

# Confronting Workplace Harassment and Discrimination

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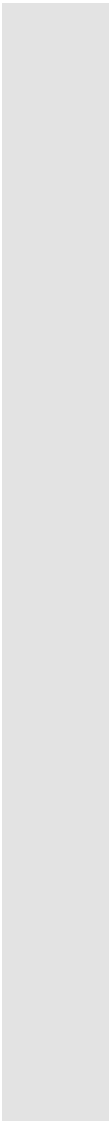
*at NOCA, 11. Oct. 2023*

# What to expect?

- **What's the problem and why does it matter?** Sexist and racist workplace harassment and discrimination in Denmark
- **New perspectives from research:** The imperceptibility of everyday harassment and discrimination
- **Practical implications:** Confronting harassment and discrimination as part of DEI work

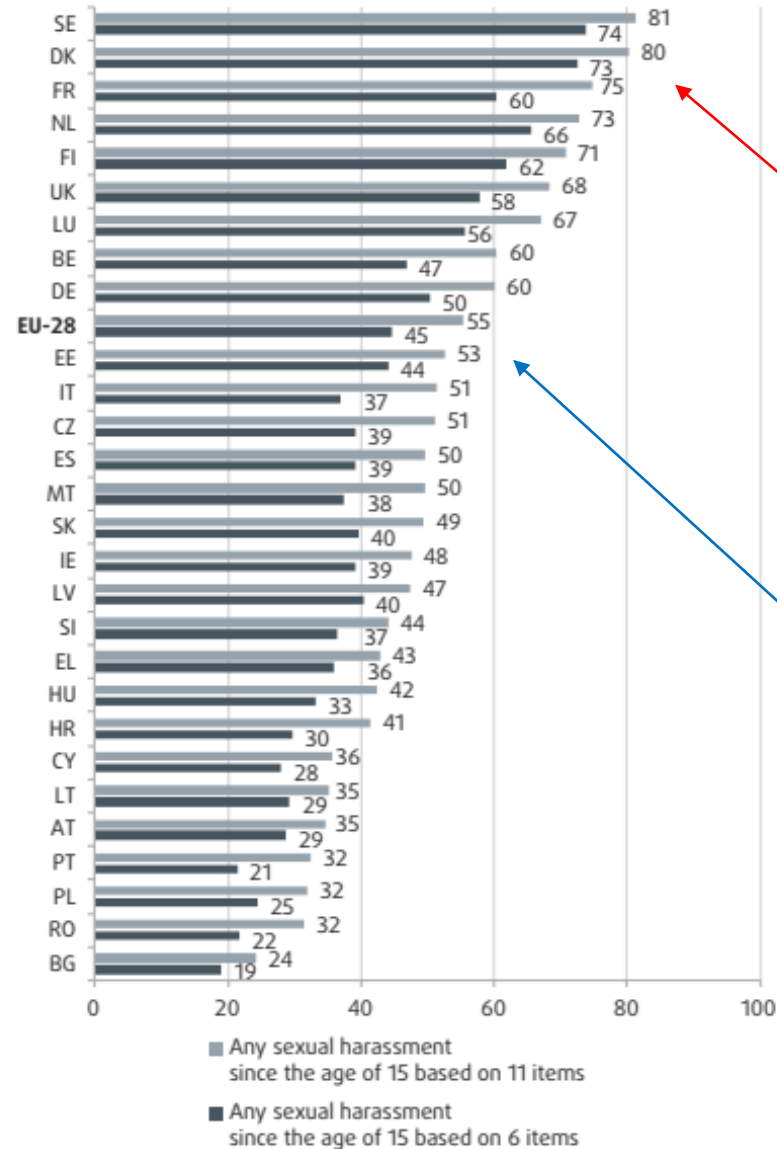


What's the  
problem and  
why does it  
matter?

- 
- We cannot talk about *equality* without talking about *inequality*.
  - We cannot talk about *inclusion* without talking about *exclusion*.
  - We cannot talk about *diversity* without talking about *harassment and discrimination*.
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# Sexism and sexual harassment in Denmark

Figure 6.2: Prevalence of sexual harassment since the age of 15, based on full and short sets of items measuring sexual harassment, by EU Member State (%)<sup>a,b,c</sup>



Denmark: 80% of women experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15

EU average: 55% of women experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15

Notes: a Out of all respondents (N = 42,002).

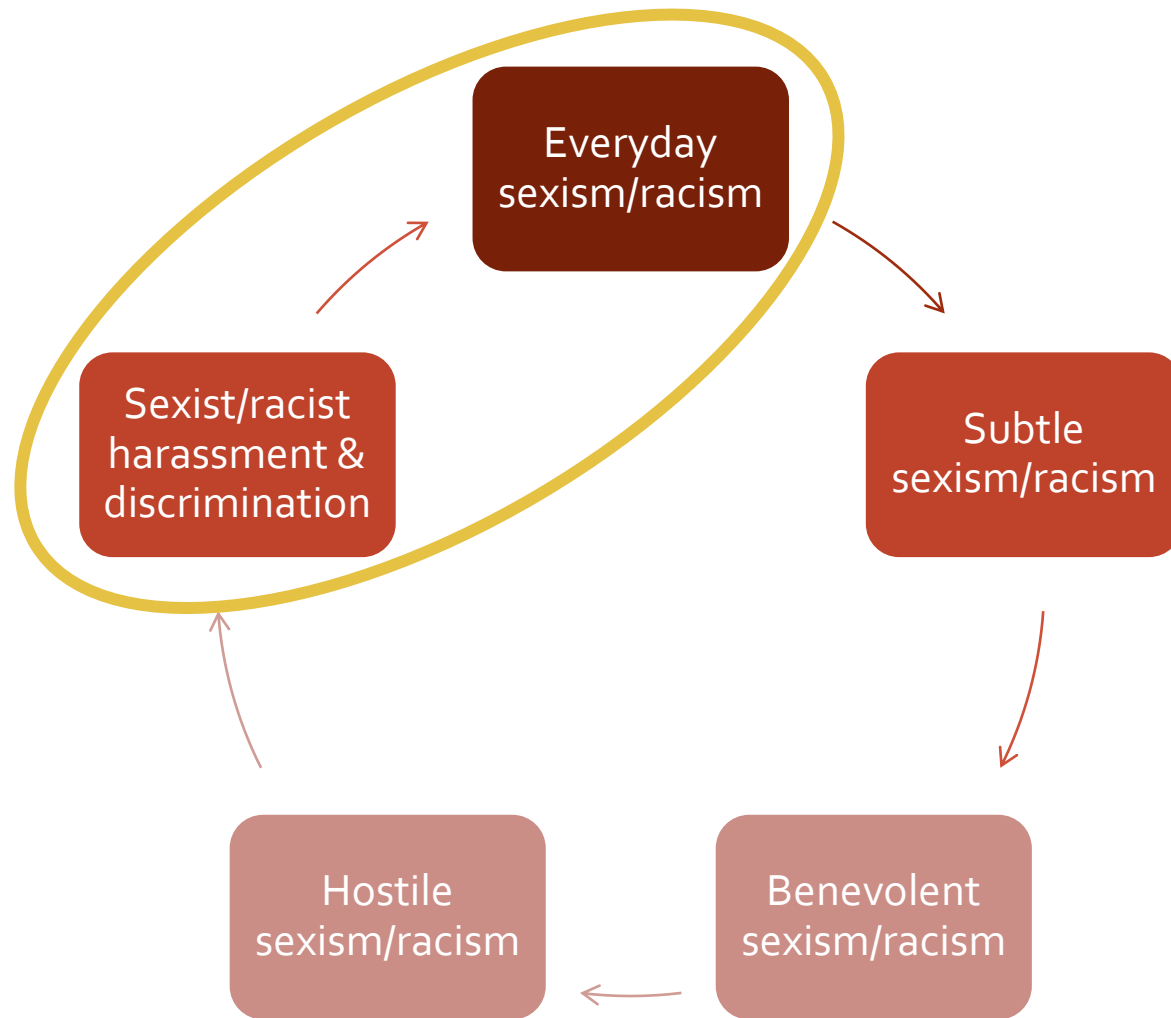
# Racism and racist discrimination in Denmark

In Denmark,

- women of color who wear a headscarf have to send **60% more job applications** until they are invited for a job interview in comparison to white Danish women.
- applicants with a name that sounds like the person might have a background from the Middle East have to send **52% more job applications** than applicants with a Danish-sounding name.

# Why does it matter?

- Harassment and discrimination are important, but overlooked and **hidden factors for low performance, productivity loss, and loss of talent ...**
- ... because harassment and discrimination lead to: mental and physical health problems, job loss, withdrawal from work, productivity loss, and financial consequences for organizations.
- It's one thing to get people 'in', but how do you make sure they stay and they thrive?



*Everyday*  
harassment and  
discrimination



Questions?



it operates without warning,  
without giving an alert,  
without attracting attention,  
as though independently of us:  
without wanting to disturb us,

,Too early' to  
do anything

until  
it destroys us.

,Too late' to  
do anything

'silent'

'in silence',  
even when it continues  
on its way  
within us

(Jullien, 2011, p. 3)

# The *imperceptibility* of workplace harassment

# Understanding harassment and discrimination

- Harassment and discrimination are not one-time exceptions but happen in the organizational everyday
- Harassment is imperceptible – therefore, it always feels ‚too early‘ or ‚too late‘ to speak up or report
- It is almost impossible for individuals to avoid, escape or ‚just speak up‘ about harassment and discrimination without appropriate support structures.

# Practical implications

- Confronting harassment and discrimination as part of DEI work through:

## ➤ Prevention

- *as an ongoing, proactive practice - beyond 'zero tolerance' promises and the annual monitoring of cases.*

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- Confronting harassment and discrimination as part of DEI work through:

## ➤ Reporting

- *that involves support structures for bystanders and enables targets/victims to record their experiences early on.*

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- Confronting harassment and discrimination as part of DEI work through:
  - Long-term change
    - *through the willingness to stay with the trouble and the not-so-happy topics*

# Practical implications

- Confronting harassment and discrimination as part of DEI work through:

- Prevention

- *as an ongoing, proactive practice - beyond 'zero tolerance' promises and the annual monitoring of cases.*

- Reporting

- *that involves support structures for bystanders and enables targets/victims to record their experiences early on.*

- Long-term change

- *through the willingness to stay with the trouble because **it's time to leave "Happyland"** (Ogette, 2017)*

# Thank you!

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# Questions?

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