

EMEA DIVERSITY NEWS 48 EDITORIAL

by Michael Stuber, Owner Manager



AIMING AT GOOD OR BEST PRACTICES?

In the male-dominated world, everybody wants to be a leader in their industry, country or discipline. And as D&I is increasingly aligned to strategic priorities, the leadership ambition gets more and more frequently included in Diversity storylines. At the same time, budget restrictions have led to minimised staff in D&I departments and increased voluntary engagement in grass-root initiatives. Considering these competing trends, it is necessary to ask – and challenge – if companies are aiming at deploying cutting-edge programmes (at cost) or if they will be satisfied with some solid initiatives.

Given the high expectations about the benefits D&I is supposed to deliver and the progress management expects on Diversity demographics, it should be intuitively clear that off-the-shelf programmes implemented with low-to-no-budgets will certainly not deliver against these objectives. But are we always clear (enough) on this point? The learning from the past 15 years should be evident: Singular, insular or popular initiatives are always nice, often colourful and cool to communicate, at best. They do not have an impact on the complex organisational system that we need to change. This assessment includes the would-be miraculous interventions at management teams that some experts promise. And it includes the massive marketing that some organisations do for ‘their case’ to be more business related than others. On those points, I feel that some of the shared commitment got lost along the way of branching out on Diversity to a much wider group of stakeholders and newly appointed experts.

In this new context, our search for good or best practices has become extremely difficult as the rules have changed. At first, it was best practice to do something that worked – and we have 100 examples for that. Then, it became best practice to do what everybody did, but slightly different or marketed more effectively. Today, a good practice requires to design something that is effective and successful in a particular organisation. This of course is bad for the copy-and-paste approach that was fashionable for a while. And it requires a more holistic approach to analysing the existing situation, past learning, relevant dynamics and the stakeholders (potentially) involved. Or in other words: It requires what we always felt made our jobs so interesting and rewarding...

Enjoy reading our spring edition! Yours

Michael Stuber

EMEA DIVERSITY NEWS 48

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DIVERSITY DIMENSIONS

The crisis abets gender and age discriminations at work

Do Diversity programmes survive economic downturn? This is one interesting question that also leads to the question what happens to diversity target groups when times get tough? Current analysis show that economic crisis have a significant, negative impact on discrimination in the workplace 'due to performance effects'. According to reports in the French newspaper 'Le Monde' this hits women and older employees the most.

The sociologist, Jean-Francois Amadieu, university professor at Sorbonne in Paris and director of the Anti-Discrimination Office, has just released his book 'DRH: le livre noir' in which he portrays the practices of Human Resource Managers in France without compromise. His findings show that being older or having a disadvantageous appearance or even being involved in the union movement can slow or block you from getting hired, or from getting a raise or developing your career. Despite the legal restrictions and the introduction of the HALDE (Haute Autorité de Lutte contre les Discriminations et pour l'Égalité), high commission for the fight against discrimination and for equality, corporations use sneaky techniques to avoid legal obligations. The book mentions the exclusion of social background as an example, which appears to be quite a stretched evaluation.

According to Prof. Amadieu the crisis fuels discrimination at the workplace. Between 2005 and 2008 the number of complaints had raised significantly which led to a high visibility of the HALDE – and to employers becoming afraid of this institution. Today they feel less at risk, since complaints have become less frequent and the HALDE was replaced by a defender of rights that rather analyses surveys and screens unemployment data for inequalities. Those, however, clearly show an increase of discrimination and a specific disadvantage for older employees. For this group, the effect of the crisis is evident: Prof. Amadieu describes an obsession with youth of society in general and argues that this leads to an increase in age discrimination and based on physical appearance. This happens despite the introduction of anonymous application processes in 2006, which are only rarely used. Although recent surveys reveal that only 18% of organisations consider a photo on a CV important. Nevertheless, employers often check candidates on social networks and the use of application videos introduces a whole set of new biases reinforcing discrimination based on physical appearance, including but not limited to skin colour and body size.

But besides this, in those cases where the tension on the labour market leads to a higher competition between candidates, the first factor of discrimination is the recruitment via existing networks. This reinforces discrimination based on social background as networks, co-optation and nepotism correlates with social status. Nevertheless, this type of discrimination has not been given strong attention. In six surveys by the Defender of Rights the question of family sponsorship to find an employment or internship has never been asked while it is known to have a massive effect on wages and even career development – completely beyond the principle of meritocracy.

Professor Amadiou does not want Diversity to be discussed against the backdrop of performance and a business case. According to him, there are social issues that need to be resolved and implementation should happen through legislation. He argues that despite the positive impact that a diverse workforce can have on business performance, for some organizations it is still more profitable to discriminate. For him, Diversity appears to have the drawback of not eliminating discrimination. “This is an opinion that we are hearing at conferences, at times,” Diversity expert Michael Stuber comments, “but we should remind ourselves that D&I is designed to be a business concept which certainly has some positive effect on reducing discrimination”. He strongly concludes that no one should impose a miracle agenda onto Diversity.

Another survey released by the French Institute of Public Opinion (IFOP) on behalf of the Defender of Rights in January 2013 indicates that your age or being a woman are the main grounds of discrimination at the workplace. The number of cases has raised since 2011 and almost equal numbers were reported from private (30% of perceived discriminations) and public (29% of perceived discriminations) employers. This means a significant increase in the public sector over the past four years (up from 22% in 2009). The survey covered 500 employees of the private sector and 500 civil servants were interviewed. Participants indicated to having been discriminated based on their gender (22% in private sector and 26% in public sector), maternity (21% in private 24% in public sector), based on their age (32% in private and 20% in public sector), due to ethnic background (17% in private and 14% in public sector), due to their involvement in a union (11% of private and public sector) and due to a disability (5% in private 3% in public sector).

81% of all participants consider the crisis and the deterioration on the labour market as factors leading to the increase of discrimination. Due to decreasing profits, the pressure and stress for managers has increased and led to inappropriate measures. According to the director of the French Institution of Public Opinion, the effects of the crisis explain why gender and age are the main reasons for discrimination: In order to increase productivity and cut costs, organizations seem to prefer men and younger employees... Let’s hope this interpretation does not reflect reality all too closely.

Ability to mainstream disability

IBM, SFR, Sodexo, Dell and Renault were announced to be the 2013 European Disability Matters honourees. The announcement was made in the run-up to the Disability Matter Award which annually honours forward-thinking companies committed to successfully mainstreaming disability in the areas of marketplace, workforce and workplace. This year’s winners will be honoured at the Second Annual European Disability Matters Conference & Awards to be held on June 12th & 13th 2013 at Accenture’s offices in Paris.

Since the disability segment is said to be the largest and fastest growing minority in the world, meeting the needs of this segment – including those who have dependents with special needs –

through workforce, workplace and marketplace initiatives is no longer just a strategic advantage, but a business imperative. This is even more true in light of the some recent legislative changes in Europe.

At the conference, corporate presenters along with experts from governments, academia and non-governmental organizations sectors will be sharing their experience on how to support and market to this large and loyal segment of the population. Innovative programs result in successful outreach, recruitment, support and retention of candidates, employees and/or customers who have a disability. This year the marketplace awards go to IBM and SFR, the workforce award goes to Sodexo, and the workplace awards go to Dell and Renault.

Disability, however, has not yet been recognised as a core work area for many international companies in Europe. An analysis by European Diversity Research & Consulting that evaluated organisational aspects of Diversity Management found that only seven out of the 31 companies analysed had a subject matter expert on disability. On the other hand, 5 organisations indicated that one D&I staff had some form of disability him- or herself. The low findings were somehow balanced by an analysis of Corporate Annual Reports and CSR Reports of the EuroStoxx 50: Disability was in the upper half of communicated topics in these publications.

The Disability Matters conference is co-organised by Springboard Consulting (US) and the French Association of Diversity Managers (AFMD), sponsored by ADECCO Group, Orange and Ingersoll Rand.

ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIES

One of Britain's Top Employer 2013, Tesco, works beyond Davies report targets

The British multinational grocery and general merchandise retailer Tesco has been recognised as one of Britain's Top Employers 2013 by the Corporate Research Foundation (CRF) Institute.

As a result of a recent research project, Tesco was named a British Top Employer among 68 other companies, all rated on opportunities for career development, training and development, cultural management and benefits offered. The participating companies have at least 250 employees or, for multinational companies, at least 2,500 employees worldwide. Tesco was also highlighted for its employee benefits and strong company culture.

In 2012, Tesco has spend GBP 1 billion for a turnaround programme embracing six categories. The item 'Service and staff' included the recruitment of more than 8,000 new employees. This programme included the Regeneration Partnership scheme, which focused on helping long-term unemployed to get back into work. About 800 long-term unemployed were hired by Tesco, making up a strong 10% of the total recruitment volume. Another scheme Tesco offered is the defined

benefit pension scheme for which the company won the top award for Pension Scheme of the Year at last year's 'Professional Pensions' awards. According to the judges, the Tesco Pension Scheme had the highest level of innovation.

In addition to these remarkable initiatives, Tesco is also planning to further improve its gender diversity. According to its annual report, Tesco aims to work towards the aspirations of the Davies report to increase the number of women in senior positions on various levels. The Davies report aims to redress the gender imbalance on UK boards through voluntary actions and the announcement of an ambition of at least 25% women on the board by 2015. Tesco has already reached that mark by now, having four women on their PLC Board (29%).

Through a specific women-in-leadership programme, Tesco encourages talented women in the UK to assume senior roles. The number of female directors increased by 45 within four years, which is an increase of nearly 76%. The percentage of women in senior management across the Group as a whole now is 31%.

European companies develop Diversity initiatives outside Europe

In order to increase the number of employees from under-represented groups or from emerging markets, European companies undertake Diversity initiatives in their subsidiaries outside Europe. Two large companies listed in the Stoxx 50, ABB and Imperial Tobacco, serve as examples for activities in the MEA region (Middle East & Africa). "Emerging markets are key to the future of business and diversity is key to being successful in these regions", says Diversity expert Michael Stuber welcoming these moves.

Imperial Tobacco organized an event at their Moroccan subsidiary, Société Marocaine des Tabacs (SMT), hosted by General Manager Paul Leggat and his senior managers, in order to mark International Women's Day and especially to celebrate the contribution made by their female employees. Currently women represent about 12% of the workforce at SMT and 23% of management roles. Through the event, Imperial Tobacco aims at encouraging more women to seek a position in currently under-represented areas, including industrial and commercial departments.

ABB has launched diversity initiatives in their subsidiaries in India, South Africa, and Saudi Arabia throughout 2012. In India and Saudi Arabia, a number of local and corporate-level initiatives were established focussing on gender equality. In accordance to the labour law, ABB for the first time offered Saudi women jobs and internships in Saudi Arabia. In India, a number of programs have been launched to strengthen the presence of women in executive, functional and factory roles. The programmes include a workshop aiming to increase the line managers' understanding of the business value of diversity and inclusion. Other examples in India included efforts to raise the number of women on the shop floor, the number of women in interview pipelines and enabling more women to work by opening child care centres. In South Africa, ABB provided training for all employees in

order to increase the awareness for disabilities and the necessity to integrate disabled people in the workforce.

ABB and Imperial Tobacco hence serve as examples for the increasing prevalence and growing importance of Diversity and Inclusion also in emerging markets.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The EPSCO council takes measures against youth unemployment

These are contra dictionary times: the labour market is tense, companies are struggling to find promising talents while at the same time unemployment rates are increasing. Nowadays, one in five young Europeans between 20-30 years are without a job. In countries like Spain and Greece even half of the young population is unemployed. Based on 2011 figures the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living Conditions (Eurofound) estimated the economic loss due to the unemployment of young people to be EUR 153 billion, and suggests countermeasures in employment, education or training. In this light, a recent decision to guarantee employment or further training for the young must be considered ground-breaking. The EPSCO, Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council, has adopted the 'Youth Guarantee' in February 2013 as a chance to help young people avoid long-term unemployment. The council is composed of employment, social protection, consumer protection, health and equal opportunities ministers and meets about four times a year. The latest initiative will concretely assure that each young person in Europe up to the age of 25 will be offered a quality job, additional training, apprenticeship or an internship within four months after leaving school or the begin of unemployment period along with some financial support.

How the 'Youth Guarantee' will be implemented in the member states of the EU remains at the discretion of the countries. But as Nordic countries already implemented Youth Guarantees during the 1980s and 1990s, those will serve not only as good example and share their lessons learned, they also raise the bars in the European labour market as they prove to be successful. Recent studies show that in Sweden young people at the age of 24 who benefited from the guarantee could find a job faster.

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), an organization that exists to speak with a single voice on behalf of the common interests of workers at European level, welcomes the decision of the EPSCO. Patrick Itschert, ETUC Deputy General Secretary declared that EUR 6 billion will be allocated to measures for the benefit of young people. Nevertheless, job creation and quality jobs remain being issues and for the realization investments and a social contracts are needed.

Also the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN specialized agency that promotes social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights, considers the Youth Guarantee to be

a good approach and therefore has announced to co-operate with the European Commission in supporting EU member states in implementing youth guarantees.

Ethnic segregation in the West Bank

Recent developments in West Bank are quite alarming. After a series of complaints by Jewish settlers about Palestinians being a security risk while using public transportation such as buses, the Transportation Ministry bowed to the pressure of the Mayor of Ariel, Ron Nahman: Since 4th of March 2013 the Afkim bus company has started to run separate lines for Jewish and Arabian/Palestinian travellers from the West Bank into central Israel, even with different routes. Palestinians are not allowed to enter Jewish settlements and are required to board buses from specific bus stops on the Trans-Samaria highway. Although any Palestinian who holds an entrance permit to the State of Israel is allowed by law to use public transportation, newspapers reported on ongoing witnessed incidents that police takes off Palestinians at checkpoints by stating for example 'You're not allowed on Highway 5'. Police has not yet answered to those reports.

The Transportation Ministry denied to have issued any instruction or prohibition that prevents Palestinian workers from riding the public bus lines. The Transportation Ministry seems to avoid to call the respective bus lines 'segregated', but instead promotes them to be a relieve for the distress of the Palestinian workers and to be an improvement of service for the both Jewish and Palestinian travellers. But as Palestinians seem to be forced to take 'Palestinian lines' and their design results in segregation, there remains a strong flavour, to say the least, of discrimination or human rights issues.

BUSINESS CASE

Unicredit offers different loans for different customers

This year, the Italian bank Unicredit was awarded four top recognitions, two second and three third ranks in the Italian "AIFIn Cerchio d'Oro dell'innovazione finanziaria", an award organized by the Italian Financial Innovation Association with the aim to promote the role of innovation in banking, financial sectors, and insurance). Due to the fact that UniCredit had an excellent position in 7 different categories, the company received a special award as "Innovative Broker of the Year". Over the last years, Unicredit has steadily improved its services and responses to customers needs as well as its products, communication, financial solutions and overall approach to its customers. One of the awards went to the UniCredit International, which is a customer solution that allows small businesses to access the international markets. For Unicredit, customer diversity is very important and addressing the needs of different customers is not only necessary from a business management standpoint, but also from a humanitarian and ethical point. For this reason Unicredit has developed several programs that apply to different customers. The bank offers the "Agenzia Tu" with special services for international customers in Italy, Austria, Turkey, Czech Republic, and Germany.

With the opening of the first branch for women in Sofia, UniCredit Bulbank officially sets the start of a specially developed service model and product line for women, which will be available all over Bulgaria. A distinguishing advantage of most of the 'Donna products' for women is that they offer preferential conditions during the first three years of motherhood and a percentage of the paid interests/fees goes to the social causes. "In gender marketing, communication and CRM, there is always a fine line between stereotypical approaches that can easily insult female or male customers and actually meeting specific needs of women or men", comments Diversity expert Michael Stuber who has published a number of articles, studies and a book on Diversity marketing.

For students, UniCredit set up different loans, e. g. the so-called Genius Card, a pre-paid card that has a zero monthly fee. For Italian students between 18 and 30 UniCredit provides several offers such as the CreditExpress Giovani loan package which enables them to pay tuition fees, purchase books and computer equipment. A CreditExpress Master package (for Master students) and a UniCredit Ad Honorem package (for graduate or undergraduate students) are other products available to Italian students. For Austrian students attending an Austrian university or recent graduates that want to pursue a second degree or want to start working, UniCredit has developed the 'Erfolgreich service'.

In addition to their regular products, UniCredit also has runs special programs for specific communities. Through the UniCredit Foundation, the bank wants to involve their employees in charitable work. UniCredit also created the UniCredit & Universities Foundation in order to support talented students and researchers with a Study-Abroad or Exchange Programs. With the foundation they also support young entrepreneurs with a platform to launch new ideas.

UniCredit will keep on using the TRI*M index methodology in order to keep up with the customer satisfaction level. UniCredit has conducted 693,000 interviews in 2011 among customers in Italy, Austria and Germany for one of their programs. Other interviews were conducted in Poland and, three times a year, in Central and Eastern Europe in order to monitor the customer satisfaction.

First speaking digital TV for blind people

The introduction of the digital TV led to problems for partially sighted and blind people as this technical revolution made watching TV impossible for them: While in the past a combination of hearing, residual sight, and audio description (AD) was used to describe what was shown on-screen, this information nowadays is written on the screen and cannot be accessed by blind people. Ironically, information about programs and how to find these is also displayed this way and hence impossible to access for partially sighted or blind audiences.

Due to this situation, the European Blind Union (EBU), a non-profit and non- governmental European organization representing the interest of blind and partially sighted Europeans, has since 2007 worked on initiating further development. EBU has taken action together with the European Disability Forum (EDF), an independent NGO representing the interests of people with a disability

in Europe, and the European Commission and started negotiating with industry representatives of “DigitalEurope”, the voice of the European digital technology industry. In February 2013, the specifications have been accepted and published by the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), an international conformity assessment and standards body for all fields of electro technology.

Panasonic has now created the first speaking digital television, which already can be found in shops. The EBU is confident that other manufacturers will also start creating speaking television for partially sighted and blind customers to tap into the market potential they represent. As always, these product innovations will probably benefit more consumers than only those originally target, or, as Michael Stuber puts it: “If you manage to satisfy some of the specific Diversity segments, you will easily win in the mass market!”

MEDIA & BITS

Football for Equality event to combat racism and homophobia

More than 100 people from all over Europe will participate in the conference “Free Kick For Equality! Moving to the next step in Combating racism and homophobia in sports together” to be held in Bratislava, 26-28 of April. The conference is part of the framework of the European Commission’s co-funded project “Football for Equality”. At the conference inter-sectional approaches in anti-discrimination work are discussed as well as sports as a means to social and political inclusion and experiences in education and campaigning areas. For the event sports communities, journalists, scientists, activists and anti-discrimination NGOs are invited to discuss and think about issues of homophobia and racism and to share good practices. Many well-known activists in the field of anti-discrimination within sports will attend the conference, e.g. from the first Palestinian women's football team, from Polish feminist and LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex) movements and from the European network FARE (Football Against Racism in Europe) and many more.

Bridges should be built between activists, NGOs and fans who compete in different contexts and countries against various forms of discrimination. The conference is another step to build a European network of grassroots initiatives with the entire football community in order to fight together against homophobia, racism and any other discrimination in sports and anywhere else.

Women’s Film Festival in Afghanistan

In the city of Herat, Western Afghanistan, the International Women’s Day 2013 was celebrated by a film festival with films from female directors or with gender themes. The film festival continued for 2 days (7th to 9th of March) during which 30 films were shown. The topics of the films also covered

problems that women in Afghanistan face, for example child marriages, domestic and sexual violence and the insecure situation for women in Afghanistan.

The city of Herat was chosen for two specific reasons, one for the ancient history and culture, but also for the violence against women that takes place in the city nowadays. According to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission half of all the 4,010 violence cases against women in Afghanistan between March and October 2012 happened in Kabul or Herat.

With the film festival, attention for women is raised in Afghanistan. The film festival will be growing larger every year, according to the organizers. So let's hope the attention for women in the country will do the same.

NEWS ABOUT US

International networking event for Academics, students and Business representatives

The private University CBS, Cologne Business School, organised for the third time a networking, learning and recruitment forum called 'University to Business' (U2B). The student initiative provides the opportunity for businesses to get in contact with students and professors from CBS and have case studies be processed by competing international student teams. This year, the topic for the event is "Workforce of Tomorrow – Managing Diversity in the 21st Century". Michael Stuber, owner manager of European Diversity, gave the opening key-note for the two days meeting and participated in an international panel discussion.

How Diversity can be systematically utilised as a value-added – this was the focus of the initial, interactive section of Michael Stuber's key-note. His ground-breaking Propelling Potential Principle got the message across and provided a base to further look at the different facets of Diversity and how they inter-relate. The diversity guru also compared Diversity with other conceptual approaches that deal with differences, namely equality, equal opportunities and anti-discrimination. He presented different types of biases that get in people's and organisations' ways to make the most of diversity. He wrapped up presenting a holistic model for the implementation of D&I and effective organisation and cultural change strategies.

Global brand leader Henkel gave an introduction about their D&I strategy and presented their case study to be worked upon by international student teams.

After Henkel's presentation, a panel discussion with International experts from Norway, Germany, Italy, and a German expert with a so-called migrational background looked at context factors for Diversity. Education, family policy and public equality policy, societal aspects of discrimination were some of the areas that were discussed from sociological, political, humanist and economic perspectives.

All presentations together provided a robust foundation for the two days of international, intersectional and multi-stakeholder work to be performed over the following two days.

Call for European case studies and organisational practices

As a practitioner, you are keeping an eye on initiatives from other organisations, and you may tell, which of your own practices are better than the average peer programmes. Or you have heard about stunning activities from an organisation that is not so well-known. In each of these cases: Let us know!

European Diversity Research and Consulting is now consolidating more than 15 years of experience in aligning, designing and executing International Diversity & Inclusion strategies in the EMEA region to produce a new book by Michael Stuber. The aim of the EMEA Diversity publication is on the one hand, to describe, for the first time, the comprehensive framework for D&I in the EMEA region covering many dimensions and perspectives. On the other, the book will focus on the necessity of promoting Diversity within organisations by show-casing successful or innovative initiatives of leading employers from across the EMEA region. Your organisation or others you have heard of should be included – as a full case study of 1-2 pages or mentioning some of your practices to illustrate aspects throughout the text.

The main section of the book include:

- How to create value-added from differences: The Propelling Potential Principle (Diversity paradigms)
- Why Diversity is vital for business in Europe: demographic, societal and economic trends
- A European look at key Diversity strands: contributions from European subject matter experts
- Barriers to making the most of differences: Unconscious bias, microinequities, systemic bias & monocultures
- Overall goals and concrete objectives of Diversity & Inclusion: What success looks like in D&I
- Introducing Diversity top-down and bottom-up in an organisation – with case studies
- Mainstreaming Diversity into HR, communication and purchasing – with case studies
- Return on Investment for D&I: Benefits and improvements achieved by the Propelling Potential Principle

Your involvement will not only increase awareness of your accomplishments in the area of Diversity but will also create an inclusive picture of the positive development that Diversity is having on top organisations within the EMEA region. Moreover your activity will be included and supported alongside contributions from some of the key experts in the Diversity arena.

In each of the areas mentioned above one or several case studies will be published as well as smaller examples included in the text. If you want to suggest content, please send an email to office@european-diversity.com

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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