



## MODULES

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## 8. Intersectionality

9. Communications
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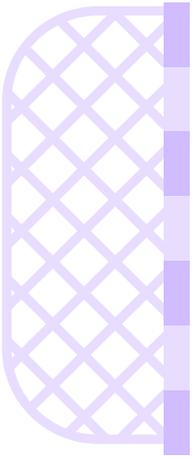
We make a binding commitment to recognize and fight multiple discrimination on the basis of intersecting characteristics such as racism, antisemitism, classism, ableism, sexism, and discrimination against LGBTIQ\* in equal measure.

## What does multiple discrimination have to do with trans, intersex, and non-binary (TIN) participation in sports?

Intersectionality or multiple discrimination means that a person's experiences are always based on the simultaneous interaction of multiple different systems of power, including racism, antisemitism, classism, and ableism. This not only includes the person's actual or presumed gender; people also have different experiences of discrimination or privilege based on their actual or presumed nationality, race, religion, social class, or disability. People experience discrimination based not only on the actual groups to which they belong but also based on prejudices about the groups to which others assume they belong. This is called an "imposed designation." The specific experiences created by the intersections and interactions between different forms of discrimination are often (rendered) invisible in daily life. Research the term "intersectionality" if you want to learn more about this subject.

### 1. Most people, including TIN people, belong to multiple types of groups

*Do you remember Ali (→ EM 2 Language)? Ali is non-binary and the only person of color on the team. Ali's teammate says to Ali: "You're not bad for an Arab." This reduces Ali to Ali's identity as a person of color and confronts Ali with the prejudicial assumption that "Arabs" are not good at handball. This example demonstrates that TIN people can*



experience exclusion both on the basis of TIN-related discrimination and based on other forms of discrimination, such as racism. Discrimination based on multiple characteristics is known as multiple discrimination. Such characteristics or designations may be real or imposed by others. Discrimination often takes place because the person experiencing discrimination is assumed or designated by others to be a certain kind of person. On the other hand, Ali does not experience discrimination because of a disability or presumed lack of education. In these ways, Ali is privileged and not disadvantaged, nor is Ali's status called into question. Ali ist in dieser Hinsicht also privilegiert und wird nicht benachteiligt oder infrage gestellt.

### Remembering that the lived experiences of TIN people can be highly diverse

A person's individual experiences depend on their gender as well as on other people's perceptions of their class, age, and religion. Gender alone involves a number of intersecting forms of discrimination. For example, the anti-trans discrimination experienced by a Black trans woman is different than that experienced by a white trans woman. Therefore, it is not possible to separate one characteristic, such as gender, from a person's other characteristics. Women are disadvantaged compared to men, and trans and non-binary people are disadvantaged compared to cis people. Yet some of trans women's experiences are also different from those of trans men or intersex people. Our aim is not to compare who experiences the most or least privilege or discrimination.

We simply want to help foster a sensitivity to the fact that the life experiences of TIN people can be highly diverse.

## 2. If diverse, intersecting forms of discrimination are not taken into account, only some TIN people will be able to participate

*Do you remember Mo (→ EM 5 Spaces)? Mo is non-binary and uses a wheelchair. Mo has trouble accessing the gym due to the dilapidated wheelchair ramp and cannot access the bathrooms there at all. The benches inside the changing room are arranged in a way that blocks the entrance to the bathroom.*

Because the organization has not considered the fact that a TIN person might use a wheelchair, Mo is not able to participate. A gender-neutral bathroom is of no use to Mo if Mo is unable to access it using a wheelchair. If organizations do not take the intersection of different forms of discrimination into account and focus solely on gender, access to programs will be available only to a few privileged TIN people.



### Learning more about the lived experiences of people confronted with multiple discrimination

If your goal is to enable all TIN people to participate in sports, you will need to consider all forms of discrimination. By doing this, you will learn more about the types of barriers that exclude different groups of people. We recommend that you listen to and learn from a wide range of people with different experiences. When you engage with people who have lives that are different from your own, what kinds of experiences do they relate?

### 3. Most people belong to multiple types of groups

*Do you remember Julia (→ EM 3 Visibility)? Julia has recently joined the board of an ice hockey club. Richard, who is also trans, and Julia want their entire organization to focus more on gender diversity and to sign the Charter for Gender Diversity in Sports. They plan to propose the idea together at their next board meeting. Julia is concerned that the board will not be pleased about the additional work and costs associated with the Charter. After all, in the “Intersectionality” article of the Charter, organizations are encouraged to consider all forms of discrimination and privilege. Julia is worried that the board will be overwhelmed by this task and opt to ignore the section on intersectionality altogether.*

When an organization begins to confront one type of discrimination, this automatically changes certain facets of the organization; it becomes more open to a wide range of different people, and everyone stands to benefit in the end. Once this process of learning and discussion has begun, it can no longer be stopped. Organizations will begin thinking about different forms of discrimination almost automatically. The underlying mechanisms are often very similar.

The first step may be to simply practice recognizing and acknowledging potential cases in which multiple discrimination might apply. This can make a major difference all on its own and generate interest about the subject of intersectionality. Of course, every person is free to choose how they wish to relate or commit to anti-discrimination. That cannot be imposed on them from outside or by a group. Unfortunately, every person – whether they like it or not – is also enmeshed in power structures, and people are often slow to recognize their own privilege. If you do not have to think about a certain topic, e.g., who you kiss in public, whose hand you can hold on the street, or whether or not you can mention your “wife” or “husband,” you are most likely heterosexual and therefore occupy a privileged position in society.

Confronting and discussing intersectionality – as it applies to us and to others – can help us better understand one another and work together to make our organizations more open and accepting.

**Power structures** result in some groups of people having more **privilege** than other groups who experience **discrimination**. Privilege ensures that a person receives preferential treatment in society. People who, for example, are perceived to be thin, adults, cisgender, white, heterosexual, wealthy, and/or non-disabled benefit from these power structures. People who are perceived to be overweight, children or teenagers, trans, Black, homosexual, poor, and/or disabled are placed at a disadvantage by the same structures. Discrimination and privilege are intimately linked to one another.

Most people belong to multiple groups, and they possess certain types of privilege or disadvantages based on specific power dynamics. If someone is truly interested in combating discrimination, it is absolutely vital for that person to assess the privilege or disadvantages they themselves are granted based on these structures.





## Having an open attitude toward anti-discrimination can help you get to know yourself better

Self-reflection is a vital part of anti-discrimination work. In what cases do you benefit from power structures; in what areas are you disadvantaged? How can you use privilege to stop others from being excluded? How can you show solidarity and allyship with people who experience discrimination? This journey of self-reflection is not something you can simply check off a list. It is part of a lifelong learning process.

### 4. It can be a sound strategy to focus primarily on one characteristic, such as gender

*When Julia and Richard introduce the proposal at the board meeting, this sparks a number of discussions. Özcan asks whether it's not a little unfair to spend so much time focused on gender at the organization when all kinds of discrimination are equally important.*

This is a very common question. It is important to consider all forms of discrimination and how they relate to one another.



### The Charter for Gender Diversity in Sports can serve as a starting point for establishing a fundamental commitment to anti-discrimination at your organization

It is certainly important to consider each individual form of discrimination and privilege on its own, provided you have established a clear understanding of multiple discrimination and intersectionality. Certain factors involved in discrimination and exclusion and legal ramifications are specific to certain types of discrimination (→ EM Legal issues). We hope that the Charter for Gender Diversity in Sports and the learning process involved in implementing this Charter will serve as a stepping stone for your organization to deepen its commitment to anti-discrimination.



### Questions for consideration

- What forms of discrimination are you familiar with? Where might interpersonal discrimination take place in your organization? To what extent might people be prevented from joining your organization in the first place?
- Which forms of discrimination do you discuss at your organization? How do these forms of discrimination relate to discrimination against TIN people?
- How could you apply this critical attitude toward discrimination in your considerations regarding the Charter?
- What framework for self-reflection and individual consideration of privilege could you establish at your organization?
- Does your organization have a dedicated contact person for discrimination or a feedback system? (→ EM 6 Protection))

### Additional information:

- LesMiGraS: Multiple Discrimination: [lesmigras.de/en/information#what-is-multiple-discrimination](https://lesmigras.de/en/information#what-is-multiple-discrimination)
- What Is Intersectionality? | The Advocate | Queer 101 (YouTube video). [youtube.com/watch?v=EXJ4Dbdm1ks](https://youtube.com/watch?v=EXJ4Dbdm1ks)
- i-Päd Competency Center - Respect Guide: [i-paed-berlin.de/de/Downloads/](https://i-paed-berlin.de/de/Downloads/) (German only)

