



FORUM: Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Committee

TOPIC: Establishing non-discrimination and safety in the workplace

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POSITION: Co-chair, Main Chair

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Hello, my dear delegates!

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the SOCHUM committee for the AML conference 2025. My name is Nasia Kalpouzou, and I will be serving as your Chair for this session. I am currently a second-year student at Model Lyceum of Anavrita. I have been involved in MUN for three years, but until now, only as a delegate, and therefore, I am really glad to be in this position.

I encourage you to approach the discussion with critical thinking, an open mind, and a solutions-oriented mindset, but above all, I hope we all have fun. I am looking forward to hearing your thoughtful debates and innovative resolutions.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of us with any questions as you prepare, since some of you may not be very experienced. We are all here to support you throughout this thrilling journey and help ensure that this committee is a productive and welcoming space for all of you, newcomers or not. If you do need assistance with anything, feel free to contact me at nasia.kalpouzou@gmail.com !

Kind regards,

Nasia Kalpouzou

Dearest delegates,

My name is Christina Liakou, I am 19 years old and I will be the Main Chair for the SOCHUM Committee in this year's AML MUN Conference. I am currently a second-year law student at the University of Athens, but my MUN journey had already started when I was just a small 8th grader, shy and timid when speaking in front of big crowds. Model UN has played an important role in my life, from teaching me how to research a topic and debate upon it, to it being the reason for countless friendships and connections with beautiful people. I do truly hope that after our time together you too will feel the MUN magic and I wholeheartedly wish we have an amazing conference! If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me at christine.liakou10@gmail.com!

Looking forward to meeting you all,



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Christina

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

The topic we will be discussing is the establishment of non-discrimination and safety in the workplace, which has been of continuous interest and relevance for years, but it has been emphasized mostly throughout the 21st century. The issue of discrimination is primarily rooted in the culture and problematic ideology of the time, which, of course, manifests in people's notions and consequently affects how they behave within the workplace. However, when legislation and policies are not correctly enforced, discrimination as well as non-safety are enabled. Therefore, even though for the most part, prejudice is the main factor in this matter, institutions are responsible for taking action and tackling it.

Even though both safety and non-discrimination in the workplace have been recognized as important matters by the United Nations and its member states and enforced with legislation, they still have not been addressed. Namely, they are apparent in developing countries, which are unable to take action on such matters due to other more important concerns, but also in developed countries, which have been unable to comply with the analogous laws. Therefore, you are called upon to find feasible solutions so as to help countries tackle the matter's effects.

Discrimination in general is the unfair or unequal treatment of individuals due to their background or personal characteristics. These characteristics could be gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, impairment, age, religion, their economic state, and more. Often, the victims of this phenomenon are part of minorities. More specifically, discrimination in the workplace can refer to lower wages, denial of employment, prejudiced or harmful behavior towards its victims due to those traits, and not based on criteria, and can occur between employees and their bosses, but between coworkers as well. It is an extremely concerning problem and "people need to know that discrimination still exists. It is still real in the workplace, and we should not take that for granted." as Alexis Herman states. However, it is vital that the difference between discrimination and harassment is clear. Harassment is a much more severe infringement of one's human rights since it can even take the shape of violence, but it remains an extension or a cause of discrimination.

When it comes to safety, it is a human right that tends to the protection and maintenance of every individual's health and well-being. Workplace safety specifically refers to the environment within the workplace. This includes the management of the conditions of the workplace, of injuries, and the reduction and elimination of hazards. When implemented, it provides a welcoming, productive environment and a boost to employees' morale. The most common workplace safety issues are human factors, health hazards, and environmental factors. Human factors pertain to items that can harm one's psychological health and manifest over time. Health hazards pertain to the defilement of one's physical health and are caused by chemical hazards and

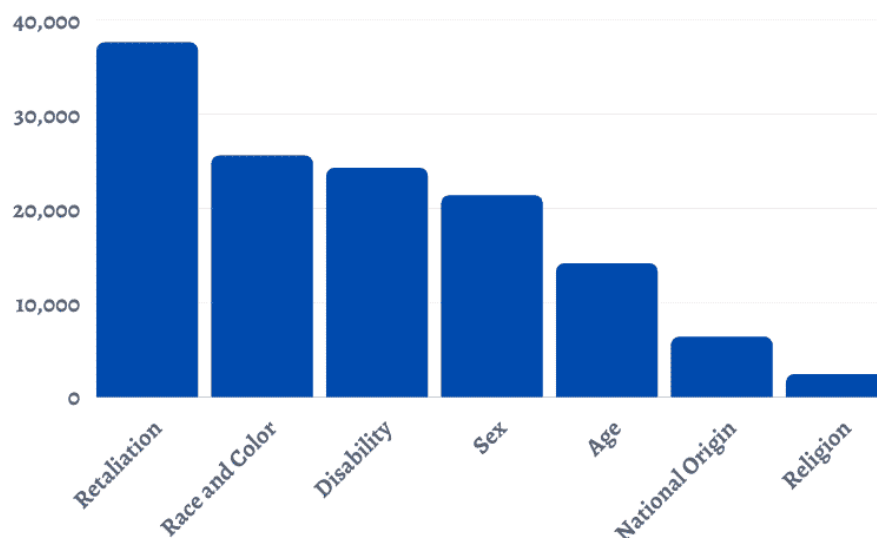
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inadequate housekeeping. Lastly, environmental factors pertain to extreme temperature changes, noise issues, lighting issues and weather conditions.

The discrimination and non-safety crisis involves issues like unequal opportunities in job applications, unfair behaviours and unhealthy or even dangerous workplace conditions and therefore requires long-term solutions that ensure the compliance of basic human rights. Some possible solutions may include the collaboration of member states in sharing resources and in mapping out plans of action ensuring countries' integration, self-reliance and equality. It is of utmost importance that governments and all relevant global organizations work together in order to cover both immediate and long-term needs. Member states need to develop strategies that aim to reduce prejudices and discrimination in the workplace, not only as a preventive but also a corrective measure.

The Most Common Forms of Workplace Discrimination

EEOC data reveals the most frequent workplace discrimination claims in 2020.



\$439.2 million recovered for victims of workplace discrimination.

EEOC data 2/26/2021

EEOC data for the most common discrimination forms.¹

¹ 2021 Race Discrimination In The Workplace. فقط الصور الجديدة لعام 2021.

<https://ar.inspiredpencil.com/pictures-2023/race-discrimination-in-the-workplace>.



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DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Minority

“Any small group in society that is different from the rest because of their race, religion, or political beliefs, or a person who belongs to such a group”²

Protected Characteristics/ Class

“Specific traits or attributes that individuals possess that are legally protected from discrimination and harassment (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, pregnancy)”³

Hostile work environment

“A workplace where unwanted conduct, such as harassment and discriminatory behaviour, is so severe that it affects an employee’s ability to work”⁴

Disparate Treatment

“The differential treatment of individuals based on their membership in a protected class, such as race, gender, age or disability”⁵

Disparate Impact

“When a seemingly neutral employment policy or practice disproportionately affects individuals in a protected class unfavorably”⁶

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

“The principle that everyone has equal way to access and pursue employment opportunities based on merit and regardless of their background and/or personal characteristics”⁷

Inclusive Workspace

² *Minority*. *Encyclopædia Britannica*, edited by The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., last updated by Amy McKenna, www.britannica.com/topic/minority. Accessed 17 Aug. 2025.

³ “Protected characteristics.” *Equality and Human Rights Commission*, Equality and Human Rights Commission, published 6 July 2021, www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/protected-characteristics. Accessed 17 Aug. 2025.

⁴ “What Is a Hostile Work Environment in 2025?” *HR Acuity*, hracuity.com/blog/hostile-work-environments-definition-and-signs. Accessed 17 Aug. 2025.

⁵ “Disparate Treatment.” *Wex: Disparate Treatment*, Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School, last reviewed October 2022, www.law.cornell.edu/wex/disparate_treatment. Accessed 17 Aug. 2025.

⁶ “Disparate Impact.” *Wex*, Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School, law.cornell.edu/wex/disparate_impact. Accessed 17 Aug. 2025.

⁷ “Equal Employment Opportunity.” *U.S. Department of Labor*, U.S. Department of Labor, last updated n.d., www.dol.gov/general/topic/discrimination. Accessed 17 Aug. 2025.



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“A work environment that makes every employee feel valued and supported and has adopted a culture which is deeply-rooted in respect for all people and their human rights regardless of their background”⁸

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

“Core corporate principles that are aimed at ensuring fair treatment, access and advancement for all individuals, while embracing diverse identities”⁹

Compliance Training

“The process of educating employees on laws, regulations and company policies that apply to their workspace and are designed to promote a safe and respectful environment”¹⁰

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Historical Background

Root Causes

The primary cause of discrimination in the workplace is implicit or unconscious bias, which can be significantly influenced by the societal climate of the time or a matter of one's ideology. This prejudiced mindset is an important driver of this issue since it can lead to the favoring of certain individuals with specific backgrounds or characteristics and to the limitation of opportunities for others, not compliant with these biased standards. Another cause of this issue is unintentional discriminatory behaviors, which can manifest as exclusionary or stereotypical practices and can only be combatted with correct training and close monitoring by the institution itself. Moreover, a lack of strong policies, accountability measures, and authority heedlessly incites not only discrimination but also non-safety in the workplace. Nonetheless, if the latter is practised accordingly, a safe space is provided for the victims to report the issue, and the offenders face the right consequences.

Early Years

Some of the earliest labor movements can already be found in the late 1800s to early 1900s, when the industrial revolution boomed. The early industrial workplaces, often poorly designed with few sanitary and safety measures being taken, were unsafe, with little to no protection from work-

⁸ “Inclusive Workplace.” *Canadian Association for Supported Employment: HR Toolkit*, Canadian Association for Supported Employment, n.d., www.supportedemployment.ca/hrtoolkit/inclusive-workplace. Accessed 17 Aug. 2025.

⁹ “What is DEI? The Oxford Review Guide to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.” *The Oxford Review*, Oxford Review, 2025, oxford-review.com/what-is-dei-the-oxford-review-guide-to-diversity-equity-and-inclusion/. Accessed 17 Aug. 2025.

¹⁰ McGarry, Olivia. “What is Compliance Training?” *LearnUpon*, LearnUpon, 2025, www.learnupon.com/blog/what-is-compliance-training/. Accessed 17 Aug. 2025.

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related injuries. The exploitation of the working class was of course very heightened given the poverty numbers, whilst discrimination based on race, gender and ethnicity was incredibly widespread due to the general societal climate and mindset. These incidents urged Labor Unions both in the United States and Europe to push for safer working-conditions, fair wages and logical working hours. Around that time, in 1919, the International Labour Organization (ILO) was founded and began setting global labor standards, including non-discrimination and safety.

First Legislative Approaches

Later, in the 1950s to the 1960s, a major turning point took place and that was none other than the Civil Rights Act of 1964, in which Title VII outlawed employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Similar acts followed, which reflect the progressiveness humanity achieved, since they tend to the needs of important minorities: The Equal Pay Act of 1963, which prohibits sex-based wage discrimination between men and women, when they perform jobs that require equal skill and expertise under similar working conditions, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (1967) which protects employees that are 40 years of old and older from workplace discrimination based on their age and the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), which protects individuals with disabilities from experiencing harassment in the workplace. During the late 20th century countries around the world adopted laws similar to those in the United States and Europe, while the recognition of sexual harassment and psychological safety became more prominent in the 1980s and 1990s as workplace issues.



Working conditions in the early 1900s.¹¹

¹¹ *Frameworks for America's past.*

https://www.fasttrackteaching.com/ffap/Unit_6_World/U6_T_Roosevelt_bear.html.



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Current Situation

As of 2025 many countries have enforced expanded protections against discrimination based upon gender identity and sexual orientation. The DEI initiatives have also gained track, since we see companies increasingly prioritizing diversity, equity and inclusion in order to attract talent and foster innovation. Changes have been made and awareness on the topic has been raised through social media as well, given movements such as the #MeToo (2017-Present), which has brought global attention to sexual harassment in workplaces and others, such as Black Lives Matter (2020), which sparked widespread reviews of racial bias in hiring and promotion. All this progress is remarkable, when one stops to think where we started from. However that does not mean our world is not facing some ongoing challenges when it comes to discrimination in the workplace. Gender and racial wage gaps still very much exist, while also minorities are severely underrepresented in leadership roles. These are just some of the aspects of the issue at hand, which is why member states should come together in order to steadily and fruitfully resolve it.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

United States of America (USA)

The United States of America, through the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which upholds laws like the Civil Rights Act, have tried to eliminate discrimination in the workplace. Additionally, OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) ensures that employers maintain safe work environments. Together, these agencies protect workers from discrimination and hazards thus promoting more inclusive and safe workplaces. However, enforcement can be inconsistent, and many workers, especially in marginalized groups, still face discrimination and unsafe conditions, revealing gaps in protections.

United Kingdom (UK)

The UK's Equality Act of 2010 legally protects workers against discrimination based on various characteristics. At the same time, workplace safety is overseen by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), which enforces regulations to minimize risks. These frameworks work together to create respectful and secure work environments. Critics may however argue that some smaller businesses struggle to fully comply due to resource constraints and so incidents of discrimination and workplace injuries still occur.

Canada

Canada prohibits workplace discrimination under the Canadian Human Rights Act, ensuring equal treatment for all employees. Also, the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) provides guidelines and support for safe



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workplace practices, helping to prevent accidents and promote health. Nevertheless, some workers, especially Indigenous and migrant populations, report ongoing discrimination and face challenges accessing safe workplaces.

Australia

Australia's Human Rights Commission handles anti-discrimination complaints, while Safe Work Australia develops national standards for occupational health and safety. These bodies collaborate to protect workers from unfair treatment and hazardous conditions across the country. Nonetheless, workplace injuries remain an issue in high-risk sectors and critics point to underreporting of discrimination cases as a persistent problem.

South Africa

South Africa's Employment Equity Act promotes fair treatment by addressing workplace discrimination, aiming to correct historical injustices and improve safety standards, whilst the Department of Employment and Labour enforces occupational health and safety laws, in an attempt to ensure safe and healthy workplaces for all employees. However, enforcement is often uneven, and many workplaces—especially in informal sectors—lack sufficient oversight to prevent discrimination or hazards.

European Union (EU)

The European Union, through directives such as the Equal Treatment Directive, promotes non-discrimination, while also ensuring occupational safety via the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA). However, varying enforcement levels and economic disparities among member states mean workers' experiences of discrimination and safety differ widely.

United Nations (UN)

The United Nations promote workplace non-discrimination and safety through global human rights frameworks, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its agencies work worldwide to foster equality, dignity, and safe working conditions. But its influence depends heavily on member countries' willingness to implement recommendations, which can be inconsistent or symbolic.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

The International Labour Organization sets international labor standards, including conventions against discrimination and for occupational safety. Its guidance helps countries develop fair policies and safer workplaces for all workers. Yet, adoption and enforcement vary worldwide, and many countries struggle to fully implement these standards due to economic or political constraints.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)



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The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development provides policy research and recommendations on workplace equality and safety among its member countries, helping to shape inclusive and healthy work environments globally. However, its recommendations mostly influence wealthier nations, limiting direct impact on poorer countries where discrimination and unsafe workplaces are often more severe.

World Health Organization (WHO)

The World Health Organization addresses occupational health by promoting safe work practices and psychological well-being. It works globally to reduce workplace hazards and support healthy working conditions. Yet, it relies on partnerships with other organizations and governments, which can delay or dilute implementation of its guidelines.

World Bank & International Monetary Fund (IMF)

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund incorporate labor standards in their development projects, promoting non-discrimination and workplace safety through funding and policy advice, helping countries improve labor conditions and protect workers. Nevertheless, critics argue that some economic policies prioritize growth over worker protections, potentially sidelining safety and equality concerns.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

DATE	EVENT
Late 1800s-1900s	Harsh factory conditions, with little to no protection for workers against discrimination
1919	The founding of the International Labour Organization (ILO)
1935 (United States of America)	National Labor Relations Act
1963 (United States of America)	Equal Pay Act
1964	Civil Rights Act
1967	Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)
1980	EEOC guidelines on sexual harassment as a workplace discrimination
1990 (United States of America)	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
1995-1997	EU anti-discrimination directives
2002-2009	Multiple countries enact LGBTQ+ workplace protections
Late 2000s	Rise in corporate diversity programs (DEI)
2019	Adoption of the ILO Convention 190



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2025	More countries ratify the ILO Convention 190
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RELEVANT UN TREATIES, CONVENTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

Universal Declaration of Human Rights - 1948 (Article 23)

It is the foundation for all international human rights and anti-discrimination frameworks. More specifically to our topic Article 23 states that “Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.”

ILO Convention No. 111 (Discrimination in Employment and Occupation) - 1958

It prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, ethnicity or social background, whilst requiring countries to develop policies to promote equality or opportunity and treatment in employment. It has been ratified by over 170 countries.

ILO Convention No. 155 (Occupational Safety and Health Convention) - 1981

It sets international standards for workplace health and safety and highlights that employers and governments must ensure a safe and healthy working environment. It has been ratified by over 60 countries.

ILO Convention No. 190 (Violence and Harassment) - 2019

It is the first international treaty to address violence and harassment, including gender-based violence, in the workplace, while also recognizing the right to a world of work free from violence and harassment.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) - 1979 (Article 11)

It addresses discrimination against women, including in employment and working conditions. More specifically to our topic Article 11 guarantees equal employment opportunities, maternity leave, and protection from harassment. It has been ratified by 189 countries, not including the United States.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) - 2006

It protects the rights of people with disabilities, including access to employment and workplace accommodation and it promotes inclusive work environments and bans disability-based discrimination. It has been ratified by over 185 countries.

Resolution 61/106 – Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)



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It is instrumental in the protection of disabled workers' rights.

Resolution 73/275 – Women and Girls in the Workplace (2019)

It calls for stronger protections against gender-based violence and harassment and encourages support for ILO Convention 190.

Resolution 70/1 – Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)

For our topic the goals that mainly concern us are Goal 5, which aims toward gender equality and women empowerment and Goal 8, which calls for decent work and economic growth, thus promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions

More and more countries ratify the International Labor Organization's Conventions on equality and safety in the workplace. Besides the fact that some countries have yet to acknowledge said conventions, although ratifying these treaties is an important step towards change, many countries fail to enforce them due to weak labor systems or political resistance.

Corporate and Private Sector Actions

Companies are expected to adhere to "Corporate ESG reporting", based on which they should disclose their environmental, social and corporate governance data in order to promote accountability and transparency. Also an increasing number of companies invest in DEI departments, employee resource groups and equity audits, whilst implementing zero-tolerance policies on harassment and discrimination and providing mandatory anti-harassment, unconscious bias and safety training in many sectors. All these efforts, as noble as they sound, are not always as pure as they intend to come off as and often face criticism for being performative or failing to create systemic change.

Social Movements and Civil Society

Movements such as the #MeToo Movement and "Black Lives Matter" along with the continued efforts of Labor Unions, both nationally and internationally, and Non-Governmental Organizations have pushed for the employment world to confront its internal issues concerning discrimination, aiming at a better workspace atmosphere. Be that as it may, however, these initiatives have only caused a cultural shift, which will be slow to translate into structural and deep-rooted change.



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POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Establish and enforce global non-discrimination standards

It is incredibly important for global organizations and member states to approach this matter in a united front. Only through collaboration and nations holding each other and individual offenders accountable will we be able to combat discriminative behaviors in the workplace.

Create an independent internal oversight and reporting mechanism

It is crucial to develop a supervision system so as to make sure nations and individuals enforce and uphold the non-discrimination and safety standards that the world has agreed upon. For this to happen, however, we need to achieve transparency through internal reports and oversights.

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives

A notable number of companies have hopped on the DEI policies train, incorporating them into their HR strategies and overall corporate culture. It is about time we encouraged this mindset not just as something companies can adopt but as a policy corporate businesses should enforce.

Comprehensive workplace safety and well-being policies

Given that employees are above all human, they need safe workplaces, both in terms of physical and psychological safety, in order to be productive and creative and thus perform as highly as is expected of them. That is why comprehensive workplace safety and well-being policies are needed.

Institutional accountability and transparency

In order to ensure that policies are being enforced and non-discrimination standards are being upheld, institutions need to be transparent about how they function and be held accountable if need be. Without transparency, accountability can constantly be avoided

Mental health, inclusion and staff well-being

The gravity of mental health and psychological well-being is so often overlooked, creating various problems in the workplace. When an employee does not feel, they will not perform well. That is why policies surrounding mental health should be encouraged, if not imposed.

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