

## The Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency's research at a glance: Racial discrimination in the housing market Results of a representative survey

### Overview of the survey

The representative survey examines how the individuals interviewed perceive the prevalence of racial discrimination in the real estate market and what personal experience they have with discrimination when house hunting. Moreover, the survey asked which measures were favoured in order to improve protection against racial discrimination in the housing market. It is based on a computer-assisted telephone interview of about 1,041 German-speaking persons over the age of 16 in private households in Germany. The survey by *GSM Dr. Jung GmbH* and by *ARIS Umfrageforschung GmbH* was conducted between 16<sup>th</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019. The results were published together with the legal report "*Rechtsfreie Räume? Die Umsetzung der EU-Antirassismusrichtlinie im Wohnungsbereich*" (Legal Vacuums? The implementation of the EU Race Equality Directive in the area of housing) by Prof. Dr. Gregor Thüsing and Dr. Sabine Vianden.

### Authors, year of publication and title of the study

*Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes* (Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency) (2020): *Rassistische Diskriminierung auf dem Wohnungsmarkt. Ergebnisse einer repräsentativen Umfrage*. Berlin (Racial discrimination in the housing market. Results of a representative study. Berlin, Germany)

## Results

### Assessment of the prevalence of racial discrimination

- 83 per cent of those interviewed are of the opinion that racially-motivated discrimination, based on ethnicity or foreign origin, occurs rather frequently when house hunting in Germany. The housing market is therefore the area of life where most of those interviewed expect problems due to racial discrimination.
- Almost two thirds of the people interviewed also assume that racial discrimination in public transport (67 per cent) as well as in access to restaurants, clubs or discos (61) occurs rather frequently.

### Personal experience of discrimination

- About 15 per cent of all those interviewed who had been searching for a flat within the last ten years (n=546) experienced racial discrimination. Amongst those interviewed with a "migration background", the proportion of people who experienced racial discrimination is significantly higher (35 per cent).
- Five per cent experienced discrimination based on religion or ideology and eight per cent felt discriminated against because of their age. 14 per cent also reported discrimination based on

their social standing - a characteristic which is not yet protected by the General Act on Equal Treatment (*Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz - AGG*).

- 37 per cent of all those interviewed who experienced discrimination in the housing market in the last ten years report discrimination based on discriminatory housing advertisements. About one third (32 per cent) state they did not get a flat or a house on the grounds of belonging to a disadvantaged group and 16 per cent were asked to pay higher rents or purchase prices than others. Ten per cent experienced insults or verbal abuse.
- Among the interviewees who experienced racially-motivated discrimination, more people state they did not get a property due to belonging to a disadvantaged group (53 per cent) or that higher rents or higher purchase prices were demanded (25 per cent).
- The majority (56 per cent) reports that the discrimination came from individuals marketing only one or few properties. 22 per cent state that discrimination was caused by a private housing company.
- Almost two thirds of those questioned (64 per cent) who experienced discrimination in the housing market did not contact an authority in order to seek advice, to report the incident or to make a complaint. However, 21 per cent of the people surveyed made direct contact with the person or authority that caused the discrimination and ten per cent contacted the tenants' association *Mieterbund* and other organisations for the protection of tenants' rights.

#### **Possible measures to protect against discrimination**

- A relatively large number of the people questioned have reservations of their own regarding immigrants as potential tenants or neighbours. Reservations increase the further the situation reaches into the private sphere. Accordingly, 29 per cent state they have strong or very strong reservations to an immigrant moving in next door. 41 per cent of the people questioned have reservations about the idea of renting out a flat to an immigrant. Regarding this, the legal report by Thüsing & Vianden clarifies that even in the case of close proximity in connection with rentals such as using living space on the same premises must not lead to the protection against discrimination giving way to the protection of privacy.
- 58 per cent of the people questioned believe that existing measures for the protection against racial discrimination in the housing market are insufficient. The majority, 68 per cent, approves a tightening of the legal ban.
- About half of the interviewees (47 per cent) state that they have never heard of the General Act on Equal Treatment (*AGG*). This shows that more information on the rights and possible options for action in the event of discrimination is needed.

The complete results of the survey are available => [here](#). The legal report by Thüsing & Vianden can be downloaded [here](#) (available only in German language).

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