

# DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is differential treatment of minorities, be it harmful actions towards some or a distinct favoring towards the other. There are tons of different types of discrimination, therefore I will only focus on the most common ones today.

- **Racial and ethnic discrimination.** As the name suggest, it applies to injustice regarding race. Such ideas were the cause for apartheid, a system that existed in south Africa between 1948 and 1991 and separated black from white people, being sure of the latter's superiority. Another well know thing that was the cause of this ideology, was the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war genocide, where Nazis considered Jewish people as not only a religion, but an ethnicity for itself. They even created a plan, The final Solution, that planned their complete extermination. Beliefs like this are still present in the modern day and age, with a significantly higher number of non-white prisoners and unemployed, especially in America.
- **Gender and sexual orientation.** More commonly known under the name sexism, discrimination like this affects people because of their gender. Some cases are direct(ex. Waitress wanted) while others are indirect (ex. Restaurant staff wanted- must look good in a skirt). It most often applies to women and is the reason terms like glass ceiling- meaning women will never be able to reach the top positions, and sticky floor- that they, unlike men, cant progress in the workplace, were created. On average men in Slovenia also earn almost 100€ per month more than women. As for the sexual orientation kind, it is most often the result of bi or homophobia and became a very widespread problem in the past few years. In Britain alone, one out of every non-straight/cisgender five people has been verbally or physically abused because they were a part of the LGBTQ community.
- **Religion.** This type of discrimination is currently a big problem, especially for Muslim people. They often face unfair accusations that they are terrorists, and while some of them may be, judgment towards everyone is not fair. This discrimination along with racial discrimination is illegal.

Other kinds of prejudice can also be based on language, nationality, disability, age and many other reasons. As mentioned before, some of them were the cause for many horrible historical events. Fortunately, certain people stood up against them, spoke up about all the problems and did their best to shape a more accepting society. Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr. and Dalai Lama are only a few of them, most interesting, at least for me, being Rosa Parks. She was born on February 4<sup>th</sup> 1913 in Alabama and had a younger brother. Her parents were divorced

and she grew up in an racially unfair environment. The most important moment in her life was when she stood up to a bus driver; black people were supposed to be seated at the back of the bus but she sat in the front with all the whites and didn't move once the driver called her out on it. Her action was the starting point of the American civil right movement. Later on in her life she also received 43 honorary doctorate degrees as well as a medal of Freedom. She died on October 24<sup>th</sup> of 2005.

And even though all of these amazing people did their best to change society for the better, discrimination can still be noticed in our everyday life. Prominent wage gaps, airport security checks on specific groups of people, homeless shelters refusing to provide help for transgender people and the list could go on and on. But how can we change that? How can we, as individuals, make a difference? Well, I recommend we start with the small things, like being careful with what we say to one another or about other people, like girls who talk secretly about that weird one on a wheelchair and the other one who doesn't have enough money to afford the trendiest clothes. Or boys making degrading remarks about girls, sexualizing them and not caring as much about their opinion as those of their guy friends. I believe that everyone in this room can make a difference and help create a better world for us and others to live in if only we each try our best.

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