrimination policies enhance the informative environment which in turn

enables individuals to not only recognize discrimination in their surroundings but also to know how to and what to do about it.

The following paper employs quantitative methods to explore the effects of perceived discrimination across different social domains on the migrants' labour market participation. Furthermore, the moderation effect of awareness of rights in this relationship is researched. The question that will be attempted to answer is: *To what extent does perceived discrimination influence the labour market participation of Sub-Saharan African migrants in Finland?*

This study will shed light on the extent to which discrimination affects labour market participation of migrants. Studies on discrimination often prioritize examining the perpetrators and the reasons behind discriminatory behaviour, rather than concentrating on the victims and the consequences of discrimination (Makkonen, 2012). It is necessary to research the implications that discrimination, especially its cumulative effects, may have on the individuals concerned. The second knowledge gap attempted to fill is in terms of rights awareness and its relationship to perceived discrimination; while Ziller (2014) has researched how anti-discrimination policies shape the relationship between perceived discrimination and rights awareness, it is suggested to research the topic from the perspective including minority groups such as migrants.

In the following, I will first discuss relevant theories of discrimination, such as the different forms of discrimination across different domains, and their cumulative effects on the labour market participation of migrants. Following this, I will elaborate on the research design and methods. After that, analysis will be conducted using SPSS software, and based on this, the discussion and conclusions will be drawn. The research will conclude by giving concrete policy recommendations in line with the findings.

## **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Defining discrimination**

Discrimination can be categorized into indirect and direct forms. Direct discrimination, as defined by Makkonen (2012, p. 34) occurs when someone is treated unfairly due to specific characteristics like race, gender, age, or disability. In contrast, indirect discrimination involves seemingly neutral rules or practices that disproportionately disadvantage certain groups. Both definitions highlight two key characteristics of discrimination: unfavourable treatment compared to others based on unchangeable features (Fibbi et al., 2021, p.14).

It is important to recognize the broader contexts of discrimination before individual experiences can be understood. Instances of discrimination are linked to unequal treatment within institutionalised and organisational settings such as labour and housing markets (Van Tubergen & Kros, 2024). As defined by Makkonen (2012), institutional discrimination arises from organisational failures to implement the principle of equal treatment due to embedded in rules and procedures of an organisation. Structural discrimination refers to societal barriers that limit equal rights and opportunities barriers due to how certain aspects of society operate, including rules, policies, practices and informal norms. These barriers take various forms but are especially prevalent in traditionally bureaucratic administration.

This research will focus on self-reported perceived discrimination, which is the belief of being treated differently due to personal characteristics (Andriessen, 2014). This subjective experience can result from the feeling of being treated differently in public or institutional spaces, or of being barred access to information, social networks or peer groups. The feelings of no control over discrimination occurrences on unchangeable characteristics such as ethnic origin can have long-lasting effects on one's social identity and wellbeing (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al. 2003). It is important to realize that perceived discrimination should not be mistaken with discrimination in a legal sense but rather as a subjective experience which might be influenced by individual-level variations to sensitivity or differences in taking part in settings where exposure to e.g. prejudice is minimized (Pager and Shepherd, 2008).

### **Discrimination across different social domains**

The common assumption is that discrimination occurs at a specific point in time within a particular domain. However, it is important to recognize that these domains form an interconnected system. Blank et al. (2004) argue that discrimination is a dynamic process and that the repercussions of discrimination may cumulate over time within and across domains. Blank et al. (2004) highlight three aspects of discrimination as a dynamic process: First, discrimination has effects that may cumulate across generations and through history. Second, the effects of discrimination may cumulate across

different domains, for instance, the poor health of children may affect their academic achievement which in turn affects labour market participation later. Third, the effects of discrimination may cumulate within a single domain. For example, biased teacher expectations in primary school may later affect the student's performance and experiences in elementary school. In the end, perceived discrimination shows the nature of interactions between the receiving society and immigrants, exhibiting the expectations that the groups have of each other (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al. 2003).

### **Connecting discrimination and labour market participation**

Discrimination can hinder full societal participation across several domains as people with migration background experience discrimination often in the labour markets, education, housing, healthcare, criminal justice (Blank et al., 2004), as well as when accessing goods or services, or at agencies and authorities (Zhang et al., 2022). In the following, the cumulative effects of discrimination on labour market participation will be discussed through discrimination perceived in housing, labour market, healthcare, and the public realm. These domains were selected as they are important domains for social interaction among individuals in the labour market. Education domain was excluded, as those involved are not fully available for employment.

#### **Discrimination in employment**

Blank et al. (2004) proposes, that discriminatory practices during hiring and performance evaluations could influence subsequent outcomes such as wage progression and promotions, potentially perpetuating the cycle of discrimination. For example, Ahmad (2019) concluded that a job seeker in Finland is four times more likely to be invited to a job interview if they have a Finnish sounding name. Even minor instances of discrimination in job search, such as in application or interviewing stages, job retention, promotion and wage negotiation can lead to significant disparities in labour market outcomes when those effects cumulate over time, even if no further discrimination occurs. Furthermore, discrimination in workplaces impacts the well-being of employees, consequently affecting productivity and resulting in higher rates of absences (Makkonen, 2012).

Perceived discrimination may manifest in the migrants behaviour for example as the “strategy of avoidance”, describing the situation when the person experiencing discrimination further avoids situations where the likelihood of discrimination is high. In the context of labour market participation, a person who avoids discrimination might only look for jobs where there is less competition, often less well-paid jobs, in which it is seen that employer cannot ‘afford’ to discriminate (Makkonen, 2012). Anticipation of unequal opportunities in the labour market and thus low future returns to skills, the investment of time and energy is lower. Consequentially, the person concerned might stop looking for work (Nievers, 2007, as cited in Andriessen et al., 2014). In addition, Andriessen et al. (2014) explain in their research in the Netherlands that non-Western migrants are more often unemployed and dependent on temporary work than compared to the Dutch natives.

However, being employed can bring a sense of security which in turn reduces the perception of discrimination (Beauchemin et al., 2018). Additionally, workers who experience discrimination can be extra motivated to show that they can do the work, and for example a study on students who experience discrimination show that they might increase their efforts (Andriessen et al. 2014). Thus, I expect that:

*H1: Perceived discrimination when looking for work negatively affects the migrant's position in the labour market.*

*H2: Perceived discrimination at work negatively affects the migrant's position in the labour market.*

### Discrimination in housing

Housing discrimination has been a key issue for integration of ethnic or racial minorities for decades. It takes form for example in the way the housing is advertised, by receiving less information about units, or fewer opportunities to view units (Pager & Shepherd, 2008). Real-estate agents may steer housing seekers into less wealthy communities by presenting housing in certain neighbourhoods, and banks might refuse loans for persons in lower-income black neighbourhoods more than for equivalent white applicants (Blank et al., 2004). Housing discrimination contributes to increased housing expenses and harms the minorities wealth accumulation. Moreover, it fuels residential segregation which is linked several outcomes such as poor health, and educational and employment disparities among ethnic minorities (Auspurg et al., 2019).

Wixe and Pettersson (2019) in their longitudinal study of neighbourhood effects concluded that individuals in segregated neighbourhoods are less likely to be employed compared to those living in non-segregated neighbourhoods, especially males of foreign background in metropolitan regions. According to Andriessen (2014), the effects of residential environment on the employment opportunities are based on the importance of social networks in terms of their size and diversity, further suggesting that informal social networks play an important role in recruiting employees, and those who lack those connections are at a disadvantage. Additionally, it is argued that residents in areas with high ethnic concentrations suffer income disadvantages.

Wixe and Pettersson (2019) highlight that residing in socioeconomically weak neighbourhoods provide fewer opportunities for labour market participation. Families who live in low-poverty neighbourhoods experience higher employment rates and income, better housing conditions, less exposure to criminal activity and violence, and improved physical and mental health among adults and children. Residential location may affect job finding and unemployment, as it is related to poor access to jobs, longer commutes, lower wages, and lower employment for low-skilled non-white workers (Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist, 1998; Mouw, 2000, as cited in Vandecasteele & Fasang, 2020), and constrained social networks (Andriessen, 2014). Thus, *H3: Perceived discrimination in the housing market negatively impacts residential segregation and thus migrant's position in the labor market.*

### Discrimination in healthcare

Discrimination in the healthcare sector can manifest in various forms, such as in accessing medical services and insurance, and it may impact both the cost and the quality of healthcare services (Blank et al., 2004). Accessibility and quality suffers if healthcare providers base their decisions based on situational context, prejudice, time pressure, implicit/explicit ethnic biases and their experience of intercultural contact (Duveau et al., 2023) which can lead to unjustifiable differential treatment based on discrimination. For example in terms of mental health care, research shows that there are significant associations between migration status and medical decisions, as differences persist in the diagnosis, assessment of symptom severity, treatment and referral to mental health services of migrant patients. Inadequate access to quality care can lead to poorer reported (mental) health, poorer reproductive health (Anderson, n.d.), and can for example lead to higher infant mortality and morbidity (Blank, 2004). Beyond health outcomes, perceived discrimination in healthcare is associated with lower trust in healthcare system, lower satisfaction with health services and in general lower healthcare utilization (Fibbi et al., 2021). Bakker et al. (2014) concluded that refugees who report higher level of mental health are more likely to work compared to those who experience lower degree of mental health. From this, we can derive *H4: Perceived discrimination in healthcare services negatively affects migrant's position in the labour market.*

### Discrimination in public realm

Besides perceiving discrimination in institutional settings, it is important to take into account the informal and unstructured everyday encounters. Feagin and Sikes (1994) explored that minor instances of disrespect that manifest through poor service in restaurants and stores, or insensitive racial comments or petty harassment, may affect the everyday experiences of ethnic and racial minorities. Rather than being restricted to specific time or actors such as employers or landlords, discrimination in this domain involves a range of social interactions. These casual encounters may lead to forming weak ties which in turn can have implications in connecting individuals to information about jobs (Pedulla & Pager, 2019), services, or other opportunities (Zhang et al. 2022). Accumulating these incidents over time can represent a source of stress on mental and physical health of minorities (Pager & Shepherd, 2008). As such, for example physical avoidance in public spaces reproduce and reinforce segregation that characterise housing, education, and employment experiences of many immigrant minorities, making public spaces a site of social division rather than shared spaces (Zhang et al. 2022). Based on this, the fifth hypothesis is as follows: *Perceived discrimination in public realm negatively affects migrant's position in the labour market.*

These accounts have provided a basis to understand how perceived discrimination within one domain may have cumulative effects on the labour market outcomes. To further understand this phenomenon from a broader perspective, the sixth hypothesis takes the simultaneously perceived discrimination across several domains into account and suggests that: *Perceiving discrimination across domains of work, healthcare, housing and in public, has negative implications on the migrant's labour market position.*

### **Individual level factors**

Studies on second-generation migrants have consistently shown that in some cases the ethnic penalties on second-generation migrants are even more significant compared to first-generation migrants, as second-generation face persistent disadvantages in education, employment and housing. These penalties cannot be explained by their lack of skills or social capital (Heath & Cheung, 2007) as for example, Van Tubergen and Kros (2024) concluded that having been born and raised in the host country, second-generation immigrants engage in more frequent social interactions with the ethnic majority for example in neighbourhoods, workplaces and schools. Additionally, second-generation immigrants are more proficient in the host country language and have higher education. These factors are associated with heightened awareness of discrimination due to their higher expectations of fair treatment (Fibbi et al. 2021 p. 70).

Other individual level factors that might influence the levels of perceived discrimination are age and gender. Gender inequality disproportionately affect women and girls, and many problems occur in domestic and sexual violence, lower pay and lack of access to adequate healthcare (Amnesty International, 2024). In addition to that, age discrimination manifests often in older adults encountering stereotypes as being less capable, which might lead to exclusion from community participation or different activities, and longer unemployment durations (Non-discrimination Ombudsman, n.d.). Thus, it is expected that being older, and being a woman, increases the chances of perceiving higher amount of discrimination.

### **Connecting antidiscrimination policy and awareness of rights**

Antidiscrimination laws are necessary in providing protection against discrimination. The general principles of anti-discrimination law is that everyone without any distinction should be protected by law, and any discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic origin and religion shall be prohibited (Article 21 - Non-discrimination). Several anti-discrimination directives are in place in

different domains such as employment and occupation, economic, social and cultural rights as well as in education.

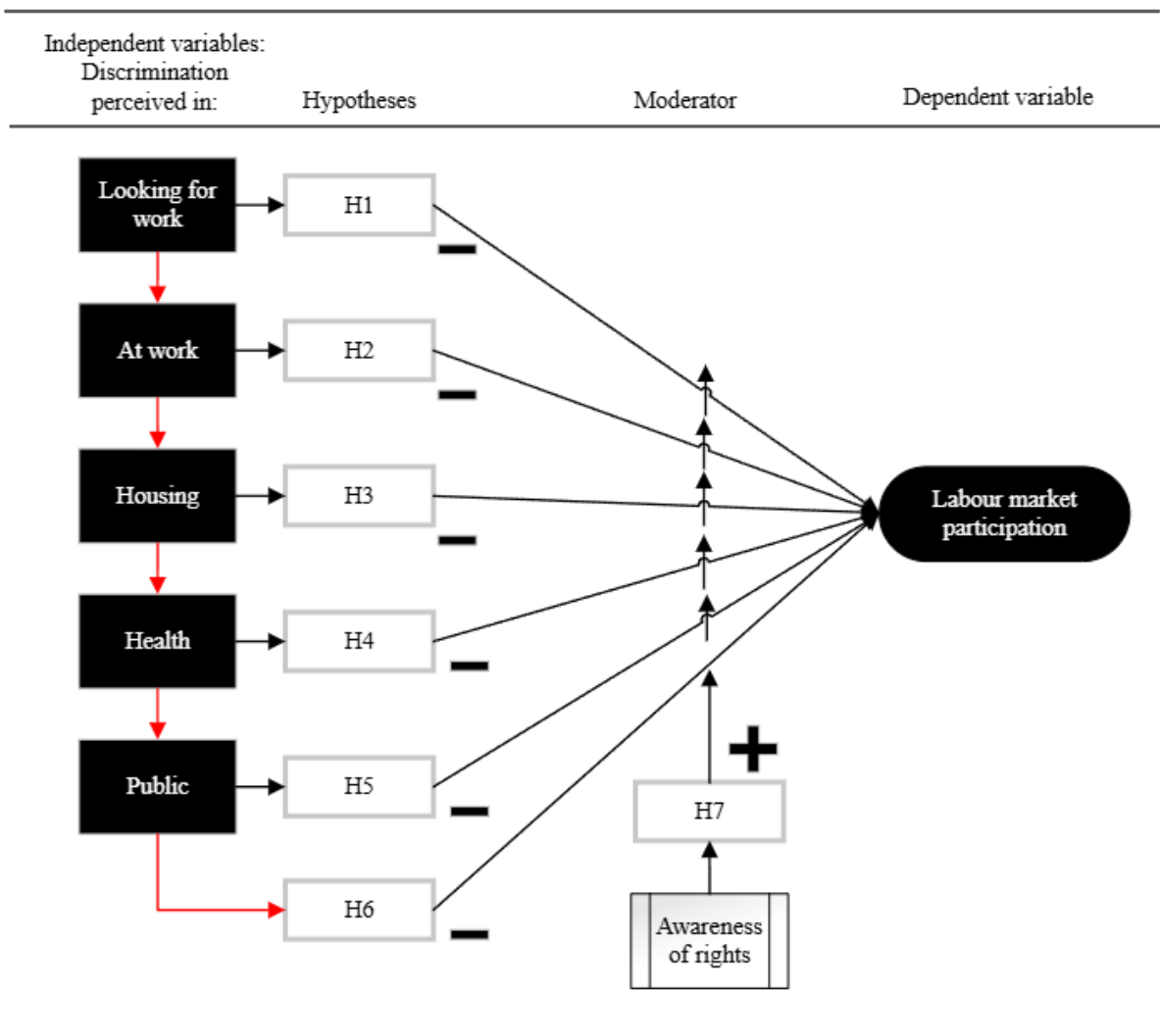
Policies are expected to influence public opinion through structural effects such as rules, administrative and organisational structures, as well as normative effects such as social norms, frames, and discourses. Additionally, antidiscrimination measures assist victims in opposing discrimination by improving their knowledge about their rights related to equal treatment and discrimination. Ziller (2014) suggests, that it is crucial that individuals know their rights so that the legal means can be appropriately utilized. Antidiscrimination policies can be seen as the key factor linking policy and discrimination outcomes in the population. Knowledge of rights constitute favourable informational environments (Kuklinski et al., 2001) which is crucial in identifying discriminatory practices and taking courses of action (Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010). Thus, informed citizens are expected to take effective use of antidiscrimination policies, which heightens the costs of discrimination for perpetrators and therefore might result in fewer discriminatory acts (Ziller, 2014).

Ziller (2014) suggests that anti-discrimination policies are beneficial to the societal awareness of rights, by which people are more likely to sense discrimination in their immediate surroundings. At the same time however, people living in better informational environments perceive less discrimination at the societal level. This might be due to clearer understandings of discriminatory practices or increased confidence to use their rights at the societal level and tendency to perceive discrimination as less of a diffuse and widespread issue. It is also demonstrated that increase in knowledge levels is associated with a decrease in self-identification with a discriminated group, further supporting the argument of strengthening peoples self-efficacy towards discrimination. This is an important finding since individually perceived discrimination has several negative outcomes for instance in well-being, social isolation, and in civic and political engagement.

For the purpose of this research, based on Ziller (2014) it is hypothesized that *H7: Higher knowledge of antidiscrimination measures positively influences the relationship between perceived discrimination and labour market participation.*

**Figure 1:**

*Visualising the relationships between the independent and dependent variables*



Based on the literature review, figure 1 visualises the expected relationships between the relevant variables in the study. Discrimination perceived within each domain has a negative link to the labour market participation. The red arrows indicate the total perceived discrimination across these domains, and further their combined effect and negative implications on labour market participation. Awareness of rights as a moderator indicates a positive link on this relationship. When it intervenes within the relationships between independent and dependent variables, it is expected to positively enhance the participation in the labour market as it mitigates the negative effects of perceived discrimination. In other words, it suggests that individuals who are more aware of their rights may be better equipped to counteract the negative impacts of discrimination, which further leads to improved employment outcomes.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION

### Research question

The focus of the research centres on examining the relationship between perceived discrimination and labour market participation of SSA immigrants residing in Finland, and further examining what is the extent that awareness of rights affects this relationship. The specific research question that is attempted to answer is thus as follows: *To what extent does perceived discrimination influence the labour market participation of Sub-Saharan African migrants in Finland?* The following sub-questions will assist answering the main question:

- What are the primary grounds and domains in which Sub-Saharan African migrants in Finland perceive discrimination?
- How does perceived discrimination in healthcare impact the labour market participation of Sub-Saharan African migrants in Finland?
- How does perceived discrimination in housing market impact the labour market participation of Sub-Saharan African migrants in Finland?
- How does perceived discrimination in public impact the labour market participation of Sub-Saharan African migrants in Finland?
- How does perceived discrimination when looking for work and at work impact the labour market participation of Sub-Saharan African migrants in Finland?
- To what extent does awareness of anti-discrimination among Sub-Saharan African migrants moderate the effect of perceived discrimination on their labour market participation?

### Data Collection

To answer the research question, the study used secondary data, which is data collected and processed by other researchers (Babbie, 2014). Secondary data on perceived discrimination in different social domains, as well as rights awareness, comes from the Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS II). The survey, conducted in 2016, covers areas such as employment, rights awareness, social participation and discrimination of minorities across all EU member states.

In Finland, the target group of the survey was SSA migrants, 86% of whom reside in Helsinki metropolitan area, Oulu, Tampere, Turku and Vaasa. The survey used random sampling strategy, i.e. “probability sampling of some kind” (Ethmig – Survey Data Network, n.d.). This strategy allows to select representative samples from large populations while countering sampling bias (Babbie, 2014). The sample source was the Finnish Population Information System (national population register) of

2015. Direct sampling was used in clustered regions, and telephone recruitment was the primary method, although there was an 80% loss due to unobtainable phone numbers. The initial sample was not large enough as selection criteria for Sub-Saharan Africans relied on African languages, for which reason the second sample was drawn to balance the representation of language groups, resulting in a well-balanced sample (Ethmig – Survey Data Network, n.d). Low response rate and willingness to take part in the survey is explained by the active far-right groups that were patrolling the streets and attacking reception centres during the fieldwork.

Babbie (2014) outlines the advantages and disadvantages of using secondary data for analysis. First, it is cost and time effective compared to conducting original surveys. Secondly, datasets like EU-MIDIS benefit from professional interviewers, ensuring standardized and efficient data collection, as well as reduced bias. However, disadvantage lies in the validity of the data, as it may not precisely align with the specific research needs: some questions could have preferably been phrased differently for the purpose of this research, for example the questions about education did not work consistently throughout the survey.

## **Case selection and sample**

Due to small and aging population, there is a growing recognition on the important role that migrant workforce can play in addressing labour shortages in Finland. Although attitudes toward skilled foreign workers are reportedly becoming more positive, structural discrimination and racism persists. Additionally, the rise of right-wing populist parties has fuelled anti-migrant rhetoric, contributing to discrimination and exclusion (Salmela & Jungar, 2019). These specific characteristics of the Finnish society and economy make Finland a unique case to study.

In total, the number of migrants arriving to Finland has been growing fast in past years, and in 2023 the record number of migrants moved to Finland with net 58 496 persons (Statistics Finland, n.d.). African migrants constitute 11% of migrants in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2019). Africans are the most victims of racial discrimination, and marginalisation against Africans in Finland dates back to 19<sup>th</sup> century (Ndukwe et al., 2016). The situation has not changed in today's Finland as research conducted by European Agency for Fundamental rights in 2019, about the experiences of discrimination of people of African descent, Finland topped the list of 12 western European states with 63% black respondents saying they have been victims of racist harassment and physical attacks (Kataja, 2020).

The total achieved sample of Finland EU-MIDIS was 1502 which consisted of 16+ year old SSA migrants. Out of those, 100 respondents were available to the labour market and had answered all questions that were necessary for the analysis in this study. 24.2% of the final sample were unemployed. This is fairly representative of the total migrant population, in which the total

employment percentage in 2022 was 73,4%. More closely, women represented 28% of the sample, and the mean age is 34 years. Additionally, the final sample consisted of 86.7% first-generation migrants, which suggests that second-generation migrants were slightly underrepresented. The share of persons with African background among those with foreign background is double in the second generation, meaning that 22% of the SSA population is second generation (Statistics Finland, 2019).

The final sample is fairly small due to missing data. Missing data occurred for example when a person did not indicate using healthcare services, as then the question about experienced discrimination was not asked. Although the total questionnaire sample was representative due to multiple rounds of sampling, the final sample used in this study lacks representation in women and to some extent second-generation migrants. A reason for lower reach of second-generation migrants might be due to their younger age, and thus not being fully available to the labour market, which means they are excluded from the study. This suggests that the findings of the study might not be fully representative of the general migrant population in Finland, which can affect the generalisability of the results.

## **Operationalization**

The key concepts of this research are perceived discrimination, labour market participation, and rights awareness, as summarised in the table 1 in appendix. The key concepts will be measured by combining questions from the EU-MIDIS questionnaire into binary variables. First, the independent variable of experienced discrimination is defined as the extent to which individuals perceive and describe acts of discrimination they face, irrespective of the legal consequences (Andriessen et al., 2014). The survey captures the level of perceived discrimination by asking respondents if in the past five years they have felt discriminated against in the four contexts (health, housing, looking for work and at work) based on the following grounds: skin colour, ethnic origin, religion, age, sex/gender, disability or sexual orientation. Housing and at work domains capture additionally more detailed discriminatory experiences such as whether the person was denied a promotion because of ethnic background, or whether the person was asked to pay a higher rent/deposit for a house due to their ethnic background. Discrimination based on ethnic origin in public institutions such as public transport, shops, clubs, administrative offices or when trying to attend university were measured simply by yes or no answers. The dependent variable, labour market participation, refers to the current employment status of the respondent, which is measured with the response options that range from being in paid work, unemployed, unpaid work in family business, to being in retirement. The moderating variable, rights awareness, is measured by following Ziller (2014) definition of rights awareness which is the extent one is aware of anti-discrimination policies and organisations in their

country. Furthermore, the question “is the household living in an area that is ethnically segregated?” will be used to measure housing segregation.

To ensure that the results are not confounded by compositional differences in individual-level variables, the following control variables are included: gender, age, and degree of segregation in housing. It is anticipated that being female, older, and residing in segregated areas will increase the likelihood of experiencing discrimination (Ziller, 2014).

Each of domain was recoded into binary variables in which a respondent received value 1 if they had reported discrimination based on any ground in a specific domain, and 0 if not. Public discrimination were coded so that if a person reported discrimination in any of the five categories, they received a score 1, otherwise 0. In each binary variable, those who did not answer any questions within a domain received a missing value. This occurred when a person did not report e.g. looking for work in the past five years. For the purpose of this research and due to the low amount of data, employment status was recoded into binary variable with two categories: unemployed with a score 1 or employed with a score 0. The rest, such as unpaid work in family business or student, were coded into missing values. A binary variable was created to measure rights awareness based on the questions regarding awareness of help organisations and awareness of discrimination law, in which if a person reported knowing at least one of them received a score 1, and if they did not report knowing any, the respondent received a score 0.

## **Data analysis**

The data is analysed with IBM SPSS Statistics 27 software. First, descriptive analysis will be conducted in order to understand the sample population and its representativeness on the entire population. Due to the binary nature of the variables in the study, the most appropriate method to test the hypotheses is to use binary logistic regression analysis. As Stoltzfus (2011) explains, logistic regression is an effective tool for examining the impact of multiple independent variables on a binary outcome by measuring the individual contribution of each independent variable. It uses similar elements as linear regression but is adapted to logit scale, allowing the use of one or more independent variables and a binary dependent variable.

## **Ethical considerations**

It is central to realise the ethical challenges in all research methods. It is important to not exhaust the target population with abundance of research especially as the necessary data for this research has already been acquired to a large extent, thus using secondary data is ethical especially as discrimination can be a sensitive topic to survey. In using secondary dataset, the concerns often revolve around the potential harm to individual subjects and issues of return for consent. For that

reason, it is important that the data is anonymous so that no individuals can be identified (Kang & Hwang, 2023). However, as the dataset is freely available it can be assumed that the proper ethical clearances have been obtained. Although the data is publicly available after logging in to GESIS, it is important to respect the privacy and store the data safely (Babbie, 2014) in this case in the Erasmus University cloud for 10 years.

Additionally, researchers can be susceptible to subjective biases also in quantitative analysis. As the original data was not collected to answer the research question of this specific study, it is central to reflect on the accuracy and content of the data and ensure that the analysis will be conducted appropriately (Kang & Hwang, 2023) by for example avoiding disclosing only positive results and exaggerating the accuracy of the research, even if they contradict the expectations of hypotheses (Babbie, 2014).

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The following chapter will report the main results of the research. First, descriptive statistics will summarise the information of the final sample after dividing the sample to unemployed and unemployed respondents. After it, the test results of logistic regression analysis will be presented and analysed per each hypothesis.

### Descriptive statistics

Descriptive analysis helps to gain an understanding of the sampled population. Table 2 summarises the descriptive analysis per employed and unemployed SSA migrants in Finland. It shows that employed respondents felt more discrimination in public and at housing markets, whereas unemployed perceived more discrimination when looking for work. The grounds in which discrimination was perceived was the most prominent due to skin colour and ethnic background for both employed and unemployed groups, while discrimination on the grounds of disability or sexual orientation was not mentioned in neither group.

**Table 2**

*Descriptive statistics per unemployed and unemployed, mean in percentages*

Variables		Employed (N=76)			Unemployed(N=24)	
		Range	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Demographics	Age	19-64	35.2	9.492	34	10.1
	Female		29.3	.459	25	.443
	First generation		86.7	.342	87.5	.338
	Segregation	Yes	0	.000	0	.000
		No	100		100	
Moderation	Awareness of rights	Yes	82.7	.381	75	.443
		No	17.3		25	
Perceived discrimination per domain	Looking for work	Yes	37.3	.487	45.8	.509
		No	62.7		54.2	
	At work	Yes	36	.483	33.3	.482
		No	64		66.7	
	Tasks below qualifications*	Yes	18.9	.395	20.5	.415
		No	81.1		79.2	
	Promotion denied*	Yes	9.7	.299	8.3	.282
		No	90.3		91.7	
Trade union not allowed*	Yes	0	.000	0	.000	
	No	100		100		

	No time off for religious holiday*	Yes	4.0	.198	4.2	.204
		No	94		95.8	
	Fired/Dismissed*	Yes	2.7	.163	8.3	.278
		No	97.3		91.7	
	No expression of religious practices*	Yes	2.7	.162	0	.000
		No	97.3		100	
	In public	Yes	52	.503	33.3	.482
		No	48		66.7	
	Shop	Yes	17.8	.385	8.7	.288
		No	82.2		91.3	
	Transport	Yes	26.5	.443	17.4	.387
		No	73.5		82.6	
	Administration	Yes	7.1	.259	17.4	.387
		No	92.9		82.6	
	Restaurants	Yes	35.9	.484	18.8	.403
		No	64.1		81.2	
	School	Yes	20.0	.403	21.1	.419
		No	90		78.9	
	Health	Yes	2.7	.162	5.1	.338
		No	97.3		87.5	
	Housing	Yes	34.7	.479	25	.443
		No	65.3		75	
	Prevented renting by private landlord*	Yes	19.2	.396	8.3	.283
		No	80.8		91.7	
	Prevented renting by public housing*	Yes	8.0	.273	0	.000
		No	92		100	
	Prevented buying from owner/estate agent*	Yes	6.8	.252	0	.000
		No	93.2		100	
	Asked to pay higher rent*	Yes	9.5	.295	4.2	.204
		No	90.5		95.8	
	Excluding adverts*	Yes	12	.327	12.5	.338
		No	88		87.5	
Perceived discrimination per ground	Age	Yes	6.7	.251	8.3	.302
		No	93.3		91.7	
	Disability	Yes	0	.000	0	.000
		No	100		100	

Sexual orientation	Yes	0	.000	0	.000
	No	100		100	
Gender	Yes	5.3	.226	8.3	.289
	No	94.7		91.7	
Religion	Yes	4	.197	8.3	.282
	No	96		91.7	
Skin colour	Yes	30.7	.464	29.2	.464
	No	69.3		70.8	
Ethnic origin	Yes	37.3	.373	33.6	.432
	No	62.7		66.4	

Note: \*Full definitions in Table 1, appendix.

**Figure 2**

*Percentages of discrimination experienced per domain according to gender*

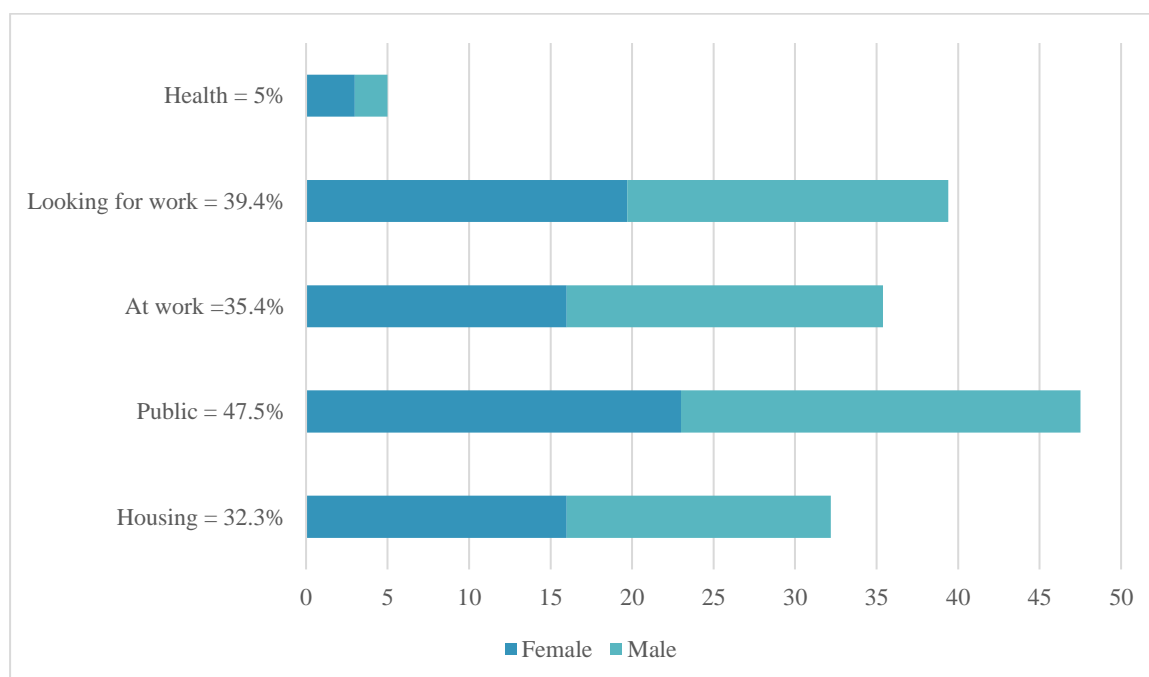
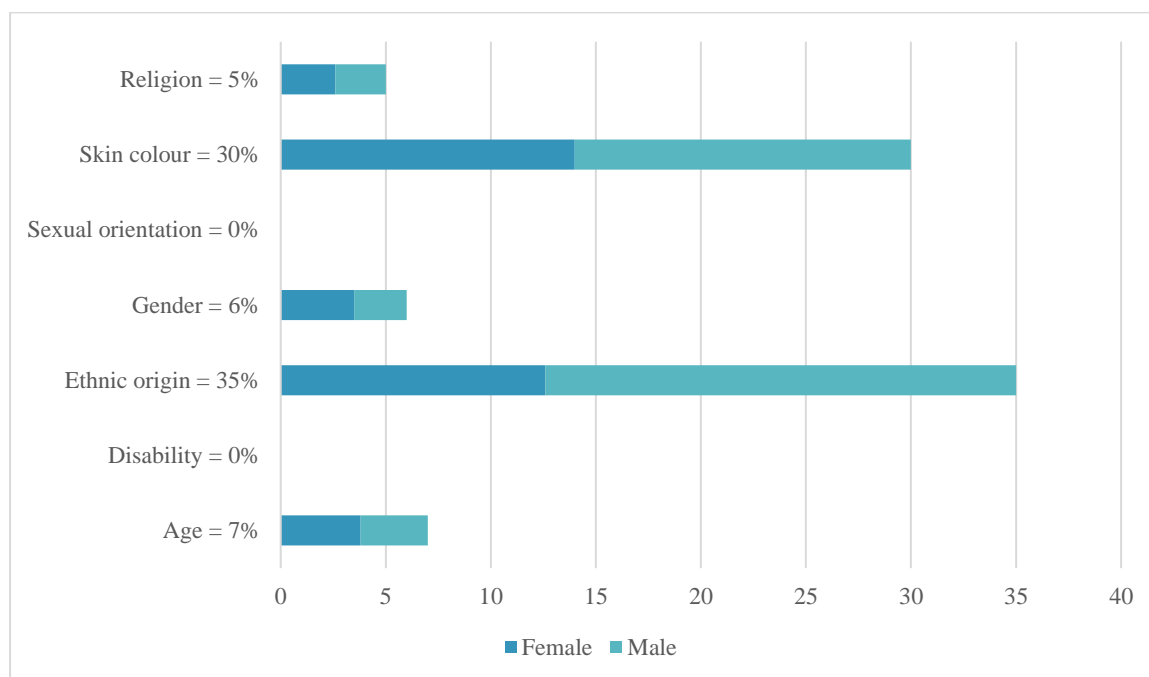


Figure 2 illustrates the percentage of perceived discrimination within the five social domains in past five years according to gender. Perceived discrimination in public, including for example shops, administrative offices/public services, public transport, and nightclub/bar/restaurant/hotels, was the most commonly experienced domain of discrimination with 47.5 percent. The second most common domain mentioned was when looking for work, with 39.4 percent of the sample reporting perceived discrimination. Moreover, 35.4 percent indicated being discriminated at work, and 32.3 percent when renting or buying apartments. Perceived discrimination that was reported in health was the lowest at 5

percent. The perceived discrimination between females and males were consistently equal within all domains.

### Figure 3

*Percentages of experienced discrimination per discrimination ground according to gender*



As seen in the Figure 3, none of the respondents reported perceived discrimination due to disability or sexual orientation. Very low levels of reports were on grounds of gender (6 percent), religion (5 percent), and age (7 percent). The most reported ground for discrimination was skin colour with 30 percent and ethnic origin with 35 percent. The percentage of female and males of reporting perceived discrimination within the different grounds was fairly equal, although males reported more discrimination than females in ethnic discrimination (64.3 percent out of all males compared to 44 percent of all women).

Table 3 below summarises on what grounds was discrimination felt the most within each domain. Perceived discrimination in terms of ethnic origin was the most prominent when looking for work and at the housing market, whereas discrimination based on skin colour was the most prominent at work. Discrimination based on age, gender or religion was rarely felt in any of the domains.

**Table 3***Discrimination grounds within each domain.*

Domains	Grounds				
	Age	Gender	Religion	Skin colour	Ethnic origin
Looking for work	5.1	1	4	16.2	25.3
At work	1	3	2	17.2	15.2
Health	-	-	-	4	3
Housing	1	2	-	9.1	17.2

*Note:* Discrimination based on disability or sexual orientation was not mentioned and thus omitted from the table.

## Logistic regression

### Assumptions

Logistic regression has several key assumptions as introduced by Stoltzfus (2011). First, highly correlated independent variables can negatively impact the model's significance and reliability of coefficients (Team, 2024). To ensure the absence of multicollinearity, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was used as a tool to identify the degree of multicollinearity. As seen in table 4, all VIF values are below 10, indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern.

Second, strongly influential outliers should be omitted. Due to the nature of binary data, outliers are not a concern in this research. Additionally, binary data eliminates the need to assume linearity in the logit of continuous variables. Sample size must also be considered to prevent overfitting. A common guideline is at least 10 outcomes per binary category. In some instances, for example in discrimination experienced in healthcare, this assumption is violated due to very small amount who responded yes to this question. Lastly, independent variables should be chosen with care, as too many may lead to decreased generalizability beyond the sample. Using a less stringent p-value can help include important variables. Considering these assumptions, we can proceed with building the logistic regression model.

**Table 4**

*Multicollinearity test significance, tolerance and VIF.*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>VIF</b>
Perceived discrimination at...			
Housing market	.340	.603	1.657
Healthcare system	.022	.961	1.040
At work	.750	.758	1.319
Looking for work	.048	.617	1.621
In public	.031	.610	1.638
Awareness of rights	.362	.671	1.030

### **Results of logistic regression model**

Binary logistic regression analysis aimed to assess the impact of perceived discrimination on likelihood of being unemployed. After it, the tests were performed with control variables and each independent variable separately, allowing to understand each predictor's effect on employment status. Additionally, tests were conducted to check for interaction effects with awareness of rights. Following this, a direct approach was used, where all independent variables were entered into the model simultaneously. This method is helpful when no variable is assumed to be more important than others and provides a clearer understanding of each variables' unique contribution after adjusting for others (Stoltzfus, 2011). Next, the model fit results will be analysed, and after the test results per hypothesis.

#### **Assessing the model fit**

Pearson chi-square and Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test are used to assess overall model fit of logistic regression models as suggested by Stoltzfus (2011): Pearson chi-square measures how well the model predicts the outcomes in general compared to the null model, while Hosmer-Lemeshow test checks the fit of the data to the model. A non-significant p-value indicates that the observed and expected events align. Additionally, Nagelkerke R-Square indicates variation in the dependent variable explained by the model. However, the increase in the models predictability is not proportional to the increase in this R-squared, this, it has to be interpreted with caution.

*Model 1: Perceived discrimination while looking for work and employment status*

In the model 1 (Table 5), in terms of perceived discrimination when looking for work and its effect on employment status, when controlling for age, gender and generations, the model was not significantly better than the null ( $\chi^2(4) = 4.411$ ,  $p = .353$ ). The Nagelkerke R Square suggests that only 2.5% of the variance is explained by the model, and the Hosmer-Lemeshow test indicates good fit of the data to the model with value .195. When adding the awareness of rights as moderator and its interaction with experienced discrimination in the model 1.1, the model significantly improves ( $\chi^2(6) = 13.400$ ,  $p = .037$ ). Nagelkerke R-Square indicates 7.4% explanation in the variance on the outcome by the model, and Hosmer-Lemeshow Test indicates good fit.

*Model 2: Perceived discrimination at work and employment status*

When testing with discrimination experienced at work and its relationship with employment, the model remained insignificant compared to the null ( $\chi^2(4) = 1.345$ ,  $p = .854$ ) (Table 6). Nagelkerke R-Square shows that only 0.7% of the variance on the outcome is explained by experienced discrimination at work. Hosmer-Lemeshow suggests that the data fits the model well. In the model 2.1 when adding the moderator and interaction the model remains worse than the null ( $\chi^2(6) = 5.629$ ,  $p = .466$ ), and the Nagelkerke R-Square shows that only 3% of the variance is explained by the model. Again, Hosmer-Lemeshow test suggest acceptable good fit of the data.

*Model 3: Perceived discrimination in housing and employment status*

The model did not significantly improve the prediction of employment status compared to the null model  $\chi^2(4) = 0.341$ ,  $p = .987$  (Table 7). Nagelkerke R-Square indicates that 0.3% of variance is explained by the model, indicating very limited explanatory power. However, Hosmer and Lemeshow test shows with value .913 that the data fits the model. Model 3.1 with interaction, was not an improvement of the null model:  $\chi^2(6) = 7.256$ ,  $p = .298$ . Nagelkerke R-Square indicates 5.5% explanatory power. In this model, the Hosmer-Lemeshow indicates that the data fits the model well with .190 value.

*Model 4: Perceived discrimination in healthcare and employment status*

The model 4 was not significantly better than the null model ( $\chi^2(4) = 5.127$ ,  $p = .275$ ) (Table 8). While Nagelkerke R-Square shows that only 3.5% of variance is explained by the model, and the data is well fit according to the Hosmer-Lemeshow test. Adding the moderator, the model improves to significant results ( $\chi^2(5) = 11.209$   $p = .047$ ). Nagelkerke R-Square shows that 7.6% of the variance is explained by the model, and Hosmer and Lemeshow tests that the data fits the model well. Here, testing for the interaction was not possible due to redundancies.

*Model 5: Perceived discrimination in public and employment status*

Chi-square statistic of  $\chi^2(4) = 2.298$ .  $p > .561$  (table 9) indicates that the model with experienced public discrimination does not provide a better fit to the data than a model without it. Additionally, the models Nagelkerke R-Square value of .014 indicates that 1.4% of the variance in employment status is explained by the model. This indicates serious issues about the improvement over the null model. Hosmer-Lemeshow test was conducted in which the non-significant result indicates an acceptable fit of the model to the observed data.

Model 1.1 Adding the interaction term of awareness of rights, shows a slight increase in the amount of variance (Nagerkerke R square of 0.57). This model was better and close to the threshold level  $\chi^2(6) = 11.795$ .  $p > .067$ . Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness-of-fit value .631 shows that the model estimates fit the data at an acceptable level.

*Model 6: testing together all domains and employment status*

In the last model (Table 10), all experienced discrimination in the different domains will be added in the same model to examine how each of these predictor variables considered together will affect the probability in being unemployed. The model is not better than the null model ( $\chi^2(8) = 11.654$ ,  $p = .167$ ). Nagelkerke R-Square shows that 16.5% proportion of the variation on employment status is explained by the predictors in the model. Furthermore, Hosmer-Lemeshow good fit of the data. In this model, the interaction term was not added as it did not yield any significant findings in the previous model, which leads to a conclusion that the interaction is not important for the observed data and we can proceed with a simpler model in this case.

In general, the results of model fits were poor. This means, that the models predicted probabilities actually might not follow the true probabilities of being unemployed. A reason for this

might be the small sample size, or that there are some other variables that are more influential to the employment outcomes.

### **Individual variable results per hypothesis**

For interpreting logistic regression results, the independent variables are presented as odds ratios (OR), which show the strength of the independent variables' contribution to the outcome (Stoltzfus, 2011). The reference category in the models was set to unemployed, experiencing no discrimination, male, and first-generation. This way, the OR can be interpreted as the higher/lower odds of being unemployed based on perceived discrimination. The results of the tests will be analysed for each hypothesis, followed by a reflection on the moderating effect of awareness of rights. While the model offers insights into the relationships between main variables, these results should be interpreted with caution due to previously mentioned model constraints.

#### *Model 1: Perceived discrimination when looking for work*

*H1: Perceived discrimination when looking for work negatively affects migrant's position in the labour market.*

39.4 percent of the respondents reported experiencing discrimination when looking for work. In the model 1 (Table 5) when testing this domain with employment status, there is a slight increased odds of being unemployed when one experiences discrimination when looking for work. However, none of the predictors yielded significant results (OR= 1.199,  $p=.529$ ). This suggests that experienced discrimination while looking for work does not have a statistically significant effect as an independent predictor on the odds of being employed versus unemployed.

Awareness of rights as an independent predictor in model 1.1 was statistically significant (OR = .299,  $p = .003$ ), this means that respondents who are aware of their rights had lower odds of being unemployed. The effect of experienced discrimination when looking for work on being unemployed was not as strong in the model when awareness of rights was added (OR = .634  $p = .367$ ), suggesting a more positive labour market outcome, however this result is not statistically significant. The interaction with experienced discrimination and awareness did not yield any significant results, further indicating that the awareness of right does not significantly moderate the relationship between experienced discrimination and employment status. For this reason, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

*Model 2: Perceived discrimination at work*

*H2: Perceived discrimination at work negatively affects the migrant's position in the labour market.*

Discrimination at work was reported by 35.4 percent of the respondents in the observed data. Model 2 (Table 6) shows the effect of experienced discrimination at work on the employment status, while controlling for age, gender, and generation. None of the predictors were able to explain the effect on employment status on statistically significant level. Here, awareness of rights as independent predictor lowered the odds of being unemployed but this is not statistically significant result on the common alpha level  $OR = .529, p = .102$ ) The results for interaction between discrimination experienced at work and rights awareness were not significant either. In the model with the moderation variable, the effect of experienced discrimination on work status remained unchanged. We fail to reject the null hypothesis

**Table 5**

*Logistic regression results of model 1 between perceived discrimination when looking for work and labour market participation and 1.1 adding moderator*

Predictor	Model 1						Model 1.1					
	B	SE B	Wald $\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	OR	95% CI	B	SE B	Wald $\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	OR	95% CI
Looking for work	.181	.288	.395	.529	1.199	.681-2.109	-.456	.506	.813	.367	.634	.235-1.708
Age	.019	.017	1.275	.259	1.019	.986-1.052	.022	.017	1.678	.195	1.023	.989-1.058
Gender	.168	.325	.265	.606	1.182	.625-2.237	.260	.335	.600	.439	1.296	.672-2.502
Generation	-.496	.536	.856	.355	.609	.213-1.742	-.187	.559	.122	.738	.829	.277-2.482
Awareness of rights							-1.207	.406	8.845	.003	.299	.135-.663
Awareness of rights * Discrimination							1.036	.633	2.681	.102	2.819	.815-9.748
Constant	-1.647	.623	6.984	.008	.193		-1.053	.652	2.606	.106	.349	
Overall model evaluation	4.411 (df = 4), <i>p</i> = .353						13.400 (df = 6), <i>p</i> = 0.37					
R2	.025						.074					
Nagelkerke Hosmer & Lemeshow	.195						.384					

**Table 6**

*Logistic regression results of Model 2, discrimination at work and employment outcomes and model 2.1 adding interaction*

Predictor	Model 2						Model 2.1					
	B	SE B	Wald $\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	OR	95% CI	B	SE B	Wald $\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	OR	95% CI
At work	-.114	.312	.133	.715	.893	.485-1.644	.045	.540	.007	.934	1.046	.363-3.012
Age	.011	.016	.483	.487	1.011	.980-1.043	.010	.016	.388	.533	1.010	.979-1.043
Gender	-.158	.339	.217	.642	.854	.439-1.661	-.094	.344	.074	.785	.911	.464-1.786
Generation	-.154	.521	.088	.767	.857	.309-2.377	-.012	.536	.001	.982	.988	.346-2.821
Awareness of rights							-.636	.389	2.669	.102	.529	.247-1.135
Awareness of rights *							-.155	.669	.054	.816	.856	.231-3.175
Discrimination												
Constant	-1.737	.624	7.743	.005	.176		-1.322	.665	3.948	.047	.267	
Overall model evaluation	1.345 (df = 4), <i>p</i> = .854						5.629 (df = 6), <i>p</i> = .466					
R	2	.007					.007					
Nagelkerke												
Hosmer & Lemeshow		.121					.420					

*Model 3: Perceived discrimination in the housing market*

*H3: Perceived discrimination in the housing market negatively impacts migrants' position in the labor market.*

32.3 percent perceived discrimination when buying or renting apartments and housing segregation was not detected as shown in the descriptive statistics. Model 3 (Table 7) illustrates the relationship between experienced discrimination at housing and employment status. Perceiving discrimination in the housing market no effect in the employment outcomes (OR = .915,  $p = .809$ ). Similarly, the control variables did not have any prediction effect. The model 3.1 adds the interaction effect shows, that the independent effect of awareness of rights on employment status is statistically significant (OR = .311,  $p = .010$ ), suggesting that being aware of rights in terms of discrimination lowers the odds of being unemployed. Also, the interaction effect shows that the interaction between awareness of rights and public interaction does not moderate the relationship. In this model, the odds ratio of experiencing discrimination and its effect on being unemployed becomes lower (OR = .540) although it remains statistically nonsignificant.

Thus, these results suggest that housing discrimination is not a significant predictor of employment status among the observed sample. For this reason, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

*Model 4: Perceived discrimination in healthcare*

*H4: Perceived discrimination in healthcare services negatively affects migrant's position in the labour market*

Discrimination in healthcare was reported by 5 percent. Those who experienced discrimination in health domain were 2.6 times more likely to be unemployed, however this finding was statistically insignificant (OR = 2.643,  $p = .136$ ). In the model 4.1 with moderator, experienced discrimination in healthcare yielded close to significant results (OR = 3.469  $p = .062$ ). This suggests that those who experienced discrimination in health domain have 3.469 higher odds of being unemployed compared to those who did not experience discrimination in healthcare.

Awareness of rights also had a significant result (OR = .408,  $p = .013$ ), which indicates that individuals who are aware of their rights have 59.2% ( $1 - \text{odds ratio} * 100$ ) lower odds of being unemployed compared to those who are not aware of their rights. Here, interaction could not be tested due to redundancies. The results of this model have to be interpreted with caution due to the low number of respondents belonging to the group who experienced discrimination in this domain. In this model, discrimination in health domain was associated with being unemployed, but the low group size harms the generalisability of the results. That being said, we fail to reject the hypotheses on the common 0.05 level.

*Model 5 Perceived discrimination in public*

*H5: Perceived discrimination in public realm negatively affects migrant's position in the labour market.*

Public discrimination was the most commonly mentioned domain as the observed sample reported discrimination at 47.5 percent. The model 5 (table 9) shows the independent effect of experienced public discrimination on the employment status. The logistic regression coefficients indicate that individuals who experienced public discrimination had lower odds of being unemployed, however this finding was not statistically significant (OR = 0.741,  $p = .273$ ). Age, gender and generation as control variables did not show almost any effects on employment status.

Awareness of rights was significant as an independent predictor on the employment status (OR = .414,  $p = .024$ ). This indicates that higher awareness of rights is associated with lower odds of being unemployed. However, the interaction term between public discrimination status and awareness of rights was not significant (OR = 1.076,  $p = .899$ ). This suggests that awareness of rights does not moderate the relationship between public discrimination and employment status.

Although perceived discrimination in public was the most reported domain of discrimination, the findings suggest that it does not harm the labour market participation of immigrants in Finland. Thus, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

**Table 7**

*Logistic regression table of model 3 with perceived discrimination in the housing market and labour market participation and model 3.1 adding moderator*

Predictor	Model 3						Model 3.1					
	B	SE B	Wald $\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	OR	95% CI	B	SE S	Wald $\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	OR	95% CI
Housing market	-.089	.368	.059	.809	.915	.445-1.882	-.617	.643	.920	.337	.540	.153-1.903
Age	.004	.021	.041	.840	1.004	.964-1.046	.010	.021	.206	.650	1.010	.968-1.053
Gender	-.016	.406	.001	.969	.984	.445-2.180	.093	.416	.051	.822	1.098	.486-2.479
Generation	-.213	.582	.134	.714	.808	.258-2.527	-.060	.599	.010	.921	.942	.291-3.050
Awareness of rights							-1.167	.454	6.609	<b>.010</b>	.311	.128-.758
Awareness of rights *							.745	.794	.880	.348	2.107	.444-9.998
Discrimination												
Constant	-1.300	.777	2.798	.094	.273		-.706	.811	.759	.384	.493	
Overall model evaluation	.341 (df = 4), <i>p</i> = .987						7.256 (df = 6), <i>p</i> = .298					
Nagelkerke R2	.003						.055					
Hosmer & Lemeshow	.913						.190					

**Table 8**

*Logistic regression results Model 4 with perceived discrimination at healthcare and Model 4.1 with awareness of rights independently without interaction*

Predictor	Model 4						Model 4.1					
	B	SE B	Wald $\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	OR	95% CI	B	SE B	Wald $\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	OR	95% CI
Health	.972	.652	2.222	.136	2.643	.736-9.487	1.244	.665	3.493	.062	3.469	.941-12.783
Age	-.004	.018	.045	.831	.996	.961-1.032	-.006	.018	.112	.738	.994	.959-1.030
Gender	-.070	.352	.040	.842	.932	.467-1.859	-.030	.359	.007	.934	.971	.481-1.960
Generation	-.902	.607	2.208	.137	.406	.123-1.333	-.716	.620	1.334	.248	.489	.145-1.647
Awareness of rights							-.896	.361	6.152	<b>.013</b>	.408	.201-.829
Constant	-.880	.685	1.649	.199	.415		-.192	.750	.066	.798	.825	
Overall model evaluation	5.127 (df = 4), <i>p</i> = .257						11.209 (df = 5), <i>p</i> = .047					
Nagelkerke R2	.035						.076					
Hosmer & Lemeshow	.331						.999					

**Table 9**

*Logistic regression results of model 5 between perceived discrimination in public and labour market participation and 5.1 adding moderator*

Predictor	Model 5						Model 5.1 with moderator					
	B	SE B	Wald $\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	OR	95% CI	B	SE S	Wald $\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	OR	95% CI
In public	-.300	.273	1.201	.273	.741	.434-1.266	-.419	.456	.845	.358	.658	.269-1.607
Age	-.002	.015	.020	.889	.998	.969-1.028	-.003	.016	.039	.844	.997	.967-1.028
Gender	-.021	.307	.005	.945	.979	.536-1.787	.064	.313	.042	.837	1.067	.577-1.972
Generation	-.602	.508	1.407	.236	.548	.202-1.481	-.426	.521	.668	.414	.653	.235-1.813
Awareness of rights							-.882	.319	5.074	.024	.414	.192-.892
Awareness of rights *							.073	.577	.016	.899	1.76	.347-3.333
Discrimination												
Constant	-.927	.596	2.422	.120	.296		-.314	.639	.241	.624	.731	
Overall model evaluation	2.982 (df = 4), <i>p</i> = .561)						11.795 (df = 6), <i>p</i> = .067					
R <sup>2</sup>	.014						.057					
Nagelkerke Hosmer & Lemeshow	.760						.631					

*H7: Higher knowledge of antidiscrimination measures positively influences the relationship between perceived discrimination and labour market participation.*

Awareness of rights as an individual predictor yielded significant results, highlighting the importance of legal knowledge in enhancing labour market outcomes. However, although adding the interaction term lowers the odds of being unemployed, it remains statistically insignificant. Taking the results of previous tests into consideration, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

*Model 6: All domains included*

*H6: Perceiving discrimination across domains of work, healthcare, housing and in public, has negative cumulative implications on migrant's labour market position.*

In Model 6 (table 10), all the discrimination domains are added together to provide comprehensive understanding on the individual contributions of each predictor while accounting for the presence of experienced discrimination in other domains. Here, discrimination when looking for work (OR = 3.605,  $p = .057$ ) had a significant effect on alpha-level of .01. Implying that when perceiving discrimination during job search, one is over three times more likely to be unemployed.

Significant results for perceived discrimination in health domain (OR = 10.661  $p = .025$ ) suggest that experienced discrimination at healthcare elevates the odds of being unemployed. However, this result is interpreted with caution due to small percentage reporting discrimination in this domain. This is noticeable from high level of 95% CI, explaining high level of uncertainty about the precise value of the coefficient.

Perceived discrimination in public yielded significant results, (OR = 0.212,  $p = .033$ ) implying it significantly lowers odds of being unemployed. Discrimination in housing market lowered the odds of being unemployed, however this finding is not statistically significant (OR = .541,  $p = .405$ ). Taking this, and the absence of housing segregation into account, conclusion is that housing discrimination does not affect the labour market outcomes of immigrants. Discrimination at work somewhat lowered the heightened the odds of being unemployed although insignificantly (OR = 1.286,  $p = .689$ ).

Additionally, these results suggest that age, generation nor gender has a significant effect on the labour market outcomes in the observed sample. Seeing that some of the domains yielded significant results in the combination model might suggest that perhaps the discrimination experiences and their effects do not occur in isolation, and their cumulative effect across multiple domains has more significant influence in labour market outcomes when they are considered together. Additionally, the significance of awareness of rights as an independent predictor suggests that it affects employment status similarly regardless of discrimination experienced.

**Table 10**

*Logistic regression results of model 6 adding all domains in one model*

<b>Model 6</b>						
<b>Predictor</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>SE B</b>	<b>Wald <math>\chi^2</math></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>	<b>OR</b>	<b>95% CI</b>
Health	2.367	1.059	4.990	.025	10.661	1.337-85.042*
Public	-1.552	.727	4.554	.033	.212	.051-.881
Looking for work	1.282	.673	3.636	.057	3.605	.965-13.470
At work	.252	.628	.161	.689	1.286	.376-4.406
Housing	-.615	.739	.692	.405	.541	.127-2.302
Age	-.001	.031	.001	.982	.999	.940-1.062
Gender	-.487	.628	.401	.438	.615	.180-2.103
Generations	.645	.909	.503	.478	1.906	.321-11.324
Constant	-1.037	1.244	.695	.405	.354	
Overall model evaluation	11.654 (df = 8), <i>p</i> = .167					
Nagelkerke R2	.165					
Hosmer & Lemeshow	.354					

*Note:* \*High level of uncertainty about the precise value of the coefficient e.g. due to small sample size,

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

This study investigated the extent that perceived discrimination affects the labour market participation of SSA migrants in Finland. Perceived discrimination was distinguished between several domains which represent different relevant social contexts for immigrants who are available to the labour market i.e. excluding for example students or retirees. Additionally, the study sought to understand the extent that awareness of rights interplays within the relationship between perceived discrimination and labour market participation. In the following chapter, the sub-questions and the main research question; *To what extent does perceived discrimination influence the labour market participation of Sub-Saharan African migrants in Finland?* will be answered while reflecting the results on the theoretical framework. In addition to that, it is important that not only the significance but also the limitations of the research are highlighted.

The first sub-question aimed to understand in which spheres of life, and which grounds, is perceived discrimination the most common. High perceived discrimination when looking for work is consistent with the findings of Ahmad (2019) who suggests that discrimination against immigrant job applicants is widespread in Finland. Also earlier surveys in Finland have consistently found that immigrants of Somali origin are located at the bottom of ethnic hierarchy in the job market (Ahmad, 2019).

Housing market and at work discrimination yielded similar results with 32.3 and 35.4 percent respectively. As suggested by Pager & Shepherd (2008), housing discrimination can occur for example in the way the housing is advertised. The findings were consistent and showed that in housing markets the most reported discriminatory practices were from preventing renting an apartment from a private landlord due to the ethnic origin, as well as coming across adverts for housing that excluded or discouraged applicants with an ethnic background to apply. However, the fact that no one reported living in ethnically segregated area, suggests that discrimination that is experienced in the housing market does not lead to residential segregation in the observed data, as suggested by Auspurg et al. (2019).

Discrimination at healthcare was almost non-existent. This might be explained by the high contact with healthcare professionals in this domain. Drawing on this, we can reflect on the fact that institutional discrimination in terms of receiving equal treatment in healthcare is not a major issue in Finland. Due to the high uncertainty of the model fit due to small event group, it is not possible to draw conclusions on the effect of discrimination in healthcare and effects on labour market outcomes.

The most reported discrimination in domain was in public settings e.g. cafes, shops, and public transport. This can be explained by the fact that it is an often-used space, and it includes

several situations in which discrimination can take place (Andriessen et al., 2014). The nature of the situations also matter, as unlike in structured institutional environments, informal settings such as public spaces have less oversight and accountability, and more anonymity which can make discrimination widespread. While this research does not specify from whom discrimination arises, it suggests that those everyday interactions between individuals in public are more likely to involve discriminatory behaviour than formal institutions like healthcare.

In terms of grounds for discrimination, migrants interestingly experience discrimination based on age and gender less than the whole population in Finland (THL, N.d.-c) while discrimination based on ethnic origin or skin colour was the most prominent ground. These results show the separation of people in terms of visual differences are present in Finland, which leads to discrimination, bias and prejudice by whites towards a person of colour. These results can perhaps be explained by Tajfel & Turner (1979), who suggest that people often classify themselves into social groups based on attributes such as race, gender or nationality. This categorization forms the basis of comparison of one's own group to others, often leading to a more favourable judgment of one's own group over the out-group. Visible characteristics can become markers for group membership which can lead to biased treatment and discrimination against those who are perceived as belonging to the out-groups i.e. those "non-white".

Answering the further sub-questions in terms of perceived discrimination in domain of looking for work, at work, housing, healthcare and in public, and their implications in labour market outcomes, the results suggest that perceiving discrimination when looking for work has significant negative effects on labour market outcomes. As Makkonen (2012) indicates, even minor instances of discrimination in job search can lead to significant disparities in labour market outcomes. Avoiding situations where discrimination might occur, e.g. job search can have a direct effect in not attaining work. Additionally, the anticipation of unequal opportunities the investment of time and energy can be lower to search for work (Nievers, 2007, as cited in Fibbi et al., 2021), and it can also affect the self-esteem and confidence which might result in prolonged periods of unemployment.

Interestingly, experiences of discrimination at work in the past five years were not associated with negative labour market outcomes. An explanation as introduced by Andriessen et al (2014) might be that those workers who experience discrimination at work can be extra motivated to show that they are able to their work and thus increase their efforts of retaining it. This motivation might be even stronger if there have been issues in the process of looking for work, so that when one managed to find work it there is higher motivation to retain it.

Discrimination in public realm had positive effect on labour market outcomes. Mesch et al. (2007) in their study of immigrant youth suggests that being treated differently in government offices, shops or cafes may be less damaging when the encounters are not frequent within these settings and

thus the migrant is not being subjected daily to negative reactions in them, i.e. their employment is not affected by those experiences. However, it can be that those who are employed are also more subjected to daily encounters with others, for example in public transport while commuting to work. On one hand, these encounters expose individuals to discriminatory experiences, but on the other hand these interactions are a part of the daily life of being employed and encounters in public can provide opportunities for social engagement. Public spaces are also important for social integration i.e. for building and maintaining social connections, which can further support the access to information about job opportunities (Zhang et al., 2022).

Unlike expected, awareness of rights did not moderate the relationship between perceived discrimination and labour market outcomes, although it was seen that awareness of rights does have a significant positive contribution to the employment outcomes on its own. An alternative explanation for the lack of moderator effect might be that those who are aware of their rights in terms of discrimination may also have a heightened perception of bias and unfair treatment, as suggested by Ziller (2014). Thus, awareness can empower individuals to seek support in terms of discrimination, but this does not translate to improved labour market outcomes.

The discussion suggests that ethnic origin and skin colour significant factors in discrimination in looking for work, housing, and in public realm for SSA migrants in Finland. Discrimination can contribute to disadvantages in various societal domains (Andriessen et al., 2014) and this study suggests that perceived discrimination in job search hinders labour market integration by migrants by decreasing motivation and effort. Simultaneously, experiencing discrimination at work may increase motivation to prove competence. Notably, an important finding is that although discrimination in public realm is common, it does not harm the labour market participation of SSA migrants in Finland.

Understanding the role of discrimination in employment rates among migrants in Finland is crucial, especially as the country seeks to attract skilled foreign workers. Ethnic origin and skin colour are major reasons for discrimination, and especially discrimination in job search can hinder labour market outcomes. Based on this, we should ask ourselves the question whether this will also affect highly skilled migrants. As suggested by Ahmad (2019), the real skills of individuals may be underutilized as discrimination outweighs qualifications in job search. If integrating to the labour market is one of the only ways to gain social acceptance, it should be realised that integration is a two-way process which is only achievable in the equality of chance in the absence of discrimination.

### Limitations and suggestions for future research

There is little research done in this area on cumulative effects of discrimination. This study was an attempt to investigate the cumulative effects of discrimination across domains, and to some extent across generations. It is important to research the size of the effect that discrimination can have across generations, across domains, and also within domains. However, this research has several limitations. First, the small sample size limits the study's generalizability. Second, the sample represents only one migrant group, making it unrepresentative of the entire migrant population. Third, the location of the sample – mainly from the Helsinki metropolitan area – may not reflect the experiences of migrants in smaller cities. Fourth, the poor fit of the models indicates that it might not be appropriate for the data, and that other variables might be explaining the outcome better. These issues affect the accuracy of the findings. The study's scope could be expanded in future research by including variables such as sense of belonging to the country, intergroup contact with locals, education levels, and language skills. Additionally, looking at employment types and contract types would allow for more broader understanding in terms of labour market outcomes. Future research should collect detailed longitudinal data and research over-time processes and causal factors. Additionally, advanced models should be developed in order to measure the dynamic patterns of racial disadvantage and discrimination across different domains and generations.

## **CHAPTER 6: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of this research, two policy recommendations can be drawn. Both of the following recommendations will interchangeably contribute to reduced discrimination and more accessible labour markets.

The goal of the first recommendation is to enhance inclusion and thus reduce discrimination. Dismantling the image of Finnishness and the Finnish myth will build a larger picture of diverse Finland. Although Finland has great anti-racism and anti-discrimination programmes, they need to be spread efficiently to institutions and to ordinary citizens. Recent efforts to include antiracism capacity building in organisations, aims to strengthen anti-racist structures in organisations and create peer support network (THL, 2024a). However, it is also important to tackle discrimination already in early childhood education and care rather than focusing solely on e.g. working professionals. For example, in social media it is important to promote inclusion and diversity by including minorities such as the Roma or Somali in representing channels which cover themes from ordinary day-to-day news to topics of discrimination. This approach can raise awareness about discrimination, racism, or stereotypes, as well as the effects of experiencing discrimination, but will also make the contact with minorities more frequent. In creating social media campaigns, working together and engaging in discussions with both established and new minority groups will not only build trust between minorities and authorities but also increase contact with individuals of different colours and backgrounds. These efforts will contribute to preventing discrimination in all domains and thus reduce cumulative disadvantages later in life.

The goal of the second recommendation is to enhance equal opportunities at the labour market by creating a job application system that emphasises skills and productivity instead of individual-level factors. Although increasingly common, it is necessary to create a standardized job application form which omits personal identifiers such as the name, picture, age, or gender of the applicants, so that the decisions in the processes are not affected by factors that do not directly tell about the productivity or skills of the applicant. This is important, as in the absence of full information, race, ethnicity, and gender can be used as proxies for productivity (Fibbi et al., 2014, p.24). Regular checks in recruitment processes is a tool to ensure the compliance with anonymisation and unbiased recruitment policies, for example Artificial Intelligence can be used to assess the biases in resume screening or interviews.

These efforts will contribute to reducing discrimination from the perpetrators point of view, as it is important to address the root-causes for perceived discrimination and curb reproduction of inequality.

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## APPENDIX

**Table 1**

*Conceptualisation table on the main theoretical definitions*

Theoretical concept	Conceptual definition	Dimensions	Question (in EU-MIDIS II)	Indicators (In EU-MIDIS II)	Scale
Independent variable: Perceived discrimination	Is an extent to which people themselves perceive and describe as discrimination, regardless whether they suffer disadvantage as a result (Andriessen et al., 2014) Discrimination is when somebody is treated less favourably than others based on the indicators	Public	<u>Discriminated against in the past 5 years (or since you have been in Finland when in</u> ... contact with administrative offices or public services ... when attending school or trying to attend a school ... when trying to enter a night club, a bar, a restaurant or hotel ... when using public transport ... when in a shop or trying to enter a shop <u>because of ethnic or</u>	1 – yes 2 – no	Nominal scale

mentioned (Makkonen, 2012)		<u>immigrant background?</u>		
	Health	When using healthcare services in the past 5 years in Finland (or since you have been in Finland), have you ever felt discriminated against for any of the following reasons?	Discrimination based on...  1. Skin colour 2. Ethnic origin 3. Religion 4. Age 5. Sex/gender 6. Disability 7. sexual orientation 8. other 9. I haven't felt discriminated against on any ground	Ordinal
	Looking for work	When looking for work in the past 5 years in Finland (or since you have been in Finland), have you ever felt discriminated against for any of the following reasons? Tell me all that apply		
At Work	In the past 5 years in Finland (or since you have been in Finland), have you ever felt discriminated against at work for any of the following reasons?  <u>Have any of the following occurred whilst at work in the past 5 years:</u>  1. You were given			

			<p>tasks below your qualifications</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. You were denied a promotion</li><li>3. You were not allowed to join a trade union</li><li>4. You were not allowed to take time off for a very important religious holiday</li><li>5. You were fired, dismissed, or laid off</li><li>10. prevented from expressing or carrying out religious practices and customs, such as praying or wearing a headscarf or turban</li></ol> <p><u>because of your background?</u></p>	
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		Housing	<p>When trying to rent or buy an apartment or house in the past 5 years in Finland (or since you have been in Finland), have you ever felt discriminated against for any of the following reasons?</p> <p><u>When trying to rent/buy an apartment/house, did any of the following occur:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You were prevented from renting municipal/social by officials working for Private landlord</li> <li>2. You were prevented from renting municipal/social by officials working for public housing</li> <li>3. You were prevented from buying an apartment/house by the owner or an</li> </ol>		
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			<p>estate agency</p> <p>4. You were asked to pay a higher rent/price/deposit</p> <p>5. You have come across adverts for housing that excluded or discouraged applicants</p> <p><u>Because of your ethnic background?</u></p>		
Dependent Variable: Labour Market Participation	Is the employment status of the respondent.	Employment situation	Please look at this card and tell me which of these categories describes your current situation best?	<p>1 – In paid work</p> <p>2 – Self-employed</p> <p>3 – Helping in the family business</p> <p>4 – Unemployed</p> <p>5 – A pupil student in training</p> <p>6 – Not working due to illness or disability</p> <p>7 – Fulfilling domestic tasks and care responsibilities</p> <p>8 – In retirement</p> <p>9 – Military service or other community service</p> <p>10 – Other (only inactive persons)</p>	Ordinal
General characteristics		Age	Can I begin by asking, how old are you?	Responses allowed from 16 to 120	Nominal

		Gender	Please may I ask, what is your gender?	1 – male 2 – female 3 – other	Ordinal
		Generation	1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation migrant	1 – first generation 2 – second generation	Ordinal
		Ethnic segregation	Is the household living in an area that is ethnically segregated?	1 – yes 2 – no	Nominal
Moderating variable: Rights awareness	Is an extent to which people are aware of anti-discrimination policies and organisations in their country (Ziller, 2014).	Support organisations  Anti-discrimination law	Do you know any organisations that offer support or advice to people who have been discriminated against – for whatever reason?  As far as you are aware, is there a law that forbids discrimination based on skin colour, ethnic origin, or religion?	1 – yes 2 – no 96 – refused 97 – does not understand the question 99 – do not know	Nominal

