



**Guide to
Equal
Treatment
in the Private Sector**

Caritas Poland – National Coordination of Migrant Services, Lublin

GET in

**Equal Treatment in the supply of goods and services
The protection against discrimination in Poland**

June 2004



For Diversity



Against Discrimination



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Introduction

This report will be used as a starting point for the development of the research and communication plans for the implementation phase of the Get in project, starting December 2004.

Situation in Poland

- *Caritas Poland has a growing network of advice centres for migrants within the country and through these contact to victims. Is discrimination a topic within your counselling services for immigrants?*

Counselling Centers for Migrants and Refugees Caritas Poland have been carrying out aid, assistance and counseling to migrants for the past 10 years. Having regular contacts with clients our counselors often face cases related to discrimination processes in Poland. By tackling individual problems Caritas Counselling Centers for Migrants and Refugees are involved in fighting various forms of discrimination.

- *Is discrimination a topic in the political discussion?*

The problem of discrimination is more and more noticeable in Poland and especially by public opinion, less so by politicians. The public debates most usually concern discrimination on the basis of sex/gender or age, less often religion, race or other grounds.

We often hear of problems from our clients, foreigners living in Poland and we do see this problem is increasing.

More and more often the discrimination issue is becoming noticeable, especially since Poland's accession to EU we are more aware of anti-discrimination regulations and policies.

Growing numbers of aliens entering our country might soon bring race discrimination to public attention, especially that already today attitudes towards aliens on the job market are difficult.



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- *Does Poland offer a legal protection to fight discrimination in the private sector, which publicly offers goods and services?*

Local ombudsman offices and customer rights offices offer counselling to victims of discrimination. Counseling is also offered by legal assistants, psychologists and social workers through the NGO network. There are many organizations in Poland, looking after discrimination victims, but these NGOs offer counseling mostly in cases of gender (read: women) discrimination. There is a lot to be done in this field in order to improve the situation.

- *Are there any policies, regulations of equal treatment regarding publicly offered goods and services based on legal obligations or on a voluntary commitment?*

Beginning with the constitution there are several regulations, as in most other EU MSs.

- *Are there strategies to raise victims' consciousness and empower them to know their rights and file complaints (e.g. guidelines or workshops)*

Fighting discrimination isn't such a hot issue in Poland yet. It is however most often tackled by NGO's, which help the victims. NGO's organize conferences and workshops on discrimination and ways to fight it. It's very important, because the discrimination problem is increasing. Unfortunately the workshops are organized by NGO's only and rarely involve the violators. There is however more and more media talk about discrimination, which raises awareness as such.

- *Are there forms of supporting victims of discrimination?*

Most likely there are, but they must be performed by small local NGO's.

- *Are there migrants' organisation? Do they deal with discrimination? In which form?*

There is a very small number of local migrant's organizations, but it is very hard to determine whether they are involved in anti-discrimination work.



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