

International Interpretations of Discrimination Confronting Institutional, Scientific and Activist Approaches

Thursday June 3 - Friday June 4, 2010, Paris

Thursday June 3 : Auditorium, 18 rue du Sergent Beuchat, Paris 12th

Friday June 4 : Hémicycle du Conseil Régional d'Ile de France, 57 rue de Babylone, Paris 7th*

The National Institute for Demographic Studies (INED) has received funding from the Regional Council of the Paris Region as part of its 2009 “campaign in support of anti-discrimination policies” to organize a symposium entitled “International Interpretations of Discrimination: Confronting Institutional, Scientific and Activist Approaches”. The symposium aims to compare the points of view of researchers from different disciplines with the experience of private and public agents working in the field of anti-discrimination, from France and other European countries (administrative officials, local government representatives, activists, trade union members, private-sector representatives, etc.). In recent years, discrimination as a topic of research and a subject of political action has developed and spread across various academic disciplines and fields of action. However, the approach to discrimination and the way discrimination is interpreted may vary according to the area of application. This is neither a surprise, nor a problem per se, but it can lead to disagreements on the origin of discrimination and how to implement anti-discrimination initiatives. Not talking about the same thing makes it difficult for people involved in anti-discrimination to adapt and use the concept; and even more so when considering that the concept is framed alternatively in terms of equality or diversity, depending on the context.

The symposium is based on the idea that there are multiple interpretations of discrimination and that it is necessary to compare them, not with the aim of defining the right approach to discrimination, but in order to pinpoint discrepancies, and hopefully to identify some points of convergence. It will consider theoretical approaches, along with institutional and activist practices.

6 topics

- ▶ How to define discrimination? The different approaches to discrimination depending on each discipline;
- ▶ The various grounds of discrimination (gender, race, sexual orientation and religion). Do they compete with one another?
- ▶ How to account for individual's experience in the definition of discrimination ?
- ▶ The implementation of antidiscrimination policies in local governments and private companies in comparative perspective ;
- ▶ How to measure discrimination ?
- ▶ Researchers and practitioners : is research useful for the concrete implementation of antidiscrimination policy ? Should researcher work in closer collaboration with practitioners?

French – English simultaneous translation provided

* For security reasons, registration is mandatory for day 2 of the symposium. Please download the invitation form available on INED's website at the following address: http://www.ined.fr/fr/rendez_vous/seminaires_colloques/bdd/rendez_vous/443/

Thursday June 3, 2010

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Location : Auditorium, 18 rue du Sergent Beauchat, Paris 12th, Metro : Montgallet or Nation.

9:30 am **Opening**

10:00 am **Introduction** : Patrick Simon (INED)

10:15 pm **Key Note: Antidiscrimination Policies in Europe** Ilze Brands Kehris (Fundamental Rights Agency)

10:45 am **Defining Discrimination : Cross disciplinary Approaches and Constructs**

Chair : Angéline Escafré-Dublet (INED)

Speakers : Timo Makkonen (University of Helsinki), Véronique De Rudder (Université Paris Diderot), Pascal Tisserant (Université de Metz), Hélène Garner (DARES)

Session 1 The session will bring together researchers from various disciplines (sociology, demography, economics and law) and ask them to define their own approach to discrimination in their field, and in comparison with other disciplines. The idea is to capture the consequences of different disciplinary paradigms on the definition of discrimination and its interpretation. Most of the disagreements on the definition of discrimination come from contrasting disciplinary paradigms. Each presentation will explore the practical consequences of the various theoretical perspectives.

12:45 pm **Lunch Break**

2:00 pm **Competing Grounds : Treatment and Strategies**

Chair : Christelle Hamel (INED)

Speakers : Ioannis Dimitrakopoulos (Fundamental Rights Agency), Sophie Latraverse (Halde), Catherine Tripon (Autre Cercle), Rachel Silvera (MAGE), Nasar Meer (University of Southampton, Royaume Uni).

Session 2 Different forms of unequal treatment are identified in relation to specific criteria, be it race, gender, or sexual orientation. Even though all criteria are of equal weight under the law, in practice, some are seen as more significant than others and are more likely to be considered as grounds for prosecution. Moreover, each of these grounds of discrimination needs to be understood within its own historical framework. Can we talk about competition between different grounds of discrimination? First, a social scientist and a representative of the administration will share their vision of the current state of the issue from an overall perspective. Second, activists and social scientists will present their response to the recent introduction of anti-discrimination in their field and will examine each of the various grounds of discrimination in turn.

4:00 pm **Coffee Break**

4:30 pm **Experiencing Discrimination, Words and Facts**

Chair : Nacira Guénif-Souilamas (Université Paris-Nord)

Speakers : Olivier Noël (ISCRA, Montpellier 3), Christian Poiret (Université Paris Diderot), Abdelkader Souifi (Association Arcade, Lyon), Lise Gagnard (Psychanalyste, Tours, CNAM), Wies Dinsbach (Association Art. 1 Rotterdam).

Session 3 This session will bring together researchers and community activists from France and abroad, and will address the following issue: how should individual experience be accounted for in the definition of discrimination? They will examine the construction of a public issue and the implementation of anti-discrimination policies. Each panel speaker will address the specific issues related to the use of the terms victim and plaintiff. The denial of discrimination following accusations of "victimization" in the public discourse will also be explored so as to highlight the impact on policy implementation – especially since the focus is overwhelmingly placed on the judicial aspect. Specific attention will be paid to the issue of everyday discrimination among individuals and the particular political challenge that it represents

Friday June 4, 2010 IMPLEMENTATION

Location : Hémicycle du Conseil Régional d'Ile de France, 33 rue Barbet de Jouy, Paris 7th, Metro : St François Xavier

9:30 am **Welcome Address:** Jean-Paul Huchon, President du Conseil Régional d'Ile de France (tbc)

9:45 am **Diversity and Anti-Discrimination Policies : Local Governments and Private Companies**

Chair : Virginie Guiraudon (CNRS)

Speakers : Franck Dobbin (Harvard University), Laure Bereni (New York University), Mireille Eberhard (INED),

Round Table: Fériel Kachoukh (Ville de Paris), Noémie Michelin (Ville de Reims), Judith Suurmond (Ville d'Amsterdam), Sophie Debost (VIGEO), Bruce Roch (Adecco).

Session 4 This session aims to compare local governments and private companies in their attempt to implement anti-discrimination policies and diversity promotion measures. In France, companies have approached the issue of anti-discrimination policies through the proxy of diversity management (e.g. the "Diversity Charter" of 2004 and the "Diversity Label" of 2008). In the public sector, an "Equality Charter" was issued in 2008 and, together with the Halde, the National Center for Local Public Servants (CNFPT) signed a convention to combat discrimination. Panel speakers will present the implications associated with the implementation of this kind of tool while exploring the challenge of building anti-discrimination policy in the public and private sector. Based on experience in France, the US and the Netherlands, this session will be the opportunity to address issues of terminology and classification when seeking to identify the beneficiaries of anti-discrimination policies. Panel speakers will be able to compare the different tools (monitoring, testing, issuing charters, etc) and to evaluate how the various grounds of discrimination are articulated with one another. Finally, they will be able to clarify the impact of national contexts on the implementation of policies that aim at securing equal access to employment.

12:45 pm **Lunch Break**

2:00 pm **Measuring Discrimination**

Speakers : Eric Cédiey (ISM Corum), Pascale Petit (Université d'Evry), Patrick Simon (INED), Eric Macé (EHESS), Daniel Sabbagh (Sciences Po)

Session 5 Measuring discrimination has been a controversial issue for over a decade now and yet the quantitative measure of discrimination is a necessary, if not sufficient, tool to combat discrimination. The EU Directive on racial equity (2000/43/CE) encourages the collection of ethnic data in order to implement anti-discrimination policies, and some countries have been producing ethnic statistics for this purpose (e.g. the UK). However, data collection raises numerous methodological and political issues depending on the grounds of discrimination under consideration. Session participants will be able to discuss, from their own disciplinary viewpoint, the utility of measuring discrimination, with the common goal of implementing anti-discrimination policies. They will be able to address the following questions: is it really necessary to measure discrimination? And what would be the cost of not doing so? How should data be collected and for what purpose?

4:00 pm **Coffee Break**

4:30 pm **Research and Implementation**

Speakers : Fadela Benrabia (Acsé - Nord Pas de Calais), Fabrice Dhume (ISCRA)

Session 5 In this concluding session, a researcher and a practitioner involved in the field will discuss the challenges of implementing of anti-discrimination policies. On the one hand, it is often said that social scientists gather knowledge without any concern for practical use while policy-makers take decisions regardless of scientific advances. On the other hand, a common critique consists in accusing social scientists of serving political interests. It points at "experts" who sacrifice scientific rigor for the sake of short term objectives and political demand. Regarding anti-discrimination policies, social scientists have been instrumental in putting the issue on the political agenda and therefore have reinforced the idea that there is a strong link between knowledge and power. Is research useful for the practical implementation of anti-discrimination policy? Should researchers work in closer collaboration with practitioners or, on the contrary, should they keep their distance and preserve their autonomy ?

5:30 pm **Conclusion**



Scientific Committee :
Mireille Eberhard (INED)
Angéline Escafré-Dublet (INED)
Olivier Noël (ISCRA, Montpellier 3, INED)
Patrick Simon (INED)

Pour plus d'informations:

http://www.ined.fr/fr/rendez_vous/seminaires_colloques/bdd/rendez_vous/443/