

## Question in Project:

International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) 2015 (English Version)

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## Question Topic:

Job and career/ Job situation & professional activity

## Construct:

Professional disadvantage

## General Information:

**\*Note: The item was tested in German. This is an English translation of the original German wording. The translation does not correspond exactly to the wording in the English ISSP source questionnaire.\***

## Question Text:

Have you ever been professionally disadvantaged in the last five years, e.g. when applying for a job or in terms of pay or promotion?

*[Sind Sie jemals in den letzten fünf Jahren beruflich benachteiligt worden, z.B. bei einer Bewerbung oder in Bezug auf Bezahlung oder Beförderung?]*

## Instruction:

(Only ONE cross possible!) *[(Nur EIN Kreuz möglich!)]*

## Answer Categories:

Yes *[Ja]*

Nein *[No]*

Don't know *[Kann ich nicht sagen]*

## Cognitive Techniques:

Think Aloud, General Probing, Comprehension Probing.

## Findings for Question:

A total of eight of the 15 test persons state that they have already been disadvantaged in the last five years, the remaining seven state that this was not the case.

By occupational disadvantage the test persons understand:

- Disadvantage in terms of pay, i.e. less pay for the same work or no pay increases (9 mentions)
- Disadvantage in filling vacancies/promotion, lack of opportunities for promotion (a total of 7 mentions, whereby two test persons (TP 14, 15) attribute this explicitly to age)
- Discrimination in applications (4 mentions: two general nominations, one in relation to age and one in relation to a link between age and gender)
- Disadvantage in terms of work tasks/task distribution (3 mentions)
- Discrimination on personal grounds, such as lifestyle (1 mention)
- Mobbing/discrimination based on gender/sexual orientation (1 mention)
- Forced transfer (1 mention)

As far as the definitions of occupational disadvantage are concerned, it is by and large no difference whether the test persons have experienced this themselves or not. While test persons who claim not to have been disadvantaged at work remain general in their answers regarding the reasons for application and promotion, those who do so refer to their own situation (due to age or due to a mixture of age and gender).

Three respondents point out that it is difficult to assess whether they have been disadvantaged when applying for jobs:

- *"Actually, I can't say, because how would I know on an application But I just had it recently that I applied and I was told that there are only two applicants and I was told that I was more qualified and likeable. In the end the other young man got the job. In this case I could just imagine that I am female, over 30 and I don't have a child yet, so they think that she will get pregnant in no time. And something must have disadvantaged me in this case."* (TP 05)
- *"I would say yes. I was thinking about where I applied. It's just so hard to get turned down on an application. I think I would have brought the prerequisites with me, but unfortunately I got a rejection. Disadvantaged, I mean, people were looking to see who was suitable. But I think, maybe from the age, that might be."* (TP 10)
- *"That's totally subjective. When applying for a job, for example, there is no feedback/no honest answer at all due to the legal regulations, so I don't know whether I was actually disadvantaged."* (TP 14)

A total of 14 test persons found the answer to the question "very easy" (6 TPs) or "rather easy" (8 TPs). Test person 04 found the answer "rather difficult", as "occupational disadvantage" is a very emotional topic for them.

### **Recommendations:**

Question: No changes recommended.

Response options: No changes recommended.