

EMEA DIVERSITY NEWS 45 EDITORIAL

by Michael Stuber, Owner Manager



Photo: Michael Cintula

FINALLY GOING TRULY GLOBAL?

Along with the globalisation of business, Diversity practitioners started to take their strategies to an International level around the year 2000. As the discussion of “Global Diversity” has recently become quite calm, we should ask what has happened to the promising approach...

- First of all, the need for truly global concepts – beyond baseline policies, worldwide communication and global reporting frameworks – seems to be much lower than originally expected. Even where business units are consistently organised globally, appropriate diversity approaches may not look exactly the same – but they might, don't they?
- Second, and equally important, the continental divides are obviously deeper and significantly stronger than estimated. And even Diversity experts find them difficult to overcome so that they can really embrace the differences elsewhere rather than, at best, simply acknowledging their existence. Do we have to become more global within ourselves, in the first place?
- Then, the question of resources presents another challenge to developing and implementing truly global programmes. As an example, imagine an experiential management development course including one week of on-site learning in South Africa bringing together participants and teachers from around the world. We did this, but could we propose such an approach today to your management?
- Finally, content has also to be put in question! While a few basic models such as our Propelling Potential Principle are globally applicable, many key concepts like ‘respect’, ‘gender’, ‘inclusion’, or ‘age’ change their nature or meaning when they travel from East to West or from North to South. So, do we have enough global beef to the add to the worldwide bone?

There are, of course, even more aspects to consider when developing Global Diversity many of which I was able to discuss in a webinar on the topic a while ago at the ISDIP. But how much more can we do about Global Diversity at this point? What are the concrete worldwide questions you are asked to tackle in your organisation? I would love to take the discussion to the next level and welcome your input.

In this 45th edition of EMEA DiversityNews, a few global stories are included in addition to our Europe, Middle East & Africa focus. Enjoy reading!

Globally yours,

Michael Stuber

EMEA DIVERSITY NEWS 45 GENERAL EDITION

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DIVERSITY DIMENSIONS

Europeans want more women on Boards but barriers persist

The attention on ‘women in management’ never decreased since Norway had introduced female quota for supervisory boards. Two current publications look at the issue but not from a pure numbers perspective: The public opinion of European Union citizens and an empirical analysis of gender-specific barriers for women to be selected for director positions.

The current Special Eurobarometer 376 published by the European Commission asked EU citizens about their attitude about women in management. A very large majority (88%) replied that women should be equally represented in decision-making positions of companies. The public also supports – with a majority of 75% – potential future legislative intervention to achieve a more balanced representation of women and men on company boards. More than four out of ten Europeans say that 50% of women would be a realistic target to achieve and almost half of the Europeans mention monetary sanctions as the most effective sanction in case of non-compliance given an adequate implementation time. This reflects high approval of women’s competences among Europeans.

While public support seems to be evident, a reality check carried out by Cranfield School of Management shows only some progress in the elite labour market. One remarkable finding of their current research points one more to executive search firms. The study says the power of ‘head-hunters’ consists in mediating the relationship between corporations and Board candidates while defining what talent or qualifies as a talented candidate! The appointment of women to FTSE 350 listed non-executive director roles is thus being held back by the selection processes which ultimately favours candidates with similar characteristics to existing male-dominated board members.

As this phenomenon of autopoiesis had already been identified, corporate governance reforms have recently included executive search firms – that used to be part of the problem – to become part of the solution and contribute to increasing gender diversity on boards. In order to tap into a wider pool of talents, executive search firms must now look beyond the current makeup of board members for the right ‘fit’ for new appointments and ensure that the selection process remains inclusive and rigorous at the short-listing and interviewing stages. Experts agree that another wise strategy would be to publicly advertise board openings and develop relationships with high calibre women to build the future talent pipeline.

We should, however, remember that executive search firms are service providers and will – hopefully – do as they are told. Many companies have hence adjusted their briefings and their policies for external searches. What remains is to question the way executive search firms are selected: All too often their business relies on close personal links with current board members. And such ties turn into challenges when meritocracy is the proclaimed standard.

Internationality in Corporate Diversity Management in EMEA

The perception that Diversity Management continues to become more important and thus more prevalent in International companies has not been confirmed through hard data. The first comprehensive analysis of organisational structures for D&I in large multinational firms in Europe shows a steady increase in D&I functions – and the study found some interesting facts around the international scope and set-up of corporate Diversity departments.

25% of all companies surveyed carry the word ‘global’ as part of the name of their D&I function. This may or may not sound much, given that all 94 companies in the sample are actually international if not global players. One third of them participated in the research. All of the departments that provided answers were at least responsible for a country cluster or sub-region, and the majority looks after Europe or EMEA or acts globally.

Given the relatively small core teams for D&I, expert roles are not wide-spread. If they exist, however, most companies have specialists for gender, or for age or ethnicity.

The heads of D&I are typically from a different gender than the predominant management culture, i.e. mostly women in leading Diversity management positions in male dominated settings. In European companies, 45% of the D&I heads have a different nationality than the predominant management culture; for US companies, this is only the case for 12%. In American firms, 37% of D&I heads have a different ethnicity than the predominant management compared to only 29% in European companies.

The first study of this kind was carried out in Germany in 2008 by European Diversity’s German arm ‘Ungleich Besser’ and it covered the first years since the start of Diversity Management in the country. Two more reports were published on DAX companies’ D&I management since then. Reports are available for large US companies as well.

One in five Diversity managers has the ambition to take their D&I work to a truly global level.

Overall, the study shows that internationality is currently not at the heart of most D&I strategies. The preliminary results are, however, only a sub-set of a larger piece of research, which is carried out in co-operation of European Diversity Research & Consulting and the AFMD, the French Association of Diversity Managers. The complete sample contains 180 International companies from the UK, France, Germany, rest of Europe and from the US. The first part of the report will be sent out to participating companies over the next week. A public version will be produced thereafter, along with a comprehensive report later in 2012.

ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIES

Communicating the essence of Diversity globally: HSBC and Bosch

Diversity strives to make the most of differences through a better understanding of the power of individual potential effectively combined. Communicating the essence of D&I through distinct messages interally is key to stimulate engagement and support for the change needed. Two of the largest global companies have delivered spot-on: HSBC and Bosch.

HSBC, the world's largest retail bank, has been famous for it's outstanding corporate communication, which put it among the 50 most expensive brands globally. The UK-based finance giant launched a new D&I communication campaign *Focus on what matters* in October 2011. Reaching about 300,000 employees in more than 80 countries has been the challenge when aiming at building

a culture where all employees are valued, respected and where their opinions count, regardless of and due to their background. The campaign was developed in co-operation with employees from around the world and in partnership with Group Marketing. In essence, *Focus on what matters* challenges the many unconscious assumptions we make about people. The campaign's messages were thus designed to be thought-provoking and adaptable to address all aspects of difference. For instance, one poster shows and says: Chinese – Strong Provincial Accent – Future CEO; along with “When you're recruiting for

senior management – what do you look at?”. This way, the campaign makes strong points about bias and meritocracy. Feedback was solicited through surveys and blogs. Additionally, a package of measures was launched including local events and the campaign was taken external on, e.g., the recruitment site and for International Women's Day. Now, in 2012, the campaign builds upon the previous messaging asking employees: ‘How will you focus on what matters?’ Their comments will be shared via a blog on the global staff website and on other forums. HSBC's Diversity & Inclusion strategy includes foci on improving gender and ethnic diversity at senior executive levels while awareness is raised around all D&I related issues. The only things that should matter for employee success is their potential and ability to do their job.

Likewise the global automotive giant Bosch (300,000 employees) has developed a worldwide campaign called „Diversity is our advantage“ promoting a more diverse and inclusive workforce. Due to the company's





manufacturing profile, communication starts at the entrances to their sites: Employees see posters with larger-than-life silhouettes of people on their way to work. In staircases, on doors and even on the bar to the parking lot, the campaign slogan reminds employees of Diversity. Through illustrations, Bosch also points to existing gaps, e.g. on gender equality at senior levels in Germany, and posters show how diversity can lead to better solutions, e.g. through involving women in product development of a small cordless electric drill called Ixo.

D&I experts know the benefits of diverse workforces in combination with Inclusion and meritocracy. What we need to do is let people know in a way they understand and in a way that also mentions the existing barriers to leveraging differences – because it is still not engrained in our genes or values.

Upcoming event: British Council presents research results on Equality monitoring

The British Council has been carrying out equality monitoring for over 10 years as an essential part of its overall diversity strategy and means of measuring its effectiveness. It has extended monitoring beyond the initial UK contracted staff focus to include staff contracted in other countries and the range of people it works and engages with. Results from a major International research project will be presented at an event in Berlin, on Thursday 13 September 2012.

Emerging from the British Council's International approach are differing experiences of equality monitoring and views on its value and importance. For example, there is a seeming dilemma in many of the countries in the EU region about having, on the one hand, a commitment to equality and diversity, demonstrated through a number of EU equality directives and equality initiatives, but, on the other, a lack of comprehensive equality monitoring to support and inform them. A specific research project sought to interrogate this further and see if equality monitoring could indeed be carried out more comprehensively in the region.

The research report, which will be presented at an event in Berlin, initially provides an insight into the British Council's approach to developing global equality monitoring. It then explores the findings of the research revealing the restrictions, practices, processes and cultural, historical and perception issues at play. It also comments on the extent to which organisations are collecting data in the EU region. The report concludes 12 'Top Tips' for effective equality monitoring.

The event will take place on Thursday 13 September, from 2 to 6 p. m. at the British Council's offices, Alexanderplatz 1, Berlin. Registration contact & information website

<http://www.britishcouncil.de/d/events/index.htm>

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Removing barriers for people with a disability – and identifying new ones

Over the last years people with a disability have experienced many improvements in their everyday life and regarding their inclusion. Maybe surprisingly, they have to cope, however, with almost unnoticed barriers in a fast-developing hi-tech area: social networking.

The European Commission has launched the Interpretative Guidelines that aim at ensuring the fulfilment of the Regulation protecting the rights of persons with disabilities when travelling by plane (Regulation 1107/2006). While these guidelines are not legally binding they are certainly going to improve the journeys of about 80 million persons with disabilities. Although the EU regulation of 2006 rules the rights of passengers with disabilities there have been still many reports of discrimination. In some cases people were even denied boarding because they were unaccompanied. Such incidences prompted the EU to clarify and detail their expectations with regard to the implementation of the original regulation. The guidelines first suggest to clearly distinguish the assistance provided at the airport from the assistance provided on planes. Also, the good practice of certain air carriers to offer a free seat for the support person of a passenger with a disability is promoted. The guidelines also point out the need for training of personnel involved throughout the service chain of an air travel and it is suggested that no medical certificates should be required from people with a disability to provide evidence for their handicap or their need for assistance. According to the president of the European Disability Forum (EDF), Yannis Vardakastanis, the Commission made an effort to provide quality assistance to passengers with a disability as well as passengers with reduced mobility.

Such elaborate guidelines are from being thought about in the area of social networking. Two current studies show the actual need to improve the accessibility of social media particularly for people with visual disabilities. Denis Boudreau, a Canadian with over 11 years of web accessibility experience carried out a study of LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Google Plus. He put his focus on basic web accessibility principles defined and described in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and which form a part of all web accessibility checks, manual or automated. The result of his study shows that social media websites have a large number of serious web accessibility deficits. LinkedIn came out ahead of the other social media websites with a 'high score' of approximately 30% accessibility. Another study was conducted by Athen, the Assistive Technology in Higher Education Network, on the accessibility of Google Docs – a website that enables people to work on documents through their browsers from all over the world. They found that the Google Docs service is practically impossible to be used effectively by people who use screen readers or by other users with visual disabilities. These studies show some aspects of accessibility that will need improvement, but lectures at Annual International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference have also indicated that individuals reporting accessibility

issues to social media websites have had limited success in having their requests heard let alone resolved.

The examples may tell us that it can take decades to make tangible progress in regards to Inclusion while it is very easy to overlook barriers in installing systems which will then again take years to improve. Why not think thoroughly from day 1?

Initiatives to leverage the expertise of older employees

In the UK the coalition government introduced two important measures to fight ageism. The Default Retirement Age (DRA) will be scrapped from October 2011 so that no forced retirements will be able to take place after 5 October 2012 (at the very latest). The Equality Act protecting ageism in employment, training and education will also guarantee increased protection when older people are receiving products and services, as of 1 October 2012 as well.

The scrapping of the DRA, which was proposed by AgeUK, especially makes a difference regarding the choices that older people have and the realisation of their preferences in retirement. Nowadays, employers can't make employees retire without giving a reason except having a compulsory retirement age on health and safety grounds. But some or even many people are very confident about being on the job after 65. They feel vivid, useful and financially independent. Employers profit from the experience and motivation while the government will benefit from the tax-payments and reduced pay-out of benefits. "Macro-economic analysis also show that keep older employees does not take away jobs for the younger generation," Diversity expert Michael Stuber adds, "just like migrants, economically active seniors enlarges the pie and increase opportunity for everyone". Such models are thus strong and obvious win-win-situations. On the other hand no older employee is forced to carry on working. There will still be a Normal Retirement Age when people can leave work and claim their full pension benefits.

In Germany, the Otto Group has introduced its Senior Expert Consultancy as another example of how to keep leveraging older employees' expertise. After 65, they can apply for appointments especially in advisory functions. Such consulting firms with former employees, mainly experts or managers, have been existing in a number of corporations including ABB, Deutsche Bank, Bosch and many more. Trade unions have criticised this move at times as they were concerned about the employment of younger people. This obviously did not take into account the growth effect neither the different segments in which employment takes place.

With lesser age limits, employees aged 65 and above will have the same job security as younger ones. Looking at labour force challenges ahead, many stakeholders will have to change their perspectives on retirement and the contribution people can make in their 50s and 60s. "We need to move beyond the current countdown culture", Stuber concludes.

BUSINESS CASE

Why employers should be interested in good private lives of their employees – for economic reasons

Many employers but also managers and employees seem to think that the company has no part to play in employees' personal lives. The spheres of 'work' and (private) 'life' have thus been discussed separately and with regards to their balance, how to navigate or integrate the two. A new research now suggests a much stronger correlation between what used to be seen individual parts.

The UK relationships research charity OnePlusOne and the work-life organisation Working Families in cooperation found out that people's lives at home and at work have a significant impact on each other. The key findings of their 'Happy Homes Productive Workplaces' report, based on a survey of over 2,000 employees, says that high levels of (private) relationship quality are associated with higher work engagement, and vice versa (!). This sheds new light on the commonly held assumption that private and work lives are almost inevitably in conflict with each other.

Moreover, some details of the study call on experts to rethink some established paradigms: There is not only a cycle effect where work pressures affect relationship quality and relationship quality affects work engagement. The impact of work stress on home life was actually found stronger than the impact of home stress on work engagement. The study also found that women are more engaged at work than men and that parents are no less engaged at work than non-parents.

Penny Mansfield, Director of OnePlusOne advises that employers need to organise and manage work in ways that don't put employees' relationships in jeopardy. She further assumes that this might not only protect employees at times of high work stress, but also provides a competence that can enhance customer relationships with the ability to attract and retain creative and committed employees and improve business performance.

Sarah Jackson, Chief Executive of Working Families proposes to employers to be alert to signs of stress, presenteeism and long-working hours, and ensure that work is well organised.

The results of the study support a conclusion from a number of similar studies: The better companies support their employees at home, the better they will perform at work. More than 10% of the empirical studies selected for the International Business Case Report (IBCR 2012-XXL) and its two previous editions provide evidence for the direct relationship of flexible workplaces and employee engagement. More information on the report can be found at

<http://www.european-diversity.com/resources/surveys/>

World Development Report 2012 – a pledge for global gender equality

This year's World Development Report (WDR) published by the World Bank is dedicated to Gender Equality. The in-depth economic analysis shows progress and barriers in the process to set

out for more gender equality worldwide. For the first time, the World Bank shows a notable shift in attitude towards recognising gender equality as a development goal in its own right. The German Development Institute (GDI) has reviewed the report and comments on it. They welcome the World Bank's new consideration of key insights gained by the international women's movement. In earlier reports, the World Bank took the position that economic growth was good for equal opportunities and that equal rights were an important precondition for increased productivity and market growth (but not necessarily a goal in its own right).

The World Bank's World Development Report describes the importance of agency and collective negotiation processes for the empowerment processes in bringing about change in existing societal hierarchies and patterns of discrimination. Furthermore it features the strong binding forces of informal institutions, such as cultural norms and traditions, in the assignment of gender-specific roles. For Africa and the Middle East in particular the report documents severe findings concerning gender disparity especially on raising women's productivity by using their skills and talents fully. For example maize yields would increase by almost one sixth in Malawi and Ghana, if women farmers had the same access as men to fertilizers and other inputs! Women's increasing labour force participation seems to be related to the unprecedented reduction in fertility in developing countries as the Islamic Republic of Iran. In Sub-Saharan Africa, education programs for girls remain much lower than for boys in disadvantaged populations. The report also warns of higher death rates among females, mainly during childhood or reproductive years in the countries hardest hit by AIDS.

To narrow disparities between women and men in earnings and productivity, a combination of policies is requested such as South Africa's rural electrification program or the improvement of women's access to land as was done in Ethiopia by granting joint land titles to wives and husbands. An effort on job placement programs like in Jordan is suggested to be made confronting with institutional biases. The report welcomes measures that increase women's control over household resources and equalize voice within households. So did recent reforms of family law in Morocco by equalizing the ownership rights of husbands and wives over property acquired during marriage. The report suggests promoting human and social capital as cash transfer programs have done in Malawi and facilitating the transition from school to work with job and life skills training programs as in Uganda.

The GDI analysis concludes that the World Bank's business operations still show too little gender-sensitivity but the new report marks a 'conceptual turning point' while experts still wonder if there was 'no change in practice?'. Everyone agrees, however, that the latest World Development Report and its focus on Gender equality is a step in the right direction.

MEDIA & BITS

Avon provides employment opportunities (and more) for South African women

Becoming an Avon cosmetics sales representative inspires South African women and promotes their self-confidence and hope according to new research funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). This sheds unexpected bright light on a frequently criticised pyramid sales system.

Researcher Professor Linda Scott of Saïd Business School, University of Oxford (UK), and her team found that the earned amount of money would put Avon Representatives in the top half of black females in their community and bring them in line with what a black man earns. But, the benefits of becoming an Avon Representative were more than financial. Some 89 per cent of respondents said they had received job training that could be used to get other employment and 88 per cent of those surveyed said that their experience with Avon had made them more self-confident. Many interviewees claimed that their Avon work had transformed them into a role model for their children and allowed them to 'fulfil their dreams' of self-sufficiency.

Avon offers a tried and tested system of training, recognition, reward and support which encourages women who are otherwise often very discouraged, to persevere and achieve. Avon has vast experience managing female Sales Representatives across the world and the company's pro-woman principle offers a supportive, collaborative network and protective umbrella under which its Sales Representatives can achieve economic empowerment and greater confidence. In comparison, the researchers suggest, the entrepreneurship training programs often instigated by governments and well-meaning companies seem somewhat superficial.

The advantages for future diversity are apparent: The South African Avon ladies and their families benefit from the experience that qualified assignment is accessible. At present there are regrettably low percentage of women employed on good terms in major enterprises. Economic independence creates higher quality of life, better education and thus leads to a more diverse cast of prospective appointments.

New Diversity Charters in Poland and Finland

Diversity Charters are written public statements of self-commitment to D&I that can be signed by companies, public employers or not-for-profit organisations that want to underscore their engagement and leverage activities for positive image. Since the first charters were created in France and the Brussels Capital Region in Belgium, several follow. Now, the first Charter was launched in an Eastern European country.

On 14 February 2012, 14 companies have signed the Polish version of the Diversity Charter at the Chancellery of the Polish Prime Minister. Works on the Polish Diversity Charter were started in 2011 by the Responsible Business Forum. The Diversity Charter is under honorary auspices of the

Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment and the Office of the Polish Human Rights Defender. The Polish Diversity Charter is thus connected to a platform promoting good practices in the area of equality. The design of the Charter text was discussed with public administration, non-profit organisations, trade unions and business representatives throughout the development process and now exceeds the regulations of the Polish Labour Code.

The Diversity Charter in Poland was signed by Presidents or Board Members of the initiating companies: Aviva, British American Tobacco Polska, Danone, Deloitte Polska, Grupa Orbis, Grupa TP, Grupa Żywiec, Kompania Piwowarska, L'Oreal Polska, Nutricia, Provident Polska S.A., PwC, Totalizator Sportowy sp. z o.o. and Unilever. Together, these enterprises employ almost 50,000 people in Poland.

One of the upcoming Diversity Charters is in its launch process in Finland, which will be the second Nordic country with a self-commitment initiative. The Finnish Business and Society (FiBS) aims at also establishing a diversity network for businesses at the same time. Diversity and inclusion are key issues in the country given the ageing of the Finnish labour force and the business need to reform recruiting and work / well-being policies accordingly. The Diversity Charter Finland will encourage businesses to develop diversity management capabilities and capacities, and of course to promote diversity and inclusion in Finland at large. Organisers say their main challenge is to raise awareness for the benefits of Diversity management. They thus want to include employees, customers and other stakeholders in the discussion. The Charter and the network will officially be launched in October but companies are already able to join.

The Polish and the Finish Diversity Charters will also be represented on the EU-level exchange platform for Diversity Charters funded by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Justice.

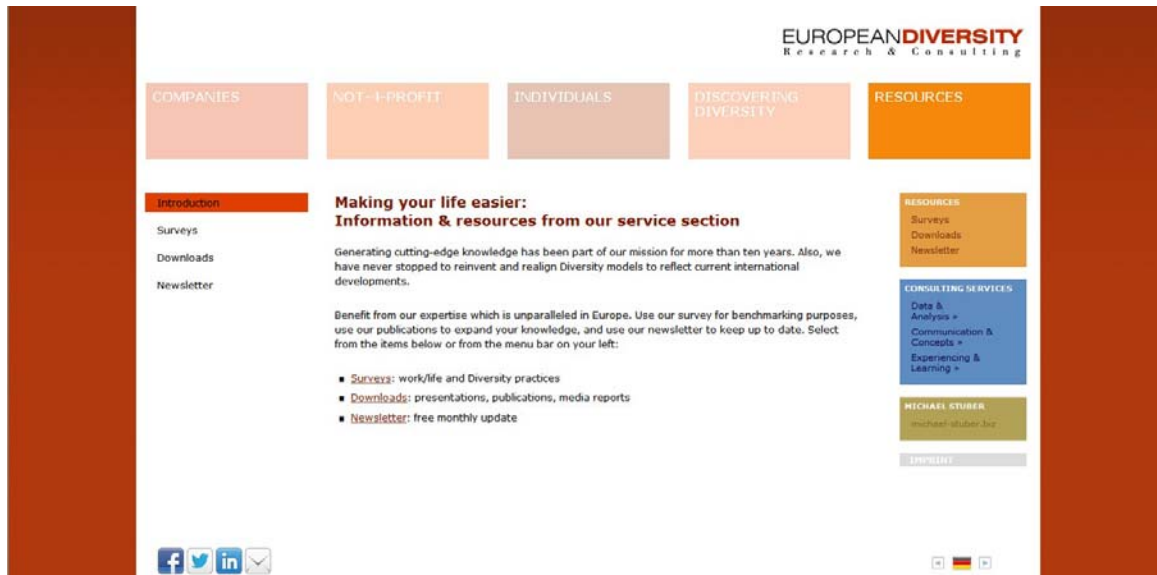
NEWS ABOUT US

Newly designed online resources for International Diversity practitioners

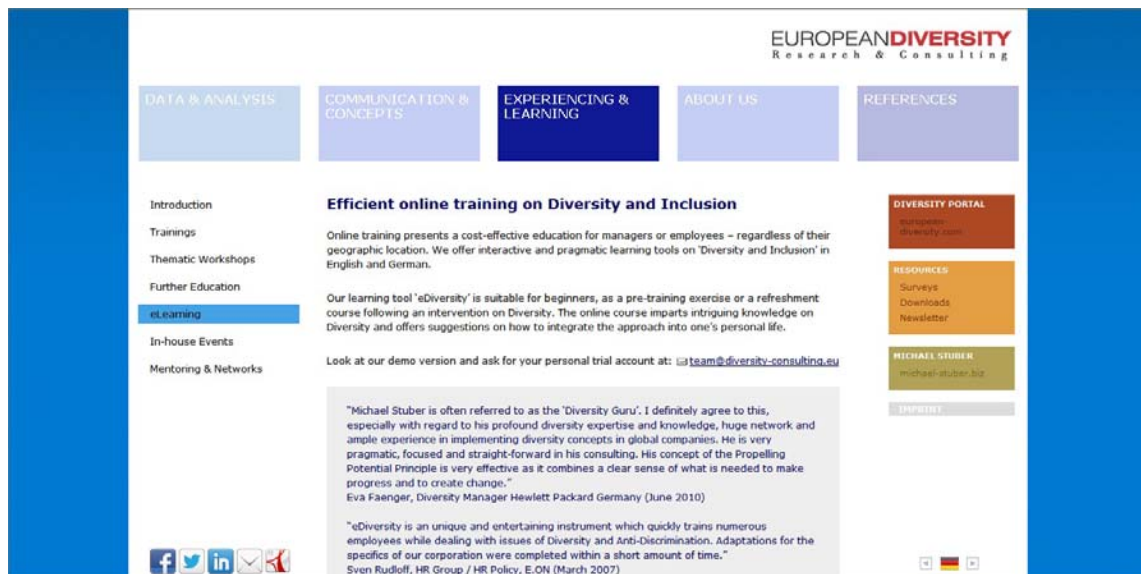
If you have visited our websites during the past few weeks you will have realised a complete new appearance. Our online development steps had to combine two aspects: keep proven elements of the previous system while at the same time integration Web 2.0 elements and allow for more innovation in the future. Of course, new technical feature were included along with the relaunch.

The new websites of European Diversity Research & Consulting join the new bloggy online style with a light and open design approach. The revamped virtual presence keeps the previous division of D&I content (european-diversity.com) and the presentation of our services (diversity-consulting.eu) which continue to be colour-coded in shades red and blue respectively.

The European Diversity website includes a resources section with a few downloads and with a full documentation of each of our publications, media features and speaking engagements of the past 15 years – check these out and get back for more information.



The Diversity Consulting pages present our range of support options along with testimonials from many of our clients. Go through some of these quotes to get first-hand information on how we perform in different areas.



The new websites provide every user with the opportunity to recommend page section on Social Media networks like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. There is also the option to download an offline pdf / print version of each section of our websites.

We often get asked why we don't display pictures showing people on our websites, which we continue not to, despite the fact that our work is completely based on human beings. Our approach avoids selective perception, reinforcing stereotypes and polarisation. While we know the importance of confronting people with their perceptions and interpretations in dedicated contexts, we choose not to do so when presenting our baseline content to an international online clientele.

Enjoy and feel free to provide feedback: www.european-diversity.com www.diversity-consulting.eu

European Diversity's front person finally on YouTube

What started off as a fun tool to 'broadcast yourself' has become one of the most important search engines on the worldwide web. Millions use YouTube every day to look for almost anything – not just the latest gag video. A key contribution on Diversity in EMEA had yet to be added and is finally available there. You may follow Michael Stuber's key note at the European Diversity Summit in Paris to get a flavour of the event, but also to recap on some of the milestones of the development of diversity in the EMEA region. Use the following link to access the 23-minute video which the event organisers, Le Club XXIe Siècle and the French Association of Diversity Mangers AFMD, were kind enough to provide:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Hbbi4m1oAc>

IMPRINT

Published by **European Diversity Research & Consulting**, a pan-European service provider centred on adding value in the field of Diversity Management and Marketing. With 15 years of experience helping international companies in EMEA build effective, high-impact diversity and inclusion initiatives, we have quickly become the go-to, full-service source for research, communication and training in D&I.

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