

Ojeaku Nwabuzo

European Network Against

Racism

The Europe of Tomorrow: Gender Equality and the Economy –
Seminar 2: Position of persons facing multiple
disadvantage

04 October 2022

Introduction:

- ENAR is a network of around 150 anti-racism countries across the EU.
 - Intersectional approach
 - Policy Research – Toolkits and Guidance
 - Build capacity of our members and learn from their expertise
 - Using this knowledge to advocate for change at EU and national level
-



Introduction:

- ‘Women of colour’ discrimination in employment and public life
- Initial focus on intersections race and gender
- Intersectionality briefing
- Intersectionality Symposium October 2018



FORGOTTEN WOMEN:
The impact of Islamophobia on Muslim women



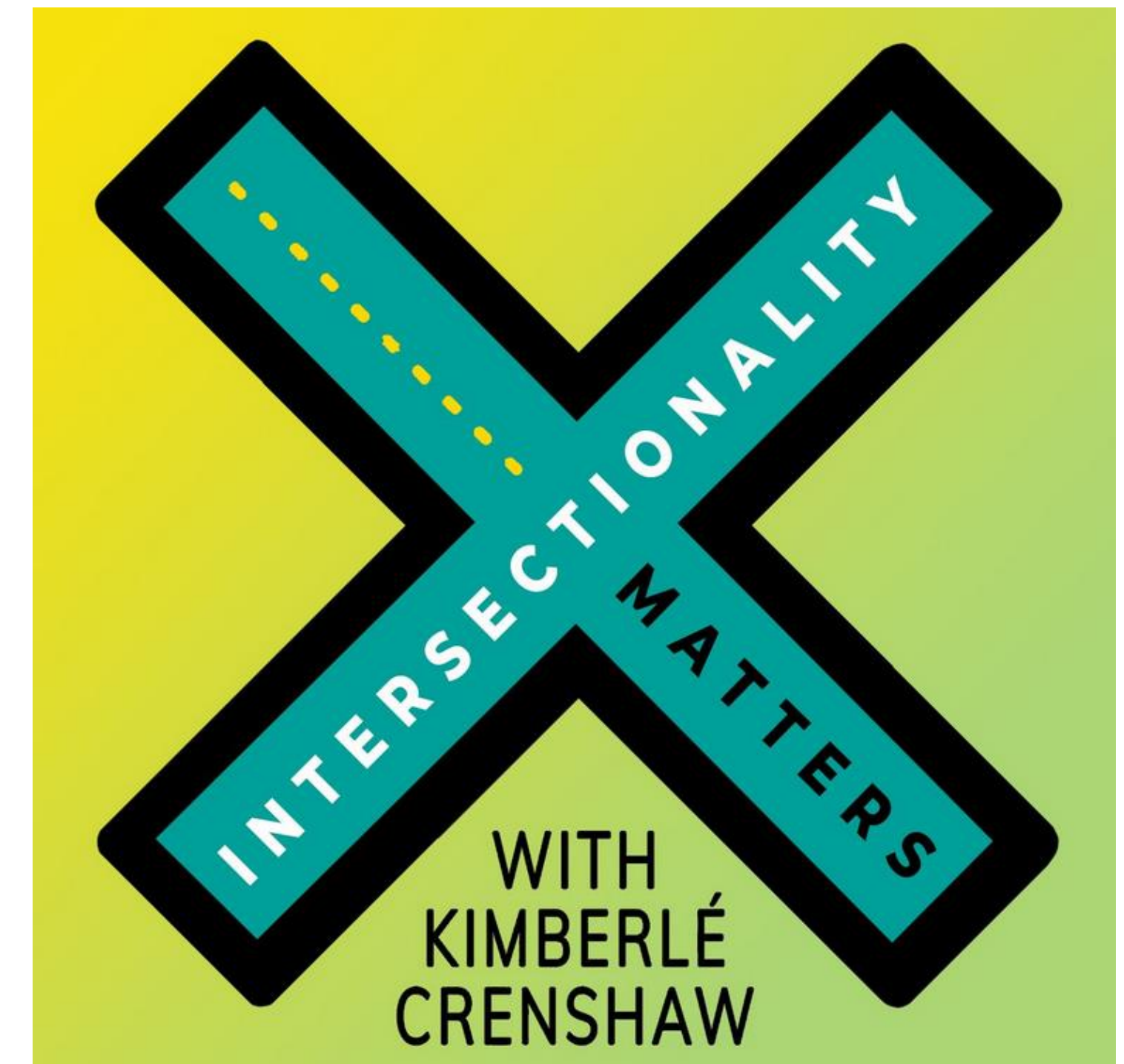
EUROPEAN NETWORK
EQUAL@WORK SEMINAR

**WOMEN OF COLOUR AT
WORK: INTERSECTIONAL
APPROACHES TO
DIVERSITY
MANAGEMENT**

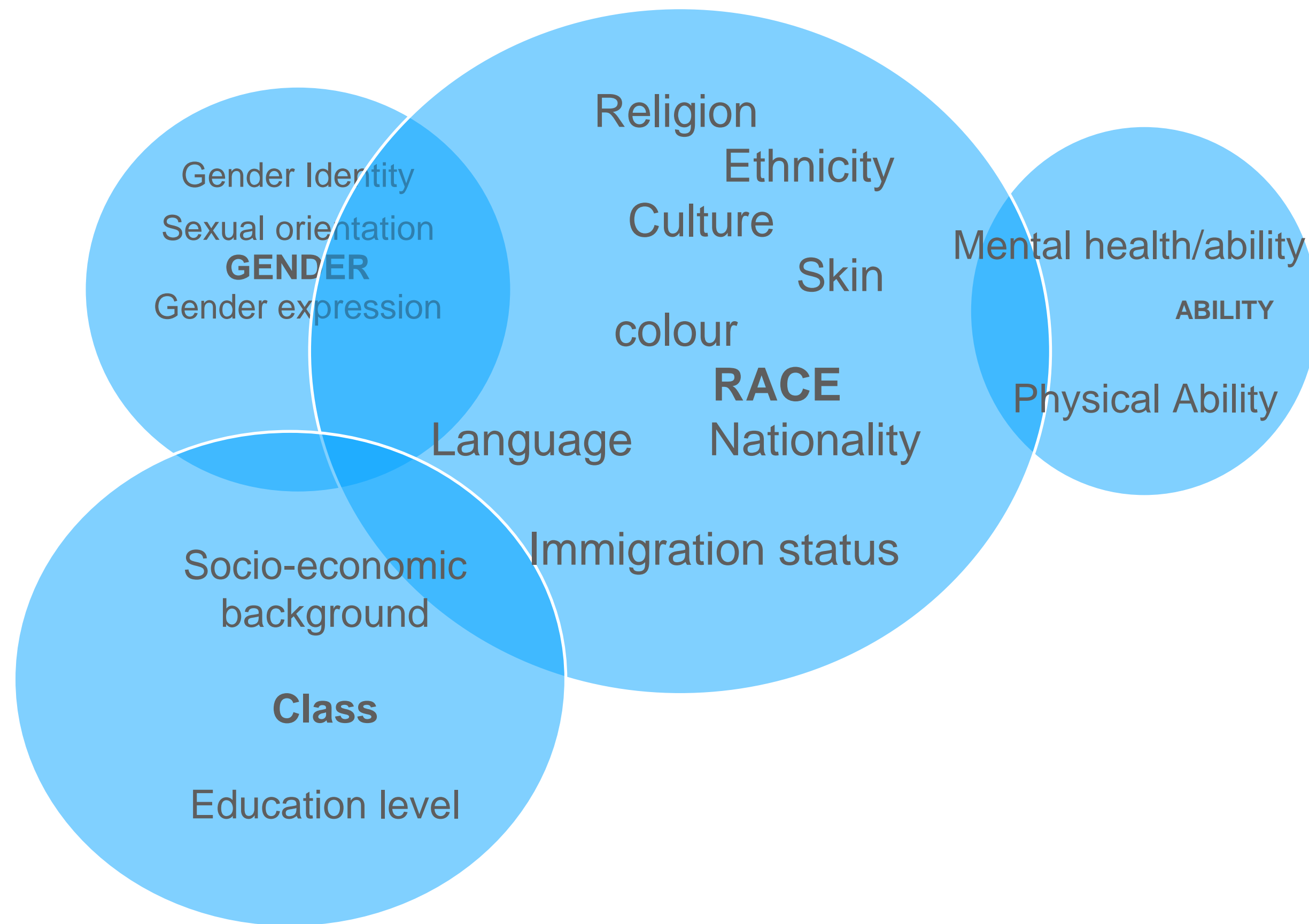
1 December 2017, Brussels

Intersectionality?

- Intersectionality has gained much **attention in Europe** over the past ten years, both in academic spheres and increasingly in the policy field.
- The concept gives policy makers, lawyers and sociologists the opportunity to not only approach discrimination and social inequalities from a **systemic and structural perspective**, but also to capture discrimination patterns which tend to be invisibilised or overlooked in the current legal and policy frameworks for antidiscrimination.
- Core aspects of intersectionality have also been **lost in translation**
- As Kimberlé Crenshaw pointedly states: “There is a sense that efforts to repackage intersectionality for **universal consumption** require a re-marginalizing of black women”.



Intersectionality?



- Intersectionality factors in the three most important global systems of domination: **racism/colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy**;
 - Instead of relying solely on single-axis frameworks - an intersectional approach caters to the **multidimensionality** of people's experiences and identities.
 - For instance, Muslim women wearing the hijab, women with disabilities...
 - The absence of robust data relevant to race has exacerbated the challenges of bringing race to the forefront of intersectionality work in Europe
-

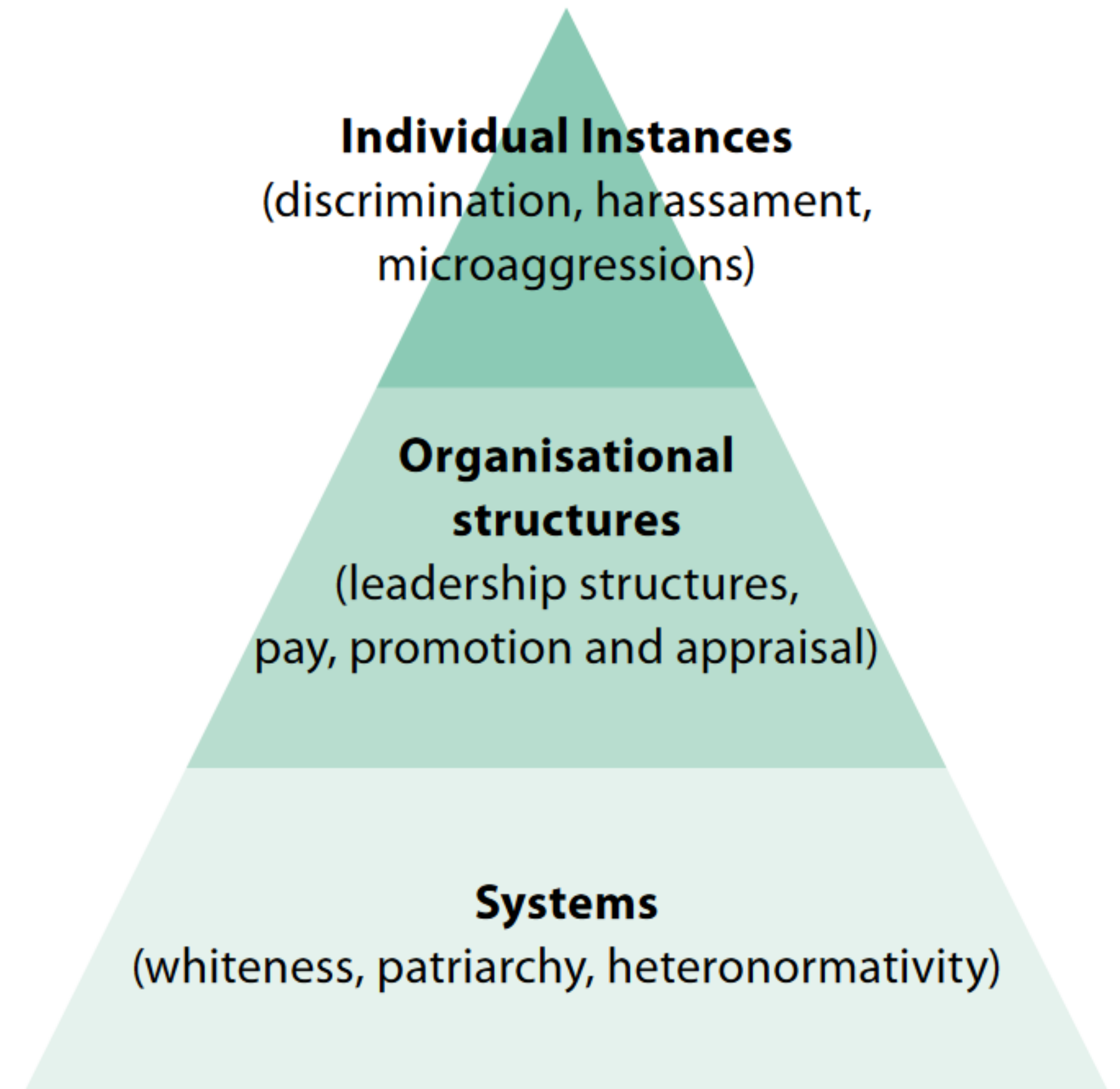
Unspeakability of race in Europe

- One challenge to a true and effective mobilisation of intersectionality throughout Europe is the widespread reluctance to face the **significance of race and the reality of racism in Europe.**
- European countries have a tradition of **opposing colour or race**, in particular in the legal arena where race is deemed irrelevant in the field of law, politics and society.
- Such ideology is extremely problematic, as any manifestation of racism in the past continues to affect the **power, privileges, positions and prejudices** of the white dominated populations of Europe.



Manifestations – Labour Market

- All ethnic minorities and migrants face significant discrimination in employment.
 - ‘concrete ceiling’ for women of colour
 - From a high rate of over qualification to a high risk of exploitation and mistreatment, women of colour, regardless of their nationality, are generally facing harder working and living conditions.
 - Job insecurity and wage disparities are notable for all ethnic minorities.
 - Despite the existence of a strong European anti-discrimination legal framework, there is a lack of law enforcement and coherence in some judicial systems.
 - Intersectional pay gap
 - Women business owners make up only 33.2 % of selfemployed people, and women are still over-represented in lower-paid roles in organisations across the EU.
-



Manifestations – Employment rates

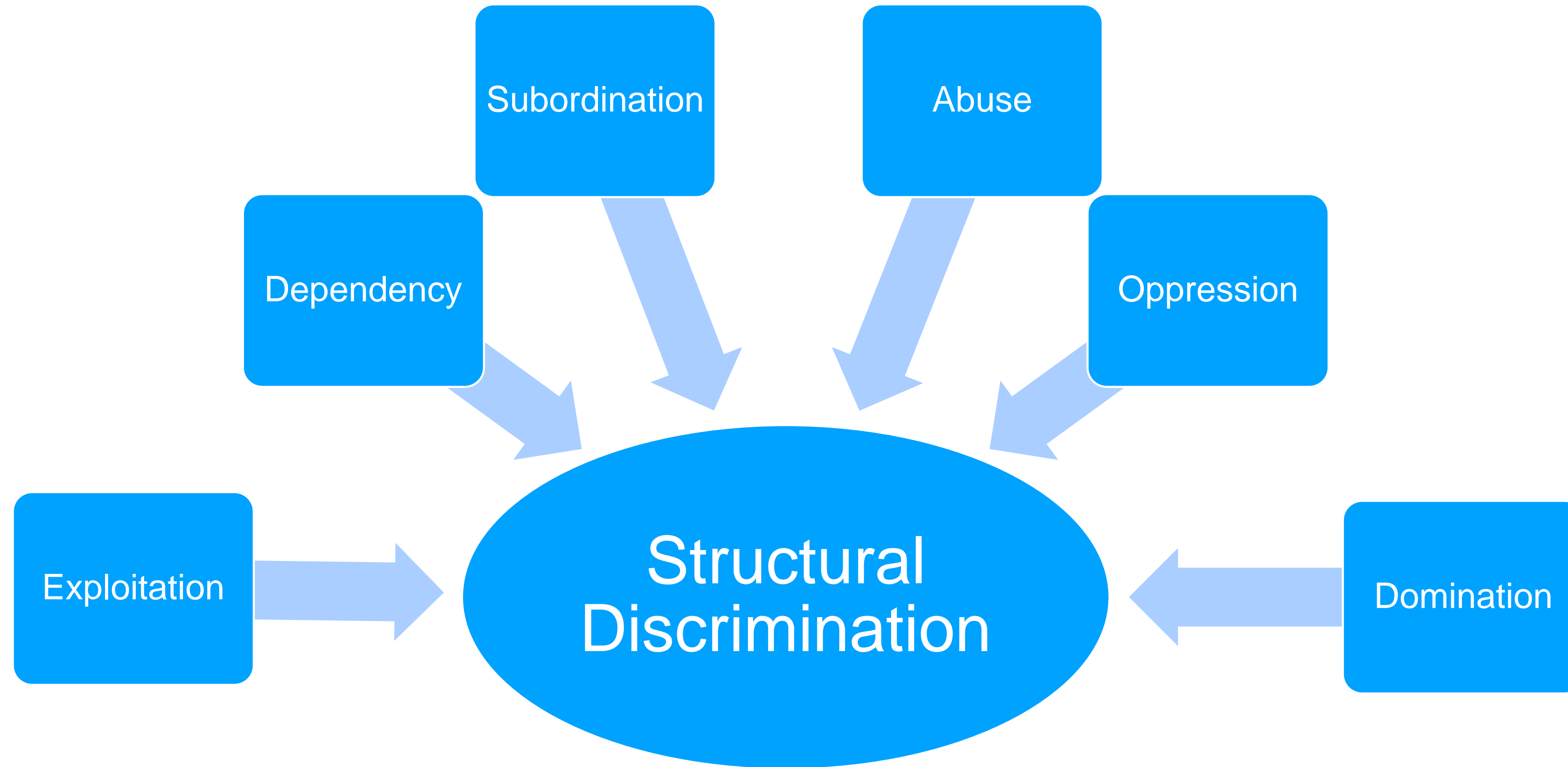
- In France, migrants from sub-Saharan Africa are more affected by unemployment (13%).
 - In the United Kingdom, migrants from some Asian countries experience significantly lower employment rates than the UK-born, and the employment rate of female workers from Bangladesh and Pakistan is around one third that of UK-born women.
 - In Belgium, a report showed that out of a total 176 contacted agencies providing cleaning and household services, a sector which employs a significant number of racialised minorities and migrants, more than 60% responded positively to discriminatory demands by clients.
 - In Italy, migrants of African (mostly North-African) or Eastern European (mostly Romanians) background have lower salaries.
 - In Denmark, research shows a difference in hourly salary based on origin. Migrants and descendants with a non-Western background receive a lower hourly salary compared with Danes in the same job position or industry.
-

Manifestation – Migrant Women

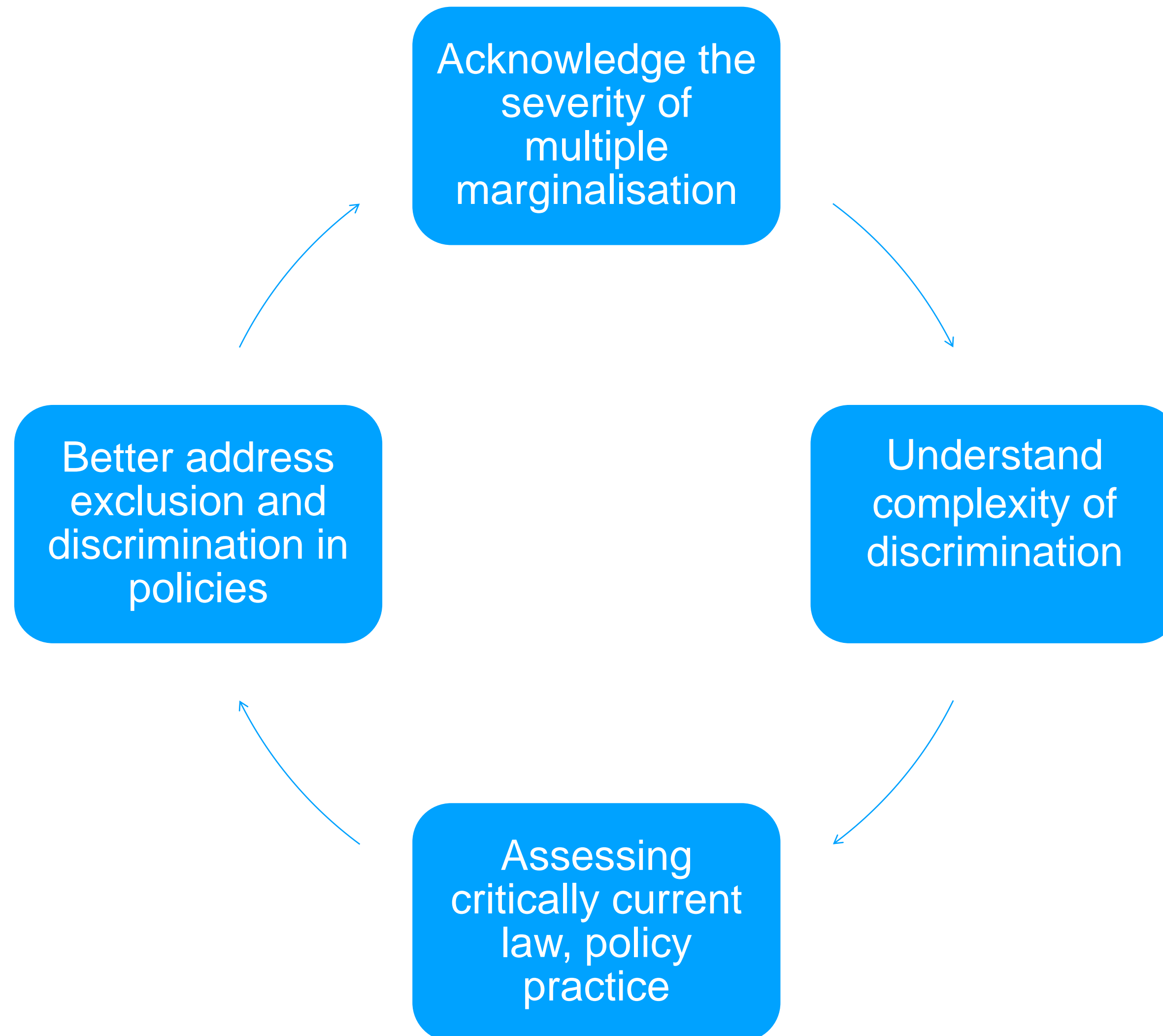
- Gender inequalities persist and labour markets remain highly segmented and segregated in both origin and destination countries.
- The global labour market reproduces traditional gendered divisions of labour.
- It presents evidence of the interaction between gender and other social categories, such as national origin, class, ethnicity and age manifest in the labour market



Migrant women are vulnerable to:

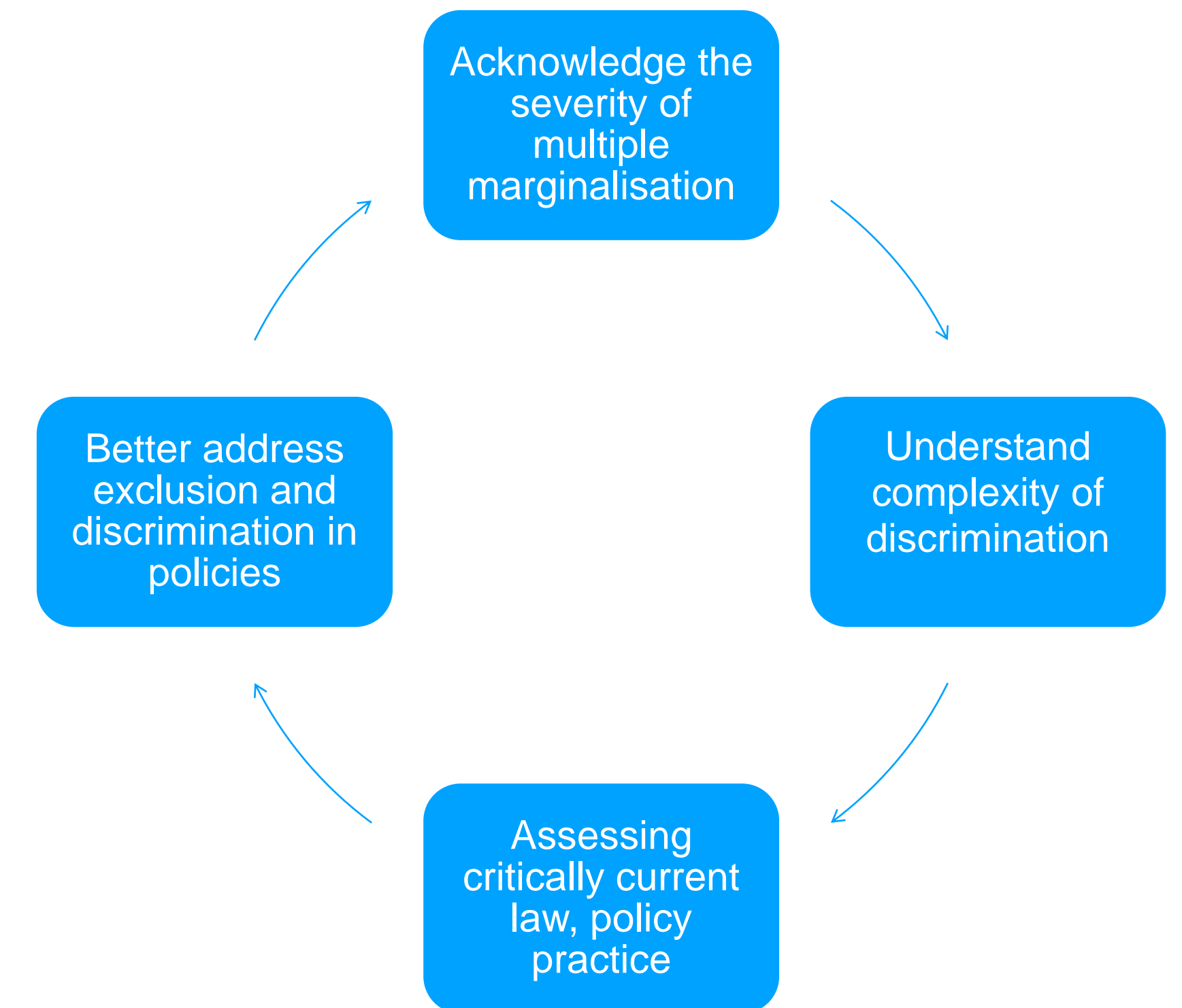


Relevance of Intersectionality to policymaking for racial equality



Relevance of Intersectionality to policymaking for racial equality

- Discrimination and social inequalities on the basis of gender tackled through gender mainstreaming
- The legal and policy framework on gender equality is colour-evasive
- Understanding that race and racism in Europe is embedded in capitalist and patriarchal structures of the past and present.
- In the absence of race, intersectionality only reinforces a status quo
- The historical dimension of discrimination helps us expose the fallacy of a meritocratic framing of success and failure.
- Contemporary analyses of social and economic inequalities require historical contextualisation



Ongoing challenges

- Putting intersectionality into practice – beyond academia
- Data collection – limited data collection and limited research focus using an intersectional approach
- Language and terminology – avoiding using language which does not reinforce discrimination
- Women of colour and gender equality – initiatives for gender diversity can be lacking
- Intersectionality and other grounds – where women of colour are not addressed



**Intersectional
discrimination in Europe:**
relevance, challenges
and ways forward

Ongoing challenges – dismantle structures

- Intersectional analysis would strengthen policies that are meant to support marginalised groups - Policies designed to facilitate entry of women into the workforce can increase the demand for workers in the domestic care, cleaning and informal sectors, who are often working class women of colour.
- Dismantling structures within school systems which allocate children to different paths at an early age or labour market restrictions for certain types of migrants and asylum seekers which are not justifiable from an economic and political standpoint.
- Combating structural and institutional discrimination without the introduction of positive action (affirmative action) is not realistic.



**Intersectional
discrimination in Europe:**
relevance, challenges
and ways forward

