



Country report 2024 on anti-discrimination: highlights



Ireland



Demographic Changes & Increasing Diversity:

Ireland remains largely homogeneous but is becoming more diverse.

The 2022 Census recorded growing non-religious and ethnic minority populations, including 16,059 Roma for the first time.



Legal Framework for Anti-Discrimination:

Ireland's anti-discrimination laws include the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2021, Equal Status Acts 2000-2018, and Pensions Acts 1990-2018.



Strong but Incomplete Legal Protections:

Irish anti-discrimination laws exceed EU directives by covering additional grounds such as Traveller status.

However, multiple/intersectional discrimination is not explicitly prohibited.



Enforcement & the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC):

The WRC handles most discrimination complaints, offering mediation and legally binding decisions.

Complaints related to licensed premises (e.g., pubs) must go through the District Court, making them more costly and complex.



Challenges in Access to Justice:

Under-reporting and legal barriers (e.g., procedural complexity, lack of awareness) hinder discrimination claims.

Compensation caps (e.g., EUR 15,000 for Equal Status cases) may weaken enforcement effectiveness.



Role of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC):

IHREC promotes equality, assists litigants, and conducts legislative reviews.

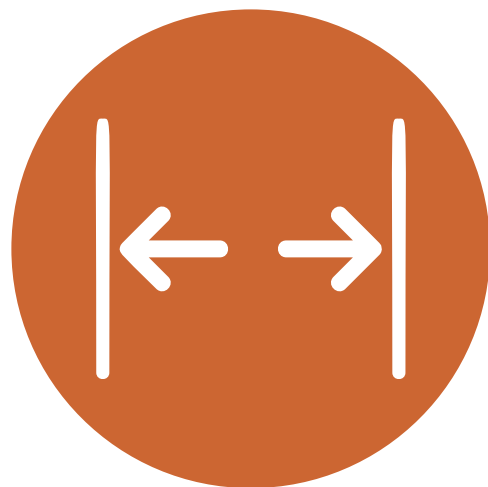
It has the power to investigate and initiate legal actions but lacks enforcement authority over non-compliant public bodies.



Disability & Employment Policies:

Reasonable accommodation is required for people with disabilities in employment and services but is subject to cost limitations.

The public sector has a mandatory disability employment quota, increasing to 6% by 2025.



Gaps in Legal Coverage:

Discrimination in social protection and social advantages is not clearly covered under the Equal Status Acts.

Employment laws contain exceptions allowing differential treatment in certain sectors (e.g., religious institutions, police, military).



Emerging Issues & Legislative Review:

A government review of anti-discrimination laws is ongoing, with IHREC proposing 55 recommendations, including intersectional discrimination recognition.

The review is expected to lead to new legislation in 2024.



Implementation & Compliance Challenges:

A 2023 IHREC study found that only 12% of public bodies fully comply with statutory human rights and equality duties.

Despite legal protections, procedural hurdles and enforcement gaps limit the effectiveness of Ireland's anti-discrimination framework.