Impact of bias on Human Rights (underrepresented groups)

AI4Gov

Trusted AI for Transparent Public Governance fostering Democratic Values

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Presentation Agenda

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I. Introduction
Definition and examples of bias in underrepresented groups

Definition of bias and its relevance to human rights

Bias can be defined as a predisposition or inclination towards or against a particular person, group, or idea. It involves the presence of preconceived notions, stereotypes, or prejudices that influence our thoughts, actions, and decision-making processes.

The relevance of bias to human rights is profound. Human rights are inherent to all individuals, regardless of their background, identity, or characteristics. However, bias can undermine these rights, impeding equal access to opportunities, resources, and fair treatment. It can also perpetuate inequality, discrimination, and marginalization, particularly for underrepresented groups

Examples of biases faced by underrepresented groups (1/2)

1. **Racial and ethnic bias**: Racial and ethnic minorities often experience biases such as racial profiling, stereotyping, and systemic discrimination. This bias can result in unequal treatment in various areas, including employment, housing, education, and criminal justice.

2. **Gender bias**: Women and gender minorities face biases such as sexism, gender stereotypes, and unequal treatment in the workplace, politics, and everyday life. This bias can limit their opportunities for career advancement, leadership roles, and economic empowerment.

3. **Sexual orientation bias**: Homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. This bias can lead to social exclusion, unequal access to healthcare, employment discrimination, and denial of rights.

Examples of biases faced by underrepresented groups (2/2)

4. **Disability bias**: Also known as ableism, limiting access and opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Ableism is a word for unfairly favouring non-disabled people. It also means prioritising the needs of non-disabled people. In an ableist society, it's assumed that the "normal" way to live is as a non-disabled person.

5. **Age bias**: Both younger and older individuals can experience biases based on their age. Young people may face ageism and be underestimated or dismissed due to perceived lack of experience. Older individuals may encounter ageism in employment, healthcare, and social contexts, limiting their opportunities and contributions.

6. **Religious bias**: Also known as religious discrimination, encompasses prejudiced attitudes and unequal treatment based on an individual's religious beliefs or affiliations. One example of religious bias is employment discrimination, where individuals may face unfair treatment during the hiring process or in the workplace

II. Legal Framework
EU regulations on human rights protection

EU regulations on human rights protection (1/2)

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

2. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

3. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (2016)

4. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

5. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
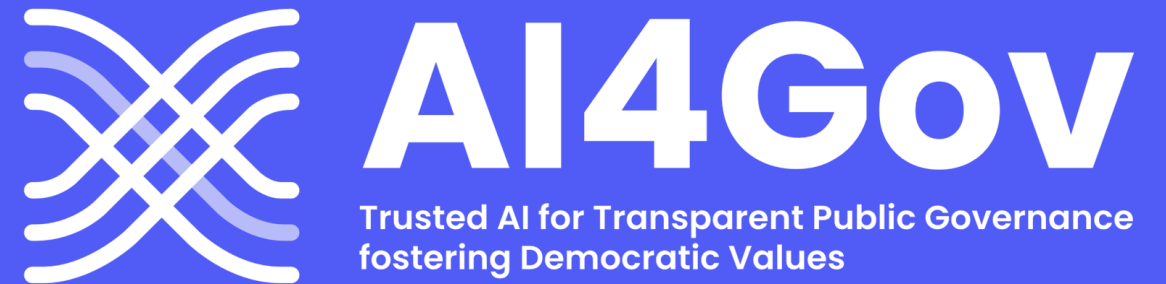
EU regulations on human rights protection (2/2)

6. Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000)

7. European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)

8. Directive on combating discrimination (2000/43/EC)

9. Directive on equal treatment in employment and occupation (2000/78/EC)

III. Causes and form of discrimination

Causes and sources of bias

Bias stems from various causes and sources, including:

1. **Stereotypes**: Oversimplified beliefs about certain groups based on characteristics like race, gender, age, or nationality.

2. **Prejudice**: Preconceived opinions or attitudes held towards individuals or groups, often based on perceived characteristics.

3. **Discrimination**: Unequal treatment or denial of opportunities based on actual or perceived characteristics, including direct, indirect, and systemic discrimination.

Common environments where individuals may perceive discrimination (1/3)

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Employment Sector

1

- Discrimination in hiring processes, promotion, and career advancement opportunities.
- Unequal treatment in terms of salary, benefits, and working conditions.
- Limited access to training and professional development programs

Education

2

- Unequal access to quality education, including discriminatory practices in admissions and enrollment.
- Limited support and resources for students from marginalised communities.
- Bullying, harassment, or exclusion based on factors like race, ethnicity, or disability.

Common environments where individuals may perceive discrimination (2/3)

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Healthcare Services

3

- Unequal access to healthcare facilities and services based on socioeconomic status or geographical location.
- Discrimination in the provision of medical treatment, diagnosis, or access to specialised care.
- Lack of cultural competence and understanding of specific healthcare needs of underrepresented groups.

Housing

4

- Discrimination in rental or housing purchase processes based on race, ethnicity, religion, or other protected characteristics.
- Unequal access to affordable and safe housing options.
- Segregation and limited housing choices in certain neighborhoods.

Common environments where individuals may perceive discrimination (3/3)

Public Services and Institutions

5

- Discrimination and bias encountered in government agencies, law enforcement, and public institutions.
- Unequal treatment in accessing public benefits, legal aid, or social support services.
- Language barriers and lack of culturally sensitive services

Social Interactions and Community

6

- Prejudice, stereotypes, and exclusion experienced in social interactions and community settings.
- Limited opportunities for participation, leadership, and representation in community organizations and decision-making processes.
- Stigmatization and marginalization of certain groups, affecting social cohesion and well-being.

IV. Addressing Bias and Promoting Human Rights

Addressing Bias for Underrepresented Groups: Promoting Human Rights (1/2)

1. Recognising and Challenging Personal Bias
   - Encouraging individuals to reflect on their own biases and stereotypes.
   - Promoting self-awareness and fostering a willingness to challenge and unlearn biased beliefs.

2. Education and Awareness
   - Implementing educational programs that promote diversity, inclusion, and human rights.
   - Raising awareness about the experiences and challenges faced by underrepresented groups.
   - Providing accurate and inclusive information to combat stereotypes and misconceptions.

3. Inclusive Policies and Practices
   - Ensuring organisations and institutions adopt inclusive policies and practices.
   - Implementing diversity and inclusion initiatives that address biases and promote equal opportunities.
   - Eliminating discriminatory practices in hiring, promotion, and decision-making processes.

4. Representation and Empowerment
   - Increasing representation of underrepresented groups in decision-making roles.
   - Empowering marginalized communities through leadership programs and mentorship opportunities.
   - Amplifying the voices and perspectives of underrepresented groups in media, arts, and culture.

Addressing Bias for Underrepresented Groups: Promoting Human Rights (2/2)

5. Collaboration and Partnerships
    - Collaborating with community organisations and advocacy groups to address bias and promote human rights.
    - Building partnerships with underrepresented groups to ensure their needs and perspectives are heard and prioritised.

6. Advocacy and Policy Change
    - Advocating for policies and legislation that protect the rights of underrepresented groups.
    - Working towards the removal of systemic barriers and discriminatory practices.
    - Supporting initiatives that promote equal access to healthcare, education, housing, and employment.

7. Community Engagement and Support
    - Engaging with underrepresented communities to understand their needs and concerns.
    - Providing support services, resources, and safe spaces for individuals facing discrimination.
    - Creating opportunities for dialogue and collaboration to foster a sense of belonging and inclusion.

V. Ensuring ethical and inclusive AI technologies
Impact of AI on Human Rights - Workshops

Ensuring ethical and inclusive AI technologies

ViLabs organised 2 workshops

- **The Impact of AI on Human Rights**: Experts in AI, law, Data privacy, data ethics (aim: how to mitigate AI biases that affect Human Rights)

- **The Impact of AI on Human Rights – underrepresented groups**: Experts/representatives of underrepresented groups: migrants, people with disabilities, sex workers - stakeholders/civil society organisations (e.g. children, people with disabilities, asylum seekers, migrants, etc).

Challenges in developing unbiased AI technologies

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> AI systems can discriminate against specific categories of people, which can result in violations of fundamental human rights and erode trust in AI technologies.

According to the workshops conducted, the following **key challenges** were highlighted:

- Potential underrepresentation of certain target groups, particularly minorities, in the data collection process. This lack of diversity can result in biased outcomes and inaccurate decision-making, negatively affecting individuals who fall outside the dataset.

- The quality of data used is paramount as unreliable or inaccurate data can have severe consequences, hindering the effectiveness of AI applications.

- Protecting the privacy and fundamental rights of underrepresented groups is essential to ensure AI technologies align with principles such as non-discrimination, equal treatment, and the right to privacy.

Strategies for eliminating bias in AI development

The workshops also uncovered the following practices in order to address bias in AI development:

1. **Input from the general public:** Incorporating public feedback through workshops to amplify the voices of minority groups and address their concerns.

2. **Data Quality Assurance:** Using disaggregated data to evaluate how different individuals perceive border control technologies, ensuring accurate and reliable outcomes.

3. **Identify and mitigate bias at every stage of AI development:** Implementing a comprehensive plan to identify and mitigate bias at every stage of AI development, promoting reliability and objectivity.

4. **Generate diverse AI development teams:** Forming diverse AI development teams with representation from various backgrounds, including women and individuals with disabilities, to foster inclusivity and minimize prejudice.

5. **Transparency and accountability:** Adopting transparent and accountable practices in the development and use of AI technologies, prioritising data protection, privacy, and non-discrimination standards.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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1st AI4GOV training workshop, May 16, Ljubljana