Changing Attitudes to Equality

Key findings
Slide 1: UK society values equality as a concept

- Strong consensus of liberal western ideological values in the UK; general profile that prioritises an equal and just society with strong values of equality as a goal.

- UK has similar value strengths on equality to the EU average and the trend over 8 years indicates these values are increasing in homogeneity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents who identified with someone who thought it was important to...</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...treat people equally and have equal opportunities</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...understand different people</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Abrams et al. (2006)

Source: (European Social Survey 2002-2010)
Slide 2: People are likely to feel there is more prejudice than there actually is

- Perceived prejudice is much higher than actual prejudicial attitudes e.g. prejudice by white people towards a black boss has declined significantly since the early eighties;

- In 2006 self reported prejudice is at the same level as perceived severely prejudice views (i.e. mind a black boss a lot).

- Disparity between self reported prejudice and perceived prejudice is increasing: 270% in 1983 to a peak of 477% in 2006.

Social desirability bias in self reporting explains some of the pattern but there are two other phenomena at work in the data:

- Dilution - data contains not only those who change their views but also those whose views are not based on direct experience and/or assumed knowledge
- Lag effect - between actual attitude and behaviour change and when this is noticed/socially acceptable to report
Slide 3: Different people hold different levels of prejudice to various groups

- **Prejudice still exists in all areas of society** with anywhere between a third and one in ten with prejudice of some kind at any one time.

- **Large amount of inter-group difference in prejudice to others** – only significant differences between red and green numbers shown in table.

- **Huge range** - e.g:
  - **LOWEST - 9% of Christians** feel prejudice towards the over 70’s (compared to **19% of other religions**)
  - **HIGHEST - 60% of Non-White people** feel prejudice towards gay men & lesbians (compared to **31% of white people**)

- **Significant differences:**
  - Largest differences in prejudice between White and other minority groups (sometimes positive/sometimes negative)
  - Only significant difference in prejudice towards black people that is not between ethic minority groups and religions is between disabled (34%) and non-disabled (23%)
  - No intergroup difference and lowest levels of prejudice against disabled people

- **Prejudice can be changed** – if individuals can hold very positive and non-prejudicial attitudes about one minority group, but negative or prejudicial attitudes towards another it means prejudices are founded on beliefs, attitudes and feelings that should be open to change.
Slide 4: Why people feel discriminated against is changing

- The ‘discriminated group’ those who feel discriminated against belong to, has changed over the last 10 years.

- In 2002, nationality and other grounds dominated but are now relatively minor in comparison to religion and colour/race.

- A quarter of those feeling discriminated against cite religion as the reason (as high as 31% in 2008).

- Colour/Race has grown from 10% to a high of 30% in 2008.

- Ethnic group has never been cited by more people than colour/race and nationality as a reason for discrimination.

- Sexuality, disability and language as reasons have remained relatively static.

Source: European Social Survey 2010
Prejudice is mostly **HIDDEN** - at least two thirds of prejudice is socially controlled, and may not be visible.

There is still a small but significant proportions of the population that feel prejudice is ‘**JUSTIFIABLE**’ (Don’t mind if appear prejudice).

**Source:** Abrams et al. (2006)