



NEWS REPORT

Date:	23 February 2014
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Title:	Report published on perceived discrimination
Country:	The Netherlands
<u>Context</u>	
Issue at stake:	The Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) publishes a large-scale research into discrimination
Grounds of discrimination:	All grounds
Source:	Political development / miscellaneous
Fields:	All fields (especially employment)

Content

Political development: In January 2014, a report on discrimination was published by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP, “Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau”), an important publicly funded institute that conducts research into the social aspects of government policy. The document, titled ‘Perceived discrimination in the Netherlands’ (“Ervaren discriminatie in Nederland”) is a large-scale research report that offers valuable information on discrimination in the Netherlands.

The Netherlands lacks a systematic structure for tracking data on discrimination. Some research into discrimination is conducted from time to time, but the studies are often very specific, focusing on the experiences of specific groups or on specific fields. This SCP report however aims to offer a broader insight into the extent to which people perceive to be the victim of discrimination, on the basis of large-scale research (more than 11 000 residents of the Netherlands have completed a questionnaire).

The main finding of the report is that discriminatory practises, views and ideas are still widespread in all fields of Dutch society. A quarter of the residents of the Netherlands has experienced discrimination on the ground of one or multiple of the EU discrimination grounds over the last year, most often on the ground of age (10%) and ethnicity/race (8%).

A field that is very problematic is (access to) employment. Particularly persons from Turkish or Moroccan descent often experience discrimination when applying for a job. Job advertisements in the Netherlands do not often include discriminatory requirements, but hidden discrimination lingers on and remains extremely difficult to prove (and thus also hard to combat).¹

¹ The author of this report conducted a comparative report on discriminatory job advertisements in Moldova, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Ukraine and the United Kingdom in commission of the International Labour Organization in 2013. In that report it was concluded that the Netherlands is still lacking effective sanctions and that awareness of (especially indirectly) discriminatory job ads is waning. The report (working title: ‘Wanted’: Effective Legal Measures to Eliminate Discrimination in



LGBT persons often experience discrimination in public areas. Most victims of discrimination do not report their experiences to one of the local anti-discrimination bureaus (ADVs, “anti-discriminatievoorzieningen”). This is especially the case where it concerns access to employment; discriminatory experiences in education are reported most often (percentage-wise).

It is important to note that the report does concern perceived discrimination, which means that it does not necessarily concern actual discrimination in all cases. This approach makes sense, as discrimination is often felt, but extremely difficult to prove. Still, some of the figures may be higher than the number of actual cases of discrimination, as some of the perceived discrimination experiences may have been imaginary (the opposite however is true as well, i.e. that people experience actual discrimination but do not perceive this experience as (forbidden) discrimination).

The Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, Mr Asscher, has reacted to the report. In a television interview, he stated that it is up to society itself to combat and eradicate discrimination, implying that no additional measures will be taken by the government in response to the alarming conclusions of the SCP. Mr Asscher has sent a letter to parliament in response to the outcomes of the SCP-report, but this letter did also not contain any concrete measures.²

Internet link source:

The Dutch language version of the report may be retrieved at http://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle_publicaties/Publicaties_2014/Ervaren_discriminatie_in_Nederland (last accessed 23 February 2014). The SCP expects to publish an English translation on 15 April 2014.

Job Advertisements) is expected to be published in the course of 2014.

² Tweede Kamer, 2013-14, 30950 no. 68, dated 24 January 2014.