



**Réseau d'action
pour l'égalité des femmes
immigrées et racisées du Québec**

10 ANS DÉJÀ!

BECOMING LEADERS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

A Workshop Aimed at Immigrant Women

**STOP
RACISM!**

**SAY NO TO
DISCRIMINATION!**



**Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada**

**Women and Gender
Equality Canada**

workshop objectives



**Develop
leadership in
regard to the
fight against
discrimination
and racism**

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INTRODUCTION

- Discrimination and racism are not unique to Quebec or Canada. They unfortunately affect all communities to varying degrees, including the immigrant communities of Quebec and Canada. It is therefore necessary to recurrently take action in order to eradicate these phenomena and thus promote a society and communities free of discrimination, and where Women's rights are respected.
- For many years, immigrant women have participated and contributed to the fights led by the feminist and trade union movement advocating for collective rights in Quebec. Consequently, their battle against sexism, discrimination and racism plays a crucial part in the demands of Quebec women's movement, which is diverse both in its components and in the struggles it wages.
- This workshop aims to help immigrant women develop important skills in their battle against discrimination and racism by building leadership and broadening their understanding of the phenomena of discrimination and racism as well as existing resources.



PART 1



Developing and Reinforcing Female Leadership

1. DEFINITIONS OF LEADERSHIP

Reminder: History of the feminist movement in Quebec and its link with the strengthening of the leadership of immigrant and racialized women

- It is “..... the power (in the sense of ability, possibility) to inspire others to get involved and take action to realize a collective ambition or achieve a common goal.”

(Bertrand Poulet), Qu'est ce que le Leadership et à quoi sert-il? <https://www.demos.fr/blog/quest-ce-que-le-leadership-et-quoi-sert-il>

- It also designates the behaviors that can be recognized in the person who performs the “function of the leader”.

House, R. J. Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies, p.15. SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, 2004



DEFINITION OF EMPOWERMENT

- "The process by which an individual, community, association, etc. takes control of events that concern them. A kind of emancipation. In French, we sometimes also hear about 'pouvoir d'agir' (meaning 'power to act'), 'capacitation', 'autonomization' or even 'empouvoirement' ('empowerment') among our Quebec friends."
- *"Born in the United States at the beginning of the 20th century in a tense climate, this concept - which women used at the time to fight for the recognition of their rights - only arrived in France more recently. It can now be applied to many other situations..."*

Raphaele Granger, *L'empowerment, un outil de management*, 2021

<https://www.manager-go.com/management/developpement-du-pouvoir-d-agir.htm>



2. INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE

- What leadership experiences have you had in your native country or in Quebec?



15 mins

EXCHANGE FOLLOWING THE INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE

- What conclusions can you draw from this exercise?



Group Exchange



10 mins

3. AREAS OF LEADERSHIP ACCORDING TO THE CHALLENGES FACED BY IMMIGRANT WOMEN

✓ **Defining the most important issues in regard to immigrant women: employment, housing, health, education, etc.**

- **Employment**

Difficulties in asserting and upgrading the education and experience acquired in the country of origin as well as experience in Quebec being a requirement for a 1st job are both important issues.

- **Access to housing is just as crucial**

Finding a first home is not always easy for some people who get a lot of rejection. Prejudices sometimes lead landlords to conclude that immigrant women have large families and will therefore make a lot of noise.

3. AREAS OF LEADERSHIP ACCORDING TO THE CHALLENGES FACED BY IMMIGRANT WOMEN

✓ Defining the most important issues in regard to immigrant women: employment, housing, health, education, etc.

- **Access to health and social services**

Studies and research emphasize that, for instance, "Language and cultural barriers are key factors that impede immigrant and refugee women's full access to health services and affect the quality of the care received."

<http://criaw-icref.ca/fr/ImmigrantandRefugeeWomen>

- **Education, a major issue**

« the non-recognition of diplomas obtained elsewhere leads to professional deskilling. (...) it generally affects qualified immigrants, particularly those with university degrees, who settle in Quebec, and even more markedly immigrant women. The comparative assessment of studies done outside Quebec with the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration (MIFI), is not recognized by employers»

<https://revuelespritlibre.org/la-reconnaissance-des-acquis-et-compétences-entre-autonomie-des-universités-et-discrimination>

Lettre d'opinion - La reconnaissance des acquis et compétences, entre autonomie des universités et discrimination systémique des personnes immigrantes, ATF, Sept 2021

3. AREAS OF LEADERSHIP ACCORDING TO THE CHALLENGES FACED BY IMMIGRANT WOMEN

✓ Areas of leadership in regard to the needs and challenges faced by female immigrants and refugees

In relation to the issues mentioned above, several resources and organizations offer the possibility for immigrant women to exercise their ability to question, defend or influence policies and/or measures that exclude them or that have negative repercussions on their development or integration into the host society.

Example: Participate in the activities of the organizations for the defense of rights or associations mentioned in part 3, or become a valued member of the RAFIQ advisory committee...



PART 2



SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE NOTIONS
Discrimination and racism

1. EXPERIENCES OF VICTIMS

Ice Breaker Activity: *Starting from experiences of discrimination and racism of participants*

Duration:



30 minutes

- ***Experiences and testimonials of participants***
- ***What understanding/definitions can you draw from this activity?***



2. DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

Within the meaning of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ) :

Discrimination is defined as :

- **“A distinction, exclusion or preference causing the obstruction or jeopardizing one’s right to equality.”**
- As stated by the CDPDJ in its Consultation report on racial profiling and its consequences, **“Discrimination is generally fueled by stereotypes and prejudices, conscious or not, which, in this case, disqualify or stigmatize individuals on account of their color, appearance or identify, real or presumed, in a group.”***

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

- According to the Canadian Human Rights Commission:
“Discrimination is when an individual is treated differently, negatively or unfavorably because of a ground of discrimination such as race, age, religion, sex, etc.”
- The laws on human rights define discrimination as distinguishing between certain people or groups based on such grounds.

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

What are the grounds of discrimination?

“Quebec is the only province that has a Charter of Rights and Freedoms that is not a simple anti-discriminatory statute, but a genuine fundamental law.

Inaugurated in 1975, the Quebec Charter of Rights and Freedoms takes precedence over other laws and has almost the status of a constitution.”

According to Article 10 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Everyone has the right to recognition and exercise, in full equality, of human rights and freedoms, without distinction, exclusion or preference based on one of the grounds cited below.

Discrimination is prohibited when it is based on :

- ✓ Race
- ✓ Color
- ✓ Sex
- ✓ Identity or gender expression
- ✓ Pregnancy
- ✓ Sexual orientation
- ✓ Marital status
- ✓ Age (except to the extent provided by law)
- ✓ Religion
- ✓ Political beliefs
- ✓ Language
- ✓ Ethnicity or nationality
- ✓ Social status
- ✓ Disability or the use of a means to compensate for said disability.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

“Reasonable accommodation is a means used to put an end to any case of discrimination based on disability, religion, age or any other ground prohibited by the Charter.

- Accommodating a person may **involve adapting a practice, or a general operating rule** or **granting an exemption** to a person in facing discrimination.

However, there is no obligation to accommodate a person in cases of **undue hardship**.

An accommodation may cause undue hardship if:

- the cost is too high for a company to absorb
- it interferes with the proper operation of the organization
- it significantly impairs the security of others or infringes on the rights of others”*.

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

WHAT IS SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION?

- According to the CDPDJ, “systemic discrimination is understood as:

[...] the sum of disproportionate exclusion effects that result from the combined effect of attitudes imbued with prejudice and stereotypes, often unconscious, and by policies and practices generally adopted without taking into account the characteristics of the members of the targeted groups by the prohibition of discrimination.”

- Systemic discrimination often has lasting effects on an identifiable group of individuals based on characteristics such as gender, age, skin color, disability, etc. In the employment system, this form of discrimination can, among other consequences, result in disproportionately disadvantageous hiring and advancement prospects, particularly for women, Aboriginal peoples, ethnic minorities, visible minorities and people with disabilities.

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

What is systemic discrimination in employment?

- In the case between Action travail des femmes (ATF) and Gaz Métro, the Human Rights Tribunal defined systemic discrimination as follows:

"The sum of disproportionate effects of exclusion which result from the combined effect of attitudes imbued with prejudice and stereotypes, often unconscious, and of policies and practices generally adopted without taking into account the characteristics of the members of groups targeted by the prohibition of discrimination."

(CDPDJ et ATF c. Gaz Métro, Tribunal des droits de la personne, paragraphe 37.)

- Systemic discrimination is a ***"situation of cumulative and dynamic inequality resulting from the interaction of practices, decisions or behaviors on the labor market, individual or institutional, having harmful effects, intended or not, on the members of groups covered by the 15 of the Charter"***

Chicha-Pontbriand, M.T. Discrimination systémique: Fondement et méthodologie des programmes d'accès à l'égalité en emploi, p. 85, Cowansville, Yves Blais, 1989

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

What are the different types of discrimination?

Direct Discrimination

- “Direct discrimination is the most rudimentary and blatant form of discrimination. It applies ‘when a person is subjected to different treatment based on a prohibited ground of discrimination, in an open and avowed manner.’”*
- Very often, there is an intent to discriminate against an individual or a group of individuals because of group characteristics, whether they be real or presumed. However, it is not necessary to demonstrate intent to conclude that there is discrimination.—**

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

The Different Types of Discrimination

Some examples :

- **Direct discrimination is open, communicative and blunt.**

Example: Refusing to rent an apartment to a person because of their origin.

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

The Different Types of Discrimination

Some examples :

Examples of direct discrimination :

- Rejecting an application because an individual belongs to an ethnic minority (discrimination based on ethnicity);
- Dismissing an employee after learning that they have HIV (discrimination based on disability);
- Refusing to rent an apartment to an individual because of their low income (discrimination based on social status);
- Denying access to young children in a restaurant (discrimination based on the marital status of the parents and the age of the children);

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

What are the different types of discrimination?

Indirect Discrimination

“(...) case where a seemingly neutral factor such as a provision, criterion or practice, cannot be so easily complied with by persons belonging to a specific group.”

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

What are the different types of discrimination?

Indirect Discrimination

“Adverse effect discrimination is a much more subtle form of discrimination than direct discrimination. **It usually occurs without the intention of discrimination.** Rather, the discriminatory situation arises from the uniform application of a norm, policy, rule or practice, which is neutral at first sight, but nevertheless has a discriminatory effect on an individual or a category. of individuals by imposing on them obligations, penalties or restrictive conditions not imposed on others. **Norms or practices may therefore have a discriminatory effect, ‘even if that effect was not expected nor intended.’”***

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

What are the different types of discrimination?

Examples of Indirect Discrimination

- Indirect discrimination is imperceptible.

Example: The use of height as a criterion for hiring is a practice that excludes women who are on average shorter than men or certain short people belonging to other groups.

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

Some Cases of Discrimination

1. *I am excluded from participating in a school trip because of my disability.*
2. *I was not hired because of my North African origins.*

Examples drawn and translated from :
<https://www.defenseurdesdroits.fr/fr/institution/competences/lutte-contre-discriminations>



DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

A Few Recent Examples

- **Example 1 : Discrimination related to disability and skin color:**

On February 2 2021, the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ) ruled and made a decision in favor of a black woman and her autistic child, in a case of neglect and abandonment.

- **Example 2 : Discrimination related to skin color:**

On December 7 2020, the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ) ruled and made a decision in favor of a family in **the case of two black children who were victims of acts of aggression and racial harassment at school.**

DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

What is racism?

- ***“Racism consists in defining a group by natural attributes, in deducing from it intellectual and moral characteristics which are valid for each of the members of this whole, whatever their action and their will, and in possibly extending these representations by practices of inferiorization and/or exclusion.”***

Micheline Labelle, un lexique du racisme, Étude sur les définitions opérationnelles relatives au racisme et aux phénomènes connexes, p.33. Centre de recherche sur l’immigration, l’ethnicité et la citoyenneté (CRIEC), 2006

- The notion of systemic racism is very controversial despite the fact that several groups currently use it. According to the CDPDJ, it is a ***“Sum of disproportionate effects of exclusion which result from the combined effect of attitudes imbued with prejudice and stereotypes, often unconscious, and of policies and practices generally adopted without taking into account the characteristics of the members of groups targeted by the prohibition of discrimination.”***

<https://www.cdpdj.qc.ca/fr/formation/accommodement/Pages/html/formes-discrimination.html>

NB: Let us note that this definition of systemic racism is the same as that of systemic discrimination advocated by the CDPDJ.



DEFINING DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (Cont.)

What is racial discrimination?

- *“(...) Any and all distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent, national or ethnic origin, which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, in conditions of equality, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social and cultural fields or in any other field of public life.”*

UN, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Article 1, GA in its resolution 2106 of December 21, 1965

In your opinion, is there a difference between the concept of racism and that of racial discrimination?

3. CASES OF DISCRIMINATION BY SECTORS

EMPLOYMENT

In the workplace, no employer can rely on a **prohibited ground of discrimination** to treat a person differently. This is determined by section 16 of the Quebec Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

- “If a job posting or public notice says ‘Women cannot apply’ or “Foreigners do not qualify,’ the message is clear...and discriminatory.”
- “Some people find themselves being denied a job or a promotion simply because they are in the wrong age group or the wrong sex, have this or that skin color or come from this or that country.”

Micheline Labelle, un lexique du racisme, Étude sur les définitions opérationnelles relatives au racisme et aux phénomènes connexes, p.28. Centre de recherche sur l'immigration, l'ethnicité et la citoyenneté (CRIEC), 2006

- “In 2005, a survey conducted by Statistics Canada among immigrant women revealed that 37% of them identified **the non-recognition of foreign qualifications and skills as well as the difficulties of access to a first work experience on Canadian soil as major obstacles to their inclusion in the labor market.**”

Statistics Canada, Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC), 2005.

CASES BY SECTORS

HOUSING

Example 1

Families are finding it increasingly difficult to rent apartments.

Published on April 18, 2021 Anne –Sophie Poirée, Journal de Montréal

<https://www.tvanouvelles.ca/2021/04/18/on-ne-veut-pas-denfants-dans-des-logements-a-louer-1>

Example 2

A participant in a study conducted by the TCRI, “confided that, ‘every time I have to look for housing, I have to drag my mother (who is a white Quebecer) with me.’ Other testimonies (from black women) had similar implications. Another participant told us, ‘I was once looking for accommodation and was told: I don't want cockroaches.’”

TCRI, Projet sur la situation des femmes immigrées et racisées au Québec: Rapport de tournée auprès des femmes immigrées et racisées, p.61, Comité de réflexion sur la situation des femmes immigrées et racisées, 2012

CASES BY SECTORS

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Example 1

The Joyce Echaquan Case: A 37-year-old indigenous woman and mother of 7 children died at the Joliette hospital in September 2020. Before her death, she broadcast a video showing the mistreatment she suffered as well as the racist and degrading remarks made to her by the care team. Her death is seen as a clear indication of anti-Indigenous racism in Quebec and Canada.

www.Ledevoir.com/societe/587114/les-dernieres-heures

Example 2

Up until very recently, children born in Quebec to parents with precarious immigration statuses were unjustly deprived of free health care.

Rapport du Protecteur du citoyen, Donner accès au régime québécois d'assurance maladie aux enfants nés au Québec de parents au statut migratoire précaire, p.4, 2018
<https://protecteurducitoyen.qc.ca/fr/enquetes/rapports-speciaux/acces-ramq-enfants-parents-statut-migratoire-precaire>

CASES BY SECTORS

EDUCATION

Example 1:

“The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board will have to pay a black mother and her two black children \$30,000 in damages for her failure to act against acts of aggression and racial harassment at school, including exposure to slurs such as the "N" word.”

A decision of the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse, Montreal, December 16, 2020,
<http://www.crarr.org>

Example 2:

“The former Marguerite-Bourgeoys School Board must pay a mother and her two black children \$65,000 in damages for acts of aggression and racial harassment at school, including insults with the word "N" and for its failure to provide young people with a school environment free of racism.”

A decision of the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse, Montreal, December 7, 2020,
<http://www.crarr.org>

PART 3



***Resources to help face
discrimination and racism***

RESSOURCES TO HELP FACE DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

In order to be informed, supported, advised and accompanied...

Employment

- Action travail femme (ATF)

Health

- Alliance des communautés culturelles pour l'égalité dans la santé et les services sociaux (ACCESSS)

Housing

- Housing Committee of the area
- FRAPRU
- Tribunal Administratif du Logement (TAL)

Education

- Center for Research-Action on Race Relations CRARR
- Canadian Race Relations Foundation



RESSOURCES TO HELP FACE DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

To file a complaint

✓ Employment

- CNESST (after the hiring process, must be already employed)

Tel : 1800 361 6477

- The Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ)

Tel : 1800 361 6477

<https://www.cdpdj.gc.ca/fr/porter-plainte/je-veux/porter-plainte-pour-discrimination-ou-harcelement>



RESSOURCES TO HELP FACE DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

To file a complaint

✓ Health

- For an internal complaint:

commissariat.plaintes.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca

- The Québec Ombudsman ensures that your rights are respected in your dealings with Québec public services. Are you dissatisfied with the services of a Quebec government department or agency? Or even an establishment of the health and social services network (2nd recourse in this case)? File a complaint with the Québec Ombudsman:

Call **1 800 463-5070** or use the form

online complaint on the following link:

<https://protecteurducitoyen.qc.ca/en/make-a-complaint/complaint-forms/online-complaint-form>



RESSOURCES TO HELP FACE DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

To file a complaint

✓ Housing

- Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ)

<https://www.cdpdj.qc.ca/fr>



DES RESSOURCES POUR Y FAIRE FACE

To file a complaint

✓ Education

- People in charge of the establishment
- Management
- Complaints Officer
- Student Ombudsman
- Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ)





Conclusion of the Workshop

- The Government of Quebec launched in December 2020 an action plan against racism entitled: **Racism in Quebec Tolerance Zero**

You can consult it at: https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/politiques_orientations/Groupe_action_racisme/RA_GroupeActionContreRacisme.pdf?1607961665

- The RAFIQ has set up an advisory committee on discrimination and racism for immigrant women since June 2021. It is possible to get involved...

Are you interested?

Members of the advisory committee and organizations consulted

- Action Travail Femmes (ATF) <https://atf.typepad.fr/>
- *Alliance des communautés culturelles pour l'égalité dans la santé et les services sociaux (ACCÉSSS)*, www.accesss.net
- Coalition of Housing Committees and Tenants Associations of Quebec (RCLALQ) www.rclalq.qc.ca
- Collectif www.cfiq.ca
- *Fédération des Communautés Culturelles de l'Estrie*, www.fccestrie.ca
- *La Maison d'Haïti*, www.mhaiti.org
- *La Maisonnée*, www.lamaisonnee.org