



## European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination

### NEWS REPORT

**Country:** Romania  
**Title:** Report on attitudes and perceptions regarding discrimination in Romania released by the national equality body  
**Date:** 21 September 2015  
**Expert:** Iordache, Romanița

#### Context

**Issue at stake:** Annual survey released by the national equality body shows trends in attitudes and perceptions regarding discrimination  
**Ground of discrimination:** All grounds

**Source:** National equality body  
**Field:** All fields

#### Content

**Policy development:** The Romanian National Council for Combating Discrimination (NCCD)<sup>1</sup> published on 15 September 2015 a survey on perceptions and attitudes regarding discrimination in Romania.<sup>2</sup> The NCCD tried to contract such surveys annually and this year, the study was conducted under the Pre-Defined Project 'Strengthening anti-discriminatory measures at national level through large participation of professionals and civil society' carried out by the NCCD together with the Council of Europe under the Financial mechanisms of the European Economic Area (EEA) and Norway Grants 2009-2014 RO10 PROGRAMME "Children and Youth at risk and Local and Regional Initiatives to reduce national inequalities and to promote social inclusion." 85% of the interviewed persons declared that they heard about discrimination phenomenon and two out of three Romanians consider that discrimination is an actual problem that occurs often in Romania

Similar to previous years, the respondents considered that the most discriminated groups in Romania are persons living with HIV/AIDS (65%), drug users (57%) or persons with physical or intellectual disabilities (55-56%). A second category of potential victims of discrimination consists of: Roma (49%), "sexual minorities" (49%), institutionalized children (48%), and Romanians, in the counties where they are a minority (48%). Elder people, people with no income, women, and people with chronic diseases are considered discriminated to a lower extent.

<sup>1</sup> The Romanian national equality body - National Council for Combating Discrimination (*Consiliul Național pentru Combaterea Discriminării*).

<sup>2</sup> <http://cncd.org.ro/files/Sondaj%20TNS%20CNCD%202015.pdf>. The survey included 1406 interviews with respondents aged over 18, with a margin of error of 2,6% for a level of trust of 95%. Interviews were carried out face to face in August 2015.

When looking at the distance and acceptance levels towards vulnerable groups (Bogardus social distance scale), the respondents show lower tolerance towards drug users compared to the other groups, with 39% of the interviewed persons stating that they would not even accept drug users to live in Romania. A low level of acceptance is also mentioned in relation to sexual minorities<sup>3</sup> (39% would not accept an LGBTI person in the same city, village, in the country or to visit the country) and persons living with HIV/AIDS (21% not accept such persons in Romania) and Roma (23% would not accept Roma to live in Romania). A higher level of openness is mentioned in relation to unemployed people, people having no income and people with a different religion. More than half of the respondents are willing to accept such persons as their friends or in their family. More than two thirds of the respondents (67-77%) consider that the minorities have the same rights as the other Romanian citizens. There are also respondents who seem to think the Hungarians and the Roma have more rights than the majority (17%). The politicians are the group that is strongly associated with being potential perpetrators of discrimination (59%). Also public officials are associated with discrimination in Romania, 46%.

Discrimination in employment seems to be the field with the highest rate of perceived discrimination since almost two thirds of the interviewees believe that the number of discrimination cases in this field is high and very high. Persons living with HIV have the lowest chances to access the labor market, 70% of the Romanians considering that is easier for non-infected persons to find a job. Compared to ethnic Romanians, Roma find it harder to get a job, 62% of the respondents indicating Roma as the most disadvantaged ethnic group when it comes to finding a job.

Discrimination in relation to access to health services is perceived as high or very high by 55% of the survey participants. When interviewed about discrimination in education half of the interviewees think that the number of discrimination cases is high and very high while 45% believe is low or very low.

In preparation to the future national strategy for equality, currently being developed by the NCCD, the survey included also questions regarding the priorities for intervention in tackling discrimination and the best actions in each specific field. Ethnicity is the protected ground which is perceived as being the most important (27%), with age and disability ranking second.

### **Key points of analysis:**

The survey on perceptions and attitudes regarding discrimination confirms constants evidenced in previous years on the most vulnerable groups, the main groups contributing to discrimination in the society and the way in which discrimination manifests itself in different fields. Comparing to previous surveys, questions assessing effectiveness of remedies were not included this year. However, the questions regarding the opinions on potential measures to be taken in tackling discrimination in different areas might help in further narrowing down the scope of the future national equality strategy.

**Internet link source:** Brief presentation of the findings of the survey is available in Romanian at: <http://cncd.org.ro/files/Sondaj%20TNS%20CNCD%202015.pdf>.

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<sup>3</sup> The survey uses the terms "sexual minorities" and LGBT interchangeably.