

A research study analyzes employment hiring practices in Europe

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It is calculated that in Europe at present, 19 million people are children of immigrants, 6 million of whom have parents who were born outside the EU. In Spain, nearly 1 in 4 young people under the age of 18 have foreign-born parents. Many of these "new Europeans" are now joining the labor force. One of the questions that the researchers posed is if they

are doing so in the same conditions of equality as those who are children of native-born parents.

To answer this question, researchers in the GEMM (Growth, Equal Opportunities, Migration & Markets) Project studied access into employment for young people who were descendants of [immigrants](#) in five European countries—Germany, Spain, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Norway—based on the analysis of the real behavior of more than 19,000 companies. For that purpose, they compared the response the candidates received from the companies analyzed with candidates who had CVs with identical features, but with native-born parents. In this way, the degree of discrimination in each of the countries in the study is estimated.

This represents "the most ambitious research on studies of discrimination when entering the [labor market](#) that have been carried out in Europe, and we do it in a comparative way, that is, we make exactly the same design for five European countries," commented the project head at UC3M, Javier Polavieja, professor in the Department of Social Sciences.

According to the researchers, the results of the study reveal "the existence of worrying levels of discrimination when accessing employment for children of immigrants in all of the countries analyzed." In comparative terms, Great Britain and Norway present the highest levels of discrimination, while Spain and Germany present the lowest levels. Concerning specifically discrimination by phenotype, Spain shows the lowest levels of all the countries analyzed. According to Polavieja, "the results for Spain are especially relevant if we take into account that our country has experienced the most severe economic crisis of all the countries in the study, and furthermore, that the crisis was preceded by the largest increase in the flow of immigration experienced in Europe, this could have led us to expect that Spain would

be among the countries that discriminate the most, not the least."

The results of the study enable us to learn a bit more about the decision-making processes hidden behind discrimination by companies. "It seems that the mechanism behind [discrimination](#) is not lack of information, but rather the prejudicial attitudes and stereotypes held by employers, or perhaps their unconscious discriminatory behaviours," Professor Polavieja explained.

GEMM (Growth, Equal, Opportunities, Migration & Markets) is a project funded by the Horizon 2020 research and innovation program of the European Union (GA 649255) in which more than 30 scientists from eight countries participate. Coordinated by the University of Essex (United Kingdom), it has recently concluded, with the participation of UC3M together with the following universities and research centers: the Center for Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS), the New Europe Centre for Regional Studies (NEC), Nuffield College-University of Oxford, the University of Amsterdam (UVA), the University of Milan-Bicocca (UNIMIB), the University of Oslo (UIO), Utrecht University (UU) and Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB).

More information: Further information: <http://www.gemm2020.eu>

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