

# Identifying Disadvantaged Minority Groups in Chile: Who are they and how do we perceive them?

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Social cohesion in Chile has been affected by global phenomena such as increased migration, economic inequality and structural racism, which has intensified discrimination against certain groups (Vlados and Chatzinokolaou, 2024). These are conceptualized as Disadvantaged Minority Groups (MDGs), characterized by low numerical representation, unfavorable social status and greater social exclusion. In Chile, some of these groups, such as migrants, indigenous peoples and people of gender diversity, have been the subject of studies on discrimination. However, these studies tend to focus on each group separately, without comprehensively addressing their experiences of discrimination. This research seeks to identify and compare the GMD spontaneously mentioned by the population and to evaluate the perceptions of discrimination towards them, considering sociodemographic differences.

The study was designed with an intrasubject approach and collected data from 244 participants through non-probability online sampling. The sample was mostly composed of women (68.8%), heterosexual people (78.3%) and people with university or technical studies (70%). For data collection, the cultural informant technique of Fiske et al. (2002) was adapted, asking participants: "In Chilean society there are several discriminated groups: which do you think are the most discriminated against by the majority of Chileans?". Participants mentioned between 8 and 15 groups, and then evaluated the level of perceived discrimination towards each one using a scale of 0 to 10.

A total of 1792 complete responses were analyzed, in which 37 GMDs were identified. The 10 most mentioned groups were (in decreasing order): Venezuelans, LGBTIQ+ people, Mapuche, Haitians, low-income people, people with disabilities, Colombians, elderly people, Peruvians and homeless people. No significant differences were observed in the identification of these groups according to gender, educational level or place of residence. However, there were differences according to age: younger participants ( $Md = 34$ ) mentioned Venezuelans and Mapuche more frequently, while those over 40 mentioned homeless people. Regarding the perception of discrimination, the groups with the highest scores were (in decreasing order) Venezuelans, homeless people, low-income people, LGBTIQ+ people, Colombians, Haitians, Mapuche, people with disabilities, older people, and Peruvians.

These results suggest that the mention and perception of discrimination towards GMDs is shared transversally by different sociodemographic groups. Venezuelans, the group most mentioned and with the highest perceived discrimination, reflects the high social and media visibility of recent Venezuelan migration (Gissi-Barbieri et al., 2019). Although homeless people were less mentioned, they received high perceived discrimination scores, indicating that their social invisibility could contribute to their low spontaneous mention (Rubilar et al., 2020). This study represents a first step towards a more comprehensive assessment of how Chilean society spontaneously perceives its disadvantaged minority groups.

*Keywords:* minority groups, disadvantaged groups, discrimination.

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