

FedDiverse

Ethnic diversity in federal public services

DURATION
01/09/2022 – 01/12/2024

BUDGET
€ 315 000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Context

Ethnic minorities are still underrepresented at higher echelons of many organizations, including the public sector. This BOSA-BELSPO co-funded project aims to identify factors that promote (and inhibit) ethnic diversity in the federal public services during the initial screening stages as well as later career/promotion stages.

Objectives

The project proposal consists of four work packages (WPs) with each time two objectives. We start with setting the scene in WP1 by analysing how ethnicity is defined (inter)nationally and how the federal public services are currently composed in terms of diversity. Subsequently, WP2 analyses the inflow of ethnic employees by examining why/how ethnic minority candidates are (not) reached during recruitment. Special attention is given here to applicants' public service motivations and perceptions of job advertisements. In addition, WP3 considers the actual and perceived fairness of federal selection processes. Finally, WP4 investigates the throughflow of employees by considering the socialization and career development of ethnic minority employees and the diversity culture at the workplace. Each WP starts with a thorough literature review, followed by the empirical studies and ends with concrete and evidence-based recommendations that should allow the federal public services to improve their strategies, procedures and practices for recruiting, selecting and promoting ethnic minorities. Although the focus of this project is on ethnic diversity, we will apply an intersectional perspective in terms of gender, age, job levels, contract type and other relevant variables.

Impact

There are at least five main drivers or motivations for this project: First, it is not only in the law but also ethical to provide fair job chances to any applicant (e.g., CAO38Sexies). Unfair procedures might discourage individuals to apply for jobs, trigger complaints, initiate legal cases, and negatively affect organizations' image and employer branding. Second, unfairness upon organizational access or career advancement (whether actual and/or perceived) also negatively affects individuals' wellbeing (low self-esteem and commitment; depression; dropout and turnover from employment). Third, a homogeneous workforce undermines the good functioning of organizations (like organizational innovativeness), including meeting the needs of the increasingly diverse customers and stakeholders. Fourth, governments have to set an example to others by reflecting its society and its citizens. Finally, surprisingly little research attention has been paid to ethnic minorities' (perceptions of/actual) job chances offered by federal services upon organizational entry (inflow) and career advancement (throughflow), which will be taken up by the FedDiverse project in very original ways. Taken together, these five drivers explain why the FedDiverse project has a very substantial impact.

Expected results

The overall valorization strategy of the FedDiverse project is to work in a step-by-step way with our follow-up committee members and stakeholders. Our main target groups are federal and regional authorities' policy makers, recruiters, employees and applicants, who will be invited to take part in meetings and focus groups during the course of the FedDiverse project. Finally, the project findings will be made available to the Federal public services (i.e., policy makers, employees, social partners), to the general public (i.e., potential applicants), and the research community (i.e., academics).



CONTACT INFORMATION

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LINKS

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