Ethnicity

Ministry of Justice: Round table discussion

Data collection on ethnic minorities in Finland – results and recommendations

Information is an effective tool in combating racism and discrimination. The purpose of data collection is to chart the extent of the phenomenon and make racism and discrimination visible. Reliable information is needed for developing appropriate practices and policies to combat racism and discrimination.

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This leaflet is based on a November 2021 round table discussion concerning gathering of information on ethnic minorities*, the identified information needs, methodological challenges and points for improvement. In which respects is there too little information related to ethnicity? And what kind of representations are maintained in society regarding ethnicity? How should ethnicity be addressed in surveys to ensure that the findings are reliable, of high quality and also ethical? These were among the questions addressed in the discussion.

Separate sessions will be held on the development of information gathering concerning the Sámi and Roma, and the findings will be published in 2022.

Required information:

- Quantitative information on the prevalence of racism and discrimination
- Information on the categories used for self-identification and on research uses of the information obtained
- Quantitative information on ethnicity and race from various sources
- Information concerning the experience and impacts of racialisation
- Information on the prospects for registering ethnic background or more than one language
- Information on intergenerational differences in experiences and views concerning discrimination and ethnicity
- Information on racism arising in services and social structures
- Information on multiple and intersectional discrimination
- Information on discrimination based on skin colour
- Information on the impacts of racism on the mental health and wellbeing of its targets
- Information on the consequences of racism for employment and on racism in the world of work
- Information on inequitable or discriminatory treatment in the operations of security authorities
- Information on racism in public spaces such as public venues and social media
- Information on discriminatory algorithms, criteria and categorisations based on artificial intelligence
- Information on representations in teaching materials, art and other cultural products

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How can better information be obtained on potential research blind spots?

Development needs - what and how?
- Through extensive inclusion of various actors in gathering information and investment in participatory information gathering for hard-to-reach groups
- Building trust, a sense of security and cooperation with various ethnic minorities
- Involvement of target groups in planning research, and investment in optimally broad research samples
- By greater target group understanding concerning such aspects as why information is gathered, what it is used for, and how data security issues are handled (anonymity, etc.)
- Development of protective structures for individuals involved in gathering information
- Increasing the transparency of research: ownership, methods, circulation
- By awareness of who is being studied and who is participating in the debate – and of who is excluded from information gathering and policymaking
- Development of self-identification categories
- Prospects for using multiple choice surveys (ethnic background, language, religion)
- By supporting and recognising the mutual organisation of racialised people
- Information produced by racialised minorities
- Information gathering for nationwide coverage
- Resourcing of systematic and high-quality information gathering (including whole population and targeted surveys)
- Increasing diversity in institutions that lead research and policymaking
- Increasing collaboration between producers and users of information and policymakers
- Gathering information through interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and participatory research

The following should also be added:
- studies on diversity and cultural competence
- anti-racist education in educational institutions and work communities
- the readiness of educational institutions, hobby clubs and employers to work against racism
- social awareness of anti-racism