

# Discrimination

## RACISM

### Joella's Story

"Every time I'm walking home, we get these random insults, like go back to your own country monkey."

Joella (aged 16) raised the issue of racism, with the Taoiseach in 2017.

"The n-word is really common at this point, which is really upsetting and it's something I grew to accept, and I just don't want anyone else to think that this behaviour is normal, it's just not normal, it's wrong and something should be done about it. Sometimes I even laugh about it, and I just walk. It's something that I had to adjust to. Thousands of people around Ireland have to adjust to this behaviour. Going home, telling your mam, 'Mam, this is happening to me while I'm walking from school or to school', and she'll be like, 'Joella, you can't really do anything about it, you just have to you know get on with and walk', and I'm like 'it's unacceptable'."

Joella finds the best way to deal with racism in school is to raise awareness, educate people and call it out when it happens. She finds standing up for herself builds her confidence and resilience.



## RACISM:

- Racism is an organized form of oppression which is used by members of one race, in order to discriminate against members of another race.
- Racism and prejudice are learned behaviours.
- “Over the past few decades, genetic research has revealed that all humans are closely related. Everyone has the same collection of genes, but with the exception of identical twins, everyone has slightly different versions of some of them. Studies of this genetic diversity have allowed scientists to reconstruct a kind of family tree of human populations. That has revealed in a very real sense, all people alive today are Africans. All non-Africans today, the genetics tells us, are descended from a few thousand humans who left Africa maybe 60,000 years ago. There is more genetic diversity in Africa than in all other continents combined.” ([National Geographic](#))
- “Irish anti-black racism has its roots in the global legacies of colonialism and slavery, as evidenced in the language and stereotypes used. It can manifest as individual acts of racism such as the use of racist epithets, or in a series of so-called “microaggressions” like constantly being asked “where are you really from?”. It is also manifest in the widespread structural discrimination, for example in the jobs market, as discrimination in a shop or as physical racist assaults. All of these have a corrosive effect on a person’s physical and mental well being and safety, as well as of their family.” ([INAR](#))
- A 2020 [Report](#) by the Ombudsman for Children’s Office found that children living in Direct Provision dealt with racism regularly. They were excluded by “both their peers and their teachers”, with teachers often failing

to stop abuse and some contributing to the children’s exclusion. “This exclusion ranged from not being selected by their peers and teachers for activities such as sports teams, presentations or projects, to serious allegations of racial abuse.” “These incidents are affecting the children’s ability to fully participate in school life, with some children explaining that they do not participate in class because their peers will not work with them and others explaining that their exclusion means they will not speak or answer questions in class,”

### DISCUSSION:

1. How does racism affect you?
2. How do you think racism might affect people who suffer directly from it?
3. How does racism impact on society?
4. How does your school prevent and respond to racism?
5. What steps can you or will you take to fight racism: friends, family, school, community, nationally, globally?

### HUMAN RIGHTS LAWS:

[The United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination \(ICERD\)](#) defines racism as: ‘Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.’

### IRISH LAW

The Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act (1989) is considered inadequate to effectively address hate speech.

Equality Commission Act (2014)

The Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015

[The Equal Status Acts 2000–2015](#)

## ACTION:

1. **LISTEN AND EDUCATE YOURSELF** Pay attention to the voices of people who experience racism every day – listen to friends, classmates, neighbours, and community leaders. Learn more about the historical context of racial prejudice and discrimination.
  2. **RAISE AWARENESS** Share these resources with your community to help them learn how they can play a role in ending racism and discrimination.
  3. **CHALLENGE DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM** It happens around us all the time. Often it is in the form of jokes, stereotypes or insensitive comments and questions from our friends, family members or colleagues. If you witness it, talk to them about it -if you feel safe to do so.
  4. **REPORT IT** If you see someone being bullied or harassed, intervene if it is safe to do so. Report online abuse.
  5. **FIND OUT** whether your school has a policy on non-discrimination and racism, safe ways to report incidents, support services, and programmes or initiatives to promote tolerance, diversity and inclusion. If not, work with other students and school management to start a discussion and identify ways in which your place of learning can become a safer and more empowering environment for all students.
    - [Let’s Fight Racism](#)
    - Become a [Yellow Flag school](#)
    - Join the [#LoveNotHate Campaign](#)
    - Read ‘Born a Crime’ by Trevor Noah
    - [Learn about racism and the history of colonialism](#)
    - [INAR Race as a social construct](#)
- Suggestions from UNICEF’s [VOY.com](#)

# Discrimination

## GENDER/NONBINARY

“In our community, boys and girls are not treated equally. But there should be equality between boys and girls because there’s no difference between us. I have a brain, just like any boy. I can think, I can create, I can be whatever I want to be just like a boy. One of the things I’ve found that is very strange is that boys are allowed to ride bicycles inside the camp – the community allows it – but when girls ride bicycles, it becomes a shameful thing. I find it really strange that girls have to walk.

“Another difference is that girls have more responsibilities than boys. The girls have to go and collect water, but the boys don’t. Girls have to cook and clean the house. Why is that? Why don’t boys have these responsibilities and why do they have the luxury of riding a bicycle around?

“The biggest challenge for girls my age is when their family makes them get married without completing their studies. They say studying is not good for girls or will not give them anything. The only way for a girl is to belong in her husband’s home. But I say they are completely wrong. With studying we get power and are more useful for societies.

“I want my dreams to be real. My dream is to be an astronomer because I like space. And an astronaut too. I hope to discover new planets and new kinds of galaxies.

“It is an exceptional thing. No one here has the same dream. And I love to be exceptional. And one of a kind. In our society no one has the same dreams and if I get this dream, I would be the first woman from Syria to go to the moon. And I want to see our planet from the moon and what the earth looks like. And I want to see the stars closer.

“If I get the chance, I see myself working in one of two places: at NASA in America or a university in Britain studying astronomy. There is nothing impossible and I will try. I will study very hard to make it happen. If I don’t get the help or support, I need, I’m going to remain in the camp just dreaming.” Bodoor, 17



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## GENDER:

- 12 million girls are married before the age of 18, each year. That is nearly one girl every 2 seconds that loses her childhood. 1 in 5 women was married before their 18th birthday. (UNICEF)
- Each year, over 4 million girls are at risk of undergoing FGM. Most girls are cut before the age of 15. (UNICEF)
- Around the world, 132 million girls are out of school, girls' access to education is the lowest worldwide, especially at the secondary level. (UNICEF)
- Today 126 million baby girls are believed to be missing as a result of gender-biased sex selection. (UNFPA)
- Conflicts and natural disasters exacerbate gender inequalities, particularly against women and girls. (UN)
- Ireland scores 71.3 and ranks 7<sup>th</sup> on the [Gender Equality Index](#)
- It's still illegal to be LGBTQ in 64 UN member States. In Brunei, Iran, Mauritania, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, the death penalty is imposed across the country.
- The vast majority of trans and gender-diverse persons in the world do not have access to gender recognition by the State. This creates a legal vacuum and a climate that fosters stigma and prejudice

## DISCUSSION:

- 1.How does this discrimination affect you?
- 2.How do you think this form of discrimination affects people who suffer directly from it?
- 3.Does this form of discrimination impact your school?
- 4.How does your school respond to this form of discrimination?
- 5.What steps will you take to fight this form of discrimination among: friends, family, school, community, nationally, globally?

## HUMAN RIGHTS LAW:

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women or its Optional Protocol 18 December 1979

### Article 2

States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake: (a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle; (b) To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women;

### Article 10

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women: ... (b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, and ....school premises and equipment of the same quality; (c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods;

### IRISH LAW

[Equal Status Acts 2000-2012](#)

[Gender Recognition Act](#) 2015 provides a process enabling trans people to achieve full legal recognition of their preferred gender and allows for the acquisition of a new birth certificate that reflects this change. It allows individuals over 18 to self-declare their own gender identity. Those aged 16-17 can apply to be legally recognised.

## ACTION:

**1. LISTEN AND EDUCATE YOURSELF** Pay attention to the voices of people who experience discrimination every day – listen to friends, classmates, neighbours, and community leaders. Learn more about the global context of discrimination.

**2. RAISE AWARENESS** Share these resources with your community to help them learn how they can play a role in ending gender discrimination.

**3. CHALLENGE DISCRIMINATION** It happens around us all the time. Often it is in the form of jokes, stereotypes or insensitive comments and questions from our friends, family members or colleagues. If you witness it, talk to them about it -if you feel safe to do so.

**4. REPORT IT** If you see someone being bullied or harassed, intervene if it is safe to do so. Report online abuse.

**5. FIND OUT** whether your school has a policy on non-discrimination, safe ways to report incidents, support services, and programmes or initiatives to promote tolerance, diversity and inclusion. If not, work with other students and school management to start a discussion and identify ways in which your place of learning can become a safer and more empowering environment for all students.

- Join The [#HeforShe](#) campaign
- Read: [The EU and Irish women](#)
- Raise Awareness: [Gender Equality lessons 'BEING LGBT IN SCHOOL' A Resource for Post-Primary Schools to Prevent Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying and Support LGBT Students](#)

## Discrimination

### SEXUAL ORIENTATION

When Moisés turned 18, his life changed forever – he tested positive for HIV. The news dealt him a heavy blow, but after time and support from his loving mother, he began to rebuild. “Heads up,” she would say constantly.

Every Friday and Saturday night, Moisés heads downtown to a popular LGBT site where he and his colleagues are ready to perform HIV tests and provide care and assistance to whomever seeks information about STDs and HIV.

This exchange of expertise with other youths and everything he has learned through this process has given Moisés strength. “Besides knowing it’s possible to live with HIV, now I feel I’m in control. I feel I’m in charge of my life.”

Today, when he is not studying to take the admission test to the University, Moisés is “clearing his head”, learning Italian and French or dreaming of living abroad and continuing to help people. “This desire I have to help people is something that moves me... I want to help people through health care,” he says. Moisés also dreams of financially supporting his family and improving their income.

For now, he says, “I’m under construction. Every day I paint a bit of that Moisés portrait. For now, all I can say is that Moisés is Moisés. I am a person beyond any label. Above all, I’m a person.”



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## SEXUAL ORIENTATION:

- “More than a third of the world’s countries criminalize consensual, loving same-sex relationships, entrenching prejudice and putting millions of people at risk of blackmail, arrest and imprisonment.” ([UNFE.org](http://UNFE.org))
- “Despite major changes in laws and norms surrounding the issue of same-sex marriage and the rights of LGBT people around the world, public opinion on the acceptance of homosexuality in society remains sharply divided by country, region and economic development.” According to [PEW research](http://PEW_research)
- In one generation, Ireland as a country has gone from having more conservative attitudes on LGBT issues to much more liberal views.
- In May 2015, Ireland became the first country to vote to legalise same-sex marriage.
- Leo Varadkar, who came out as gay in 2015, was appointed as Ireland's Taoiseach becoming the fourth openly gay head of state/government in the world.
- Same-sex relations are still criminalized in 69 countries, which means that, as of today, over 2 billion people live in countries where being gay or lesbian is illegal.

## DISCUSSION:

1. How does discrimination based on sexual orientation affect you?
2. How do you think discrimination based on sexual orientation might affect people who suffer directly from it?
3. How does this issue impact people globally?
4. How might discrimination based on sexual orientation affect children’s rights?
5. How does your school prevent or respond to discrimination based on sexual orientation?
6. What steps can you or will you take to fight this form of discrimination: friends, family, school, community, nationally, globally?

## HUMAN RIGHTS LAW:

United Nations human rights treaty bodies have confirmed that sexual orientation and gender identity are included among prohibited grounds of discrimination under international human rights law. This means that it is unlawful to make any distinction of people’s rights based on the fact that they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT), just as it is unlawful to do so based on skin colour, race, sex, religion or any other status. This position has been confirmed repeatedly in decisions and general guidance issued by several treaty bodies, such as the United Nations Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee against Torture, and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. ([UNFE.org](http://UNFE.org))

## IRISH LAW

- The Thirty-fourth Amendment of the Constitution (Marriage Equality) Act 2015 amended the Constitution of Ireland to permit marriage to be contracted by two persons without distinction as to their sex.
- Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 and the Adoption (Amendment) Act 2017 means that same-sex couples are in law permitted to adopt
- Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is outlawed by the Employment Equality Act, 1998) and the Equal Status Act
- The Government has confirmed a referendum on gender equality will be held later this year. The ballot will propose whether the outmoded reference to 'women in the home' should be removed from the Constitution in line with the recommendations of the Citizens Assembly on Gender Equality.

## ACTION:

**1. LISTEN AND EDUCATE YOURSELF** Pay attention to the voices of people who experience discrimination based on their sexuality or gender identity – listen to friends, classmates, neighbours, and community leaders.

**2. RAISE AWARENESS** Share these resources with your community to help them learn how they can play a role in ending discrimination.

**3. CHALLENGE DISCRIMINATION** It happens around us all the time. Often it is in the form of jokes, stereotypes or insensitive comments and questions from our friends, family members or colleagues. If you witness it, talk to them about it -if you feel safe to do so.

**4. REPORT IT** If you see someone being bullied or harassed, intervene if it is safe to do so. Report online abuse.

**5. FIND OUT** whether your school has a policy on non-discrimination, safe ways to report incidents, support services, and programmes or initiatives to promote tolerance, diversity and inclusion. If not, work with other students and school management to start a discussion and identify ways in which your place of learning can become a safer and more empowering environment for all students.

- [Free and Equal United Nations](http://Free and Equal United Nations)
- [A global look at LGBT discrimination](http://A global look at LGBT discrimination)
- Campaign with [LGBT Ireland](http://LGBT Ireland)

Suggestions from UNICEF’s [VOY.com](http://VOY.com)

# Discrimination

## DISABILITY

Sajad Al-Faraji, 16, who fled conflict in Basra, Iraq with his brother, Zein Alabdien Al-Faraji, 14, his sister, Houda Al-Malik 26, and his mother Mona Al-Hammoudi, 56, lost the use of his legs during an operation on his lower back when he was one month old in Iraq. His family arrived in Vienna in late 2015 after a harrowing trip through the Balkans.

Sajad plays basketball during a sports session at the Dr. Adolf Lorenz School in the Heitzing district of Vienna, Austria. The Austrian state-run school is for children with special needs. Sajad was accepted at the school after a twelve month wait following his arrival in Vienna. Now, after just a year at the school, this is the last year he can attend due to his age.

Sajad is deeply frustrated with the long wait in the asylum process in Austria and as an escape, he spends between two and three hours a day playing games on his phone. "I didn't know about Europe, but now I've met so many people, and seen many things, and I'm one step closer to my dreams. My dream now is to finish school and learn very good German. I want to be with the Austrian people, I want to work as a chef, I want to travel." Sajad said, pausing, "I want to have a life like others."



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## DISABILITY:

- “Children with disabilities are one of the most marginalized and excluded groups in society. Facing daily discrimination in the form of negative attitudes, lack of adequate policies and legislation, they are effectively barred from realizing their rights to healthcare, education, and even survival.” ([UNICEF](#))
- Around 15 per cent of the world’s population, or estimated 1 billion people, live with disabilities. They are the world’s largest minority. ([WHO](#))
- Estimates suggest that there are at least 93 million children with disabilities in the world, but numbers could be much higher. They are often likely to be among the poorest members of the population. They are less likely to attend school, access medical services, or have their voices heard in society. Their disabilities also place them at a higher risk of physical abuse, and often exclude them from receiving proper nutrition or humanitarian assistance in emergencies. ([UNICEF](#))
- 643,000 people in Ireland are living with a disability ([IHERC](#)) Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental intellectual or sensory impairments.
- Persons with disabilities are almost twice as likely to face discrimination or have their human rights restricted in some way.

## DISCUSSION:

1. What are the different forms of disability?
2. What is a sensory disability?
3. How does disability affect you?
4. How do you think disability might affect people who suffer directly from it?

## DISCUSSION continued:

1. Some people living with a disability refer to it as their superpower, what do you think this means?
2. How does your school respond to the rights of people with a disability?
3. How does society respond to and support people living with disability?
4. What steps can you or will you take to fight for the rights of people living with disability: friends, family, school, community, nationally, globally?

## HUMAN RIGHTS LAW:

[The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#) is a human rights treaty adopted by the United Nations in 2006 which exists to protect and reaffirm the human rights of disabled people. The Irish Government signed the Convention in 2007 and in March 2018 the Convention was ratified.

Recognizing the valued existing and potential contributions made by persons with disabilities to the overall well-being and diversity of their communities, and that the promotion of the full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of their human rights and fundamental freedoms and of full participation by persons with disabilities will result in their enhanced sense of belonging and in significant advances in the human, social and economic development of society and the eradication of poverty, (Preamble of CRPD)

## IRISH LAW

[Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004](#)  
[Disability Act 2005](#)  
[Equal Status Acts 2000-2012](#)  
[National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017/2021](#)

## ACTION:

1. **LISTEN AND EDUCATE YOURSELF** Pay attention to the voices of people who live with disabilities every day – listen to friends, classmates, neighbours, and community leaders.
2. **RAISE AWARENESS** Share these resources with your community to help them learn how they can play a role in ending racism and discrimination.
3. **CHALLENGE DISCRIMINATION** It happens around us all the time. Often it is in the form of jokes, stereotypes or insensitive comments and questions from our friends, family members or colleagues. If you witness it, talk to them about it -if you feel safe to do so.
4. **REPORT IT** If you see someone being bullied or harassed, intervene if it is safe to do so. Report online abuse.
5. **FIND OUT** whether your school has a policy on non-discrimination, safe ways to report incidents, support services, and programmes or initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion. If not, work with other students and school management to start a discussion and identify ways in which your place of learning can become a safer and more empowering environment for all students.

- [My 10 Principles](#)
- Learn about it [Disability is not Inability](#)
- [Include girls with disabilities](#)
- [Write About it](#)

Suggestions from UNICEF’s [VOY.com](#)



# Discrimination

## AGE

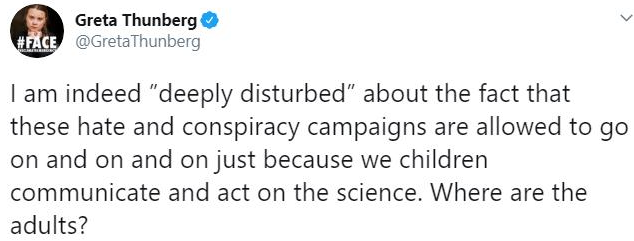
When referring to age discrimination people often think of agism as discrimination against older people, however children often face discrimination because of their age.

Historically, children were considered “the property” of their parents or caregivers and as such had no power to make decisions or challenge authority. The Convention on the Rights of the Child has changed this notion, recognising children as rights holders, who cannot be discriminated against simply because of their age. As they gain in maturity and understanding they have the right to have their opinions taken seriously, to be involved in decision making over issues that affect their lives. Adults can sometimes find it difficult to acknowledge the evolving capacity of young people and or adhere to this principle.

Young climate activists often experience this form of ageist discrimination, having their views or actions minimised or discredited because of their age.

Greta Thunberg’s powerful speeches have garnered global attention, yet some demean her by saying she is simply a mouthpiece for adults exploiting her for their own agenda.

Although Thunberg is 17, her critics, almost always refer to her as a child to undermine her message- US President Donald Trump tweeted: “She seems like a very happy young girl looking forward to a bright and wonderful future. So nice to see!”



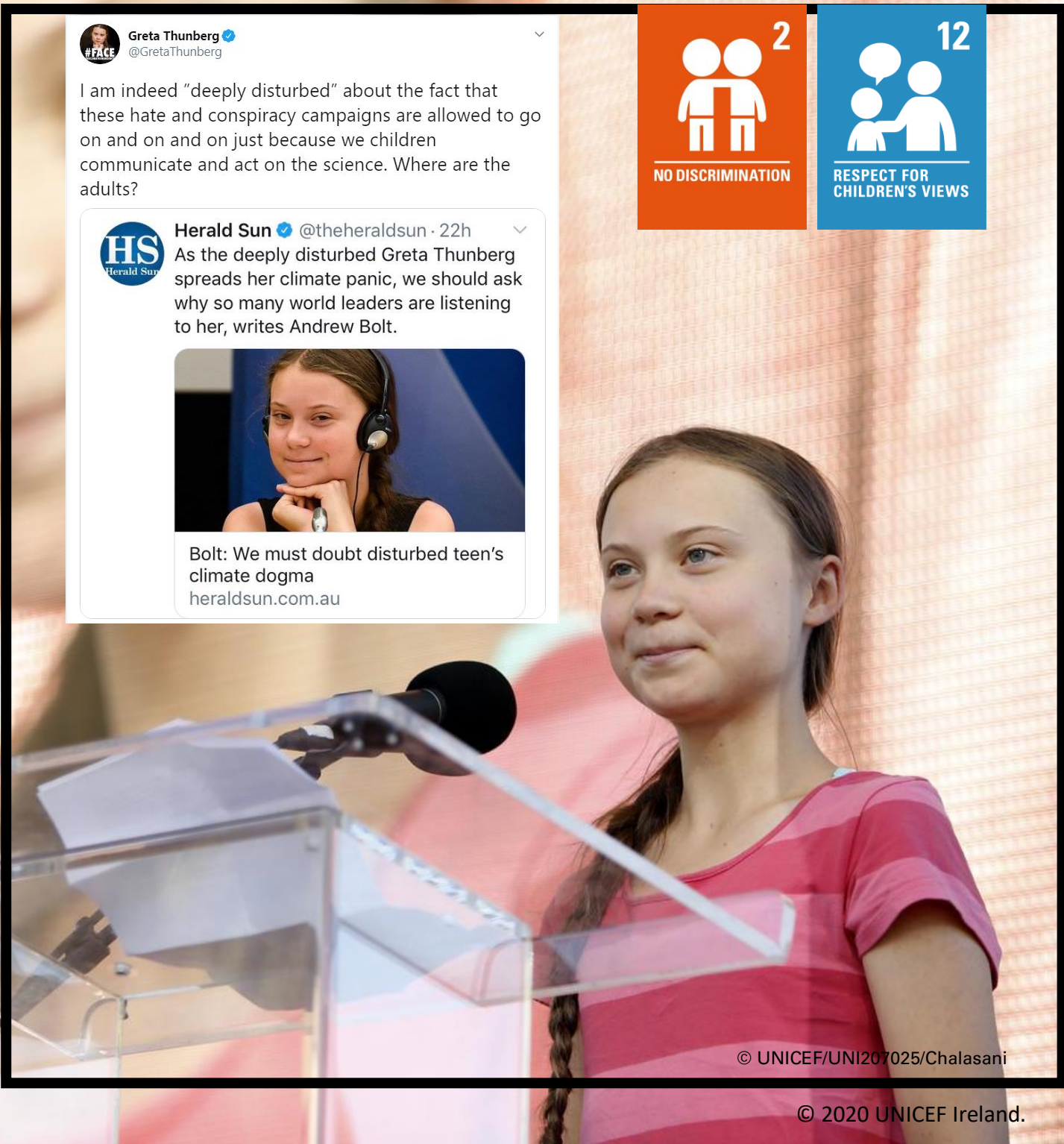
**Greta Thunberg** @GretaThunberg  
I am indeed “deeply disturbed” about the fact that these hate and conspiracy campaigns are allowed to go on and on and on just because we children communicate and act on the science. Where are the adults?



**Herald Sun** @theheraldsun · 22h  
As the deeply disturbed Greta Thunberg spreads her climate panic, we should ask why so many world leaders are listening to her, writes Andrew Bolt.



Bolt: We must doubt disturbed teen’s climate dogma  
heraldsun.com.au



## AGE DISCRIMINATION:

- Does discrimination against children happen simply because of their age? Do people's words, actions, thoughts, or ideas sometimes favour adults over children.
- Are parent's, rights more important than children's rights?
- Do professionals (guards, teachers, shopkeepers, bus drivers etc). who have contact, work with, or for children respect and genuinely listen to their views and perspectives or do some use their "power and authority" over children simply because they are older?
- Why are children more likely to live in poverty than adults. Children comprise one third of the global population, but they represent half of those struggling to survive on less than \$1.90 a day. (UNICEF) Are their gaps or underfunded health and social services for children?
- Are children catered for in our cities and communities. Do they have the facilities and places to go to support their growth and development?
- Are adults and governments making decisions that could harm children's future?

## DISCUSSION:

1. How does ageism affect you?
2. Have you ever been treated unfairly or disrespectfully because of your age?
3. How do you think ageism is experienced by other people?
4. How does ageism impact on children's rights in society?
5. Should Ireland lower the voting age to 16 as recommended by the European Union?
6. What steps can you or will you take to fight ageism: friends, family, school, community, nationally, globally?

## HUMAN RIGHTS LAW:



Ireland committed to protect and promote children's rights when it signed up to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1992.

Children have historically, been given fewer rights than adults. They were seen primarily as the responsibility of their parents and guardians, who had a great deal of autonomy in deciding how they would be treated.

However, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has begun to change this view globally. Children's rights in Ireland over the last decade have been reinforced particularly since the approval of the Thirty-First Amendment of the Constitution (Children) Act 2012. This makes the child's best interests a primary consideration in all action relating to that child.

## IRISH LAW

Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997  
Education Welfare Act 2000,  
Children Act 2001,  
Ombudsman for Children Act 2002,  
Children First Act 2015,  
Children and Family Relationships Act 2015,  
[Equal Status Acts 2000-2012](#),  
Child and Family Agency Act 2013,  
Section 31 of the Data Protection Act 2018.

## ACTION:

1. **LISTEN AND EDUCATE YOURSELF** about discrimination and in particular ageism. Understand more about Children's Rights and how they apply to you.
2. **RAISE AWARENESS** Share these resources with your community to help them learn how they can play a role in ending age discrimination.
3. **CHALLENGE DISCRIMINATION based on age.**
4. **REPORT IT** If you see someone being bullied or harassed, especially a child or young person intervene if it is safe to do so. Report online abuse.
5. **FIND OUT** whether your school has a policy on children's rights. If not, work with other students and school management to start a discussion and identify ways in which your place of learning can become a more empowering environment for all students.

Suggestions from UNICEF's [VOY.com](http://VOY.com)

# Discrimination

## RELIGION

Rohingya refugee children and women sit on a makeshift raft made of logs, bamboo poles and jerrycans as it is brought to shore after they crossed the Naf River, which demarcates the border between Myanmar and Bangladesh. 12 November 2017.

### What is the Rohingya crisis?

Hundreds of thousands of terrified Rohingya refugees began flooding onto the beaches and paddy fields of southern Bangladesh in August 2017. Almost 60 per cent of whom were children. As they came across the border from Myanmar into Bangladesh, they brought with them accounts of the unspeakable violence and brutality that had forced them to flee.

By September 2019, around 914,000 Rohingya were estimated to need assistance, with the Cox's Bazar District hosting more than 850,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar. Those fleeing attacks and violence in the 2017 exodus joined around 300,000 people already in Bangladesh from previous waves of displacement, effectively forming the world's largest refugee camp.

For the past 40 years, Bangladesh has provided shelter to Rohingya refugees from Myanmar following five separate outbreaks of violence and persecution. ([UNICEF.org](https://www.unicef.org))



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## RELIGION:

- The Religious Discrimination Declaration considers "...infringement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or whatever belief, have brought, directly or indirectly, wars and great suffering to mankind, especially where they serve as a means of foreign interference in the internal affairs of other States and amount to kindling hatred between peoples and nations..."
- In the past six years alone, there have been two mass atrocities in particular: In 2014 the Yazidi, (a Kurdish religious minority found primarily in northern Iraq, south-eastern Turkey, and northern Syria) were forced to flee Iraq by Islamic State militants. In 2016 The Rohingya crisis, described in the photograph.
- 64 nations representing nearly 70 percent of the world's 6.8 billion people live in countries with high restrictions on religion, the brunt of which often falls on religious minorities. ([Pew](#))
- The vast majority (96%) of primary schools in Ireland are owned and under the patronage of religious denominations and approximately 90% of these schools are owned and under the patronage of the Catholic Church. ([DES](#)) In 2016 Roman Catholics accounted for 78.3 per cent of the de facto population compared with 84.2 per cent in 2011.
- "In the Name of the Most Holy Trinity, from Whom is all authority and to Whom, as our final end, all actions both of men and States must be referred, We, the people of Éire, humbly acknowledging all our obligations to our Divine Lord, Jesus Christ, who sustained our fathers through centuries of trial," (Constitution of Ireland)

## DISCUSSION:

1. How does religious discrimination affect you?
2. How do you think religious discrimination might affect people who suffer directly from it?
3. Do Protestants, non-Christians or atheists face discrimination in Ireland?
4. Should public schools be run by religious patron bodies?
5. How might people representing religious minorities access schools catering for their religion?
6. How does religious discrimination impact on society or the wider world?
7. What steps can you or will you take to fight racism: friends, family, school, community, nationally, globally?

## HUMAN RIGHTS LAW:

**Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief 25 November 1981 Article 3**  
*Discrimination between human beings on the grounds of religion or belief constitutes an affront to human dignity and a disavowal of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and shall be condemned as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and enunciated in detail in the International Covenants on Human Rights, and as an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations between nations.*

## IRISH LAW:

[Equal Status Acts 2000-2012](#)

## ACTION:

- 1. LISTEN AND EDUCATE YOURSELF** Pay attention to the voices of people who experience religious discrimination every day – listen to friends, classmates, neighbours, and community leaders. Learn more about the historical context religious persecution around the world,
- 2. RAISE AWARENESS** Share these resources with your community to help them learn how they can play a role in ending discrimination.
- 3. CHALLENGE DISCRIMINATION** It happens around us all the time. Often it is in the form of jokes, stereotypes or insensitive comments and questions from our friends, family members or colleagues. If you witness it, talk to them about it -if you feel safe to do so.
- 4. REPORT IT** If you see someone being bullied or harassed, intervene if it is safe to do so. Report online abuse.
- 5. FIND OUT** whether your school has a policy on non-discrimination that includes religious discrimination, safe ways to report incidents, support services, and programmes or initiatives to promote tolerance, diversity and inclusion. If not, work with other students and school management to start a discussion and identify ways in which your place of learning can become a safer and more empowering environment for all students.
  - Become a [Yellow Flag school](#)

Suggestions from UNICEF's [VOY.com](#)

# Discrimination

## ETHNICITY (MINORITIES)

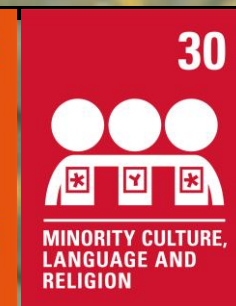
The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (the Commission) has produced extensive research demonstrating consistent and significant levels of discrimination against minority ethnic groups in Ireland. Of particular note is “...a demonstrable history of chronic racism toward Travellers, a minority ethnic community that is indigenous to Ireland.” ([IHREC](#))

Travellers represent one of Ireland’s ethnic minorities. Their unique ethnic identity was recognised by the Irish Government in 2017. As of 2016, there were over 30,000 Travellers living in Ireland, representing .7% of the population. ([CSO](#))

They are almost 10 times more likely to deal with instances of discrimination than white Irish members of the general population. Irish Travellers were 22 times more likely to face discrimination when availing of private services, particularly in shops, pubs and restaurants. ([ERSI](#))

Just 13.3 per cent of Traveller females were educated to upper secondary or above compared with 69.1 per cent of the general population. ([CSO](#))

167 Irish Travellers held a third level qualification in 2016, albeit up from 89 in 2011. ([CSO](#))



## MINORITIES:

Everyone wants to belong. Defining ourselves by a cultural or ethnic identity is a natural way to feel that belonging. However, in countries with ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or minorities of indigenous origin, their identity can often be tied to human rights issues, especially when a more powerful majority group seeks to impose its culture on less powerful minority groups. Minorities face multiple forms of discrimination resulting in marginalisation and exclusion, socially, economically, politically and culturally.

## IN IRELAND:

- **Main religions:** Roman Catholic 3,729,100 (78.3 per cent), Church of Ireland (Anglican) 126,400, Orthodox 62,200, Other Christian 37,400, Presbyterian 24,200, Apostolic or Pentecostal 13,400, Muslim 63,400, Hindu 14,300 (2016 Census).
- **Main ethnic groups:** White Irish 3,854,200 (82 per cent), Other White 446,700, Other Asian 79,300, Black Irish or Black African 57,900, Irish Travellers 31,000, Chinese 19,400, Other Black 6,800 (2016 Census).
- As of 2016, 810,400 Irish **residents were born outside Ireland**, amounting to 17.3 per cent of the population, with Romanians, Brazilians and Spanish among the fastest growing national groups (2016 Census).
- There are 1.76 million people who **can speak Irish**: 73,800 of these speak it daily, 111,500 weekly, 586,500 less often and 421,300 reported never speaking it (2016 Census).

## DISCUSSION:

1. Are you a member of a minority group in Ireland? How does this affect you?
2. How might a member of a minority group feel about the majority?

3. How do you think the discrimination of minorities affects people who suffer from it?
4. How does cultural diversity impact on society?
5. What steps can you or will you take to fight the discrimination of minorities: think friends, family, school, community, nationally, globally?

## HUMAN RIGHTS LAW:

**International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** Article 27 - In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.

**Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities** 1. States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity. 2. States shall adopt appropriate legislative and other measures to achieve those ends.

**UNCRC** Article 30 In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

## IRISH LAW

[Equal Status Acts 2000-2012](#) Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989, the Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977, the Employment Equality Acts.

## ACTION:

**1. LISTEN AND EDUCATE YOURSELF** Pay attention to the voices of people who experience discrimination every day – listen to friends, classmates, neighbours, and community leaders. Learn more about minorities in Ireland and their rights.

**2. RAISE AWARENESS** Share these resources with your community to help them learn how they can play a role in ending discrimination.

**3. CHALLENGE DISCRIMINATION** It happens around us all the time. Often it is in the form of jokes, stereotypes or insensitive comments and questions from our friends, family members or colleagues. If you witness it, talk to them about it -if you feel safe to do so.

**4. REPORT IT** If you see someone being bullied or harassed, intervene if it is safe to do so. Report online abuse.

**5. FIND OUT** whether your school has a policy on non-discrimination safe ways to report incidents, support services, and programmes or initiatives to promote tolerance, diversity and inclusion. If not, work with other students and school management to start a discussion and identify ways in which your place of learning can become a safer and more empowering environment for all students.

- Learn more about Travellers from [Pavee Point](#)
- Learn more about [minorities](#)
- Become a [Yellow Flag school](#)

Suggestions from UNICEF's [VOY.com](#)

# Discrimination

## SOCIAL CLASS

The 1916 Irish Proclamation promised to cherish all of the children of the nation equally. Has that been the reality or do certain children fair better than others because of their family circumstance or background?

The Economic and Social Research Institute investigates this question, in a publication entitled, "Cherishing All the Children Equally" Their research leads them to conclude, "children's wellbeing in contemporary Ireland is largely shaped by parental circumstances and social position, resulting in persistent inequalities."

The authors found, social inequalities interfered with children's educational health and overall wellbeing. "The attitudes, dispositions and language skills of 5-year-olds differ according to social class background, mother's education and household income." In relation to child health, "Overweight and obesity were also found to be strongly linked to social disadvantage. Lastly, "Economic vulnerability, particularly where it was experienced on a persistent basis across two rounds of the study, was associated with a detrimental effect on the child's socio-emotional well-being." ([Cherishing all the Children Equally](#))

Social class should not determine the wellbeing outcomes of children in any country. This is a form of discrimination that happens in all countries around the world.



## **SOCIAL CLASS:**

- Socio-economic status – refers to a person’s position in society. A common understanding of this would be your social class - upper, upper-middle, middle, working and lower.
- Class discrimination, or classism, is prejudice or discrimination on the basis of social class. It includes beliefs, attitudes, behaviours, systems of policies and practices that are set up to benefit the upper class at the expense of the lower class.
- This prejudice can be based on the perception of someone’s wealth, education, appearance, accent or job, and is usually supported by social stereotypes about particular social classes.
- The wealthiest 10% in Ireland own about 40% of the country’s wealth.
- 1 in 7 children in Ireland is living in a family with income below the poverty line. (UNICEF)
- Caste system is a social structure that divides different groups into ranked categories. Members of “higher” castes have a greater social status than individuals of a “lower” caste.

## **DISCUSSION:**

1. Do you consider yourself a member of a socially or economically disadvantaged group in Ireland? How does this affect you?
2. Do you believe that you live in a fair and inclusive society? Yes/No Why?
3. How do you think class discrimination affects people who suffer from it.
4. How do class divides impact on communities, national and globally?
5. What steps can you or will you take to fight social disadvantage and the discrimination that stems from social class: think friends, family, school, community, nationally, globally?

## **HUMAN RIGHTS LAW:**

### **The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), that Ireland ratified in 1989,**

Article 2 ensures non-discrimination with regard to rights recognized in the ICCPR, Article 26 provides for equality before the law and a general prohibition of discrimination. Both Articles contain an open list of discrimination grounds and make explicit reference to, among others, social origin, property and birth.

**International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)** a state must take steps “to the maximum of its available resources” to progressively realise the Economic Social and Cultural Rights. 2. The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to guarantee that the rights enunciated in the present Covenant will be exercised without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights published its latest Concluding Observations on Ireland in July 2015. In this, the Committee regretted that no steps have been taken to incorporate the ICESCR into domestic law and, in particular given the disproportionately adverse effects the austerity measures had on disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups, that domestic legislation does not provide protection against discrimination on all grounds of discrimination prohibited by the ICESCR.

### **IRISH LAW**

The former [Equality Rights Alliance](#) had called for a legislation protecting against socio economic discrimination.

## **ACTION:**

**1. LISTEN AND EDUCATE YOURSELF** Pay attention to the voices of people who experience discrimination – listen to friends, classmates, neighbours, and community leaders.

**2. RAISE AWARENESS** Share these resources with your community to help them learn how they can play a role in ending discrimination.

**3. CHALLENGE DISCRIMINATION AND INVITE INCLUSION:** It happens around us all the time. Often it is in the form of jokes, stereotypes or insensitive comments and questions from our friends, family members or colleagues. If you witness it, talk to them about it -if you feel safe to do so.

**4. REPORT IT** If you see someone being bullied or harassed, intervene if it is safe to do so. Report online abuse.

**5. FIND OUT** whether your school has a policy on non-discrimination and inclusion, safe ways to report incidents, support services, and programmes or initiatives to promote tolerance, diversity and inclusion. If not, work with other students and school management to start a discussion and identify ways in which your place of learning can become a safer and more empowering environment for all students.

Learn more about how Ireland is divided by class, explore [Pobal’s Deprivation Indices Maps](#).

Suggestions from UNICEF’s [VOY.com](#)