

EMEA DIVERSITY NEWS 40 EDITORIAL

by Michael Stuber, Owner Manager



PROGRESS THROUGH QUALITY

With increased attention from top management, politics and the Media, the work on D&I has become a tougher business. Not so long ago, awareness raising programmes, networking platforms and informational communication were considered effective if they were positively evaluated. Nowadays, expectations for double-digit growth are extended to the representation of women in management, and stakeholders can be impatient at times when it comes to progress. The good news is, that now resources are less of an issue than they used to be, but what about the acknowledgement of the complexity of D&I and hence the sophistication and time a powerful programme needs?

In the new environment, pioneers and leaders in Diversity review and reassess their strategies and programmes to date, some of which have been running for a decade. That is when some have to face their moment of truth, realising that their progress has been below expectations. It is fascinating to participate in these discussions and to detect and moderate the different perspectives, opinions and approaches involved. Never before has it been clearer that there is no best solution for D&I and obviously no universal fit of any programme either.

Looking at a number of international D&I strategies I can reconfirm two conclusions, which used to be educated guesses: First and foremost, issue-specific and group-focused initiatives will help and provide support, but they won't change the game plan. Organisational development experts had preached for a long time that the mainstream groups should not only be involved, but they should be the focus of D&I implementation. It has become obvious at last. The second lesson is that the mere integration of D&I into processes and systems won't deliver progress in the absence of deliberate change elements. A new model is the management of the D&I in the very same way as the business is being run. First results show that the nature of pure management processes are not well enough aligned with the very nature of Diversity & Inclusiveness, which is not only a process, driven by numbers, but an organic, human system, driven by people – and their emotions.

Fortunately, most initiatives still create balanced yet complex plans, where we can apply the quality work and experience gathered over 14 years. As an example, we have included more different aspects in each of our stories in this EMEA DiversityNews – let us know what you think about this approach in comparison to brief snap-shot news.

Enjoy reading

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Stuber'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large 'M' and 'S'.

Michael Stuber

EMEA DIVERSITY NEWS 40

Q2 / 2011

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DIVERSITY DIMENSIONS

A Comprehensive Look at Ageing, Migration, Gender and Employment

According to the latest European Commission Staff Working Document the European Union with its 500 million-plus citizens is not only growing older, but is becoming a lot more diverse at the same time. The paper states that the EU-27 member states are home to 20 million non-EU nationals, while there are also 10 million EU-nationals living abroad in other member states. Additionally, since 2001, approximately 5 million people have acquired an EU citizenship. The report predicts the further diversification of the EU workforce with the number of employees with a so-called migration background rising further in coming years. 50 years from now, people with at least one foreign-born parent will account for about one third of the population of the EU-27 states and their percentage will be even higher in the workforce. Mobility within the EU will also continue to grow, the latest Eurobarometer survey shows, pointing out a young and mobile population that is thinking and moving beyond its national borders. 53 percent of Europe's youth are willing or even keen to work abroad; financial restrictions, however, sometimes deny those opportunities.

The educational level of foreign-born immigrants varies significantly among EU states. Greece, France, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain attract immigrants of lower education, whereas more than 40 percent of the immigrants in Bulgaria, Estonia, Ireland, Luxembourg and Poland have attained a higher education degree. "Good talent comes in increasingly different shapes," says Diversity expert Michael Stuber, "and companies must be willing and able to tap into this potential which will also help them relate to the ever diverse customer base". In fact, the population of the EU will also continue to grow even older compared to earlier predictions, with the 65+ age group accounting for 30 percent of the population by 2040. With these long-term trends in mind, next year's European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (EY2012) will be an opportunity to analyse current policies dealing with Europe's future demographic challenges. This very item was on the agenda of this year's 3rd EU Day of Solidarity between Generations (April 29) where citizens' groups, social actors, and EU-level business representatives presented their recommendations on how to create a society where people of an older age (can) remain active at work and in the community. It was felt that the objective should not only be to master the challenge posed by an ageing society but to turn it into an opportunity. The current policy framework is contained in a leaflet compiled by the participants in the discussion and can be downloaded from the Age Platform Europe's website (http://www.age-platform.eu/images/stories/EN/ey2012_joint_leaflet-en.pdf).

Active ageing will also include challenges around gender and women's empowerment. As pointed out by the European Women's Lobby (EWL), the rate of unemployment by age groups rises much faster for women than for men. In EU countries, only 45 percent of women in the 55 to 64 years age group are employed, while male employment is almost twenty percent higher in that segment (63 percent). This, combined with the fact that according to the European Commission women in the EU earn on average 17.5 percent less than men, leads to smaller pensions and greater risk of poverty

for women. Currently 22 percent of European women over 65 years live in poverty, compared to 16 percent for men. Hence, Europe-wide active ageing policy will have to pay specific attention to female issues as well.

According to the latest OECD Economic Outlook dealing with unemployment, active ageing is becoming an increasing necessity among older workers. Governments in many OECD countries that have not encouraged the premature withdrawal of older workers, closing many benefit routes to early retirement. Combined with the significant losses of some private pension funds in several countries this may well result in many older workers having to extend their active employment to keep up prospective incomes.

Overall, ageing and the pro-active management of generational diversity presents a key issue for Diversity practitioners which must be included in the already complex framework of existing priorities and approaches.

5th Jump Forum Identifies Cultural Change Essential for Women's Empowerment

“A new culture of identity for men and women is possible.” This was the central message of this year's Jump Forum in Brussels on the 5th and 6th of March, in which 500 participants and 30 international speakers took part. The goal of the forum was to raise awareness for the various aspects of gender diversity and foster the consciousness of participants for the various tools and approaches they can benefit from in a business environment that promotes equality. In line with recent discussions on gender balance, the Forum placed great emphasis on the necessity of a top-down role-modelling implementation of gender diversity, starting with a better representation of women on executive and supervisory boards. As Marc Luyckx Ghisi, researcher of global cultural transformation, put it “it is women, who will be able to offer and generate a change in firms' business agendas in order to make them more responsible and sustainable”. Hence, the event made a strong point about societal and corporate cultural change being required for more female involvement and empowerment.

Many agree that such thorough change has to start from the top. Ghisi pointed out that involving more women at the highest levels will bring immense value to companies through more diversified approaches. Russ Hagey, the worldwide Chief Talent Officer at Bain & Company added that diversity in leadership and within the company is also useful when dealing with the requests of clients, or when accessing diverse markets and talent pools. Hagey added that in order to understand different clients around the world or within a country, any company has to be representative of that community or it might easily find itself missing out on opportunities. Consequently, Ghisi calls diversity not simply a “good idea” but essential for a company's survival. Peninah Thomson, who has published three books on women in boardrooms and leadership positions, pointed to cultural change as the most difficult, but also most important task for a company, so that they not only

include women in management but also leverage their particular perspectives and appreciate their different leadership styles. Thomson said that male dominance is so ingrained in the culture of most companies that they are only beginning to realise that the current system has been produced by men and that it may not be the only nor the most effective way to conduct business.

Participants were offered a number of workshops that helped them develop networks, deal with workplace challenges, situational awareness, or get image consultancy. There were also various discussions on female leadership and flexible work models. Speakers were invited mainly from Belgian companies but there was room for guest speakers from various European countries and the US. The international nature reinforced another message of the Forum: support and transnational cooperation between women so as to promote change within companies and in societies beyond national borders.

ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIES

Experts Present Recommendations for Monitoring Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in the EU

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) has progressed its work to find better ways of monitoring ethnic diversity at the workplace in the EU. Being able to track numbers consistently has been seen as key enabler to drive the inclusion of ethnic minorities in employment. The special interest NGO had conducted an extensive survey in the fall / winter of 2010 and hosted an expert meeting in Brussels on December 8th to discuss the current situation and potential ways forward. An ad-hoc expert group made up of business and civil society representatives mapped out existing methods of monitoring ethnic and/or cultural diversity. The meeting also aimed at improving the co-operation of participants when dealing with the issues and developing new strategies to measure ethnic/cultural diversity on the European and on national levels.

Monitoring diversity numbers are one of the essential elements to keep track of the progress of any diversity strategy. “Representational numbers are not everything,” says Diversity expert Michael Stuber who took part in ENAR’s survey, “but without them, your Diversity reporting can face fierce criticism”. The situation in the different EU member states has been challenging when it comes to ethnic monitoring, e.g. in the context of European benchmarking systems, Stuber added. The new discussion “provides hope” for a consistent framework to emerge.

In fact, the ad-hoc expert group’s report, which will be presented at ENAR’s upcoming employment conference on 24 June 2011 in Brussels, contains recommendations for private and public sector employers as well as for the EU and its institutions. The conference will feature European politicians, civil society members and also business representatives. Its overall goal is to progress further towards the objective of creating an alliance for equality in the workplace. The conference will not only address Europe-wide equality legislation, but will include discussions on better employment

strategies, active ageing and national-level partnerships. It is expected that the question of monitoring ethnic diversity will also be tackled and advanced.

Kenyan Women enter male occupations

Slowly but surely, Kenyan women are starting to pursue careers in some of the male-dominated professions of their African country. Faced with doubt and discrimination but spurred on by economic necessities or an urge to succeed, women of Kenya have started to become increasingly active professionally. As reported by WeNews correspondent Joanne Wanjala, training and employment opportunities are being seized by women throughout the country. For example one local NGO, Project Africa, provides auto mechanic training classes for small groups of women. Although currently the project can only service a group of 30, it is hoped that the programme will lead to the establishment of such initiatives. Lindy Wafula, founder of Project Africa, believes that while obtaining a higher education for rural women is certainly difficult, it does not pose an absolute barrier to women. According to her, there are various professions that require less expensive training and once equipped with the right tools, women will succeed. Recently, females have entered street level employment as well, some becoming shoe shiners and bus touts. Such work represents a great leap forward for some women and is an opportunity to earn additional revenues for themselves or their families.

Apart from such initiatives, there are other developments that suggest that we should expect Kenyan women to become more visible in employment. The number of female university students at the bachelor, master and diploma levels in the country is on the rise. Although currently for every woman there are three men at universities, this gender gap is becoming smaller. This is in part thanks to the universities admission processes, which specifically target greater female participation. The trend can be witnessed throughout disciplines. According to Charles Sikulu, PR officer at the University of Nairobi the number of women enrolling in studies of Agriculture, Engineering, Biological and Physical Sciences has risen considerably in recent years.

Certainly, to achieve tangible success countrywide there are many other barriers to overcome. For instance, some people might still find it hard to accept women in a traditionally male environment. Thus professional recognition is not self-evident for female co-workers, even in menial jobs. Another obstacle may be posed by women's families as some husbands might prefer their spouse to remain in the 'traditional' role of a wife.

But then: Have you noticed parallel gender issues in European/Western countries?

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

“Last Chance” for a Voluntary Increase of Women on EU Boards

Following her strong statements about potential quota for women on executive and supervisory boards, Viviane Reding, EU Commissioner for Justice, announced a Europe-wide voluntary initiative, that aims at increasing the representation of women on corporate boards of publicly listed companies. Businesses choosing to enter into the voluntary agreement called “Women on the Board Pledge for Europe” commit themselves to increase the number of female board members in their organisations to 30 percent by 2015, with the further objective of increasing it to 40 percent by 2020. The pledge was announced after Commissioner Reding’s meeting with business leaders and social partners. It gives publicly listed companies the opportunity to devise strategies to create more gender equality on their boards without external regulatory intervention. According to the European Commission’s Vice-President, the Pledge is “a last chance” for self-regulation. Reding emphasised her desire for employers to “get creative” in appointing more women to the boardroom, so that regulators do not have to. Currently only 12 percent of the board members at Europe’s largest companies are female, and only 3 percent of these boards are chaired by a woman.

Norway, France and Spain have already seen regulatory intervention to raise women’s participation and Reding stressed that such approaches could be adopted on a European level if the “Women on The Board Pledge for Europe” proves ineffective. On March 8th 2012 “the [European] Commission will assess whether there is significant progress and whether credible self-regulatory initiatives were developed to enhance women’s participation in decision making,” Commissioner Reding said.

The Pledge is available for download at the European Commission’s website (http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/reding/pdf/p_en.pdf) and can be signed by all publicly listed companies in Europe.

The Pledge comes after the European Parliament’s Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality expressed its belief that a quota system will ensure women are adequately represented in the public and private sectors. The committee also stressed the need for more female politicians in the decision making bodies of EU member states, where the average number of women representatives in lower houses of parliament is below 23 percent.

New Community-based rehabilitation Guidelines includes Africa

After having been developed since 2004, the WHO has introduced its guidelines for Community-based rehabilitation for Africa. The guidelines are the result of joint work of several organisations including UNESCO, ILO and IDDC. They offer a multi-sectoral approach to community-based rehabilitation that encompasses all levels of governmental institutions, civic society organisations, as well as individuals with disabilities, their families and communities.

The guidelines main purpose is to help fighting poverty and exclusion in Africa. It aims at supporting low and middle income states implement the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and help reverse the trend of excluding people with disabilities from the mainstream society. Instead, the objective is to empower and involve them in decision-making processes. It remains to be seen how CBR policies that are based on the empowerment of people with disabilities, and a transformation of institutions and methods in and around government will impact countries whose leadership has so far proven averse to change. The guidelines, available from the WHO's website, have been introduced both on regional and national levels.

The launch of the CBR guidelines at an Abuja conference in Nigeria was followed by its European launch in Copenhagen, while the guidelines were also introduced at the 1st Asi-Pacific Convention on CBR later in the same month. National launches have also taken place in India, Pakistan, the Netherlands and Sweden. Although introduced worldwide, the CBR guidelines success relies most heavily on whether African countries can implement it successfully, hence the venue of its global launch.

BUSINESS CASE

UN makes the case for women's empowerment

Recent studies by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization and the Population Fund suggest that the road to economic growth requires the empowerment of women and youth. The former report about women's possible role in agriculture and the debates that have followed its publication all support the notion that closing the gender gap is essential to end hunger in developing nations. The State of Food and Agriculture report 2010-11 (SOFA), titled "Women in Agriculture: Closing the gender gap for development" suggested that the underperforming agricultures of developing countries could be greatly strengthened if women were given equal access to resources, such as education, land, technology, seed, fertilizers and credit. Empowering women by these means could increase their yields and lift 100-150 million people out of hunger. At a roundtable discussion organised on March 8th, National Women's Day, that featured the FAO, the IFAD and WFP as well as government representatives, academia, foundations and farmers' organizations, FAO Assistant Director-General Hafez Ghanem made the case, that without women's empowerment the problems of global hunger and poverty could not be solved. A similar view was expressed by Kevin Clearer, IFAD Associate Vice President, President of Liberia Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the latter to participating in the discussion through pre-recorded statements.

A widely cited obstacle for women was found to be the difficulty for them to obtain land, but great emphasis was placed on the role of the private sector to foster development through investment. FAO Deputy Director-General Ann Tutweiler stated that the business community understands that poor consumers will not buy their products, and the important role of agriculture in decreasing poverty. Tutweiler feels it is time for companies to start thinking about how they can

address gender issues in the way they are doing business, the way they are contracting and doing extension work.

Meanwhile the United Nations Population Fund unveiled a report titled Population Dynamics and Poverty in the LDCs: Challenges and Opportunities for Development and Poverty Reduction at the Fourth UN Conference on Least Developed Countries in Istanbul, in May. The report stressed that women's and youth access to education, employment and health services are essential to develop LDC's and that currently women are overlooked when investments in social services are made. The report, available at the UNFPA's website, states that the world's 48 least developed countries have an increasingly younger population, the percentage of under-25 people in some cases being as high as 60 percent. UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin when speaking about the report that reproductive healthcare and family planning are essential in helping women plan their own lives, make the most of their potential and to help them contribute most to their societies, while avoiding unintended pregnancies, AIDS and other issues.

The BBC Announces their New Global Diversity Strategy

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has announced their diversity strategy for the next four years to come. The new strategy extends to all groups presented in society and its main aim is to develop the organisation to mirror that of its consumers, which entails creating more diversity in its workforce and in its programming. The broadcasting giant has stated that it feels such steps will help meet its viewers' needs and create more successful programmes. This statement reflects the strong business rationale the media corporation emphasises in its Diversity work.

The BBC's workforce diversity is closely tied to the diversity of its programming and the representation of different societal groups. The publicly funded broadcasting company has the responsibility to serve its diverse audience and to provide distinctive programming. This latter objective can be effectively achieved by having a diverse workforce for content creation. Apart from these reasons, the Equality Act 2010 requires public companies in the UK to end unlawful discrimination based on various grounds including age, gender, race, disability, pregnancy, maternity and gender reassignment. The BBC developed its current Diversity strategy through external and internal surveys, research and census, as well as quantitative and qualitative methods that have yielded information that help the organisation align its workforce and programming strategy to better reflect its audience. As part of the research, the Cultural Diversity Network, a UK partnership of main UK broadcasters and industry companies aimed at creating greater diversity within the companies and their on-screen content, found that men occupy twice as much screen time as women and that the discrepancy between disabled people on television and real life is 1-to-20. The same analysis showed that there are 10 times as many homosexual or bisexual audience members than there are present on screen. This figure, however, is biased by the relatively large number of gay characters, which is disproportionately higher than the number of lesbian or bisexual characters. Two

analysis by European Diversity Research & Consulting had delivered very similar results of gender, ethnic, generational and sexual diversity for both the German TV and magazine advertising markets.

The BBC's newly set objectives for 2015 require the Corporation to create greater diversity in its workforce from top to bottom and to deliver high quality, diverse programming. Hence, the company also intends to introduce a system that would make diversity part of their departments' various day-to-day operations. Departments have to individually introduce rolling one year Diversity Action Plans that help meet the BBC's overall goals of diversity. Additionally, the BBC plans to move part of its production out of London, place greater emphasis on audience research, and deploy targeted training of staff. Also, BBC Access has been created, a body within the BBC solely tasked with providing accessibility for disabled staff and audience members.

MEDIA & BITS

International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia in the Media

May 17th marked the 7th annual International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO). Commemorated around the world with positive reactions in many countries, it was also marred by attacks in others, generating intense and diverse press coverage. In line with one common media principle, a large share of the coverage featured the officials who provided their weight to the event. This resulted in a large and illustrious pool of international appearances, from US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, to the President of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek. Most European Institutions proclaimed their support for the core message of the day, which reached approximately 50 million people world wide with its call for tolerance. Apart from its prominent supporters, the press also covered countries which celebrated the day for the first time in their history, such as Burkina Faso, Fiji and Trinidad & Tobago.

Apart from positive reports, Paul Canning of the Guardian focused on places where homosexuality is still a risk. Featuring recent anti-gay and anti-lesbian legislation, and arrests in Uganda and Malawi, he notes the challenge of promoting equality in countries that are in deep economic trouble. Some might still remember the infamous Ugandan 'Kill the Gays' bill, a debate on which was delayed for a second time. In Malawi, blaming gays has also become a simple way of identifying where the problems of the country stem from. An article published by the Bulgarian Sofia Echo hit a more positive note. It highlighted a new survey to better understand the roots of homophobia and transphobia, introduced by the EU's Agency for Fundamental Rights. Spanish El Mundo ran a story focusing on the Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Transsexuals and Bisexuals (FELGTB), which published a statement to raise awareness that being condemned of homosexuality still means capital punishment in seven countries (Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Somalia, Nigeria, Iran, Mauritania and Sudan), and denounced the violence against equal rights protesters in Africa and the Middle East.

Coinciding with the IDAHO, the Moscow protest held at the end of May received large coverage: As in previous years, the city's administration banned a gay march which was held anyway and ended in violence being perpetrated against IDAHO activists. Founder Louis Georges Tin was arrested by police. Homophobia is also still prevalent in Montenegro and the country earlier this year became the last European state to found a specifically designed LGBT rights group called LGBT Forum Progress. The group had already faced aggression when a concert at the beginning of May was disrupted by anti-gay protesters throwing tear gas and attacking participants. Following the incident and in the absence of government protection the group decided not to hold their pride march at the end of May. Hence, there were even events that the Media were unable to cover for IDAHO.

First Comprehensive Guide to European Non-discrimination Law

The European Court of Human Rights has launched the first Comprehensive Guide to European Non-discrimination law on the 21st of March, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The handbook based on case law of the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice covers the history and the background of European Non-discrimination law, the groups protected under the law, the scope of the law and the categories and defences of discrimination.

The handbook, available from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Human Rights (FRA) website, targets legal professionals, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and law-enforcement officials. It is also aimed at organisations giving legal advice, such as human rights institutions, equality bodies, or legal advice centers. The handbook is set to be available in almost all EU-languages as well as Croatian.

At the Handbook's launch the Court President Jean-Paul Costa and FRA Director Morten Kjærum emphasised that they hope the handbook would make access to justice easier for victims of discrimination and help resolve disputes at a state level. The simplified language of the handbook is expected to present the complicated system of European Non-discrimination law in an easy-to-understand way: http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/research/publications/publications_en.htm

NEWS ABOUT US

New Tools to Implement Gender Diversity

More women are needed in leadership positions – this overarching goal is undisputed by politics and the private sector alike. However, past efforts and recent progress is assessed differently by the various stakeholders, men and women, Diversity experts and HR managers, politicians and business leaders. Professionals and practitioners in D&I are reluctant to admit that the numerous (women) programmes have resulted in less change than what was originally aspired. Analysis show that the majority of initiatives favoured one of the following models: assumed gender-specific

communication, assumed gender-specific competence or assumed gender-specific behaviour. With the objective to get beyond gender stereotypes, the experts of European Diversity carried out a meta-analysis of more than thirty studies of the past 30 years and consolidated those into one comprehensive model. It describes five female and male approaches which are – to varying degrees – being pursued by both men and women. In events, trainings and workshops, this model allows to create a balanced understanding of the possible – but not necessarily existing – differences between men and women. On this basis, the model helps to understand the emergence of existing imbalances within an organisation, where ‘male approaches’ are preferred or valued higher, especially in performance and talent management and thus in career progression.

The barriers for women to be as successful in developing their careers as their male counterparts have been discussed at length in the current debate on quota. Even scientists have identified different factors, depending on their perspective and research approach. Again, European Diversity has integrated the existing evidence from 14 studies into one model that reflects the complexity of the issue as outlined in this newsletter. In workshops and mentoring programmes, women’s networks or diversity councils, this model is used to objectify the discussion around career barriers, and it helps to develop sophisticated programmes leading to measurable progress.

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 13 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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