

Experiences of racialization and discrimination of migrants from 'Central and Eastern Europe' in the labor market in Vienna

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Based on empirical findings from two recent research projects (2021-2025), the presentation focuses on experiences of racialization and discrimination identified in our interviews with EU citizens from 'Central and Eastern Europe' working in Vienna.

Our qualitative approach focuses on the micro-level processes leading to experiences of labour market discrimination. We thereby opt for a multi-perspective and longitudinal mixed-method proceeding, combining a qualitative panel study with highly-educated migrants from different CEE countries, a cross-sectional interview study with Romanian migrants with lower levels of formal education, interviews with institutional actors, and complementary ethnographic observations (for more information on research projects see: <https://inmi.univie.ac.at/>) In order to give particular attention to the interaction of various discrimination mechanisms, we apply an intersectional approach and aim to move beyond an ethnic lens and instead consider the embeddedness of migration experiences.

While several recent publications have dealt with the racialization of 'Central and Eastern' Europeans in 'Western' Europe, racism was rarely explicitly mentioned by our interviewees. Their experiences of discrimination are often ambiguous and hard to grasp (and admit) for both our research subjects and ourselves as researchers. Linguistic discrimination plays a crucial role in this regard, as it can mask racial discrimination, but is often naturalized. While our data illustrates how linguistic and racist discrimination are intertwined, the presentation aims to disentangle these two types of discrimination in

order not to lose sight of linguistic discrimination beyond racism on the one hand and to recognize the masking of racism through linguistic discrimination on the other.