

Part 1

Theoretical Perspectives

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Equality and Diversity Issues in the Labour Market

Learning objectives

- Understand the concept of equality and its different meanings
- Define disadvantage and discrimination
- Explain patterns of disadvantage and discrimination relating to different social groups
- Understand how surveys and statistical data can be used to monitor rates of labour market participation and employment patterns of different social groups and identify labour market inequalities
- Define occupational segregation and understand different theories developed to explain this phenomenon
- Explain the role of stakeholders like the European Union, the State and the Social Partners to promote equality and diversity in the labour market and in the workplace

Key terms

- **Disadvantage:** with regard to employment, disadvantage encompasses a situation where an individual, because of her personal characteristics, is not able to participate in paid work in the same way as others. An example of this is a disabled person who may not be able to work unless some adjustments are made to the working environment.
- **Discrimination:** amounts to unfavourable treatment which cannot be objectively justified.
- **Equality:** the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that: 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights', which means that they are all equal in their humanity and moral worth and they all share an essential dignity as human beings.
- **Occupational segregation:** this relates to a situation where people from a particular social group are concentrated in certain occupations or in certain employment sectors. Occupational segregation can be horizontal (e.g. women predominantly working in administrative and clerical jobs across different sectors of employment) or vertical (e.g. women segregated in lower-status jobs and under-represented in senior jobs).
- **Social dialogue:** social dialogue is defined by the European Trade Union Confederation as 'the process of negotiation by which different actors in society (or

“social partners”) reach agreement to work together on policies and activities’. The social dialogue can bring together representatives of employers and employees but it can also involve government or European Union representatives.

Introduction

This first chapter is intended to help students to familiarize with a range of key concepts and theories relating to equality and diversity issues in the labour market and in the workplace in order to equip them to start their intellectual journey in this subject area. Section one starts with an exploration of the concept of equality, discusses the different meanings that have been attributed to it and how the notion of difference has helped to shape our understanding of equality. Section two explains the difference between disadvantage and discrimination and provides an overview of changing patterns of disadvantage across different social groups. Having explored key concepts such as equality, disadvantage and discrimination, the following section discusses the use of surveys and statistical analysis to monitor labour market participation trends and employment patterns of different social groups. It shows how surveys and statistical analysis can help to identify labour market inequalities and patterns of both ‘vertical’ and ‘horizontal’ occupational segregation. A range of theories are then examined which seek to explain the causes of occupational segregation. The chapter concludes with an overview of the role of stakeholders like the European Union, the state and the social partners to promote equality and diversity in the labour market and in the workplace.

Equal or diverse?

Equality and diversity may sound as a contradiction in terms but in practice these two terms are often used together, such as, for example, in the title chosen for this book, or even used interchangeably. These two terms reflect different concepts which have evolved as part of the equality discourse: some would argue that they are complementary while others would disagree with this view. This debate is fully explored in Chapter 3 and in this section we limit our discussion to define the broad meaning of equality and to show how the notion of diversity has helped to shape the idea of equality.

From an historical perspective the concept of equality in western societies is rooted in the Enlightenment, an intellectual and philosophical movement that influenced thinking across Europe and North America in the eighteenth century. The idea of equality was at the core of the 1776 United States Declaration of Independence, which states that ‘all men are created equal’, and of the 1789 French Revolution, which predicated the principles of equality, fraternity and legality. More recently, the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights states that ‘all human are born free and equal in dignity and rights’. However, what does equality actually mean to us in the twenty-first century?

The meaning of equality has been the subject of an extensive academic debate and much has been written about this subject. Exploring the concept of equality and its different interpretations could be the subject of an entire book. However, for reasons of space, in this chapter we shall limit ourselves to provide an overview of some of the different meanings of equality developed within legal theory.



Signpost to Chapter 3 From Equal Opportunities to Managing Diversity for an in-depth discussion about how equality and diversity have been theorized with reference to the workplace.

The most intuitive meaning of equality is that everybody should be treated equally; in other words, according to the Aristotelian maxim, 'likes are treated alike'. This is referred to as formal equality (Vickers, 2011), which is achieved through the application of a symmetrical approach to the principle of equal treatment. However, in practice the application of this approach can be problematic. An old fable written by Aesop, who lived in ancient Greece (c. 620–560 BC), can help us to understand the difficulties of conceptualizing equality as a symmetrical relationship.

The fox and the stork

Once upon a time a fox invited a stork to dinner and provided a meal that consisted of soup in a large flat dish. The fox was able to lap this soup up very easily, while the stork, unable to take a mouthful with her long narrow bill, was as angry at the end of the dinner as she was when she began.

When it was the stork's turn to invite the fox for dinner, she provided a meal contained in a narrow-necked vessel down which the stork easily thrust her long bill, while the fox was obliged to content himself with licking the neck of the jar. As a result the fox was unable to satisfy his hunger.

What lessons can be drawn from this fable? The first point to note is that the fox and the stork are not alike. Therefore, if we apply a symmetrical approach to equality we would need to set a standard to measure equality based either on the characteristics of the fox or of the stork. However, if we set the standard either on the fox or on the stork, inevitably one of them, as the story shows, will be disadvantaged and equal treatment will not be achieved.

This fable demonstrates that there are two main flaws with the concept of formal equality: the first one is that in reality we all have different characteristics and different needs, while the second one is that in order to take a symmetrical approach to equal treatment it is necessary to choose a 'comparator' against whom to measure equal treatment. This raises a fundamental question, which is 'who should be compared against whom?' Fredman (2001: 30) suggests that the concept of a comparator is based on the premise that there is a 'universal individual' against whom to set equality standards, but she suggests that this idea is 'highly deceptive'. She argues that this apparently abstract construct of a 'universal individual' is likely to have all the relevant characteristics and 'the attributes of the dominant culture, religion, or ethnicity' which leaves no room for accommodating people's diversity. Thus the importance of recognizing and understanding people's different characteristics and attributes has led legal theorists to reconceptualize equality and shift from a formal idea of equality to a more substantive one.

At least three more substantive models of equality can be identified that can help to understand this concept: equality as dignity; equality and disadvantage; and equality and inclusion (Vickers, 2011).

- **Equality as dignity:** as mentioned above, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights', which means that they are all equal in their humanity and moral worth and they all share an essential dignity as human beings. In other words, although individuals may present different characteristics, they are all equal in their human worth. Thus equality, underpinned by dignity, offers a broader conceptual framework which goes beyond the formal notion that everybody should be treated in the same way, but it recognizes and values different

identities and, consequently, allows for the accommodation of differences. Equality as dignity is discussed in more depth in Chapter 10 on managing religion or belief in the workplace. In that chapter it is argued that this view of equality can help us to understand why religion or belief should be protected in the workplace, since religion and/or belief are an important part of an individual's self-identity and therefore they should be respected and valued by society.

- **Equality and disadvantage:** this model uses disadvantage as an underlying concept of equality and treats grounds such as sex, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age as 'proxies' for disadvantage. As highlighted by Vickers (2011), this approach sees the wrong of discrimination as being the way it causes disadvantage, rather than its lack of recognition of different identities. However, a critique of this approach points to the fact that different grounds of equality may not necessarily be proxies for disadvantage. For example, there may be significant differences in disadvantage between gay women and black straight women; between Christian men who have high rates of employment and Muslim men who have higher rates of unemployment. Furthermore, different grounds of equality can interact with one another, making it even more difficult to identify where the disadvantage lies.
- **Equality and inclusion:** this model is based on the concept of inclusion, which promotes the idea of dignity for all as well as the need to tackle disadvantage through equality, thus encompassing both equality as dignity and equality and disadvantage. This is achieved through encouraging respect for the equal dignity of all and participation in civic life of all different social groups. Greater participation in civic life of all different social groups will give them a voice within the communities in which they live and help to combat social exclusion and disadvantage, which will lead to a more equal society both in terms of economic distribution and social cohesion (Fredman, 2002; Collins, 2003; Vickers, 2011).

Understanding disadvantage and discrimination

It is important to understand the difference between disadvantage and discrimination as well as the relationship between these two concepts. Broadly speaking, with regard to employment, disadvantage encompasses those situations where people in some social groups, because of their characteristics, are not able to participate in paid work in the same way as other people. For example, disabled people may not be able to work in some environments unless some adjustments are made. Likewise, people with caring responsibilities may not be able to take up full-time employment. This means that people in these groups, unlike others, may face some barriers to participating in paid work because of their characteristics (e.g. disability or being a carer).

Discrimination may be experienced by people belonging to a particular social group because of employers' discriminatory decisions which cannot be objectively justified. These decisions may be the result of an employer's prejudice or negative stereotyping against certain groups. For example, employers may not want to hire older workers because they think that they are less productive; women with caring responsibilities may be less likely to be promoted because they are considered to be less committed to their job. In both of these examples employers' decisions are influenced by negative stereotypes. Stereotypes can be

'regarded as a model of probability, not a statement of certainty' and the implications are that an employer whose judgement is influenced by stereotypes may discriminate against a job applicant if 'she feels that there is a degree of likelihood that the worst predictions of the stereotype may be fulfilled' (Jenkins, 1986: 92–97). Furthermore, all decision-making processes involve a certain degree of subjectivity in the decisions of employers when recruiting staff. It has been argued that the judgements of those involved in the recruitment of staff may be shaped by 'informal criteria ... heavily circumscribed by selectors' evaluation of the extent to which a candidate either contrasts, compares or identifies with their own experience or perception of themselves, they almost inevitably reproduce the prevailing employment profile' (Collinson et al., 1990: 67). Thus a job applicant who does not fit the prevailing employment profile in a particular workplace (e.g. an ethnic minority candidate applying for a job in a predominantly white environment or a woman applying for a job in a predominantly male employment sector) may be discriminated against either consciously or unconsciously.

However, in order to gain a deeper understanding of how disadvantage and discrimination interact, it is useful to refer to the theoretical framework developed by Makkonen (2002). This author argues that there is a causal connection between people's attitudes, which can be informed by prejudice, and their behaviour. Prejudice is defined as 'unfairly or unreasonably formed opinions and feelings against a group of people' (ibid.: 7). In other words, it can be said that prejudices are based on assumptions that are not substantiated either by facts or evidence but are formed on the basis of an individual's opinions, feelings, or broad generalizations. When people's attitudes are informed by prejudice, their behaviour can lead to discrimination. However, it is not automatic that attitudes informed by prejudice will result in a discriminatory behaviour because some people, in spite of their prejudices, may act fairly. For example, an employer may be prejudiced against older workers, but she may be careful not to discriminate against them to avoid legal challenges.

Also, behaviour patterns such as social distance between different social groups who have little or no voluntary interaction with each other, can create or reinforce prejudices which in turn can lead to discriminatory behaviour. This is defined by Makkonen (2002) as the 'vicious circle' of discrimination, as illustrated in Figure 1.1.

In summary, it can be observed that people's attitudes, informed by prejudice or stereotypes, can both influence behaviour and create discrimination, but can also create or reinforce social distance. Discrimination in turn can fuel prejudice as well as create or reinforce social distance. Thus discrimination can lead to socio-economic differences and these can

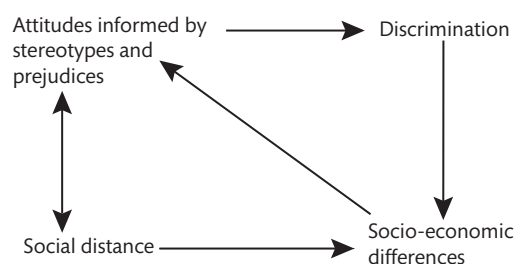


Figure 1.1 The 'vicious circle' of discrimination (Makkonen, 2002: 9)

lead to stereotype and prejudice. This demonstrates the existence of a relationship of reciprocity that interlinks these two factors and can lock people from certain social groups into a 'vicious circle' of disadvantage and discrimination which can be difficult to break. Anti-discrimination legislation can help to modify behaviours but other interventions, for example education, are also needed to tackle prejudice, break this 'vicious circle' and reduce social distance which can continue to fuel prejudice and discrimination.



Case study 1.1 Cutteslowe Walls

The Cutteslowe Walls in Oxford, built in 1934, were over two metres high and topped with lethal spikes. They divide the City Council's Cutteslowe Estate, which offered rented accommodation to people on low income, from a private housing estate. The dividing walls were constructed by the developer who built the private estate. He did this because he was afraid that his houses would not sell if the so-called 'slum dwellers' were going to be neighbours, so the walls were built to separate them. The walls were eventually demolished in 1959 by the Oxford City Council.

For more information see: http://www.bbc.co.uk/oxford/content/articles/2009/03/26/cutteslowe_feature.shtml
Follow the link on the online resources and watch the short video about the Cutteslowe Walls.

Case study question

Use the Makkonen 'vicious circle' of discrimination model to explore the impact of the construction of the Cutteslowe Walls on the people who lived on that estate.

Multiple and intersectional discrimination

Discrimination tends to be understood as a one-dimensional issue (e.g. either sex or ethnicity or other protected characteristics), but it has been advocated that anti-discrimination law should take a more holistic approach in order to capture multiple dimensions of discrimination (Fredman and Szyszczak, 1992). For example, a woman may be discriminated against because of her sex, her age and her ethnicity. Likewise, a man may be discriminated against because of his age and because of his sexual orientation. Thus different forms of discrimination can interact with one another and result in three main types of dynamic which have been described as (Government Equalities Office, 2009: 10–11):

- Multiple discrimination occurs when a person 'is treated less favourably because of more than one protected characteristic, but each type of discrimination occurs in separate occasions'.
- Additive multiple discrimination or compound discrimination (Makkonen, 2002) occurs when 'a person is treated less favourably because of more than one protected characteristic and, although the two forms of discrimination happen at the same time, they are not related by each other'. For example, a black woman experiences both racism and sexist bullying from her employer during the same incident.
- Intersectional discrimination occurs when 'the discrimination involves more than one protected characteristic and it is the unique combination of characteristics that results in discrimination, in such a way that they are completely inseparable'.

Historically, the concept of intersectional discrimination emerged from the experience of black women in the United States. In the 1980s, the Courts began to acknowledge that black women could experience discrimination in a way that neither black men nor white women experienced it. It was recognized that 'when two bases for discrimination exist, they cannot be neatly reduced to distinct components because an attempt to bisect a person's identity at the intersection of race and gender often distorts or ignores the particular nature of their experiences' (Lam v University of Hawaii, cited in Solanke, 2010: 16).

The UK 2010 Equality Act was intended to contain provisions to tackle multiple discrimination. This would have allowed claims to be brought on the grounds of two legally protected characteristics, such as, for example, age and sex. These provisions were quite controversial from the start and in particular they were met with much opposition from the business lobby. In the face of this opposition, the Labour government at the time decided to limit possible claims of multiple discrimination to the combination of only two grounds of discrimination (Hepple, 2010: 16). However, the current UK Coalition government has decided not to enact the multiple discrimination provisions in the Act, and this represents a significant drawback and a missed opportunity for the law to start tackling multiple discrimination (Hepple, 2010: 16).

In the next section we provide an overview of patterns of disadvantage and discrimination.



Signpost to
Chapter 2 An
Outline of
European and
UK Equality
Legislation

Debate Box

Organize the class into two groups, one for the motion and one against.

The BBC TV presenter Miriam O'Reilly sued her employer, the BBC, for age and sex discrimination after she was replaced in her job as a TV presenter by a younger woman. The employment tribunal found that she had been discriminated against because of her age but it rejected her claim for sex discrimination.

The motion is:

Women are more likely to be discriminated against because of their sex and age in a way that men are not likely to experience.

Stages in the debate: (each stage is given with timings, the overall time for the activity is 55 minutes – allowing a few minutes for change over of presenters, etc.)

- Each group has 20 minutes to prepare their arguments either for or against the motion.
- Each group is given five minutes to present their opening statement (10 minutes in total).
- Groups reconvene for 10 minutes to prepare rebuttal arguments.
- Each group has two minutes to present rebuttal arguments.

A vote is taken and the winners of the debate announced; the casting vote goes to impartial observers, tutors, audience members not involved in the debate, or observers.

Changing patterns of disadvantage and discrimination

Patterns of disadvantage and discrimination in relation to different social groups are not static and they evolve as a result of socio-economic and political changes in society. While some groups that have been subjected to disadvantage and discrimination in the labour market but eventually improve their position, other groups emerge as being in a position of disadvantage and are likely to be discriminated against. Patterns of disadvantage and discrimination vary not just between different social groups but also within the groups themselves. For reasons of space, in the sections below we review briefly the situation of some groups. In particular we concentrate on migrants and issues around social class and the so-called 'working poor'. A comprehensive view about patterns of disadvantage and discrimination relating to other groups is provided in the second part of this book.

Gender

The role of women, particularly, in western societies has changed significantly over several decades. Their level of education has increased and in several countries surpassed that of men. For example, in Britain girls outperform boys in their education attainment at age 5, 16 and at degree level (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2010). Equally, their participation in the labour market has increased and the traditional model of family dependent on the male breadwinner has been replaced by dual earning couples or single-parent families. In spite of these achievements, as discussed in Chapter 6, patterns of disadvantage and discrimination persist with regard to women.

Many boys are performing less well in education compared to girls and this is cause for concern in some countries, e.g., the UK (ibid.). The role of men as fathers and expectations about their involvement in caring responsibilities are also changing. Several countries have introduced special leave arrangements for fathers but, as discussed in Chapter 6, workplace norms and expectations about male workers may act as a barrier for them to access these measures.

Ethnicity

Patterns of disadvantage and discrimination in relation to ethnic minorities have also evolved as some groups are no longer 'newcomers'. These groups have settled in their host country, and acquired citizenship and the right to political participation, which has helped them to integrate (Sen, 2000). For example, the occupational structure of the labour market in Britain shows positive changes for some ethnic groups, as Indian and Chinese people in Britain are twice as likely to be employed as professionals than white British people (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2010). However, if some ethnic groups by and large appear to be well integrated, others are still in a position of disadvantage and are likely to be discriminated against either because of their ethnicity or because of their religious affiliation, or both. For example, Muslim people in Britain have the lowest rate of employment of any religious group. Only 47 per cent of Muslim men and 24 per cent of Muslim women are employed and figures suggest that 42 per cent of young Muslim people are classified as 'NEET', which means that they are neither in employment, in education, nor in training (ibid.). Issues around race and



Signpost to
Chapter 6
Managing
Gender
Diversity in the
Workplace



Signpost to
Chapter 5
Managing
Ethnic
Diversity in the
Workplace

ethnicity, and religion or belief, and the management of these diversities in the workplace are explored respectively in Chapters 5 and 10.

Migrant workers

International migration is a trend shared by many European countries and it plays an important role in population growth. This is particularly important as the population of many countries is ageing against a fall in birth rates. This means that the population is below replacement levels. Migrant workers can be defined as non-nationals living in a foreign country. This definition includes non-nationals from another country within the European Union (EU) or from a country which is outside the EU. There is a significant difference between these two groups since non-nationals, from another EU country, are entitled to be treated as nationals of the host country. For example, they do not need a work permit to take up a job or set up a business, and they have access to education on the same terms as the country's nationals. Conversely, the non-nationals from a country outside the EU need a permit from the host country to take up work and they may be subject to other restrictions imposed by national immigration policies. Comparative studies about working conditions of migrants across the EU (Ambrosini and Barone (2007), and Vandenbrande et al. (2006)) have highlighted that migrants, particularly those from a non-western background, are more likely than nationals to be in a disadvantaged position in the labour market in all of the EU member states. In particular, these studies have pointed to three main sources of inequalities for migrants which are interrelated. These are: a significant pay gap compared to nationals; lack of opportunities for upward occupational mobility; and work-related health and safety issues. These sources of inequalities are determined by the fact that many migrant workers tend to be employed in low-paid and low-skills occupations.

It appears that so far, in most countries government policies have paid little attention to promoting equality of opportunity for migrant workers. Rather, policy makers tend to focus on dealing with illegal immigration. However, as the findings from the studies discussed above demonstrate, there are serious equality issues that need to be tackled by both policy makers and employers in relation to migrant workers.

Social class and working poor

Another major source of inequality is social class. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1984) highlights how differences in people's income and other material possessions, compounded with their lifestyle, mark their belonging to a particular social class. These differences become entrenched in a society as people from more affluent classes are able to provide better education and other opportunities for their children, thus facilitating their success in life and helping them to secure their place within the middle or upper classes. While the middle and upper classes maintain their position of privilege in society through this 'virtuous circle', people with low income and low levels of education find themselves caught in a 'vicious circle' since they are unable to provide opportunities for their children to move up the social ladder. As a result, they remain trapped in a position of poverty and with low social status. Wilkinson and Pickett (2010: 159–161), in their book *The Spirit Level*, discuss empirical evidence which shows a strong correlation between income inequality and social mobility. They use findings from a longitudinal study by Blanden et al. (2005), which compares international data on

intergenerational social mobility in eight western countries: the USA, the UK, Germany, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Norway. This study looked at the correlation between fathers' incomes at the time when their sons were born and sons' income at the age of 30. It concluded that those countries with bigger income differences, such as the USA and the UK (Germany and Canada are positioned in the middle), tend to have lower social mobility compared to those with less income differences, such as the Scandinavian countries. In other words, those born in low-income families in societies where there are marked income differences are more likely to remain on low income throughout their lives. Another important finding of this study is that higher public spending on education has a significant impact on social differences in accessing higher education, which has a key role in facilitating social mobility. Most equal societies spend more on education, for example Norway, where 97.8 per cent of spending on education comes from public funding, compared to the USA where only 68.2 per cent of money spent on education comes from public funding.

Debate Box

The poorest pupils are 55 times less likely to go to Oxford.

It is feared that rising tuition fees (of up to £9,000 a year to attend university in England) will seriously reduce opportunities for social mobility.

Organize the class into two groups, one for the motion and one against, and follow the stages outlined in the previous Debate box.

The motion is:

Higher Education should not to be subsidized by the taxpayers.

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-12048629>

Furthermore, it has been estimated that in 2007 eight per cent of the population within the European Union fell in the category of the so-called 'working poor', who are people with an income which is below 60 per cent of the national median (Hanzl-Weibss and Vidovic, 2010). In the UK, for example, one in five people live in households with less than 60 per cent of the median income, and this rises to one in three for Bangladeshi-headed households (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2010). Overall the risk of being among the working poor, a category that tends to include people with a low level of education, migrants and single-parent families, appears to be greater in southern Europe and in some eastern European countries. However, younger people are more at risk of in-work poverty in northern European countries, while in southern Europe older people are more at risk of in-work poverty.

Monitoring labour market participation trends and employment patterns of different social groups

The purpose of this section is to help students to understand the importance of using surveys and statistical analysis to monitor levels of labour market participation and the employment patterns of different social groups. Labour market surveys are routinely collected

by international organizations such as the International Labour Organization and the European Union as well as by individual countries. These are usually easily accessible online. Throughout this book we have used extracts from relevant statistics where appropriate to provide an indication of labour market trends and employment patterns. Although statistical data become out of date very quickly, the results are unlikely to change significantly from one year to the next and, even if they are not entirely up to date, they can still provide a good indication of marketplace trends and patterns. Web-links to labour market statistics produced by the organizations mentioned above and to the Labour Force Survey, produced by the UK Office for National Statistics, are included in the online resources which are made available with this text.

The use of surveys and statistical data in the study of equality and diversity in the labour market can serve two purposes. First, they enable us to observe how different social groups fare in the labour market. Second, they can be used to assess the impact of policy and legislation to address inequalities relating to different social groups. Third, they can measure the impact of economic downturns on these groups.

The significance of statistical analysis in the study of equality and diversity issues in the labour market can be best understood from an historical perspective with reference to the work undertaken in the 1970s by the French sociologist Evelyn Sullerot on *Women, Society and Change*. Through a longitudinal statistical analysis she showed how the life of women in the 1970s had changed, compared to previous decades, and highlighted that not only were many more women engaged in paid work, but also that a large proportion of them continued to work while they were married. Overall, their 'working curve', in other words the time spent in paid work, was becoming similar to that of men. This analysis also indicated that the expansion of jobs both in services and in the public sector attracted many women to work in these areas, although at the same time this had the effect of concentrating women's employment in these sectors, thus creating occupational segregation (ibid., 27–30). This work was fundamental in showing how women's lives had changed over time, but also in bringing these changes to the attention of policy makers within the European Union and in developing policies and legislation to support women's participation in the labour market.

If we take a look at current statistics about women's employment rates, we can see that in 27 EU countries this mounts to 59.1 per cent, which is still considerably lower compared to men's employment rates, which is 72.8 per cent. Furthermore, there are significant differences between the rate of employment of men and women across member states: higher rates of female employment (above 70 per cent) can be observed in northern European countries such as Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands, while in southern European countries female employment rates are well below the EU average, with Malta being one of the lowest at 37.4 per cent, followed by Italy at 47.2 per cent, and Greece at 48.7 per cent, as outlined by Figure 1.2.

Disaggregated data by sex on employment rates show that there are still marked differences between men and women's levels of participation in the labour market. However, this kind of statistic does not shed any light on the possible reasons for the existence of these differences. Therefore it is necessary to gain a better understanding of women's life experiences to find explanations for these differences. Thus statisticians have shifted from producing 'statistics on women' to producing statistics about 'women and men'. This approach is underpinned by a conceptual shift that distinguishes between biological characteristics, which define sex, and the notion of gender. This concept has been adopted by social scientists to refer to the

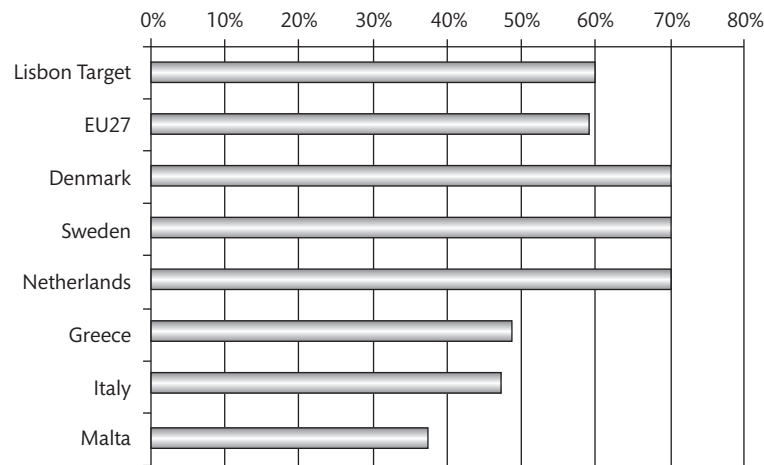


Figure 1.2 Rates of women's employment across the EU (Eurostat, 2010)

'culturally and sociologically constructed representation of women and men, such as psychological characteristics, activities, social role and status' (Nicot and Houtman, 2007: 2). When applied to statistical analysis, the concept helps us to gain a better understanding of the different experiences of men and women, at a deeper level from that offered by sex-disaggregated data, and it shows, for example, that in more egalitarian societies, in countries like Sweden and Finland, which offer better provisions to encourage a more equal distribution between men and women of childcare responsibilities, women have higher rates of employment (as shown in Figure 1.2 above). In southern European societies, however, where men and women are expected to perform different roles, namely with women taking prime responsibility for childcare and the family and men being the family provider, women's rates of employment are significantly lower.

While extensive statistical data about men and women in the labour market is available both at an international and national level, the same cannot be said about ethnic minorities. From an international perspective it would be virtually impossible to make meaningful comparisons because the profile of ethnic minorities varies from one country to another. Besides, sometimes it can be difficult to find information about these groups at a national level. The reason for this is that ethnicity can be a very sensitive subject in some countries, where for example, for political reasons, ethnic minorities may not wish to be identified as such and singled out from the general population. The UK is a highly diverse country where a wide range of different ethnic groups have settled. The Office for National Statistics monitors labour market participation and rates of employment for the main different ethnic groups who live in the UK. Table 1.1 shows an example of the percentage of economic activity within ethnic groups. Furthermore, by cross-referencing statistical data about the rate of participation of ethnic minority groups with participation rates by religious affiliation, it has been possible to identify labour market inequalities for certain groups which suggests the existence of discrimination on religious grounds.

As well as rates of economic activity by different social groups, surveys can show the distribution of different types of jobs in different sectors among men and women and among ethnic minorities



Signpost to Chapter 10 Managing Religion or Belief in the Workplace for further discussion about religious discrimination in the workplace

Table 1.1 Percentage of economic activity within ethnic groups, October to December 2009

	Employment (%)	Unemployment (%)	Inactivity (%)
All ethnic groups	72.60	6.20	21.20
White	74.30	5.80	19.90
White British	74.40	5.90	19.70
Other white	75.50	4.80	19.50
All ethnic minority groups	59.90	9.20	30.90
Mixed	61.50	10.10	28.40
Asian or Asian British	60.40	7.90	22.70
Indian	70.90	6.40	22.70
Pakistani	46.50	10	43.50
Bangladeshi	44.70	10.80	44.50
Other Asian	66.40	6.60	27
Black or black British	59.20	13.20	27.60
Black Caribbean	65.30	13.50	21.20
Black African	55.20	12.30	32.50
Other black	53.40	21	25.60
Other, including Chinese	58.90	7	34.10

Source: Barrett, 2010

or other social groups, depending how much information is available in the country under investigation. The snapshot below, which relates to the UK, shows that people from certain groups tend to be concentrated in certain types of occupation. This phenomenon is called occupational segregation. Occupational segregation can manifest itself either horizontally or vertically. Examples of horizontal occupational segregation are, as shown by the box below, the over-representation of women working in administrative and secretarial posts across all employment sectors, as well as a disproportionate representation of Pakistani men in the occupation of taxi drivers.

- One in four Pakistani men in Britain are taxi drivers or similar.
- In Britain, women occupy 77 per cent of administration and secretarial posts but only 6 per cent of engineering and 14 per cent of architects, planners and surveyors. 83 per cent of people employed in personal services are women.
- In Britain, 40 per cent of female jobs are in the public sector compared to 15 per cent of male jobs.

Source: Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2010

Vertical occupational segregation occurs when people from certain social groups are disproportionately under-represented in senior jobs, as shown by the examples in the box below.

- Women hold one in three managerial jobs in Britain.
- Bangladeshi and Pakistani women in Britain are more likely to be employed as professionals than Bangladeshi and Pakistani men.
- Indian and Chinese people in Britain are twice as likely to be employed as professionals as white British people and the trend is upwards.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

- Muslim men are as likely to be in managerial or professional jobs as elementary ones; Jewish men are 13 times more likely to be in managerial or professional jobs than elementary ones.

Source: Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2010

Finally, as mentioned earlier, surveys and statistical analysis are important for monitoring the impact of legislation, but also of economic recessions on different social groups. For example, findings from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (2010) in the UK show that the latest economic recession has hit some groups harder than others. According to this analysis, men have been more adversely affected than women and young people more than older people.

Although surveys and statistical analysis are extremely important in the study of equality and diversity in order to understand how different social groups fare in the labour market, they cannot provide adequate explanations for the causes of occupational segregation. In the next section, we review a range of theories which have been developed to explain the causes of occupational segregation and labour market inequalities.



Student Activity 1.1

Look at the International Labour Organization's key indicators of the labour market (weblink available on the supporting Online Resource Centre) and compare and contrast rates of labour market participation of men and women in two or more different countries. In particular, examine the following:

- Select two different age groups for both men and women, for example age 25–54 and age 55–64, and look at their rates of labour market participation over the last three decades, 1989–1999–2009.
- Highlight any significant changes relating to gender and age over those three decades within the selected countries.
- Think of reasons that may justify any significant differences.

You may present the results of your statistical analysis in a PowerPoint presentation.

Explanations for the causes of labour market inequalities and occupational segregation

In this section we provide a summary of some of the main theories developed within academic literature to explain the causes of labour market inequalities and occupational segregation. These can be divided into two broad groups: neo-liberal theories that focus on the labour-supply side and take the individual as a basic unit of analysis, which include the human capital theory; and theories that focus on the demand-side and the structure and functioning of the labour market which include dual labour market theory (Doeringer and Priore, 1971) and segmented labour market theory (Watts and Rich, 1993: 160).

Neo-classical labour market theory predicates that the allocation of jobs and resources in a free labour market economy is determined by supply and demand. The implications of this are that discrimination based on prejudice and stereotypes against certain social groups is irrational and has no place within the functioning of a rational and efficient market since it would be uncompetitive. Therefore, according to this theory, any irrational discrimination against workers over time would be eliminated by competitive mechanisms because employers evaluate

workers in terms of their individual characteristics as they seek to maximize profit (Arrow, cited in Reich et al., 1982). However, the persistence of discrimination and inequalities among workers in the marketplace has led neo-classical economists to search for a different explanation and develop the human capital theory. According to this theory, people's position in the labour market depends on how much they are prepared to invest in their education and training. For example, women may choose to invest less in their human capital because they are likely to take time out of the labour market to bring up a family. Also from this perspective, marketplace inequalities in relation to ethnic minorities are explained by the fact that they have lower levels of education, ability and skills (Shultz, 1961). Similarly, the human capital theory has been used to explain discrimination against older workers, suggesting that they are to blame for their disadvantaged position in the labour market because they tend to fail to keep their skills up to date and thus maintain themselves as sufficiently competitive workers (Wood et al., 2008).

There is no doubt that there is some validity in this theory. However, it also presents a number of flaws. First, it ignores socio-economic constraints which limit an individual's ability to invest in her human capital. Second, it does not recognize that sometimes discriminatory attitudes and stereotypes tend to be reproduced at the level of the workplace by those who are involved in making decisions about the selection and recruitment of staff (Collinson et al., 1990). For example, older workers may be discriminated against by employers, even if they have kept their skills up to date, because of negative stereotypes. These might include the belief that older workers are less productive, less adaptable and/or less willing to accept change, or more likely to take time off for sickness. Third, it fails to explain the persistence of the pay gap between men and women. A longitudinal study about graduate career paths in the UK over a period of seven years shows that men and women with the same educational capital, namely a higher education degree, start their careers with different level of earnings (Purcell and Elias, 2004). In particular, this study has highlighted the existence of a gender pay gap of 10.5 per cent between male and female graduates when they access their first job.

Another theory developed to explain occupational segregation is the so-called 'preference theory', which argues that patterns of labour market participation and employment are the results of different lifestyle preferences and values of men and women (Hakim, 2000).

What all these theories have in common is that they tend to exonerate employers from inequalities in the labour market and instead focus on individual workers' circumstances in order to explain their position of disadvantage. Thus, from this perspective, the explanation for the occupational segregation of certain social groups lies in the labour-supply side rather than in the actual functioning of the labour market. For example, as suggested by Beechey (1986: 103), women's disadvantage in the workplace is often attributed to their individual characteristics, such as their nature, capabilities, or temperament, rather than social structures. By implication, the same can be said about other social groups, such as ethnic minorities, groups with a particular religious affiliation, or older workers who may be discriminated against because of prejudice or stereotypical views that employers have about them.

Institutionalists and Marxist political economists have instead focused on the demand-side and functioning of the labour market to explain marketplace inequalities and occupational segregation of certain groups. The dual labour market theory and the labour market segmentation theory have been developed from these perspectives. According to the dual labour market theory (Doeringer and Priore, 1971), the labour market is divided into a primary and a secondary market. The primary labour market includes more skilled, secure and better-paid jobs, usually organized in an



Signpost to Chapter 6 Managing Gender Diversity in the Workforce for an in-depth discussion of the 'preference theory'

hierarchical structure to offer opportunities for career progression. The secondary labour market includes low-skilled, low-paid and insecure jobs with poor opportunities for career progression. This theory is used to explain occupational segregation of certain groups by pointing to the fact that white men are more likely to be employed in the primary labour market, as opposed to women and ethnic minorities who are more likely to be employed in the secondary one (Anker, 1997). Although this explanation provides some insight into the process of vertical occupational segregation, since it shows the existence of an hierarchical organization of work, it does not explain horizontal occupational segregation (Beechey, 1986). For example, we have seen earlier that 40 per cent of women in the UK are employed in the public sector, where many jobs, such as teachers and nurses, have primary labour market characteristics. (It is important to be clear that the distinction between primary and secondary labour market does relate to employers. For instance, public sector employers, which are usually quite large, provide a wide range of jobs which can be located both in the primary and in the secondary labour market.) Another flaw of this theory is that not all jobs fit easily within one category or the other. Jobs in the manufacturing industry, for example, require skills that are often acquired on the job; they are not necessarily insecure jobs, but nonetheless they do not fit within the category of primary labour market. However, in spite of its shortfalls, the dual labour market theory had provided scope for developing further analysis of the labour market and has led to the argument that the labour market is divided into segments.

The labour market segmentation theory builds on the dual labour market school of thought and predicates that throughout the history of capitalism 'political economic forces have encouraged the division of the labour market into separate submarkets, or segments, distinguished by different labour market characteristics and behavioral rules' (Reich et al., 1982: 359). According to this theory, the primary labour market is segmented between 'subordinate' and 'independent' jobs. The first category includes service types of job (e.g. office work) and manufacturing jobs, while the second category includes professional types of job that requires a certain degree of autonomy, creativity and problem-solving ability. The secondary labour market is segmented into low skills and poorly paid jobs where turn over is high. This theory is based on a more nuanced and thus more realistic distinction of jobs in different segments within the primary and secondary markets and offers a better explanation for both vertical and horizontal occupational segregation. It argues that certain jobs are segmented by 'race', and although workers from ethnic minorities are present in the secondary labour market as well as in both the subordinate and independent primary labour market, they still tend to be found in 'race-typed' jobs as a result of prejudice and stereotype (ibid.: 360). The same can be said about women who may be present in all the different segments of both the secondary and primary labour market, but they tend to be in 'gender typed' jobs, for example those in education and health, which can be seen as an extension of women's caring role. Also, it has been suggested that when new technology is introduced in the workplace it might already be gendered by the activities and expectations of its manufacturers and owners: 'it may even be ergonomically sex specific, scaled for the average height or anticipated strength of the sex that is to use it' (Cockburn, 1991: 38). Drew and Emerek (1998) also draw attention to gender-based segregation and flexibility as a high proportion of women, compared to men, are concentrated in part-time jobs in whatever segment of either the primary or secondary labour market.

Marxists argue that it is in the interest of employers to keep the labour force segmented into sub-labour markets as in this way workers can be better controlled, and employers can

rely on a cheap and flexible supply of labour. From this perspective, discrimination serves the purpose of maintaining the economic status quo and of ensuring that organizations continue to maximize their profit. Although this analysis may provide a credible explanation for the persistence of labour market inequalities and occupational segregation, it may not pay sufficient attention to other factors, such as social class and nationality, which, as discussed previously can be sources of disadvantage as well as historical factors and migration patterns.

In the last section of this chapter we consider the role of the stakeholders, namely the European Union, the state, the social partners (i.e. trade unions and employers' organizations) in tackling inequality in the labour market and in the workplace.

The role of stakeholders in promoting equality and diversity

In this section we consider the role of stakeholders such as the European Union, the state and social partners in promoting equality and diversity in the labour market and in the workplace.



Case study 1.2 Jessica Taylor, electrician

When Jessica Taylor's son was born she needed a job. Her ex-boyfriend told her 'why don't you do beauty therapy' - 'and I thought, that sounds alright'. By the time she was 18, Jessica's son was three. She was working part-time as a beauty therapist and earning £200 per week. 'I was struggling to make ends meet', she says.

Her life turned around after she attended an equal opportunities workshop run by the YWCA in Wolverhampton. She was asked to rank a range of careers in order of the best to the worst paid. 'I noticed that electricians were quite high up', she recalls.

'It got me thinking: why can't I be an electrician, why do I have to work in a bar or a beauty salon?'

'I started to say to people that I wanted to be an electrician and they'd say "you can't be an electrician", and I'd say "why", and they'd say "because you're a girl". So I thought I'm going to prove you wrong and that I can do it.'

Once she decided to retrain, as an electrician, she enrolled at a local college. She passed her preliminary exams and applied for jobs. After putting out 15 CVs she got an interview with Doncaster Council.

'Within 15 minutes of walking out of the interview I got a call to say that I had got the job out of the 200 people that applied. I was over the moon.'

'The atmosphere where I work is very loud and dirty. I have to climb through lofts and under floor ducts. I've seen rats and lots of huge spiders. I really do enjoy being an electrician. It's opened so many doors for when I am qualified.'

Now aged 23, Jessica is in her fourth and final year before becoming fully qualified. Her ambition is to learn her trade before setting up her own electrician's business catering for female customers. She thinks more girls should follow her example, but warns: 'You have got to be prepared to work hard and put a lot of effort into it - you have to do the same as the men. But it's worth it. It also means that now I've got savings - I've gone abroad on holiday, I can buy new clothes and things for Kieran, I've bought a car, and I'm doing up my house. All that wouldn't have been possible if I hadn't changed my career.'

Source: Adapted from Equality and Human Rights Commission (2010) How fair is Britain? Full link available from the Online Resource Centre.

Case study questions

Explain Jessica's experience within the labour market by referring to the theories and arguments discussed in this section. In particular, address the following questions:

- Why was Jessica initially discouraged from becoming an electrician?
- Why do you think Jessica's boyfriend suggested that she become a beauty therapist?
- Jessica's experience of working as a beauty therapist seems to suggest that beauty therapists earn considerably less than electricians. In your view, which of the theories and arguments discussed in this section can better explain such a difference?
- Consider through a 'gendered lens' Jessica's comment that to become an electrician 'you have to do the same as the men' and what this implies for women.

The European Union

The European Union has played a key role in tackling inequalities in the labour market by developing a framework of legislation and policies that have been applied across all of its member states. Equality and social cohesion have been fundamental commitments for the EU as

key political leaders, such as Delors, sought the creation of a single market and a distinctive kind of capitalism, different from that of the US or Japan. ... Part of the distinctiveness of the EU capitalism was a commitment to social cohesion, which was unlike the US. Equal opportunities policies are part of this commitment to social cohesion and to a model of capitalism in which efficiency and equity go together, in which a degree of equity is seen to help the overall efficiency of the society. (Walby, 2000: 118-119)

Equal opportunities policies were identified at the Luxembourg summit in 1997 as one of the four pillars of European employment policies (Goetschy, 2001). In 2000, the European Council, at the meeting in Lisbon, established new goals for the following decade. Its 'Lisbon Strategy' set a target of 60 per cent for women's employment in all member states and, among other things, stressed the importance for economic growth of offering better quality jobs and promoting social inclusion through employment. Equality of opportunities for all in relation to access and participation in the labour market continues to be at the core of the 2020 European employment strategy (European Commission, 2011). Its targets include:

- 75 per cent of people aged between 20 and 64 in work.
- Reducing school drop-out rates in the member states to below 10 per cent, and aiming for at least 40 per cent of 30-40 year olds completing third-level education.
- At least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

In order to achieve its objectives with regard to equality of opportunities and social inclusion, the EU has been using a series of measures that include legislation and special funding to support the adoption of targeted action.

The EU can legislate in the form of Directives which are legally binding on the member states. Examples are the EU Equality Directive (2000/78) and the Race Equality Directive (2000/43) as well as others. Member states are obliged to transpose these Directives into national legislation

and if they do not comply with their obligations or if the content of their national legislation is not in line with that of the EU Directives, the European Commission can take action against them and compel them to amend their national legislation.

The main source of funding to promote equality in the workplace is the Structural Fund that was set up to reduce differences in economic prosperity and standards within the member states. The European Social Fund (ESF) is part of this funding stream and it is especially devoted to promote employment and support the achievement of equal opportunities and social inclusion in the labour market. This fund has been used for about 50 years and between 2007 and 2013 it will have distributed 75 billions of Euros among member states. The type of projects funded include training, job creation and improved access to the labour market for disadvantaged groups (European Commission, 2011b).



Student Activity 1.2

Extract the following information on two or more countries:

- Their socio-economic employment situation;
- Their ESF priorities, especially those aimed at promoting equality and diversity in the labour market;
- Examples of country-specific ESF past projects.

Prepare a report or a PowerPoint presentation that compares and contrasts the situation in the member states selected and in particular highlight the main challenges faced by these countries in terms of promoting equality and social inclusion.

Visit the Online Resource Centre for a link to the ESF website.

The role of social partners and the social dialogue

Social dialogue is defined by the European Trade Union Confederation (2011) as:

the process of negotiation by which different actors in society (or 'social partners') reach agreement to work together on policies and activities. Social dialogue can take place at a national and sectoral level as well as a European level. 'Bipartite' social dialogue brings together workers and employers, whereas 'tripartite' social dialogue also involves government or EU representatives.

At a European level, national trade unions are represented by the European Trade Union Confederation while employers are represented by *Businesseurope*, which includes small, medium and large companies. One of the most important ways in which the Social Partners can promote equality and diversity in the workplace is through the achievement of Framework Agreements which are negotiated autonomously between representatives of employers and employees at the European level. Once a Framework Agreement has been concluded between the Social Partners it can be implemented in two different ways: through EU legislation or by the Social Partners themselves, who take direct responsibility for implementing such agreements at a national, sectoral and enterprise level.

In the first instance, a Framework Agreement becomes a Council Directive which is legally binding on all member states. Examples of these agreements are the Council Directives on parental leave (1996), the text of which was revised in 2008, part-time work (1997), and fixed-term contracts (1999). In the second instance, a Framework Agreement is known as an 'autonomous agreement'.



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So far four of these types of agreement have been negotiated – in the areas of telework (2002), work-related stress (2004), harassment and violence at work (2007), and inclusive labour markets (2010).

A similar process can take place at the national level between trade unions, representing workers, and representatives of employers, and this is called collective bargaining. This is used to agree working terms and conditions and levels of pay and it can be used to promote equality and diversity in the workplace. It has been argued that historically the process of collective bargaining has not been very supportive of the needs and interests of either women or ethnic minorities. This was probably due to the fact that trade unions used to be male-dominated and thus focused on the interests of white men who were seen as the main family earner, the 'breadwinner', while women's position in the labour market and earnings were considered of secondary importance (Williams and Adam-Smith, 2006). However, from the 1970s, trade unions have started to engage more with equality and diversity issues in the workplace and used collective bargaining to advance equality in the workplace (for an in-depth and critical discussion about equality and diversity bargaining see Kirton and Greene, 2010: Chapter 7).

Another approach that has been adopted by employers and trade unions, particularly in the UK, to advance equality in the workplace is that of working in partnership to develop policies and practice at an organizational level to pursue equality and diversity goals. For an example of this approach, see the case study at the end of Chapter 6 and the online resources.

The role of the state

The state has an important role to play through policy and legislation to promote equality and diversity in the workplace. Member states within the European Union are bound, as discussed earlier, to follow European employment policies and transpose European Directives into their national legislation. This creates a common framework of employment rights across member states, which include anti-discrimination legislation and other measures to promote equality of opportunities in the workplace and social inclusion, which contribute towards the achievement of the common goals set by European employment policies. However, it is important to point out that in spite of this common framework of employment rights, member states can have very different approaches to employment relations which are influenced by their economic and political agenda. For example, the UK is characterized by a liberal market economy which favours a deregulated labour market. This means keeping employment legislation to the minimum and, more generally, limiting state intervention in the economy. An example of how this can translate in practice is the tendency of the UK government to take a 'minimalist' approach to the implementation of European Directives on maternity and parental leave (McColgan, 2000). This is unlike the approach taken by other member states, for example Germany, which are characterized by 'coordinated market economies' where there is a robust national framework of employment legislation and a centralized system of collective bargaining (Williams and Adam-Smith, 2006).

In almost any country, the state is also an employer, to a greater or lesser degree, as it provides services to its citizens (e.g. education, health, local administration. etc.). In this capacity it can promote equality and diversity goals through public sector employers.

Equally, the state has a significant purchasing power as it buys goods and services from the private sector and, as discussed in Chapter 2, public sector employers can use procurement processes to enhance equality. This involves requiring private contractors providing goods



Signpost to Chapter 10 Managing Religion or Belief in the Workplace for further discussion on the role of public sector employers in promoting equality and diversity.

and services purchased by the public sector to adopt equality and diversity policies. An example of how this can work in practice is illustrated in the case study below.

End of Chapter Case Study Using procurement to promote equality and diversity: the case of Transport for London and EnterpriseMouchel

This case study is based on an interview carried out by one of the authors of this book with representatives from Transport for London (TfL) and from EnterpriseMouchel. It shows how a public organization (TfL) can use its services purchasing power to require contractors to adopt equality and diversity standards.

TfL is responsible for the operation of London's transport infrastructure, which includes the underground, London rail and surface transport (e.g. buses, taxis, traffic signals, and others). It operates in one of the most diverse cities in the world, where it is projected that by 2031 39 per cent of the population will be from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups (Lulham, 2011). TfL has included equality and diversity in its tendering process and this means that private contractors who wish to bid for work from TfL have to satisfy the following:

- They need to respond to an initial Pre-qualification Questionnaire that includes questions on equality and diversity (E&D).
- Bidders who have successfully responded to the questionnaire take part in the invitation to tender. A three-envelope approach is taken at this stage. One of these envelopes needs to contain information on E&D while the other two respectively relate to quality and to price. The E&D envelope is based on a pass or fail approach.
- Those bidders who have passed E&D have to demonstrate their commitment to E&D by producing an action plan. This must address four key components: a strategic E&D plan; an E&D training plan; a supplier diversity plan; and a communication plan.

EnterpriseMouchel is a national highway maintenance company employing 220 full-time staff and, at peak times, over 400 people, including staff in their supply chain on the Transport for London contract. When in 2007 they bid for work from TfL they had to engage with the process described above and satisfy E&D requirements. They had never been requested to do this before and their initial reaction of having to comply with TfL requirements was 'to scratch their heads' because E&D was a new field for the new highways construction industry. However, they were able to develop their action plan with support from TfL and from a parent company that had already had experience of developing E&D policies and practices.

The main challenges for EnterpriseMouchel in implementing their E&D plan were, first, to raise their staff awareness about the importance of E&D and ensure that they bought into this idea, and second, to ensure that their subcontractors in the supply chain complied with E&D requirements.

Their workforce is made up primarily of blue collar workers who are predominantly white and male, so they needed to make sure that this group appreciated the relevance of the E&D agenda, for themselves as much as for other groups. For this reason the company put a lot of emphasis on inclusivity and developed a programme called RESPECT. This stresses the importance of responsible behaviour, both individually and as a company, health and safety issues, and respect in the workplace, since these are values which relate to all people. As part of this initiative, emphasis was placed up-skilling the workforce, increasing skills and developing education levels, setting up an apprenticeship programme, providing local employment, and engaging with the community.

Engaging contractors in the supply chain was also a major challenge given that some of these companies are rather small and lack the capacity to manage an E&D development process. EnterpriseMouchel helped these small businesses by sharing policies and practices with them, and by inviting TfL to explain directly to

them the importance of engaging with E&D. As a result of such action, these small businesses are now in a better position to compete for public work where E&D requirements are included in the bidding process.

EnterpriseMouchel has derived a number of advantages from developing an E&D approach. These include:

- A responsible procurement policy which takes into account the values of E&D, health and safety, environmental sustainability and ethical procurement, favouring and supporting SMEs.
- An improved working environment that supports their staff's needs which has resulted in lower staff turnover, recruitment costs, and increased the education level of staff.
- Greater engagement with the community through an Engagement Schools and Community annual programme and the offer of apprenticeships, work placements, and work experiences for the disadvantaged.

As a result of their effort and initiatives to promote E&D, they have won the Excellence Award 2010 for their approach to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Case study questions

Why do you think that it is important for TfL to require its contractors to develop E&D policies and practices?

What were the main challenges for EnterpriseMouchel in developing E&D policies?

How did they address them?

How important is the law on procurement to ensure that companies like EnterpriseMouchel apply E&D standards to their policies and practices?



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+ Conclusion

We have explored in this first chapter the different meanings of the concept of equality and how the notion of diversity has helped us to shift from a formal approach to equality to a more substantive one. Equality and inclusion appear to be the most helpful model of substantive equality as they encompass both the idea of equality as dignity and as disadvantage.

We have also examined the concept of disadvantage and discrimination and seen how the dynamics between these two elements can create 'a vicious circle' which can lead to social distance and reinforce prejudice. Furthermore, it is important to understand that discrimination is not a one-dimensional issue, but that it can present multiple dimensions. Although, for clarity, in the second part of this book we focus on the separate strands of equality, we have nevertheless discussed here examples of multiple and intersectional discrimination.

Extensive patterns of disadvantage and discrimination still exists in the labour market. These, however, are not static and change as society evolves. Labour market surveys and statistical analysis are key tools for monitoring rates of labour market participation and employment patterns of different groups, and for identifying inequalities in the marketplace.

In the next chapters in this part of the book we focus on equality legislation and on theoretical approaches to equality and diversity and the implementation of diversity management. In the second part of the book we take a thematic approach and discuss theory and practice relating to different equality strands.

? Review and discussion questions

1. How can the concept of equality be defined?
2. What is the difference between disadvantage and discrimination? Explain the concept of the 'vicious circle' of discrimination by providing examples.

3. What are the main patterns of disadvantage and inequalities affecting different social groups?
4. How can surveys and statistical analysis help with the study of equality and diversity issues in the labour market and in the workplace?
5. What does occupational segregation mean and what theories have been developed to explain this phenomenon?
6. How important is the social dialogue in advancing equality in the workplace?



For additional material on the content of this chapter please visit the supporting Online Resource Centre at www.oxfordtextbooks.co.uk/orc/kumra_manfredi/



Further reading

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