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# Electoral discrimination against MENAPT candidates: Evidence from a voting advice application in Denmark

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Immigrants from Muslim-majority countries (hereafter referred to as MENAPT) constitute the largest non-Western immigrant group in Europe, yet remain markedly underrepresented in European political institutions and decision-making bodies. While this underrepresentation partly reflects supply-side factors such as institutional and structural barriers to representation, existing research on demand-side dynamics suggests that candidates with MENAPT backgrounds face electoral discrimination from voters. In this context, electoral discrimination refers to candidates receiving lower levels of electoral support due to their perceived ethnic or religious background, all else being equal. However, studies of electoral discrimination are often constrained by trade-offs between causal precision and real-world generalizability. We address this gap through a novel field experiment embedded within Jyllands-Posten's Voting Advice Application ahead of the 2025 Danish local elections. This experimental approach allows us to assess voters' support for candidates perceived as belonging to different immigrant groups in a real-world electoral context while holding voter-candidate policy congruence constant. We find clear evidence of electoral discrimination. Voters are less likely to indicate support for recommended candidates perceived as MENAPT compared to both majority-ethnic candidates and candidates perceived as belonging to other minority ethnic groups. Importantly, this electoral penalty is selectively directed toward candidates perceived as MENAPT and does not extend to candidates perceived as belonging to other ethnic minority groups. By combining experimental control with ecological validity, the study contributes to theoretical debates about the mechanisms underlying electoral discrimination. Specifically, it examines whether bias against candidates perceived as MENAPT arises from factors beyond policy inferences, ingroup favoritism, or general outgroup antipathy. In doing so, the study advances our understanding of how candidates' perceived ethnic and religious identities shape electoral behavior and sheds light on how voter biases may constitute a boundary to political inclusion in contemporary secular democracies.

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## Affirmative Action as Solidarity Speech

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Affirmative action is typically pursued when it comes to admissions to prestigious universities, hiring for prestigious jobs, and parliamentary elections. What is the purpose of pursuing these affirmative action policies? They are typically justified by appealing to particular effects that can be secured thereby: less inequality of opportunity, more diversity, more integration, and so on. But if we say that their purpose is to secure such effects, then we struggle to explain why we primarily pursue affirmative action in these prestigious social sites. After all, many much less prestigious sites could also benefit from less inequality of opportunity, more diversity, and more integration.

In light of this problem with effects-based justifications, this paper argues that we should see the purpose of typical affirmative action policies, not primarily as a matter of securing particular effects, but as what I call *solidarity speech*: a way of expressing solidarity with groups, such as women and racial minorities, who are unjustly disadvantaged in society. The idea is to see the practice of affirmative action as in itself an expression of solidarity with members of such groups. This means that the question of whether affirmative action can be justified (also) becomes a matter of what might and might not be said, and by whom.

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## Social Responses to Stigma: Using Bourdieu's theory to develop a case study of systemic stigma and homelessness in London, UK, and design system level responses

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The stigma attached to homelessness – as for many health and social experiences and identities – is widely recognised as profoundly limiting health and welfare. There is however little precise understanding of how stigmatisation operates and has influence, especially in its systemic forms. There have been long-standing calls for theoretical and methodological development to support i) detailed analysis of the role for social inequalities in stigmatisation, ii) development of complex anti-stigma efforts that address social and systemic factors, and iii) evaluation of complex system wide responses to stigma.

The Social Responses to Stigma project is a 7-year project – 2021 to 2028 – in south London, UK using ethnographic research and co-production to develop system level responses to stigma. The methods we are using for the research include a survey, interviews and observation within homelessness and health care and support settings. Theoretical goals are to add to literature approaching stigma as reproduced through social inequalities and power. The study is seeking to further apply Bourdieu's theory of symbolic power to stigma and health, and in turn use this to develop anti-stigma efforts.

This presentation will describe how Bourdieu's theory has been applied and developed in conceptualising and empirically studying stigmatisation as it relates to homelessness in south London, UK. This includes conceptualising stigmatisation as an emergent systemic process as part of a model of structural stigma, drawing on Bourdieu's concept of habitus in integration with ideas from complexity theory. We describe how stigmatisation and discrimination are institutionalised, with institutional stereotyping varying for different groups in how they correspond to three dimensions of stereotyping: deservingness, risk and capacity. We then explore how institutional stigma and discrimination combine with other system dysfunctions and disparities combine to create new emergent properties of systemic stigma and discrimination, which we characterise as 'abandonment'. In contrast, we then look at where and how stigmatisation is overcome or mitigated in different parts of the homelessness and health system.

In discussion we reflect on how these theoretical lessons could inform future directions for systems level responses to stigma. Our approach here again seeks to integrate Bourdieu's theory with complexity theory, and to use this to align system-wide, decentralised anti-stigma efforts. Given the necessary institutional complexity of a system-wide response conventional evaluation approaches are limited, leading us to explore the role for natural-experiments, and especially how they can draw on i) longitudinal ethnography and ii) already available service level data. We set out some specific options and questions for future research and evaluation design.

## Does Political Orientation Drive Minority Bias at the Frontline?

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Despite extensive evidence of minority discrimination in public sector provision, we still have scarce knowledge about what drive these disparities. This paper argues that individual political differences among frontline workers deserve more attention as a possible explanation for minority bias. Specifically, the paper theorizes that conservatives' psychologically heightened threat sensitivity and resistance to change foster preferences for social conformity and homogeneity, which may translate into more negative attitudes toward minorities who symbolize unfamiliarity. Based on this reasoning, the paper tests whether conservative frontline workers exhibit stronger favoritism toward majority citizens than their liberal colleagues. Further, to illuminate the mechanism through which bias toward minorities may be activated, the paper hypothesizes that providing respondents with additional information about target individuals' resources or effort attenuates favorability difference by reducing reliance on group-level prejudices. These pre-registered expectations are tested using conjoint experiments fielded in Denmark (N = 362, observations = 2,896) and the United States (N = 750, observations = 12,000) among elementary and middle school teachers. The findings from both contexts reveal similar patterns: minorities experience positive differential treatment, and these differences are not driven by frontline workers ideological preferences. However, there is some evidence that disparities can be reduced when frontline workers receive additional information about the target individuals. These findings contribute to a growing literature seeking to understand the complex dynamics underlying minority discrimination at the frontline.

## Comparability and validity concerns in cross-national correspondence studies: methodological lessons from Hungary and the UK

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Correspondence studies are widely considered as the gold standard (Verhaeghe 2022) for measuring discrimination across different social contexts (Zschirnt & Ruedin 2016; Quillian et al. 2019). Yet, there is still relatively little comparative research on discrimination based on harmonised cross-national designs. In our paper, we examine the methodological limitations and challenges involved in implementing harmonised cross-national correspondence studies and discuss their implications for the internal and external validity of the study, building on broader methodological debates in the correspondence testing literature (e.g. Bertrand & Duflo, 2017; Lancee, 2021).

Our paper draws on a harmonised cross-national study of labour market discrimination conducted in Great Britain and Hungary within the broader comparative experimental framework of the Horizon project *EqualStrength*. Focusing on discrimination against ethnic minority applicants, we argue that differences in recruitment infrastructures and hiring practices between countries — rather than applicant characteristics alone — systematically shape experimental outcomes. Our study reveals several key challenges. First, contact modes are not functionally equivalent: UK job applications are predominantly platform-mediated, while Hungarian design relies more on direct employer contact. Second, temporal dynamics—such as delayed email responses relative to calls—alter observed callback rates. Third, platform-based recruitment systems standardize some interactions while obscuring others, creating asymmetries in how applicant signals are transmitted and recorded.

These differences introduce systematic threats to comparability and validity (both internal and external) by embedding identical treatments in non-equivalent social contexts. Our preliminary results illustrate how these dynamics shape observed outcomes. In the UK, we find the same difference in callback rates between majority and minority applicants when email and phone responses are analysed separately. In Hungary, by contrast, email responses alone do not reveal any significant differences between the majority Hungarian and Hungarian Roma applicants (18% vs. 19%), whereas phone-based contact indicates potential discrimination against minority applicants (31 % vs. 24%).

The paper advances a methodological framework that treats recruitment institutional practices as integral to experimental design. It outlines practical strategies for improving cross-country comparability, including aligning communication channels and incorporating platform-specific constraints into study design. Our planned presentation contributes to ongoing debates on the

validity of field experiments in discrimination research, with a special focus on the labour market and offers important insights for future comparative work in the area of audit studies.

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## Revealed Preferences? A Cross-National Typology of Prejudice–Discrimination Regimes Across European Labour, Housing, and Childcare Markets

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Discrimination in the marketplace is a ubiquitous phenomenon which researchers have tried to explain using multiple methodologies, particularly field experiments and attitude or prejudice measures. A persistent and fundamental challenge is to reconcile “what people say they would do” (stated intentions) and “what people actually do” (measured behaviour). While attitude surveys and survey experiments can offer valuable insight into stated preferences and anticipated behaviour, this does not always align with measured behaviour in real-world settings or findings might even contradict each other. Few studies have tried to reconcile these sources of evidence, combining field experimental data with attitudinal measures (survey experiments, attitude surveys, focus group discussions or interviews), but those that do typically focus on a single national or even single regional context, thus limiting their comparative and theoretical reach.

To address these gaps, the current study draws on a large-scale, multi-methods cross-national research project spanning nine European countries and three domains: housing, employment and childcare markets. We combine findings from harmonized correspondence experiments (behavioural measure) with a large-scale survey measuring both implicit and explicit attitudes towards minority groups.

Based on this unique research design, we develop a typology of prejudice-discrimination regimes, mapping the relationship between attitudes and behaviour across national and domain specific contexts.

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## Reconsidering Intersectionality in Bureaucratic Encounters

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Research on bureaucratic discrimination has made significant progress documenting how race, gender, and ethnicity shape citizens' treatment by street-level bureaucrats. Yet it contains a consequential blind spot: it almost exclusively examines social identity in one dimension at a time. In reality, people experience discrimination not as women or as minorities, but as the specific combination of identities they inhabit. Failing to account for this intersection misrepresents who face discrimination, how severely, and why, thereby undermining our capacity to design policies that effectively reduce it.

This paper advances discrimination research by providing conceptual and empirical tools for integrating intersectionality into the study of bureaucratic encounters. We distinguish three modeling approaches, additive, multiplicative, and categorical, and show that each rests on different assumptions about how identities combine to produce discrimination, with divergent implications for policy. A diversity intervention effective under additive logic (hire more women; hire more minorities) may be insufficient if discrimination operates categorically, leaving minority women—who face a distinct and compounded burden—unprotected by either measure alone. We also propose a more valid measure of perceived discrimination, grounded in respondents' concrete encounters with specific bureaucrats rather than abstract self-assessments.

We illustrate these arguments with survey data from university students in Southeast Brazil ( $n = 629$ ). Categorical intersectionality models consistently outperform additive and multiplicative alternatives: specific configurations of race and gender produce unique discrimination experiences that simpler models mask. Intersectional representation, i.e., sharing multiple identity characteristics with one's teacher/professor, reduces perceived discrimination, but in a non-linear, context-dependent manner that single-axis measures would miss.

We conclude that intersectional measurement and modeling must become standard practice in public administration research on discrimination and representation. Single-axis analyses structurally undercount harm to multiply marginalized groups, and single-axis policies risk creating an illusion of progress while the deepest inequalities persist. We offer concrete guidance on choosing between modeling approaches depending on the theoretical question at hand.

The politics of migrant scapegoating: narratives of exclusion and inclusion

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Migrant scapegoating is ubiquitous and politically expedient. This presentation provides an overview and explanation of the narratives that increase migrant exclusion, as well as the factors that exacerbate it; it then evaluates strategies that counter migrant scapegoating and promote migrant inclusion.

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## Unequal pathways to employment: A field experiment on ethnic discrimination in internship access

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Research on ethnic discrimination predominantly focuses on unequal access to employment, with the vast amount of field experiments documenting persistent and widespread employment discrimination (e.g. Lippens et al., 2023; Zschirnt & Ruedin, 2016). At the same time, scholars have long highlighted the importance of the transition from education to work and documented substantial ethnic inequalities in these transitions (e.g. Lillehagen & Birkelund, 2022). However, while ethnic discrimination is often mentioned as a mechanism that could explain the residual disadvantages in school-to-work transitions, this is rarely empirically studied. An important element in this transition is the internship: By offering valuable work experience and access to professional networks, internships function as a crucial bridge between schools and the labour market (e.g. Baert et al., 2021). However, ethnic discrimination in internships has received scant scholarly attention (for an exception, see Kaas & Manger, 2012),

In this study, we present unique field experimental data on internship discrimination in the Netherlands. We address two questions:

1. To what extent is there discrimination against ethnic minority applicants in access to internships in the Netherlands?
2. Does discrimination vary across sectors (private vs public), firm characteristics (small vs large), and educational programmes (theoretical vs practical oriented)?

We present data of a unique large-scale unpaired correspondence study, carried out between June 2025 and March 2026. In this field experiment, we submit  $N = 1,750$  fictitious internship applications to employers across the Netherlands for eight different education programmes. We randomly vary the applicant's ethnic background (Antillean, Surinamese, Moroccan, Turkish, Polish, Dutch) and gender. Both treatment conditions were signalled using carefully pre-tested names (Ghekiere et al., 2025), while other elements of the CV and cover letter were kept constant per programme. Vacancies were retrieved from the largest internship platform in the Netherlands (stagemarkt.nl). Applications were randomly assigned to a vacancy and submitted via the platform. Details about the internship listing, including sector and company size were recorded. We estimate average treatment effects using linear probability models, and we test for heterogeneity by firm size, sector, and education programme.

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## Critical Notes on Discrimination in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

**Frej Klem Thomsen<sup>1</sup>**

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The ethics of AI discrimination and algorithmic bias has emerged as a central research field over the past decade. In a recent analysis, Bert Heinrichs argues that discrimination should be understood as an all-things-considered moralised concept: an act counts as discriminatory only when it violates an established weighting of relevant ethical concerns. Heinrichs further argues that this conclusion has important implications for how the use of AI in decision-making affects discrimination. On this view, AI may aggravate the problems of discrimination because algorithmic opacity undermines our ability to perform the moral evaluation needed to identify discriminatory practices.

The present article argues that while Heinrichs' conception captures one important use of the term, it is neither the only possible conception nor one that is clearly superior to alternatives. Some uses of "discrimination" are non-moralised, referring simply to differential treatment between groups, while others treat discrimination as *pro tanto* morally bad but potentially justified all things considered. These alternatives are meaningful, and competing conceptual desiderata may favour the adoption of different conceptions in different contexts.

The article further argues that Heinrichs' discrimination-based challenge to AI decision-making relies on two controversial assumptions. First, it assumes that AI decision-making is, in principle or on average, less transparent than human decision-making. This is doubtful. Human decisions are often opaque, noisy, post hoc rationalised, and inaccessible to mathematically rigorous analysis, whereas bias in and discriminatory outcomes of AI systems can both in principle and (with certain limitations) in practice be audited, tested, and compared in ways human decision-making cannot. Second, Heinrichs assumes that moral evaluation of potentially discriminatory decisions requires insight into the decision-making process. This is true for some accounts of discrimination; however, it is not true for harm-based or equality-of-opportunity accounts, which can evaluate discrimination by examining outcomes. Given both strong arguments in the literature against mental-state based accounts of the badness of discrimination, and the possibility that they simply do not apply to AI (which lacks mental-states), it is not clear that it would pose a problem even if we were incapable of evaluating the process of AI decision-making.

The article concludes that *pace* Heinrichs AI need not aggravate the problems of discrimination. Whether it does depends on the relevant conception of discrimination, the moral theory used to evaluate discriminatory conduct, and the comparative transparency of AI and human decision-making in particular contexts. Nevertheless, Heinrichs' analysis raises important questions. These include how discriminatory beliefs and the comparable use of weighted parameters in AI should be morally evaluated, whether such evaluation depends on epistemic fault, and how theories of discrimination should treat AI systems that lack beliefs, intentions, or other mental states. The article concludes by sketching some of the ways these issues can be fruitfully explored.

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## Can Passivity Discriminate? General Institutional Passivity, the Reproduction of Domination and the European Court of Human Rights

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The European Court of Human Rights (hereinafter 'ECtHR') increasingly confronts complex inequalities, raising a fundamental question: can state passivity itself discriminate? Although the ECtHR adjudicates cases involving entrenched structural harms, it frequently relies on vague terminology for systemic discrimination. Recently, however, the ECtHR introduced the novel concept of *general institutional passivity* (hereinafter 'GIP') in 3 judgments concerning violence against women and children (*A.E. v. Bulgaria*, 2023; *Vieru v. the Republic of Moldova*, 2024; *I.C. v. the Republic of Moldova*, 2025).

This presentation explores GIP as a tool to operationalize systemic discrimination by combining the theoretical analysis of concepts with the empirical analysis of legal data. Bridging critical feminist theory and sociological theory, I argue that GIP deepens the understanding of discrimination by exposing how institutional inaction serves as an active mechanism for the reproduction of domination. Traditional models of discrimination frequently fail to capture how intersecting disadvantages are systematically sustained. Through the lens of transformative equality, we can view systemic discrimination as a set of interrelated mechanisms operating across domains to cumulatively disadvantage vulnerable groups. GIP shifts the adjudicatory focus from isolated rights violations to the structural conditions, from reacting to consequences after the fact to proactively preventing them. In doing so, it tackles institutional inertia that preserves these power imbalances.

Crucially, GIP highlights the problematic institutional construction of the "Other." Domination is reproduced not only through unequal resource distribution but also through symbolic and epistemic processes wherein certain groups are persistently marginalized. Institutional passivity persists when authorities act without questioning the deeply embedded stereotypes, informal practices, and biases that render vulnerable groups as the "Other". By remaining passive, institutions do more than fail to protect; they actively validate systems of subordination, effectively silencing the voices of those experiencing intersectional disadvantages.

Applying an empirical legal methodology, this research uses qualitative textual analysis (via NVivo coding) of recent ECtHR jurisprudence to outline the core elements of GIP, such as institutional tolerance to violence, the absence of state statistics, and disproportionate effects on vulnerable groups. Ultimately, applying GIP within equality jurisprudence demands proactive institutional engagement, urging a shift from reactive legal remedies toward transformative structural change that dismantles historical hierarchies and the reproduction of domination.

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# Unrestricting Officer Discretion: The Impact of Search Zones on Racial Disparities in Policing

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Does restricting the conditions under which officers can stop-and-search individuals reduce racial bias in policing? Stop-and-search, the power to detain and search individuals in public space, is arguably the most contested instrument of law enforcement in liberal societies. Proponents characterize it as a proactive crime-fighting tool that allows officers to intervene based on reasonable suspicion before crimes escalate. Critics counter that it infringes on fundamental rights to privacy and discriminates against ethno-racial minorities. Studies consistently find that police stops fall disproportionately on ethno-racial minorities and the neighborhoods they inhabit, while generating little to no deterrent effect on crime. Scholars have pointed to biased officer discretion as the primary mechanism driving these disparities. Because stop-and-search decisions are largely left to individual officers, they are vulnerable to the explicit and implicit biases and ethno-racial stereotypes that link race to criminality, causing officers to disproportionately target minorities, independent of actual behavioral cues. If discretion is the problem, the remedy follows logically: restricting the conditions under which officers can legally initiate stops should reduce the scope for bias and, in turn, narrow ethno-racial disparities.

This study exploits a Danish policing practice that makes it possible, for the first time, to causally test how *unrestricted* officer discretion shapes ethno-racial disparities in policing. Under the Danish Police Act, officers operating within search zones are *not* required to establish individualized reasonable suspicion before stopping and searching a person; the mere presence of an individual within the zone suffices. Search zones thus temporarily and spatially suspend the individual rights protections that normally constrain officer discretion. Crucially, however, discretion operates at two levels in this system. It is not only individual officers who exercise judgment unchecked; the district police commissioner has the authority to decide where and for how long to place the zones. I argue that search zones concentrate two sources of racialized discretion: an institutional one, in the spatial targeting of minority neighborhoods, and an interactional one, in the latitude afforded to officers once inside the zone. Understanding the consequences of search zones requires attending to both levels and the ways they compound one another.

I use geocoded register data on more than 3 million police searches and charges from 2009 to 2022 combined with detailed socio-demographic information on neighborhoods and whether they have been affected by search zones during this period. To estimate the causal effects of search zones, I use a difference-in-differences design that exploits the staggered implementation of search zones and a spatial regression discontinuity design that leverages variation in the spatial proximity to the zone border. The findings demonstrate that the neighborhood share of minority residents significantly predicts commissioners' placement decisions net of local crime rates. Once placed, search zones significantly exacerbate disparities in policing. Compared to native-Danes, individuals originating from Muslim-majority countries face 13 times higher rates of police scrutiny, while the share of police investigations that discover a crime drops 2.5 times more. These results demonstrate how unrestricting discretion amplifies discrimination among police officers whose impartiality is vital in liberal societies.

## Representation Through Misperceptions and Discrimination Among Young Women of Middle Eastern Descent in Denmark

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Young women of Middle Eastern descent are frequently represented through competing identity narratives in Western societies, often framed as ‘victims of their culture’, ‘aggressive Arab women’, or ‘role-model minorities’. While these narratives are pervasive, less is known about how young women of Middle Eastern descent themselves understand and navigate them, and what meanings they attach to - or reject in- the representations the narratives produce. This article examines how perceptions of (mis)representation shape ideals of representation among young women of Middle Eastern descent in Denmark, where issues of immigration and integration remain highly salient and politicized. The study draws on focus group interviews conducted with women of Middle Eastern descent residing in Denmark, having minimum 1 parent from a Middle Eastern country, aged between 20 and 38 years. Drawing on the focus group interviews and an intersectional lens, the findings show that the women often approach the concept of representation by recalling experiences of misrepresentation and discrimination. Rather than viewing representation as a matter of feeling more seen and heard (visibility alone), participants described navigating a bundle of coexisting and often contradictory stereotypes that render them either hypervisible and misrepresented or invisible and irrelevant. The tensions create hyper-awareness leading to adopting specific strategies on how to act and try to live up to who they are expected to be. The women express how representation is deeply intertwined with *everyday (intersectional) experiences of discrimination* and in order to understand representation ideals we have to look at how representation is emerging through micro actions. Faced with persistent misperceptions and incompatible identity expectations, many of the women ultimately expressed a desire not for greater representation, but rather for recognition as individuals beyond the identity categories imposed upon them. The article argues that ideals of representation cannot be understood independently of the everyday experiences of misrepresentation and discrimination through which they (also) are formed. I discuss the implications of my findings for political representation and understandings of representation among other minoritized groups.

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Until recently, philosophical investigations of moral appraisal focused primarily on blame (Telech 2022). A widely accepted motivation for this focus was the assumption that praise is essentially benign: praisees welcome praise, and being praised is a benefit to them, so praise requires no special justification (Shoemaker 2024, 3; Wallace 1994, 61). In recent years, however, philosophers have paid more attention to praise, especially its malign forms (Bingeman 2024; Ciorra 2019; Holroyd 2021, 2024; Jeppson & Brandenburg 2022; Shoemaker 2024). One malign form — the focus of this paper — is discriminatory (or, at to use a more common term, oppressive) praise. Roughly, discriminatory praise invokes biased norms that unjustly favor some socially salient groups over others (e.g., women).

First, I offer an improved definition of discriminatory praise. I disentangle whether praise (token or type) reflects discriminatory norms in its content or implicatures from the causal effects of praise on the reproduction of a discriminatory system of norms — distinctions that are not always clearly separated in the literature (e.g., Björkholm 2026, 2–3; McHugh 2024; Holroyd 2021, 1, 11; Holroyd 2024, 20). I argue that praise which is non-discriminatory in content or implicature can nonetheless reinforce a discriminatory norm set causally, but it can also hinder its reproduction (for example, if the praiser is generally negatively regarded). Finally, I ask whether discriminatory praise is discriminatory in virtue of the act of praising itself or in virtue of the biased norms it enacts.

Next, I distinguish discriminatory (withholding of) praise (and blame) from liberating (withholding of) praise (and blame) (cf. Bingeman 2024). Liberating praise is well-calibrated according to non-discriminatory norms and is offered for the right reasons. Consider a case modeled on one used by Holroyd's/McHugh:

Young receives a “Community Achievement Award.” Relative to other children, Young is not especially remarkable, but because able-bodied peers respond negatively to her physical disability, it is harder for children like her to function socially in ordinary ways. A potential praiser withholds praise for Young's average social functioning because the praiser literally fails to see any reason why anyone would respond negatively to her due to her disability.

Here, withholding praise for something that is, regrettably, praiseworthy can be liberating: the absence of praise signals the non-praiser's atypical, non-stereotypical response to Young — a response that could empower Young. But withholding praise can also be unfair: Young is praiseworthy for achieving average social functioning despite unjustified ableist treatment.

Third, I argue that agents acting well relative to discriminatory norms can nonetheless often act praiseworthy. We cannot infer from the discriminatory character of praise that the praisee has not genuinely acted praiseworthy. Fathers praised under parental norms that disadvantage women for doing what mothers typically do might deserve praise — for non-gender-conforming efforts that they could, without much cost, have avoided. Conversely, mothers who go unpraised might not deserve praise for actions they are massively, albeit unjustly, incentivized to perform (Holroyd 2021, 5–6; Khader & Lindauer 2020). It is crucial, therefore, to adopt a suitably fine-grained individuation of praise’s objects (e.g., “parenting while male” versus “parenting while male despite social costs”) (cf. McHugh 2026, 163).

Some will find this normality- and cost-adjusted view of praiseworthiness deficient. In the fourth and final part of the paper I defend it. I examine the grounds of praiseworthiness by making two distinctions. First, whether an act is praiseworthy depends on a narrower set of considerations than those that determine whether an act should be praised. Sometimes praiseworthy acts should not be praised — for example, praiseworthy acts by fathers enjoying the “father dividend” might best not be praised given the broader consequences for reproducing discriminatory gendered parental norms. Conversely, sometimes non-praiseworthy acts should be praised because praising them produces good consequences. This mirrors how we should think about blame.

Second, I distinguish comparative from non-comparative sources of praiseworthiness. An agent can be praiseworthy on comparative grounds for doing better than others, even if the act is not particularly costly or beneficial (e.g., giving up a bus seat when very few people notice the need). An act can be praiseworthy on non-comparative grounds independently of how others would act (e.g., rescuing a drowning child, because of the large harm avoided, even if most would do the same) (cf. Stout 2020, 216–217; Telech 2020, 931; Telech 2022, 9). Costly actions can also be praiseworthy (Pummer 2021, 15). This implies that there can be praiseworthy wrongful actions — actions that are less bad, morally speaking, than what most would do, yet still wrong or actions that are very costly but still wrong (cf. Pummer 2021). It also implies that there can be rightful actions that are blameworthy (see Driver 1992).

Regarding discriminatory praise, recipients of the “daddy dividend,” for example, might be praiseworthy both comparatively and non-comparatively — they go against gendered norms in ways most fathers do not, potentially incurring significant social costs (far outweighing the benefit of being praised), while delivering substantial benefits to partners and children. Along the way, I develop a praise-mitigating correlate to blame-related excusing conditions and argue that such conditions need not be present in cases of discriminatory praise.

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## Discrimination Beyond Intent

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Philosophical accounts disagree about the importance of agents' mental states for discrimination. Moreover, ordinary judgments of intentionality can diverge from agents' stated intentions, complicating empirical investigation of this question. Two preregistered experiments examine how intention and knowledge shape judgments of discrimination. We find that people can regard an action as discriminatory even when discrimination is neither intended nor known to result from it. At the same time, intention and knowledge influence how readily actions are seen as discriminatory. Overall, our findings suggest that mental states matter to the ordinary concept of discrimination without constituting a necessary condition for its application.

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An increasingly prevalent approach to understanding the moral character or distinctive "wrongness" of discrimination is to draw on anti-discrimination law and situate it in relation to the structural socio-historical dynamics between so-called *socially salient* groups. On such "structural accounts", the wrongness of discrimination (when it is wrong) consists in its contributing to or perpetuating structural inequalities, whether through the direct harms inflicted upon socially salient groups (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2013) or through expressing and legitimising attitudes that sustain structural domination (Laborde, 2024; cf. also Hellman, 2008; Khaitan, 2015; Moreau, 2022). Structural accounts claim superiority in explaining the distinctive wrongness of discrimination, as opposed to mere differential unfairness, while also accommodating recognised forms of discrimination such as indirect, statistical, and rational discrimination.

Drawing on the emerging phenomenon of *algorithmic proxy discrimination* (APD), this paper seeks to question whether, despite their advantages, structural accounts are adequate or sufficiently fine-grained to incorporate the distinctive wrongness of APD. While APD has already attracted attention within legal and public policy scholarship for its capacity to discriminate whilst complying with existing legal anti-discrimination norms, its conceptual significance for philosophical explanations of the wrongness of discrimination is yet to be fully elucidated.

In particular, the paper examines three potential challenges posed by APD for understanding the distinctive wrongness of discrimination within structural accounts. First, although APD might contribute to structural inequalities, it does not do so in a manner equivalent to either direct or indirect discrimination such that to assimilate the wrongness of APD purely in terms of its downstream structural consequences misconstrues and normatively flattens its wrongfulness. Second, whereas structural accounts confine indirect discrimination to dominated socially salient groups due to their suffering a "global" rather than merely "local" disadvantage of dominant groups, this 'asymmetry thesis' is complicated by APD because its context-specific proxies can be functionally analogous to the global disadvantage across members of dominant groups. Third, this also reveals that social salience might not even be central to the distinctive wrongness of discrimination. Although much indirect discrimination is indeed distinctively wrong by virtue of some (relevantly specified) tracking of socio-historical injustice or structural disadvantage, the sophisticated correlations of APD may generate novel classifications that are morally analogous to protected groups despite lacking antecedent social salience. Overall, in revealing the potential gaps and dilemmas for prevailing structural accounts, APD provides a valuable test case for reassessing the relationship between anti-discrimination law, emerging AI systems, and the philosophical foundations of discrimination.

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## Identity Appeals, Perceived Discrimination, and Minorities' Political Behavior

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Previous research shows that personal experiences with discrimination have demobilizing effects on minorities. In this paper we explore whether identity appeals to minorities counteract this demobilizing effect. We use a conjoint experiment to vary the presence of various types of identity appeals to minorities (descriptive and symbolic), and test whether such appeals affect turnout intentions and candidate choice. We measure perceptions of personal and group discrimination and examine whether the effects of the appeals depend on perceptions of discrimination. The study contributes to our understanding of what drives immigrants' political integration, the role of perceived discrimination, and how different types of identity appeals work.

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## Discrimination, Impartiality, and Cost-Effectiveness in Humanitarian Aid Allocation

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The gap between humanitarian need and available funding is vast and widening: in 2025 the UN appeal sought \$44 billion but received only \$12 billion — the lowest level in a decade. I examine the ethical principles governing allocation under such scarcity through a stylized case inspired by Daniel Wikler:

An earthquake in Bolivistan affects two equally vulnerable ethnic populations: 60,000 people in accessible lowland areas and 30,000 people in hard-to-reach mountain areas, where delivery costs are twice as high. With insufficient resources to save everyone, three options present themselves:

Option 1: allocate all resources to the mountains, saving 30,000  
Option 2: allocate all resources to the lowlands, saving 60,000  
Option 3: divide resources equally between the two areas, saving 30,000 lowland and 15,000 mountain people — 45,000 in total

Cost-effectiveness rationing (CER) straightforwardly recommends Option 2, maximizing lives saved per unit of resource. Although CER makes no essential reference to ethnicity, its prioritization of the accessible lowland population imposes systemic disadvantages on the mountain ethnic group that fall entirely along ethnic lines. This appears to satisfy the conditions for an indirect discrimination complaint against a socially salient group. I argue, however, that this charge cannot be sustained, since the disadvantage to the ethnic population in the mountains is not disproportionate to the benefit to those saved in the lowlands.

Critics of CER may instead argue that CER conflicts with the principle of impartiality — one of the foundational principles of humanitarian action. I distinguish two conceptions of this principle. Formal impartiality requires that no group be targeted for disadvantageous treatment, a condition Option 2 clearly satisfies. Substantive impartiality however, requires that allocation respond equally to equal need, a condition Option 2 violates by allowing equal vulnerability to generate unequal access to assistance. The humanitarian principle of impartiality, I argue, is committed to the substantive rather than the formal conception. This points toward Option 3.

However, Option 3 faces its own challenge. By committing equal resources to save half as many mountain people as lowland people, Option 3 spends twice as much per mountain life saved as per lowland life saved. Reading resource commitment per life as a signal of implicit valuation, Option 3 appears to treat mountain lives as worth twice as much as lowland lives — triggering a moral equals complaint from the lowland group that does not depend on a contested baseline. I suggest this complaint can be answered. Option 3 does not deny that lowland and mountain lives are of equal moral worth. Rather, it realizes the further value of impartiality understood as equal

response to equal need. This value is independent of, and not reducible to, the value of saving individual lives. The differential resource commitment per life reflects not a judgment about comparative worth but a commitment to equal treatment that operates alongside, and sometimes in tension with, the goal of maximizing rescue.

## Gender and Office-Specific Preferences for Politicians

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Recent meta-analyses and multi-country studies find that voters in most democracies favor rather than oppose women candidates. However, research also finds that contexts and situations characterized by threat and conflict—such as wars and terrorist attacks—push citizens towards relatively weaker (stronger) preferences for women (men) candidates. Consequently, one may hypothesize that citizens hold office-specific and gendered preferences for politicians such that preferences for women candidates decrease (relative to men candidates) the closer a specific office is connected to conflict and threat in the minds of citizens. This project tests if Danish citizens' gendered preferences for politicians vary across specific offices/policy areas in accordance with this expectation. The project relies on two pre-registered conjoint candidate choice experiments in which participants are randomly assigned to consider fictitious politicians for specific and well-known political offices (e.g., Secretary of Defense, Social Affairs etc.). Resonating with existing research, Study 1 (n=1,020) reveals that Danes generally prefer women politicians, but that this favoritism is lower when considering the role as Secretary of Defense compared to Secretary of Social Affairs and an unspecific ministerial office. Study 2 (data collection autumn 2026) investigates two possible mechanisms underlying these results. First, perceived threat against Denmark may drive citizens' lower preference for a woman Secretary of Defense. Second, stereotypic perceptions of women as compassionate and empathetic and men as assertive and tough-minded may cause citizens to see women as less well-suited for the job as Secretary of Defense. Study 2 pits these explanations against each other by measuring perceived threat against Denmark and trait-based stereotypes about women and men before participants engage with a conjoint experiment similar to Study 1. Results are discussed in connection with the high saliency of threat and conflict characterizing contemporary political situations in many democracies.

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## Reducing ethnic discrimination in rental housing: two interventions from Hungary

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Ethnic discrimination in housing markets is a key mechanism through which social inequalities are reproduced and minority exclusion is maintained. In Hungary, Roma people face substantial barriers in accessing rental housing, yet there is limited evidence on interventions capable of reducing discriminatory behaviour in real-world settings. Previous correspondence studies conducted by our research team show the scale of these inequalities: while a non-Roma applicant typically needs to contact only two landlords or agents to secure a housing viewing, a Roma applicant needs to contact approximately nine. Such disparities not only restrict access to housing but also reinforce residential segregation, economic disadvantage, and social exclusion.

This paper presents findings from two complementary intervention studies that seek to reduce ethnic discrimination against Roma homeseekers in the Hungarian rental housing market.

The first study examines whether perspective-taking can reduce discriminatory behaviour. In summer 2024, we contacted all active landlords advertising rental properties on a major Hungarian housing platform and invited them to participate in an online study. Participants in the treatment condition viewed a short documentary on housing discrimination co-created with Roma participants and based on their real-life experiences searching for rental housing in Hungary. The control group received a placebo treatment unrelated to discrimination. Seven to ten days later, we conducted a correspondence field experiment targeting the same market actors under real-world conditions. Fictitious Roma and non-Roma applicants with otherwise identical profiles contacted landlords and agents regarding advertised apartments. Results show that exposure to the documentary increased positive responses toward Roma applicants by approximately 9 percentage points relative to the control group. To further validate these findings, we also conducted a complementary crowdsourcing survey experiment that replicated the direction of the treatment effects and provided additional evidence.

The second study focuses on norm-signalling and voluntary commitments to equal treatment. In collaboration with a small online rental housing platform, we developed an “equal treatment” badge that landlords could voluntarily display on their profiles to indicate commitment to non-discriminatory treatment regardless of applicants’ ethnic background. Using an online field experiment, we compare the behaviour of landlords who adopted the badge with those who did not. Preliminary findings indicate that badge adopters discriminate substantially less against Roma applicants. We additionally surveyed Roma respondents regarding the perceived credibility and usefulness of the badge and found overwhelmingly positive evaluations, suggesting that such signals may increase trust and perceived safety among minority homeseekers.

Building on these early results, the intervention is now entering a larger-scale implementation phase through a collaboration involving a major housing platform and the Municipality of Budapest. The ongoing project aims to test whether voluntary anti-discrimination commitments can be

institutionalized and scaled through public-private cooperation, while also evaluating their long-term behavioural effects. Data collection is currently underway.

Methodologically, the paper contributes to discrimination research by combining randomized interventions with behavioural field experiments in naturally occurring market settings. More broadly, the findings highlight both the promise and the limitations of scalable anti-discrimination tools in normative environments where egalitarian norms remain politically contested.

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## Violence against politicians and the consequences for political representation: Raced-gendered patterns among U.S. local politicians

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Gender and politics research outlines violence as a principal obstacle to equality in political representation, and this raises questions about raced-gendered patterns. Centering women of color politicians in the U.S., we study the nature, frequency, and impacts of violence they experience and how these compare to their counterparts. We use a survey of ~600 local politicians and ~30 interviews conducted in summer 2024, and find that women of color (WOC) experience the highest rates of violent encounters and uniquely experience both gender- and race-based violence. They also report significant negative emotional and career impacts due to worrying about political violence. Our interviews indicate that politics is experienced as a gendered and racially hostile space, where WOC lack adequate support for mitigating the negative consequences of violence. The book highlights the disproportionate burdens placed on WOC as local politicians, which ultimately threatens the ability of political institutions to fully represent the citizenry.

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# To Engage or to Obey? How Exclusionary Nationalism Shapes Unequal Expectations and Standards for “Good Citizenship”

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Are standards and criteria for what makes a good citizen applied similarly across different social groups? While a large body of literature has established that individuals carry distinct notions of what makes a good citizen, comparatively little work has investigated whether the application of citizenship norms might differ depending on who is being evaluated. In this paper, we provide a new theory and test connecting exclusionary national narratives to the unequal application of citizenship norms. We argue that individuals who subscribe to a more exclusionary conception of national identity which firmly distinguishes between “core” and “non-core” members of the nation will hold the latter group to a comparatively higher standard for good citizenship, as well as evaluate them more often on duty as opposed to engaged citizenship criteria. We find support for our theory in a pre-registered survey experiment across a diverse array of 13 countries (N=13,281). Respondents on average are less likely to evaluate perceived non-core members as good citizens, prioritize to a greater degree duty-based criteria (e.g., legal compliance) than engaged citizen criteria (e.g., political participation), and effects are more pronounced for individuals and regions where exposure and receptivity to exclusionary narratives are likely to be greatest. Our study highlights the importance of national narratives and opens new questions about the application of citizenship norms and their role in society.

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# The Multi-Dimensional Nature of Discrimination at Work: A Survey Experiment in Four European Countries

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Workplace discrimination remains widespread across countries and organizational contexts and has well documented consequences for job outcomes, as well as employees' psychological and physical health (Dhanani, LaPalme, and Joseph 2021; Jones et al. 2016; Quillian et al. 2019). Research in the social sciences has examined perceptions of discrimination through self-reports in surveys (Lewis, Cogburn, and Williams 2015) or identified discrimination risks through field experiments (Quillian and Midtbøen 2021). While these methods are useful for measuring (perceived) exposure, they provide limited insight into the attribution process by which individuals interpret an event as discriminatory. Understanding these attributions is especially interesting in light of recent evidence that discrimination increasingly takes more subtle and ambiguous forms, an ambiguity that can hinder recognition, generate discomfort (Ozier, Taylor, and Murphy 2019), and discourage reporting (Kaiser and Miller 2003). We therefore ask: *how do people decide whether a workplace situation counts as discrimination?*

Prior research shows that people rely on internalized and often narrow definitions of discrimination that are closely aligned with prototypical cases, such as overt and intentional acts (Inman and Baron 1996; Major and Dover 2015; Valentino and Warren 2025). At the same time, discrimination experiences are likely to be multi-dimensional, varying in subtlety, intentionality and formality (Jones et al. 2017). Empirical studies that focus on attributions, however, rarely examine these aspects jointly and cannot fully grasp their interplay (Warnke, Di Stasio, and Lubbers 2026).

We address this gap using a pre-registered factorial survey design (Auspurg and Hinz 2015) in which respondents take the perspective of observers and evaluate four fictitious workplace scenarios that vary along several dimensions. The scenarios describe interactions between a supervisor (perpetrator) and a subordinate (target) that occur in the presence of other colleagues (bystanders). Our experimental design randomly varies multiple characteristics across respondents, including the gender and ethnicity of the actors involved, the nature of the event (subtlety, formality, intentionality, frequency), and the context (bystander support, organizational policies). The random assignment of actor-, event-, and context-related characteristics to vignettes allows us to estimate both their independent and combined effects on the likelihood that a situation is perceived as discriminatory, providing causal insight into the drivers of attribution processes. Another advantage of our study is that its quota-representative sampling strategy allows us to examine between-respondent heterogeneity in attributions and detect which respondent-level characteristics increase or decrease the recognition of discrimination, net of the characteristics of the situation (i.e., exposure).

In May and June 2026, a cross-national online survey will be fielded among 8000 employees in four European countries (UK, Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain), oversampling respondents with an ethnic minority background. Preliminary results from a pilot we conducted in the UK in March (n=800) indicate that respondents were able to pick up the intended manipulations and that their attributions

of discrimination are multidimensional, with subtle, unintentional, and informal events being less likely to be attributed to discrimination.

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## Integration Effects of Restrictive Welfare Policies

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This paper examines the effects of the 2016 amendment to the Danish integration benefit, which introduced a retroactive residence requirement and reduced social assistance benefits for non-EU immigrants with less than seven years of cumulative residence in Denmark. Unlike earlier Danish welfare reforms targeting newly arrived immigrants, the reform affected immigrants who had already resided in Denmark for several years, thereby extending benefit reductions to a more established immigrant population.

The study contributes to the literature on immigrant integration by providing causal evidence on the broader integration effects of a benefit reduction among non-EU immigrants with several years of residence. Using population-wide administrative data and a difference-in-differences strategy, the paper estimates the effects of the reform on multiple dimensions of integration, including labour-market participation, crime rates, and children's educational outcomes and wellbeing.

While previous research has primarily focused on incentive-based mechanisms, this study argues that restrictive integration policies may also operate through discrimination-related mechanisms. Policies that impose restrictions on specific immigrant groups may signal exclusion and unequal treatment, potentially weakening some aspects of integration. By examining different integration outcomes, the paper evaluates whether restrictive welfare policies generate trade-offs across different dimensions of integration.

The findings contribute to debates about whether restrictive integration policies promote or undermine immigrants' integration into the host society.

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# Factors Shaping Women's Political Representation in Rural Communities: A Comparative Mixed-Methods Analysis

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This article presents a comparative analysis of rural communities in Romania, examining the interplay between socio-economic conditions, cultural norms, institutional contexts, and women's political representation. Rather than assuming that structural factors alone explain variations in women's political participation, the study investigates the contextual mechanisms that make certain communities more conducive to women's political leadership than others.

The research adopts a mixed-methods design that combines quantitative analysis of socio-economic indicators with qualitative evidence derived from semi-structured interviews. The comparative analysis focuses on 20 rural communities from the North-West Region of Romania, selected through a contrasting-case design: ten communities characterized by consistently high levels of women's political representation and ten communities in which local political leadership remains predominantly male. This research strategy is intended to identify the contextual factors associated with contrasting patterns of political representation and to examine whether cultural, institutional, and socio-economic mechanisms contribute to facilitating or constraining women's participation in local decision-making processes.

Through an in-depth analysis of the selected case studies, the research identifies several mechanisms associated with higher levels of women's political representation, including institutional support for the reinterpretation of local traditions, the presence of female political role models and mentors, well-established women's political networks, and community-specific cultural characteristics that encourage women's participation in public life.

The comparative findings reveal substantial differences in community perceptions regarding women's leadership and suggest that cultural factors play an integrative role by mediating the influence of socio-economic conditions and institutional arrangements. These findings indicate that inclusive local governance cannot be explained solely by economic development but also depends on locally embedded cultural narratives, social norms, and institutional practices.

By identifying transferable mechanisms that support women's political participation, the article contributes to philosophical and socio-political debates on representation, equality, and discrimination. It demonstrates that community-level evidence can advance the understanding of broader patterns of gender inequality while providing empirical support for theories of inclusive governance and social inclusion. The study concludes that communities with stronger female political representation tend to exhibit distinctive patterns of civic engagement, institutional collaboration, and resource allocation, highlighting the importance of context-sensitive approaches to promoting gender equality and reducing barriers to political participation at the local level.

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# Who Deserves Citizenship? Perceived Economic Contribution of High-Skilled Immigrants in Sweden: Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment

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Studies consistently show a preference for high-skilled immigrants (Aviña et al., 2026; Hainmueller and Hiscox, 2010; Helbling and Kriesi, 2014; Iyengar et al., 2013; Kage et al., 2018; Igarashi et al., 2022; Lawrence, 2015). While much is known about the type of immigrant people prefer to admit, we know less about the type of immigrant they are willing to accept as a fellow citizen. This distinction is important because citizenship is a more demanding and definitive form of inclusion than entry into the country. Citizenship grants immigrants rights on a par with those of native citizens and marks recognition as full members of the national community.

This study examines how people evaluate the citizenship deservingness of high-skilled immigrants in Sweden. While high educational attainment and labor-market success are generally presumed to facilitate immigrant integration, it remains unclear whether such merits are recognized by others as sufficient grounds for citizenship. In particular, citizenship evaluations may depend not only on human-capital characteristics, but also on whether applicants are perceived as economically productive, self-sufficient, and socially integrated. At the same time, evaluations may remain shaped by broader symbolic boundaries of belonging, such as country of origin and language accent.

Empirically, I use a forced-choice conjoint experiment in which respondents choose which of two immigrant applicants should receive Swedish citizenship. All applicants are high-skilled, with university-level education, but profiles vary by gender, length of residence in Sweden, country of birth, type of educational credential, occupation, Swedish-language proficiency, employment status, and religiosity. This design makes it possible to assess whether support for granting citizenship is conditional on current economic contribution, qualification match, educational credential, occupational value, and social or symbolic markers of integration. More specifically, I test whether respondents prefer applicants who are employed rather than unemployed, whether employment below one's qualification level reduces perceived deservingness, whether Swedish or highly ranked foreign credentials are rewarded more than origin-country credentials, and whether occupations that signal scarce human capital generate stronger support.

This study also examines variation by respondent background, comparing native-born respondents with respondents of migrant background to assess whether they use similar criteria when evaluating applicants. Its key contribution is to focus on high-skilled applicants while systematically varying other cues. This makes it possible to test whether high skill alone is sufficient for citizenship acceptance, or whether support remains conditional on actual economic contribution and perceived belonging.

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# What Advances the Causes of Disadvantaged Groups? Experimental Evidence on Particularistic and Universalistic Arguments

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A core element of contemporary progressive “identity politics” concerns rectifying injustices experienced by disadvantaged groups, who have been, and in some cases continue to be, the subject of discrimination and general adversity in society. Achieving this goal requires advocates of these groups to convince others – especially members of dominant groups – of their position. However, we know little about which arguments are the most effective in advancing the causes of disadvantaged groups. In this paper, we examine how different types of arguments disseminated on social media – a common battleground for debates about identity politics – affect citizens’ preferences for measures that advance such causes as well as their evaluation of the affected groups. We identify two distinct lines of argument frequently used in discussions about identity politics and theorize their persuasive efficacy on a given identity political issue as well as their broader effects on affect toward the disadvantaged group in question. More specifically, we examine *particularistic* arguments, which present a given issue as the result of oppression of a disadvantaged group by a dominant group, and therefore calls for policies rectifying or accommodating this injustice, and *universalistic* arguments, which construes accommodating policies as a matter of “common humanity” in terms of universal values of equality of opportunity and dignity of the individual. We test these two lines of argument in a large survey experiment conducted on a nationally representative sample of voters in the UK ( $n \approx 12,000$ ). We embed the arguments in fictitious social media profiles to increase ecological validity. In the experiment, we randomly assign the type of argument (particularistic vs. universalistic (and a control case without an argument)) across eight issues frequently discussed in the context of identity politics. Further, to examine the possibility that the effect of each argument is modified by its source, we also randomly vary the sender of the argument (member of the disadvantaged group in question vs. member of the dominant group). Our results will have important implications for understanding the disagreements over contentious issues related to identity politics.

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## For Refinement, for Utility, or Just for Laughs? Experimental Evidence on Distinction Through Modes of Consumption

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How we consume culture, and not just what we consume, may be a fundamental yet underexplored source of social distinction. While (quantitative) research on cultural tastes has focused predominantly on cultural objects, recent qualitative work argues (but does not show) that *modes of consumption* may be equally, if not more, consequential for how individuals are perceived. I address this gap with a vignette survey experiment in Denmark in which a representative sample evaluates hypothetical individuals varying in both taste for cultural objects (highbrow vs. popular) and modes of consumption (cultivated vs. practical vs. ironic). Both objects and modes of consumption shape perceptions independently. A taste for highbrow objects and a cultivated mode of consumption produce the same form of distinction: favorable perceptions of status, labor-market success, and cultural sophistication, alongside greater social distance. This parallel supports a Bourdieusian reading in which cultivated consumption and highbrow taste are two expressions of a single aesthetic disposition. Open-ended responses further suggest that cultivated consumption creates a more subtle form of distinction when applied to popular rather than highbrow objects - a mechanism through which cultural omnivores can preserve status. Ironic consumption, by contrast, produces strong and consistently unfavorable perceptions regardless of object: irony reads not as sophisticated detachment but as inauthenticity, undermining rather than creating distinction. Overall, these results have implications for how culture contributes to social inequalities through stereotype-formation.

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## The Dark Side of Associational Life: Does Civic Density Attenuate or Amplify Out-Group Discrimination? Evidence from East and West Germany

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A dominant view across social psychology and political sociology treats associational life as a solvent of prejudice: both Allportian contact theory and Putnamian social-capital theory predict that denser civic participation generates generalized trust, cross-cutting ties, and lower out-group hostility. Yet a competing tradition — from Berman's account of Weimar's collapse to recent evidence that association density accelerated entry into the Nazi Party — holds that civic density can instead consolidate exclusionary in-group solidarity and supply the organizational infrastructure for discriminatory mobilization. These opposing predictions are rarely tested against each other with fine-grained data. This paper asks: under what conditions does associational density attenuate, and under what conditions does it amplify, discriminatory attitudes toward out-groups?

I argue the contradiction dissolves once we distinguish the *type* of social capital and its institutional embedding. Bonding-dense, sociability-oriented associations — sports clubs, volunteer fire brigades, traditional *Vereine* — primarily strengthen in-group boundaries, whereas bridging associations expose members to difference. Where responsive political institutions and democratic counter-milieus are weak — conditions characteristic of structurally disadvantaged, post-transformation regions — bonding density becomes an asset for actors seeking to normalize exclusionary norms. Social-identity and recognition mechanisms specify the micro-level link: associations allocate belonging and status, and the same affective goods that produce cohesion can harden the in-group/out-group line.

I test this with a district-level (*kreisscharf*) design covering all German districts, combining register-based association density from the ZiviZ *Vereinsregisterauslese* (waves 2012-2022) with measures of discriminatory and group-focused-enmity attitudes. To address endogeneity, association density is employed within an instrumental-variable framework. An East–West dummy and interaction terms capture the divergent institutional and historical legacies of the post-socialist transformation, situating the German case within a broader Central and Eastern European comparative frame. A mechanism analysis using the ZiviZ-Survey Scientific Use File (~12,800 organizations) disaggregates the effect by association type, distinguishing bonding-sociability from bridging-advocacy organizations.

The paper makes three contributions. Empirically, it moves beyond civic *density* to civic *composition*, showing that aggregate measures can conceal opposing effects. Theoretically, it integrates the discrimination literature's integration/contact paradigm with the "dark side of social capital" tradition, treating civil society as contested terrain rather than an unambiguously democratic good. Comparatively, it uses East Germany as a strategic site for examining how the collapse and state-incentivized reconstruction of associational life after 1990 shape contemporary discrimination. The findings speak to ongoing policy debates — including programmes that fund

sports clubs and fire brigades as democratic infrastructure — by clarifying when such investment reduces discrimination and when it risks entrenching it.

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## The Integration Paradox:

Why some people are more willing to disclose experiencing discrimination than others

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The Integration Paradox, the empirical finding that more "integrated" ethnic minorities, particularly those with higher levels of education or longer residence, report more experiences of discrimination, continues to puzzle migration scholars. The first mechanism that tends to come to mind posits that more integrated individuals are more likely to be exposed to discrimination, a claim that empirical evidence debunks. Current research, therefore, focuses on heightened awareness of discrimination as an explanation of the integration paradox: the more educated a person is, the more aware they are of the existence of discrimination and what discrimination looks like. This article advances the debate by introducing a third, largely overlooked mechanism: willingness to disclose discrimination. We argue that survey reports of discrimination are shaped not only by what respondents perceive or experience, but also by their inclination to reveal these experiences in non-anonymous research settings. This inclination is conditioned by social desirability pressures, political orientation, and individuals' understanding of the ambiguous nature of discrimination. In addition, we refine the "awareness" mechanism by distinguishing between general knowledge of discrimination and the specific ability to recognise subtle, indirect, or ambiguous forms of bias. We propose that educational gradients in discrimination reporting reflect differences in recognition of ambiguous behaviours, and not only in general awareness of ethnic inequality. To isolate awareness from reporting bias, we field cross-national survey experiments in the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom with large oversamples of ethnic minority respondents. The design integrates list experiments, informational treatments, and direct survey questions to test three competing mechanisms explaining the Integration Paradox: (1) reporting bias, (2) political orientation, and (3) the effect of explicit versus ambiguous information about discrimination. First, we test whether the highly educated report more discrimination than their lower educated co-ethnics when asked directly, consistent with the standard Integration Paradox pattern. Second, list experiments assess whether these gaps persist under conditions of anonymity. Third, we implement two text-based informational treatments that describe either explicit or ambiguous forms of discrimination. These treatments allow us to examine whether new information affects perceptions among respondents with differing levels of education and whether ambiguous discrimination, because it validates subtle experiences, reduces educational gaps more strongly than explicit discrimination. Fourth, we test whether political orientation mediates educational differences in reporting. Because higher education is increasingly associated with left-leaning preferences across Europe, political orientation may render highly educated minorities more willing to advocate for social equality in survey contexts. Together, these analyses provide a comprehensive test of why more "integrated"

minorities report more discrimination. By distinguishing between awareness, conceptualisation of discrimination, and willingness to disclose, this study clarifies the micro-level processes that drive the Integration Paradox. It also demonstrates how discrimination data can be misinterpreted if reporting biases are ignored. Beyond contributing to the Special Issue theme, this article offers methodological guidance for future research on discrimination, showing how anonymous formats and informational cues can better capture minorities' lived experiences across diverse European contexts.

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## Discrimination as a choice: Discrimination Attribution, Decision-Making, and Mental Wellbeing in PhD Education

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PhD students occupy a structurally low-power position within academic hierarchies, which may heighten their vulnerability to both actual and perceived discrimination. Experiences such as exclusion, diminished status, unequal workloads, and lack of procedural transparency can negatively influence wellbeing, identity, and academic persistence. At the same time, core processes in doctoral education—including admission, supervision, evaluation, and career progression—are often characterised by uncertainty, ambiguity, and incomplete information. These conditions create fertile ground for both biased decision-making and the attribution of discrimination, particularly where decision rationales are unclear.

This paper presents a research proposal for an empirical study examining how PhD students interpret and attribute experiences of discrimination, and how these attribution processes relate to mental wellbeing, identity, and engagement. We conceptualise discrimination as a multi-level phenomenon encompassing interpersonal behaviours (e.g., exclusion, microaggressions), structural conditions (e.g., inequitable institutional practices), and internalised processes (e.g., impostor feelings). Importantly, we distinguish between actual discrimination—objectively unfair treatment—and attributed (perceived) discrimination, which reflects individuals' interpretations of ambiguous events. Attribution processes are shaped by contextual uncertainty, availability of alternative explanations, and identity-relevant cues, and may lead students to oscillate between self-blame and perceptions of bias.

The study is theoretically grounded in attribution theory, decision analysis, and value-focused thinking. We argue that discrimination in doctoral education may partly arise from decision-making under uncertainty, where incomplete information and implicit biases affect judgements. Decision analysis highlights the importance of process quality—such as clear framing, consideration of alternatives, and explicit value trade-offs—rather than outcomes alone. From this perspective, weak or opaque decision processes may contribute to both the occurrence of discrimination and its attribution. Furthermore, value-focused thinking suggests that misalignment between students' fundamental objectives (e.g., wellbeing, intellectual development, career success) and institutional priorities may increase the likelihood of perceived unfairness.

A qualitative, cross-national design will be employed, involving semi-structured interviews with approximately 50 PhD students across England, Portugal, Norway, Denmark, and Poland. Participants will be sampled across doctoral stages and disciplines. Interviews will explore students' values, decision-making processes, experiences of ambiguity, and perceptions of discrimination, with particular focus on three critical junctures: admission, doctoral progression (including supervision and opportunity allocation), and transition to the labour market. Data will be analysed thematically, integrating insights from decision quality frameworks and attribution processes.

The study aims to advance understanding of discrimination attribution in doctoral education and to bridge literatures on inequality and decision-making. It will generate empirical evidence on how values, ambiguity, and decision processes shape perceptions of fairness and wellbeing. The findings are expected to inform supervisor training, institutional policy, and the development of value-aware, transparent decision-making practices. Ultimately, the research seeks to contribute to more equitable doctoral environments by addressing both the structural and interpretative dimensions of discrimination.

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## What's in a Name? Perceived Ethnic Discrimination in Tokyo's Rental Housing Market

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This paper studies perceived ethnic discrimination in Tokyo's rental housing market within Japan's contemporary legal and institutional framework. Using a survey-based experiment, native Japanese and foreign-born respondents evaluate the likelihood that otherwise identical rental applicants with ethnically identifiable names receive a viewing invitation for the same property. We document five main findings. First, both native Japanese and foreign-born respondents expect non-Japanese applicants to face significantly lower viewing probabilities than otherwise identical Japanese applicants. Second, native Japanese respondents perceive substantially larger penalties than foreign-born respondents. Third, perceived disadvantage varies across applicant groups and is smallest for Western-Japanese applicants, suggesting that perceived access is shaped not only by foreignness itself but also by signals of cultural proximity and partial insider status. Fourth, among foreign-born respondents, prior experiences of everyday discrimination are associated with more pessimistic expectations regarding rental access. Fifth, respondents evaluate their own prospects more favourably than those of their broader nationality group, consistent with the personal-group discrimination discrepancy (PGDD), suggesting that perceptions of disadvantage are shaped differently at the personal and collective levels. The paper contributes to the literature by shifting attention from realised discrimination to subjective expectations of discrimination in housing markets.

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## Evaluating the Relationship Between Antisemitism and Islamophobia

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Politicians, the media, and activists routinely pit Muslims and Jews against one another, suggesting that animus toward one necessarily means positive evaluations of the other. Recent scholarly work suggests that Islamophobia and antisemitism are subtypes of xenophobia, and that a sizable share of Americans hold both antisemitic and Islamophobic attitudes. Nonetheless, the extent to which these two sets of attitudes matter for shaping political evaluations remains unexplored. Here, we explore whether and how Islamophobia and antisemitism are related. We find that they are modestly, if not strongly, correlated with one another, and each meaningfully shape Trump support in 2024. Overall, these findings challenge the approach that actors like the media, politicians, and activists often characterize responses to Antisemitism and Islamophobia as being zero-sum. Our research demonstrates that hostility toward American Muslims and Jews need not be considered in opposition to one another and often comes from similar sources.

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## The cumulative burden of discrimination and its recognition

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While discrimination is typically studied as a single, isolated event, disadvantage can accumulate across different areas of life. Yet the cumulative burden that discrimination places on ethnic minorities remains difficult to measure. In her keynote, Di Stasio presents the first cross-domain, cross-national field experiment of its kind, conducted as part of the EqualStrength project (Horizon Europe). Unprecedented in scale, the study measures ethnic discrimination in employment, housing, and childcare across nine European countries. But measuring discrimination is only part of the challenge: despite its pervasiveness, much discrimination goes unnoticed. Findings from her ERC-funded TARGETS project show that information about experiences of discrimination circulates within socially segregated networks, leaving them largely invisible to others. The keynote therefore presents a research agenda that moves beyond measuring discrimination to understanding when, and by whom, it is recognized.

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Human categorisation is a fundamental cognitive process through which social reality is rendered intelligible. Perceivers rely on socially meaningful cues to assign others to categories and infer further attributes from those assignments. Recent work has substantially revised classical two-dimensional accounts of stereotype content, showing that spontaneous stereotypes are organised over a richer set of dimensions whose relevance varies by target group (Abele et al., 2021; Nicolas, Bai, & Fiske, 2022). Names are one such cue: they are not neutral labels but culturally loaded signals from which perceivers infer origin, religion, gender, status, and belonging (Martiniello & Verhaeghe, 2022). Yet existing research on names focuses primarily on discrimination outcomes, especially in hiring (Lippens, Vermeiren, & Baert, 2023; Quillian & Lee, 2023), rather than on the prior classificatory process through which names become socially meaningful group markers. This paper addresses that earlier step.

The paper asks whether respondents who encounter names associated with different minority-origin groups infer broader social categories, and whether these inferred categories organise subsequent judgements on religion, religiosity, skin colour, language proficiency, and social position. Conceptually, the paper engages with recent critiques of the analytical separation between ethnicity, religion, nationality, and class (Türkmen, 2024), and with the racialisation of religion in Europe (Husain, 2023; Di Stasio et al., 2021). In this sense, it studies the cognitive and classificatory preconditions of discrimination: before unequal treatment can occur, individuals must first be sorted into socially meaningful categories carrying coherent inferential content.

The analysis uses original survey data collected in 7 European countries: Belgium, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Respondents rated first names associated with the majority population and 6 minority-origin groups (Pakistan, Turkey, Morocco, Senegal, Nigeria, Congo) on perceived country of origin, religion, religiosity, skin colour, language proficiency, and social position. Country-of-origin attribution is treated as the most direct indicator of categorisation, distinguishing intended origin, perceived origin, and perceived broad category.

The empirical strategy proceeds in 3 steps. First, confusion matrices and classification rates map the categorisation structure of names, distinguishing exact country recognition, broad-category recognition, within- and cross-category misclassification, and non-recognition. Second, mixed models with country fixed effects and cross-classified random intercepts for respondents and names predict perceived traits from respondent-level inferred broad categories (Majority, MENAP, SSA, Other, *Don't know*). Third, latent profile analysis on the continuous trait dimensions tests whether perceived characteristics cluster into recurring stereotype bundle.

The paper argues that, once a name is categorised, multiple perceived traits become organised into structured social profiles. Minority-origin names may converge into higher-order racialised categories rather than remaining origin-specific, consistent with arguments that ethnic and religious markers in Europe operate as a fused race-religion signal. The paper thereby clarifies one cognitive

precondition of discrimination: names operate as cues through which minority difference is classified, made legible, and connected to broader stereotype content.

## What makes paternalistic discrimination wrong?

**Viki Lyngby Hvid<sup>1</sup>**

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Acts and policies that interfere with people, without their consent, and to promote their interests or wellbeing are paternalistic. Paternalism has the potential to significantly benefit people, but opponents argue that paternalism is pro tanto morally wrong (e.g., Feinberg 1986; Flanigan 2017; Quong 2011; Darwall 2006, 267-268; VanDeVeer 1986). An important but underexamined aspect of paternalism is that it often discriminates. Discrimination is typically defined as disadvantageous and differential treatment or impact based on the target's group membership (Lippert-Rasmussen 2013, 15, 36-40; Rasmussen 2020). Paternalistic acts and policies often fit this definition of discrimination. First, "differential treatment or impact" may be an objective of a paternalistic policy, or it may be an unintended side effect. An example of how a policy or practice may single out specific groups for paternalistic treatment is affirmative policies that are designed to benefit disadvantaged groups. Recent research shows that affirmative action initiatives will often be paternalistic towards the intended beneficiaries who prefer their situation without such measures (Bengtson and Pedersen 2024). In addition, even when not targeting specific groups, paternalism can still affect groups differently. Some paternalistic policies that target everyone have such disparate impacts. An example is safety requirements in the workplace, which sometimes make certain groups, e.g., people with disabilities or pregnant women, less suitable for employment compared to other groups (Daniels 2003; see also Buchmann et al. 2024). Second, while paternalism aims to benefit people, it is also "disadvantageous" due to its non-consensual interference with individual autonomy (Midtgaard and Pedersen 2024).

While paternalistic policies often discriminate, very few studies examine the intersection of paternalism and discrimination. In general, theories of the wrongness of paternalism do not examine the discriminatory aspects of paternalism; and theories of the wrongness of discrimination tend not to consider cases of paternalistic discrimination. This paper studies whether existing central accounts of the wrongness of discrimination can explain what makes paternalistic discrimination morally wrong. Specifically, the paper examines harm-based, mental state-based, expressive, and deliberative disrespect accounts of the wrongness of discrimination. It argues that theories focusing on deliberative disrespect are best able to explain what makes paternalistic discrimination wrong (when it is wrong). In addition to providing novel insights into the analysis of the wrongness of paternalistic discrimination, the paper contributes to our understanding of the merits and limitations of existing theories of discrimination.

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What psychological processes do conjoint experiments actually measure? Introducing a new attribute-norming tool for political scientists

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Conjoint experiments are among political science's most widely used tools for measuring multidimensional preferences and discrimination, yet the psychological processes generating conjoint estimates remain relatively unexamined. When a respondent penalises a Muslim applicant or rewards a co-partisan, is that effect automatic or deliberative? The answer matters for how we interpret AMCEs and the tradeoffs they imply between attributes. Drawing on dual-process theories of social cognition and motivation-opportunity models of attitude activation, we argue that conjoint AMCEs are process-heterogeneous: different attributes within the same design reflect qualitatively different psychological processes.

To test this, we develop an accumulation function norming procedure based on a response-signal paradigm. Participants make speeded binary judgments about individual attribute levels across three timed exposure durations (500, 1500, and 2500ms) and an untimed condition. This yields two empirically separable measures for each attribute: evaluative inaccessibility—the miss rate as a function of exposure duration, indicating whether evaluation is possible under time constraint—and the accumulation function itself, tracing how evaluative direction ( $P(\text{"better"})$ ) evolves across encoding time. Attributes that produce flat accumulation functions with near-zero miss rates reflect automatic, resource-independent evaluation. Attributes with high early miss rates or steep accumulation slopes require deliberate processing and are sensitive to resource constraints.

We validate the procedure against an independent time-pressure conjoint experiment on UK immigration attitudes, expecting normed accumulation functions to predict which attributes attenuate under time pressure and which survive. We further argue that accumulation functions are individual-heterogeneous: the same attribute can generate fast, personally decisive evaluation for some respondents while being rapidly dismissed as irrelevant by others. This heterogeneity in who evaluates, and how quickly, has direct implications for what aggregate AMCEs represent in psychological terms and for which respondent subgroups drive attribute-specific effects. The norming procedure requires only a short task administered to a small independent sample and is readily appended to any conjoint design. We discuss applications to democratic norm tradeoffs, preferences for gendered and racialized candidates, and visual conjoint designs—contexts where assuming psychological comparability across attributes may substantially distort substantive interpretation.

## How to Think about Discrimination in the Funding of Religious Needs? The Case of Muslims in Israel

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Israel has no formal separation of religion and state, and the state provides generous funding for religious services. What is less widely known is that this support extends not only to Jewish institutions but also to Muslim ones. In a recent study, we examine how the Israeli state is involved in—and finances—religious services for Muslims and then ask whether Muslims are discriminated against relative to Jews. A central finding is that the discrimination question is far more complex than the familiar “compare budgets and see who gets less” approach suggests.

First, even where the relevant needs seem comparable—e.g., the remuneration of religious officials (imams and rabbis)—institutional fragmentation complicates the normative diagnosis. Imams’ salaries are funded through the Ministry of the Interior, whereas rabbis’ salaries are largely funded through local authorities. Because different state actors are responsible for parallel functions, observed disparities do not straightforwardly translate into claims of discriminatory treatment by a single agent.

Second, and more importantly, Jewish and Muslim communities have partly non-overlapping religious needs. Jews have institutions such as ritual baths (*mikvehs*) and their attendant staff, while Muslims have roles such as *muezzins* (who call worshippers to prayer from mosque minarets). Most importantly, the Jewish sector includes yeshivot—traditional institutions devoted to the study of rabbinic literature—that receive substantial, dedicated state funding, with no clear Muslim counterpart. On a simple “treat like cases alike” model, these differences seem to imply that Muslims have no grounds for complaint about receiving less public money for religious services overall: since there is no Muslim analogue of a *mikveh*, there is (on this view) no basis for demanding the funds allocated to *mikvehs* (or, more accurately, roughly a quarter of those funds, given the relative size of the two populations).

The main aim of my talk is to reject that conclusion. We argue that an appeal to the fact of different religious needs cannot justify the current funding gap between Jewish and Muslim religious services. We suggest that the same lesson applies more broadly to disputes over public funding involving religious or national minorities, especially minorities with a history of prejudice and discrimination.