

UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

MASTER'S THESIS

**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN INTERNATIONAL NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATIONS**

Ljubljana, June 2023

MAJA FURLAN

AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

The undersigned Maja Furlan, a student at the University of Ljubljana, School of Economics and Business, (hereinafter: SEB LU), the author of this written final work of studies with the title Diversity and Inclusion in International Non-Profit Organizations, prepared under supervision of Full Professor Matej Černe, PhD,

DECLARE

1. this written final work of studies to be based on the results of my own research;
2. the printed form of this written final work of studies to be identical to its electronic form;
3. the text of this written final work of studies to be language-edited and technically in adherence with the FELU's Technical Guidelines for Written Works, which means that I cited and/or quoted works and opinions of other authors in this written final work of studies in accordance with the FELU's Technical Guidelines for Written Works;
4. to be aware of the fact that plagiarism (in written or graphical form) is a criminal offense and can be prosecuted in accordance with the Criminal Code of the Republic of Slovenia;
5. to be aware of the consequences a proven plagiarism charge based on the this written final work could have for my status at the FELU in accordance with the relevant FELU Rules;
6. to have obtained all the necessary permits to use the data and works of other authors which are (in written or graphical form) referred to in this written final work of studies and to have clearly marked them;
7. to have acted in accordance with ethical principles during the preparation of this written final work of studies and to have, where necessary, obtained the permission of the Ethics Committee;
8. my consent to use the electronic form of this written final work of studies for the detection of content similarity with other written works, using similarity detection software that is connected with the FELU Study Information System;
9. to transfer to the University of Ljubljana free of charge, non-exclusively, geographically and time-wise unlimited the right of saving this written final work of studies in the electronic form, the right of its reproduction, as well as the right of making this written final work of studies available to the public on the World Wide Web via the Repository of the University of Ljubljana;
10. my consent to the publication of my personal data that are included in this written final work of studies and in this declaration, when this written final work of studies is published.

Ljubljana, May 19th, 2023

Author's signature: _____

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND.....	4
1.1 Diversity and inclusion	4
1.2 Diversity management.....	5
1.3 Importance of D&I nowadays	5
1.3.1 Demographic shifts.....	6
1.3.2 Socio-economic changes	6
1.3.3 Changed design of work	7
1.3.4 The Business case for D&I.....	7
1.4 D&I practices in the contemporary workplace.....	8
1.4.1 Diversity Training	8
1.4.2 Diversity Recruitment Initiatives	9
1.4.3 Internal Advocates for Diversity	10
1.4.4 Managerial participation.....	11
1.4.5 Workplace Policies	12
1.5 D&I in International Organizations	13
1.5.1 D&I in a global setting	13
1.5.2 Global D&I strategy – community of best practices	14
1.5.2.1 Gender balance at Sodexo	15
1.5.2.2 Accessibility at Accenture	15
1.5.2.3 Skill-based hiring at General Motors	16
1.6 D&I in Non-Profit Organizations.....	17
1.6.1 Non-Profit sector as standard setter.....	17
1.6.2 Non-Profit sector lacks to take initiative	17
1.6.3 Composition of boards and their role	18
1.6.4 D&I strategy in the Non-Profit sector – community of best practices	19
1.6.4.1 Disability Inclusion and Accessibility at United Nations	19
1.6.4.2 Gender and Diversity at Inter-American Development Bank.....	20
1.7 Delivering impact through D&I	21

1.7.1	From transactional to transformational D&I approach	21
1.7.2	Building an impactful D&I strategy	23
1.7.2.1	<i>Commit and cascade</i>	23
1.7.2.2	<i>Link to growth strategy</i>	24
1.7.2.3	<i>Prioritize and measure</i>	24
1.7.2.4	<i>Tailor for impact</i>	24
2	EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS	25
2.1	Research plan and methodology	25
2.2	Research process.....	25
2.3	About the Organization.....	26
2.3.1	Mission and work	26
2.3.1	Main figures	27
2.4	Research results	28
2.4.1	Organization’s D&I initiatives	28
2.4.1.1	<i>Diversity and Inclusion Report</i>	28
2.4.1.2	<i>Diversity and Inclusion Framework</i>	29
2.4.1.3	<i>Recruitment</i>	29
2.4.1.4	<i>Training on Diversity</i>	30
2.4.1.5	<i>Raising awareness on D&I</i>	30
2.4.1.6	<i>Monitoring and analytics</i>	31
2.4.1.7	<i>Employee Resource Groups</i>	31
2.4.2	Perception on D&I interview results	33
2.4.2.1	<i>Importance of the D&I agenda</i>	35
2.4.2.2	<i>D&I agenda in the Organization’s context</i>	36
2.4.2.3	<i>Awareness and communication about the D&I agenda</i>	37
2.4.2.4	<i>Ownership and accountability</i>	39
2.4.2.5	<i>D&I practices in other international organizations</i>	40
2.4.2.6	<i>Fostering an inclusive work environment</i>	42
2.4.2.7	<i>Monitoring and measuring D&I</i>	43
3	DISCUSSION	44
3.1	Theoretical Contributions.....	44

3.1.1	The importance of D&I	44
3.1.2	D&I in the context of International Non-Profit Organizations.....	45
3.1.3	D&I initiatives as part of HRM strategy	47
3.1.4	Fostering an inclusive work environment	48
3.1.5	Good D&I practices.....	48
3.2	Practical Implications.....	49
3.3	Research Limitations and Future Research Directions	50
	CONCLUSION.....	51
	REFERENCE LIST	52

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Diversity management categories	14
Figure 2: Maturity levels of organization’s approaches to D&I.....	21
Figure 3: Four imperatives for development of an impactful D&I strategy.....	23
Figure 4: The Organization’s Diversity and Inclusion Framework.....	29

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Organization’s Officials grouped by nationality representation on cut-off date...	27
Table 2: General information about the interviewees	33
Table 3: Interview categories	34
Table 4: Answer attributes related to the importance of the D&I agenda.....	35
Table 5: Answer attributes related to D&I agenda in the Organization’s context	36
Table 6: Answer attributes related to awareness and communication about the D&I	37
Table 7: Answer attributes related to ownership and accountability on D&I.....	39
Table 8: Answers attributes related to D&I practices in other international organizations	41
Table 9: Answer attributes related to fostering an inclusive work environment.....	42
Table 10: Answer attributes related to monitoring and measuring D&I.....	43

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Povzetek (Summary in Slovene language).....	1
Appendix 2: UN’s entity accountability framework - 15 system indicators.....	2
Appendix 3: Interview questions.....	3
Appendix 4: Interview summaries	4

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

D&I – Diversity and Inclusion

e.g. – For example

EDGE - Economic Dividends for Gender Equality

ERG – Employee Resource Group

et al. – And others

etc. – Et cetera

GM – General Motors

HR – Human Resources

HRM – Human Resource Management

i.e. – That is

IADB - Inter-American Development Bank

ILO – International Labour Organization

KPI – Key Performance Indicator

LGBT – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender

NPO – Non-Profit Organization

P-O – Person - Organization

UN - United Nations

INTRODUCTION

“Diversity must be seen as an opportunity to be leveraged for competitive advantage, not an obstacle to overcome.” (Goodman, 2013).

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that over 38 million people will partake in the labor force between 2016 and 2026. This labor force is more diverse than ever before (Grissom, 2018). Its characteristics as well as values have changed drastically due to globalization fully immersing into people’s everyday lives as well as the working sphere.

Consequently, the concepts of diversity and inclusion (hereinafter D&I) at the workplace have held a prominent position in the business literature for quite some time. What started as a narrow definition of demographic characteristic changes of the labor force, built up into a broad definition that considers a variety of nuances when referring to diversity. Discussing how diversity should and can be managed in an effective manner, the topic of inclusion gave rise. If diversity aims to bring to an organization member of certain groups that are less represented, such as women and/or ethnic minority members, inclusion deals with ensuring that these people of difference become completely accepted, reach the same productivity, and get fair rewards for their work (Hays-Thomas, 2016). In the contemporary workplace, both concepts are intertwined and considered indispensable tools allowing organizations to tap into full potential of their employees.

Applying both terms in the context of organizations and employee management, field of diversity management started evolving. Diversity management deals with managing employees’ backgrounds, knowledge, and experience in a way to achieve organizational goals as well as personal objectives (Syed & Memoona, 2017). Already in 2001, Daniels indicated that diversity management is no longer considered a choice organization can opt for, but rather an imperative considering that at that time over 75% of Fortune 1000 companies were already implementing different initiatives on diversity.

Big demographic shifts coupled with the ongoing motion of globalization required organizations to rethink how they attract, retain and develop talent. People employed in international organizations differ widely in terms of their professional, educational and personal backgrounds. With the increasing size of an organization’s operations, managing the D&I strategy also becomes more complex. The non-profit sector has been criticized for its mediocre performance regarding its representational diversity. Hayes (2012) described the non-profit sector’s workforce in the US with the following words: *“non-profit employees are approximately 82 percent white”*. Indeed, the composition of employees in Non-Profit Organizations (hereinafter NPO) in the past didn’t really reflect the increasing need for a diverse workforce that globalization and other factors, such as technology innovation, brought about (Weisinger, Borges-Mendez & Milofsky, 2016).

In the early years of the 21st century, the need for workplaces to reflect the changing social norms of the society emerged, despite the sensitivity of their nature. Following the bare minimum effort when it comes to D&I does not suffice anymore – for organizations to attract top talents, they must act as advocates for raising awareness around workplace inequalities, marginalization of women and people with disabilities and promote inclusion within their operations (Grissom, 2018). It is clear that the agenda for D&I should be on top of organizations' priority lists today more than ever before. It presents a cornerstone of a healthy organization that can keep up with the dynamicity of the current job as well as a prerequisite for creating a healthy working environment where individuals can learn and thrive.

The purpose of this master's thesis is to better understand the different types of D&I initiatives an organization can implement as part of their Human Resource Management (hereinafter HRM) strategy and how these apply to an example of an international NPO. Hence, the main objective of this master's thesis is to identify and analyze the current D&I initiatives of a particular international NPO and how different stakeholders within the organization perceive them.

Supplementary objectives of this master's thesis are the following:

- By conducting in-depth interviews with different internal stakeholders to assess the perception and effectiveness of the current D&I initiatives the analyzed organization has in place now.
- Uncover deficiencies in the current implementation of the D&I initiatives in the organization and compare them with suggested practices by researchers to propose changes/suggestions for improvement.
- Highlight how the need to implement D&I initiatives as part of an organization's HRM strategy reflects the changing social norms of the contemporary workforce.

The following research questions were determined in order to obtain answers that will help reach the aforementioned thesis objectives:

1. Why is it important to include D&I initiatives/policies in the HRM strategy when managing the contemporary workforce?
2. How does the D&I agenda apply to the context of international non-profit organizations?
3. What are the different initiatives an organization can include in their HRM strategy?
4. How do different internal stakeholders perceive D&I initiatives/policies a non-profit international organization has in practice?
5. How to foster an inclusive work environment that ensures fair treatment and equal opportunities for all employees?
6. What are some of the best D&I practices organizations are doing nowadays?

This research work is a result of an inductive research approach as it stems from the author's interest and work experience. It consists of three main chapters. The master's thesis begins by providing a theoretical background, encompassing a comprehensive overview of the D&I concepts, the socio-economic changes as its development factors, different D&I initiatives organizations are practicing nowadays as well as an overview of D&I in the global and non-profit sector context.

The second chapter includes the empirical analysis part of the master thesis which is essentially a case study of a selected international NPO. Analyzed was an intergovernmental organization accounting for almost 40 member countries that fund its operations. The organization helps create economic policies to reach prosperity and wellbeing for all. Besides giving policy recommendations to its member countries, the analyzed organization also establishes international standards following an evidence-based approach to address social, environmental and economic challenges of today's society. This chapter contains the qualitative data obtained from conducting semi-structured interviews as well as information gathered from secondary sources on D&I by revising the analyzed organization's publicly available sources (Organization's website, Diversity and Inclusion Report etc.).

The systematic organization of the data collected then serves as an input for the last chapter of the master's thesis, the discussion. Here, the qualitative data is interpreted in order to present the research findings and draw meaningful conclusions. With the limitations of the scope of the research in mind, practical implications and recommendations for future research regarding D&I in International non-profit organizations are made as well.

1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Diversity and inclusion

Hays-Thomas (2016) indicates that in its narrower sense of meaning, the term diversity gained importance in the 1980s, mainly referring to differences in demographic characteristics (such as race, ethnicity and gender) of the workforce, or any group members (McGrath, Berdahl & Arrow, 1995). As the society developed, new aspects of the diversity became more distinct (level of education, geographic background, language, value system and others). From a psychological perspective, diversity refers to all differences among people that have the potential to affect how they feel and perform within an organization (Hays-Thomas, 2016, pg. 12). Consequently, different behavior is expected from different group members due to these differences (Larkey, 1996). As years progressed, managers started increasing the demographic mix of their workforce by deploying members of certain groups that were less represented (e.g. women, persons with disabilities).

Nonetheless, little importance was given to integrating these groups in the workplace as a whole (i.e. fully accepting them, offering them fair and equal chances of remuneration and progression). Term “inclusion” emerged, addressing how to ensure that employees of different backgrounds truly feel a valued member of the group and experience the treatment that satisfies their needs for belongingness and uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011, pg. 1265). Creary, Rothbard & Scruggs (2021) flag that inclusion emerged to address turnover problems among women and people of color not receiving equal treatment as men and white colleagues. In her study, Pelled, Ledford & Mohrman (1999) depict inclusion using three indicators: employee empowerment regarding decisions that affect them at their workplace, how well are the employees informed about the organization’s strategic objectives and happenings and lastly, job security (likelihood to retain a job).

As years progressed, the field of D&I research widened, as did the meaning of both terms. Nowadays, the traditional diversity aspects such as ethnicity, gender, religion can be considered as deficient and outdated. What D&I entail nowadays is far more complex and less specified because group categorization and self-identification became increasingly fluid (Combs, Milosevic & Bilimoria, 2019; Weisinger, Borges-Mendez & Milofsky, 2016). Jackson, May & Whitney (1995) as well as Tsui, Egan & O’Reilly (1992) argue that this complexity can be outlined with several less evident attributes such as organizational tenure and socio-economic background among others. Jonsen & Özbilgin (2014) even call out a fraud anyone trying to explain what diversity means on a global scale as the explanation is too tied to country and geographic region specifics.

1.2 Diversity management

When addressing how an organization can leverage employee differences, diversity management is discussed. With the increasing diversity of the 21st century workforce, organizations started acknowledging that their organizational functioning and competitiveness depend on the extent to which the demographic workforce changes are efficiently and effectively managed (Harvey, 1999; Kuczynski, 1999).

Diversity management encompasses all structured, intentional initiatives and procedures an organization has in place that i) improve interaction between employees and ii) turn diversity into an asset rather than an obstacle to their performance and workplace satisfaction. Deriving from this, inclusion can be a result of good diversity management practices (Hays-Thomas, 2016).

Davidson & Ferdman (2001, pg. 38) describe effective diversity management as such that continuously evolves to better use Human Resources (hereinafter HR) for both individual and collective good. In an organization where differences between employees are truly valued, policies, structures and norms are set up in a manner that ensures the needs of everyone are heard, respected and valued. Inclusion then tries to connect all stakeholders into an equitable whole, a community.

More specifically, diversity management becomes evident in the form of different initiatives such as unconscious bias recruitment training, workshops on diversity and mentoring programs. When a broader set of programs is practiced within the organization, in parallel with fostering employee participation, engaging communication and forming communities, the inclusion part of diversity management comes to life (Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 2000; Harvey, 1999).

1.3 Importance of D&I nowadays

A simple answer to the question of why anyone within an organization should be concerned about diversity, is that the workforce diversity affects each HR function as well as the staff directly (Hays-Thomas, 2016, pg. 9).

In addition to the social movements which encouraged organizations to reassess their relationships with employees (Harvard Business Review, 2021), Kirton (2020) highlights the following front-line arguments for D&I consideration in the modern workplace:

- a multitude of socio-economic changes altering the employment landscape,
- increasing socio-demographic diversity of world population, and
- changed nature of how work is done.

Indeed, in a survey conducted by Harvard Business Review (2021) where 1,115 leaders from North American organizations were interviewed, 65% survey respondents indicated to have been setting diversity, equity and inclusion on top of their strategic priorities.

1.3.1 Demographic shifts

One of the most notable changes are the age cohorts – the median age of the workforce is rising steadily with generations of experienced workers reaching retirement (Hays-Thomas, 2016, pg. 10). Besides the increasing average age of world’s population, the workforce is becoming more and more heterogeneous in all other aspects – gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, migration status and others (Mak, 1994). Indeed, a McKinsey study (2015) showed that “(...) *in the US, half of all infants under the age of 1 in 2010 were members of a racial or ethnic minority group*”. Similarly, the UK has recorded a decline in share¹ of workers with European ancestry by 10% points in the last 10 years.

Until recently, most of the workforce was comprised of generation X-ers². Today, the workforce structure has changed with millennials³ accounting for the highest share. Accordingly, the workplace had to transform and adapt to be able to address the changed customs and expectations of the new generation of workers. Indeed, an Ernst & Young survey (2022) showed that 76% of millennials would leave an employer if Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives were not considered within the organization.

1.3.2 Socio-economic changes

Compared to the period following World War II, the workforce nowadays is exposed to higher levels of job instability and uncertainty. The job market has become highly competitive, requiring continuous skill upgrading and flexibility (Smithson & Lewis, 2000). Easier access to education and information made a large share of job profiles easier to replace. With people changing jobs more frequently, a demand for flexibility and welcoming diversity became non-negotiable.

Recent events in modern history definitely carved the path to diversity implications at the workplace. From the largest work-from-home experiment that the pandemic brought about, to movements to suppress systemic racism and geopolitical tensions, managers were almost forced to reconsider their staff’s wellbeing (Creary et al., 2021). Studies confirm that over 70% of job seekers want to work for an entity with dedicated commitment to DEI (McKeon, 2020).

¹ As a share of the total UK workforce.

² Population born between 1965 and 1981.

³ Population born between 1982 to 1996.

Another argument is that globalization made the job market a global talent pool that companies can easily tap into. National boundaries became more permeable because of economic integrations (e.g. European Union) while offshoring business activities and outsourcing labor made processes globally dispersed (Hays-Thomas, 2016, pg. 11).

1.3.3 Changed design of work

Increasing importance of service work, IT advancements, work in teams and job market shifts caused big changes to the nature of work (Hays-Thomas, 2016, pg. 11). Gorenšek (2022) highlights that existing models of process implementation became inadequate due to the digitization of both business and the entire society and are being replaced by an agile and inclusive culture with diverse members.

The scale and complexity of service work is growing and causing move to service-based economies (Buera, Francisco & Kaboski, 2012). This has remarkable implications on diversity management, bearing in mind that services require more direct human interaction.

The contemporary workplace nowadays largely depends on team work rather than individual contributions (Hays-Thomas, 2016, pg. 12). Roberge & van Dick (2010) affirm that a greater variety of perspectives stemming from members' diverse backgrounds positively contributes to the performance of people working in groups. The output of a diverse group yields higher quality as different members tend to suppress the groupthink effect.⁴

1.3.4 The Business case for D&I

In its core, the business case for diversity argues that good diversity management is linked to an increase in company's financial returns (also known as the bottom-line argument) (Hays-Thomas, 2016, pg. 13).

A McKinsey study (2018) researched the relationship between level of diversity⁵ and value creation⁶ in a sample of more than a hundred organizations to find out that companies in the top quartile of gender diversity on executive teams were 21% more likely to create above average value creation. In that same study, companies that ranked highest with respect to ethnic/cultural diversity on executive teams had a 33% higher likelihood of having an industry leading financial performance. Moreover, an unequal performance across companies from the same country and industry was noted, indicating that diversity is a competitive differentiator causing more diverse companies to account for a higher market

⁴ Groupthink is a psychological phenomenon where the want for harmony or consensus between group members causes lack of critical thinking and consideration of alternatives having dysfunctional outcome as a result.

⁵ Diversity was defined as a greater share of women and a more mixed ethnic/racial composition in the leadership of large companies.

⁶ Measured as economic profit margin.

share. Similarly, Bourke's (2016) study concludes that organizations fostering inclusive cultures are twice as likely to meet or exceed their financial targets, three times more likely to be high-performing and six times more likely to be innovative and agile in their processes.

Cox & Beale (1997) were one of the pioneers who suggested that good diversity management is positively linked to organization's performance by providing the following arguments:

- diversity as a talent pipeline enabler (talented candidates from minority group are more attracted to accept job offers from organizations that are known to be inclined towards greater diversity);
- comprehensive problem-solving skills (employees coming from different backgrounds possess a wide array of information and introduce a greater variety of problem-solving approaches, leading to a higher quality output);
- increased creativity and innovation (group's critical mass increases as information origins from a wider scope of sources);
- greater ability to adapt (organization that is internally diverse is more capable to withstand fast paced external changes such as increased competition, changes in the job market etc.);
- improved organizational image (investors and job seekers tend to gravitate towards organizations that are socially responsible).

Good diversity management within a workplace is said to have direct positive effects on employees as well. Riordan (2014) states reduced employee turnover, team engagement, higher participation in decision making⁷ and greater altruism among other positive effects. Morley (2018) also indicates that diversity fosters a healthy organizational climate of respect, mutual understanding and tolerance.

1.4 D&I practices in the contemporary workplace

1.4.1 Diversity Training

Phillips et al. (2016) define diversity training as interventions that aim to improve relationships within the workplace and reduce prejudice. Similar terms used to describe initiatives that enhance interactions in a diverse work environment are awareness training, cross-cultural training, sensitivity training and diversity education. Paluck (2006) notes that the aim of diversity training initiatives is to make employees aware of the differences between people working together and equip them with the necessary knowledge to value and

⁷ Based on Deloitte Australia's analysis of 105 leaders as assessed by 600 raters against the six signature traits of inclusive leadership and performance outcomes, an increase in individuals' feelings of inclusion translates into an increase in decision-making quality by +20%.

leverage these differences (influence attitudes and behaviors of employees). This should then result in a higher quality output of the group.

According to Rynes & Rosen (1995) and Dobbin & Kalev (2018), many diversity programs unfortunately do not result in trainees' improved knowledge, changed behavior or desired organizational outcomes. In particular, Paluck & Green (2009) reviewed past studies on anti-bias interventions to find no evidence that training actually decreases bias. Apparently, this happens due to many diversity and bias awareness training being set up with no clear purpose or being conducted because of the "others are doing it" mannerism, therefore lacking clear goals. Instead, Roberson, Kulik, & Pepper (2003) stress the importance of carrying out a thorough needs analysis first, in order to uncover what kind of diversity training would best suit an organization, depending on the composition of the workforce and the workplace environment.

Moreover, diversity training should be thoughtfully placed in the context of a broader D&I strategy, obtaining central support from the top management. Ferdman (1996) emphasizes that diversity training is a component of a more extensive series of D&I initiatives rather than a standalone practice. Watts (1987) notes that it is in the realm of the managers to successfully position the meaning of the training by acting as role models and personally undertaking the training(s). Additionally, the leaders should be able to address any concerns and questions employees might have regarding the trainings and their purpose in order to add credibility and support employee commitment (Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1999; Winters, 2008).

Finally, King, Gulick & Avery (2010) state that the competency component is also one of the prerequisites to make any D&I training impactful. Many trainings overfocus on awareness and knowledge building, aiming to inform rather than teach. While this can be a good step in the right direction, trainees might struggle to put the knowledge learned into practice. For this reason, diversity trainings ought to include engaging behavioral activities (e.g., role playing) as this ensures trainees are deploying relevant skills and know how/when to use them. Such an approach to training will help attain the desired behavioral outcomes (Garavan, 1997).

1.4.2 Diversity Recruitment Initiatives

Targeted recruitment is usually done to attract candidates with desired skill sets, education or other relevant characteristics. However, much of the research regarding targeted diversity recruitment focuses mainly on the classic, surface-level attributes (demographic attributes such as race, gender and education). In contrast, Casper, Wayne & Manegold's (2013) study shows that targeted recruitment that is based on deeper level attributes (such as attitudes) yields better results in attracting suitable candidates. Tangible aspects of an organization (its policies, job descriptions etc.) have the power to signal organization's values to applicants who then create their own impressions, making them want to (or not) join an organization.

Candidates will have the tendency to apply for organizations where their (D&I) policies and initiatives (and consequently the values they represent) resonate with their own personal values and beliefs (Rivera, 2012).

Many different diversity recruitment strategies exist. McKay & Avery (2005) list using i) minority group member recruiters, ii) emphasizing the commitment to staff policies that support self-identity and iii) public releases of the organization (e.g., photos) that depict a diverse workforce. The intention behind such efforts is to catch attention of different minority groups that will want to join an organization which values their uniqueness. Nevertheless, solely executing such efforts will not ensure the retention and integration of minority group members. Kristof (1996) suggests the organizations to look for a Person-Organization (hereinafter P-O) fit (alignment between the organization's and individual's values) when recruiting. Supposedly, a high P-O fit prevents job attrition and breeds a healthy organizational climate in the long term. This will ensure the employee's values are aligned with the espoused values of the organization and help breed the desired organizational culture.

Lastly, McKay & Avery (2005) propose to constantly evaluate the effectiveness of different recruitment initiatives. Both the hiring rates of minority groups as well as their retention should be monitored. The outcome of an effective recruitment process aimed to increase diversity is not the recruited headcount of diverse staff but how many of those hired actually remain in the organization over a certain period. Such data should serve as an input for diversity audits to ensure accountability as well as progress measurement over time.

1.4.3 Internal Advocates for Diversity

In her paper, Dutton (2018) highlights that employing only members of less represented groups won't suffice and stresses the importance of building a supportive environment to prevent their attrition. A cornerstone of building such an inclusive atmosphere are also Employee Resource Groups (hereinafter ERGs), also referred to as associate resource groups or affinity groups. Rolf, Schlachter & Welbourne (2016) describe ERGs as groups of employees that join voluntarily and meet on a regular basis to address issues relevant to their group and propose action to the leadership. Their existence is normally patronaged by the organization. As reported by McKinsey (2022), nowadays, 90% of Fortune 500 companies have ERGs in place.

Such "company sponsored groups" bring together employees that have a common interest, hobby, identity, characteristic, background or theme (Rolf, Schlachter & Welbourne, 2015). Their existence is supposed to benefit both the employer as well as the employees. On one hand, ERGs present an internal community for employees meanwhile also contributing to the recruitment, retention and development of (potential) staff by offering social engagement, mentorships and acting as a collective advocate for employee rights to the leadership (Friedman & Holtom 2002; Colgan & McKearney, 2012; McKinsey, 2022).

Furthermore, Ibarra (1993) indicates that ERGs allow for better career advancement opportunities for minority groups staff by expanding their internal and external networks.

Their strong contribution to the D&I agenda occurs through various facets; organizing social events and informative sessions, spreading agendas, advising the HRM department on new D&I initiatives and other (Colgan & McKearney, 2012; Green, 2011). Cenkci, Zimmerman & Bircan's study (2019) also confirms that ERGs positively affect work engagement through increased feeling of connectedness and workplace inclusion (increased sense of belonging). Green (2018) sees ERGs' added value in the fact that they operate on a more personal level than organization's departments which makes them more credible and easier for employees to relate to. Nishii (2013) supports this thought by stating that ERGs allow for an authentic engagement that reduces bias and facilitates change.

In line with the ever-increasing importance of workplace D&I, a new type of diversity practitioners evolved. Referred to as diversity champions are managers, oftentimes in more senior positions, who give additional credibility to diversity measures by being involved in D&I policies, promoting inclusion and helping influence employees' attitudes towards diversity (Kirton & Greene, 2009). Appointing diversity champions not only adds to the legitimacy of existing D&I efforts but also activates important change agents that can motivate their colleagues to contribute to the D&I agenda with a more horizontal and less instructive "top-down" approach (Adobor & McMullen, 2007). In their research study, Kirton & Greene (2009) raise a concern that diversity champions are oftentimes white males as this position requires a certain level of seniority.

1.4.4 Managerial participation

As underpinned by many studies (McKinsey, 2018, pg. 26-28; Ng & Wyrick, 2011; Roberts & Mayo, 2019; Wolfgruber & Einwiller, 2023), a successful D&I strategy should begin at the top management level and then cascade down the organizational ladder to ensure full commitment as well as sufficient resource allocation. Senior management should act as a D&I cornerstone by setting the strategic vision and providing the rationale behind it, while middle managers implement it into the daily work context, compliance and performance assessment (Denhardt & Vinzant, 2000; Lapuente & van de Walle, 2020). Tatli and Ozbilgin (2009) argue that managers' involvement adds legitimacy to diversity goals. Lundy et al. (2021) state that even though all employees should adhere to non-discriminatory behavior, managers have additional responsibility to champion workplace fairness and equality.

Creary et al. (2020) believe that middle managers play an important role as they are directly involved in D&I activities by closely engaging with employees. Therefore, the authors encourage managers to share personal stories (conveyed naturally) about their own career paths which will help colleagues feel heard. Furthermore, authors suggest that managers do regular check-ins with their staff as this indicates true concern and care especially in challenging times of balancing work and personal life.

Deloitte reports (2011 & 2018) highlight the importance of managers undertaking the role of inclusive leaders. Inclusive leaders in the D&I context are those who visibly advocate for diversity and all initiatives connected to it, are aware of their employees' trait and skill differences, value and know how to effectively manage them. Moreover, they honor the collaborative style of leadership, take decisions based on merit, are emphatic and culturally intelligent. Inclusive managers should create a workplace environment where talent, experience and identity diversity are valued, meanwhile balancing the need for uniqueness and equality which is key to foster inclusion (Prime & Salib, 2014).

To answer the question on how to fully commit managers to the D&I agenda, Creary et al. (2020) propose a series of actions such as i) providing diversity trainings to model behaviors of middle management, ii) managers attending meetings of affinity groups where relevant issues are discussed and iii) offering managers complete access to online resources where they can inform themselves in case of diversity-related challenges or questions.

1.4.5 Workplace Policies

Bernstein and Bilimoria (2013, pg. 641) describe diversity policies as procedures and guidelines adopted by the leadership that reinforce the organization's commitment towards ensuring a diverse and inclusive workplace. International Labour Organization (hereinafter ILO) (2022) proclaims D&I policies as an important foundation for change as they set out the intentions and principles that hold the organization accountable.

For example, Badgett et al. (2013) report that policies supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (hereinafter LGBT) employee communities are connected to better wellbeing of LGBT workers as they feel more comfortable disclosing about their self-identification. Additionally, in their study review⁸ Badgett et al. (2013) concluded that LGBT-supportive policies have a positive link to greater workplace commitment, better relationships between colleagues, higher job satisfaction and even improved health state of LGBT employees.

Aligned with the D&I policies are also other policies that seek to reduce inequalities and foster workplace inclusivity: recruitment and selection policy, code of conduct, disability policy and whistleblowing policy. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2020) flags the importance of collecting data on different aspects of diversity to identify key areas where policy action is required to then help design policies that will properly address the existing deficiencies in creating an inclusive workplace. In their study, Scarborough, Lambouths & Holbrook (2019) examined employee support for D&I policies and concluded that employees reported higher level of support for D&I policies when they

⁸ In this study review Badgett et al. (2013) analyzed the findings of 36 research studies related to LGBT policies and their impact on business outcomes and the workplace climate.

stemmed from the rationale to address discrimination, meanwhile lower levels of support were reported when these policies were established with the purpose of increasing diversity.

The Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation's report (2020) also flags that diversity policies tend to benefit disproportionately the privileged within the minority groups. Accordingly, more attention and targeted initiatives should be created to help the disadvantaged within these groups. Similarly, an ILO (2022) report, based on a D&I survey,⁹ highlights that most organizational D&I policies focus on gender and age, followed by policies relating to ethnicity/race/religion/disability, while modest attention is given to aspects like sexual orientation and acknowledging people living with HIV. However, the survey also showed that respondents who work in enterprises with a D&I policy are 9% more likely to be supported to work flexibly and be comfortable to speak up about inappropriate behavior in the workplace than those who work in organizations without a D&I policy in place. Additionally, it is also 26% likelier that respondents working in organizations with a D&I policy believe in transparency and fairness of opportunities and promotion decisions within the company.

1.5 D&I in International Organizations

1.5.1 D&I in a global setting

Shin & Park (2013) explain that international companies largely benefit from the richness of knowledge, experience and unique perspectives due to the diverse staff they employ. Building a D&I strategy in such a business environment must begin by senior leadership's acknowledgement that no universal approach to D&I exists. Indeed, results from a survey that Nishii & Özbilgin (2007) report that only 50% of organizations take into account global stakeholders (e.g. employees, business partners) when building D&I strategies. What is more, only 39% of those provide diversity trainings and mere 27% measure progress using different D&I metrics. The authors criticize many multinational companies opting for a narrow minded and ethnocentric approach to D&I. They further point out the insufficient recognition of the fact that diversity management approaches developed in one national context most likely won't work in others. In this regard, Goodman (2013) proposes that global organizations gather diversity champions from every country/region they operate in and conduct a diversity survey which will help them understand how staff perceive D&I in different geographic areas.

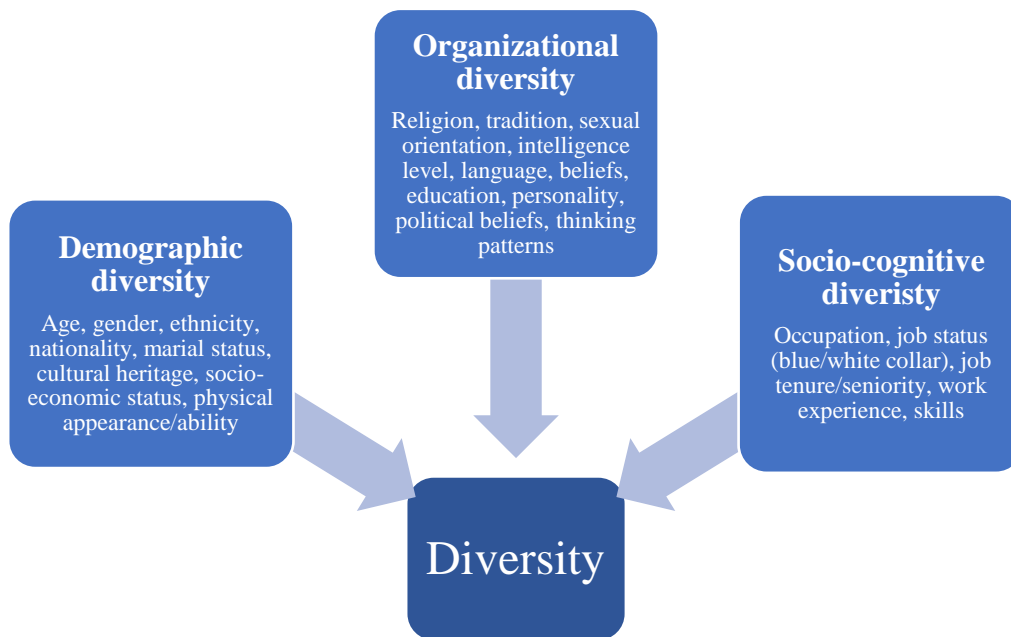
Diversity acknowledgement in globally operating organizations should have a further reach than examining solely the surface level aspects like gender and age. Accordingly, Shin & Park (2013) propose global organizations consider diversity through the lens of three

⁹ ILO conducted a D&I survey in 2021 with 13,087 employees from 75 countries across various different sectors.

categories – demographic, organizational and socio-cognitive. While the demographic diversity attributes are easier to detect, authors emphasize that the other two categories should not be neglected to fully capture the complexity of employees’ diversity.

Figure 1 shows the three diversity management categories Shin & Park (2013) propose to consider.

Figure 1: Diversity management categories



Adapted from Shin & Park (2013).

Next, Shin & Park (2013) proceed to divide workforce diversity management into two levels: macro and micro. At the macro level, leadership should i) enable development of policies and formal training programs that foster diversity awareness, ii) hold stakeholders accountable, iii) ensure that diversity management is integral part of the business growth and change process of the organization, iv) put in place internal support systems that allow employees to be proactively involved in institutionalizing diversity of thought and action in the workplace. On the micro level, management should ensure that group strategies enable diverse members to co-create better outcomes (i.e. leveraging the differences of staff members). Accordingly, top management should equip local teams with knowledge and skills to move forward the diversity agenda in a collaborative way.

1.5.2 Global D&I strategy – community of best practices

The following subchapter will briefly present some of the selected practices of global enterprises that serve as an example of an effective approach in different areas of D&I.

1.5.2.1 Gender balance at Sodexo

Sodexo is a hospitality service industry company, offering a job to around 412,000 employees as of 2022. The company bases their approach according to the United Nations (hereinafter UN) Sustainable Development Goals across five different dimensions: promoting gender equality, standing against any form of discrimination, hiring and providing people with disabilities equal employment opportunities, accepting all sexual orientations and identifications and, lastly, paying attention to generation gaps (Sodexo, n.d. a).

Nonetheless, making significant progress with respect to gender equality remains at the core of Sodexo's D&I initiatives. The company has provided clear goals on their objectives and made a commitment to tracking their progress. By 2025, Sodexo aspires that at least 40% of its leadership will comprise of women and 100% employees will work in gender balanced management teams. The 40-60 ratio and gender balance commitment are evidence-based policies and an outcome of their Global Gender Balance study which was conducted to understand how gender balanced teams influence their performance.¹⁰ As part of this exercise, 50,000 managers from 70 entities were surveyed through 5 years (Sodexo, n.d. b).

A cornerstone of Sodexo's strategy on reaching gender balance has been their global advisory board called SoTogether, established in 2009, consisting of members of 20 different nationalities. Board's function and mission is to drive gender balance by leading the gender equality strategy, recruiting to the board influential colleagues who can help ensure their efforts are effectively cascaded and to help women advance in their careers (Sodexo, n.d. b).

The company has also publicly committed to share their progress on gender balance advancements. For example, Sodexo yearly reports on gender pay gap progress by releasing differences in gross hourly earnings for men and women. Additionally, they participate in Women-Men Professional Equality Index ranking, being awarded a score 99 out of 100 in 2020 (Sodexo, n.d. b).

1.5.2.2 Accessibility at Accenture

Accenture is a global company specializing in digital, cloud and security services. With over 738,000 employees, the company has left immense footprints in inclusion of people with disabilities (Accenture, November 2022). The company received the highest score (100) for Disability Equality Index in three consecutive years between 2017 to 2019.

With their disability champions network, Accenture has been a pioneer in ensuring equal opportunities for disability minority group members. On their website, the company states its belief in enterprises having a powerful role to ensure technology that helps bridge the

¹⁰ Impact on KPIs such as operating margins, client retention rate, workplace accident rates and employee retention rate was measured.

divide for people with disabilities. Therefore, Accenture launched a Global IT Accessibility practice to help design a workplace experience with removed visible and invisible barriers for people with disabilities. The company has a dedicated team of software specialists who are revamping their systems to adhere to global accessibility standards (Accenture, n.d. a).

A multi-year plan was rolled out including key initiatives on how their technology shall change to become more inclusive. Software developers are undergoing training to truly understand what features need to be implemented for an inclusive user experience. A key partner in increasing accessibility options for employees has been Microsoft – the two companies are trying to expand the Office 365 features. With this, Accenture is trying to get outside partners involved in the co-creation of an inclusive workplace as well. A high number of colleagues with disability comprises Accenture’s Accessibility Center of Excellence where individuals test the user experience and provide feedback to Microsoft. This business relationship benefits both sides as it enables Accenture’s fulfillment of its D&I mission as well as offers constructive feedback for Microsoft on how to optimize their products (Accenture, 2021; Accenture, n.d. b).

1.5.2.3 Skill-based hiring at General Motors

General Motors (hereinafter GM) is a multinational automotive manufacturing company with almost 200,000 employees located worldwide. The company has made some groundbreaking changes when it comes to innovative HR practices. It is indicated in their website that they want to improve employees’ equity by bringing an innovative mindset to HR processes and systems (GM, n.d.). One of such innovations happened in 2022 when GM dropped one of their eligibility requirements about candidates having to complete at least a four-year degree study program. Hiring based on skills instead of focusing on degree allows employers like GM to tap into a wider talent pool (Thier, 2022).

The transition to skill-based hiring practices presents the third pillar of GM’s three-pronged approach to revamp their hiring practices to become the most inclusive company. This pillar concerns the workforce design in a way that ensures creation of clear career pathways to candidates wanting to join the company and have experience but not necessarily the required education. Meanwhile, the first pillar of their hiring practices transformation emphasizes diversity, equity and inclusion and the second one concerns workplace innovation and bias awareness (GM, n.d.).

GM has also acted as a role model for other companies when it comes to leveraging talent in innovative ways. The company has been collaborating with a variety of organizations joining individuals with interest in the automotive and science industry (e.g. Society of Women Engineers; the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers) that help them provide a diverse set of potential candidates. Furthermore, as a part of their Take 2 program, the company targets individuals that have taken a work break for two or more years, offering them employment opportunities. An important talent pipeline for the company is also young

talents, especially students – they aim to attract the latter by offering them paid summer internships (GM, n.d.).

1.6 D&I in Non-Profit Organizations

1.6.1 Non-Profit sector as standard setter

One of the reasons as to why the D&I agenda is so intertwined with the mission and values of NPOs is that they play a key role in diffusion of good D&I practices. In this regard, Nesbit & Gazley (2011, pg. 560) argue that member-based organizations are formed to “educate, train and credential people”. Mason (2020) even refers to them as “mediators” and “facilitators of change”.

In their survey research, Mastracci & Herring (2010) discovered that NPOs employ more women in full-time positions compared to private sector entities. What is more, women are appointed in key and mission specific roles. The authors explain this phenomenon by reasons specific to the non-profit sector. Firstly, they argue that HR processes in NPOs tend to be more formalized than in the private sector. Secondly, personnel practices in the non-profit sector differ a lot from the private – inclusive governance and innovative management approaches with the aim to increase the share of women employed are much more prevalent. What is more, the personnel practices in NPOs are said to be more transparent which creates a fair playing field for everyone.

Nonetheless, AbouAssi (2015) brings to attention the dependence NPOs have on the funding of their members (also referred to as the resource-dependency theory) which can influence the decision-making processes and strategic priorities (including D&I). Even though D&I efforts can receive a lot of support from the funding members, the fact that functioning of NPOs is dependent on them, can also have a suppressive effect (NPOs conform to preferences of donors in order to not risk losing financial support). Solebello, Tschirhart & Leiter (2016) further elaborate on the difficulties non-profit organizations, historically formed as member associations, encounter when dealing with D&I. The authors name such phenomena as the paradox of inclusion and exclusion in membership associations.

1.6.2 Non-Profit sector lacks to take initiative

The non-profit sector has oftentimes been criticized for its mediocre performance regarding its representational diversity. Hayes (2012) described the non-profit sector’s workforce in the US saying, “*nonprofit employees are approximately 82% white*”. Weisinger, Borges-Mendez & Milofsky (2016) as well as Schwartz et al. (2015) also criticize the employees’ profile composition of NPOs, acknowledging they do not reflect the increased multiculturalism of the contemporary workforce, and are therefore unable to keep up with demographic shifts. The authors also condemn a lack of effort when it comes to

consideration of secondary diversity characteristics such as socio-economic status and religion, among others.

Schwartz et al. (2015) conducted a survey with 1,638 non-profit sector employees assessing their perspectives on D&I initiatives within their respective organizations. The survey findings revealed that although many NPOs communicate their commitment to diversity, they often fail to act on it. 7 out of 10 respondents answered that their employers do not dedicate enough effort to creating a diverse and inclusive working environment. Most common reasons were attributed to diversity not being strategically implemented or prioritized by management or diversity initiatives being set aside due to budget constraints.

Additionally, putting (D&I related) values into action indicates legitimacy regarding commitment to D&I. Schwartz et al. (2015) found out that perceived D&I efforts within an organization largely affect the recruitment process and employee retention. Consequently, if there is a significant disconnect between the organization's espoused values and the actions it takes, this will lead to dampening the organization's employer brand, increased employee dissatisfaction and inability to retain top talent.

1.6.3 Composition of boards and their role

Research suggests that diversity of the board composition will reflect in the composition of the workforce. This supposedly happens because including minority group members in boards will make the organization more committed to drive the D&I agenda. Van der Walt et al. (2006) imply that greater board diversity generates less narrow-minded decision-making. Minority groups members also shed light on problems that are oftentimes less evident to board members that do not form part of any minority group. What is more, an increased heterogeneity of the board tends to reflect a higher sensitivity to stakeholders in general (Bantel & Jackson, 1989). Indeed, in their study Bear, Rahman & Post (2010) confirm that increasing representation of women in board constitution brings about benefits such as increased sensitivity to corporate social responsibility and participative decision-making. Apparently, as the number of women in boards increases, communication barriers lower and minority voices turn more assertive. Similarly, Buse, Bernstein and Bilimoria (2016) confirm the causal relationship between the board's diversity and its improved organization's performance.

Unfortunately, Schwartz et al. (2015) report about a representational problem of board composition in the non-profit governance as people of color account for only 14% of board members. This is consistent with Kang and Cnaan's (1995) discovery that 80% of board members are white and 60% are males.

An ILO report (2022) showcases that many European Union countries have already started acknowledging the value of diverse boards, imposing either voluntary targets (e.g. Australia,

Finland, New Zealand) or quotas (e.g. Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and Norway) to increase the representation of women and persons with disabilities on management boards.

1.6.4 D&I strategy in the Non-Profit sector – community of best practices

1.6.4.1 Disability Inclusion and Accessibility at United Nations

The UN is an intergovernmental organization formed to maintain international peace and security as well as to foster amicable relations between countries. The organization consists of 193 member countries and personnel of around 120,000 people (UNSCEB, 2021). One of the initial formalized UN's efforts that made remarkable progress in their agenda on inclusion of people with disabilities was the Secretary-General's bulletin¹¹ issued in 2015. In the bulletin, measures and guidelines covering the following aspects related to employing staff with disabilities were laid out: accessibility, awareness-raising, monitoring and coordination and confidentiality of information on staff with disabilities (UN, 2014).

In 2019, the UN launched its Disability Inclusion Strategy (hereinafter Strategy) where a framework on how to include people with disabilities through all areas of their work is outlined. The Strategy includes a system-wide policy, an accountability framework and detailed implementation modalities. Through those, the UN embeds the rights of people with disabilities into their work to ensure equal treatment and enable an environment where they feel valued. What is more, the Strategy's timeline covers the organization's efforts over a decade and ties in other international human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2019).

An important section of the Strategy is the accountability framework formed of two parts: i) 15 system indicators framework for entities (see Annex 1) that focus on the analysis of four areas (leadership, strategic planning and management; inclusiveness; programming; organizational culture) and ii) accountability scoreboard on disability and inclusion for UN countries. According to the UN, the accountability framework will allow for setting of custom target measures for the UN entities as well as for monitoring and evaluation of country policies in place related to inclusion of people with disabilities (UN, 2019).

Furthermore, the UN also made significant progress eliminating barriers in the recruitment process, ensuring accessibility for everyone. Both their recruitment platform (Inspira) as well as Careers Portal offer an "accessibility" button that enables users with disabilities to tailor website content and functionalities to their special needs. Such adjustments are, for example, shifting keyboard navigation, enabling screen reading, color contrasting options, monochromatic display and block blinking, among others (UN HR Portal, n.d.).

¹¹ United Nations Secretariat ST/SGB/2014/3.

1.6.4.2 Gender and Diversity at Inter-American Development Bank

The Inter-American Development Bank (hereinafter IADB) is an international financial institution headquartered in Washington, D.C. The organization employs around 2,000 people across four continents and accounts for 48 member countries (IADB, n.d. a). Its mission is to better the life quality of people from Latin America and Caribbean by offering financial (e.g., loans and grants) and technical support (IADB, n.d. b). The organization has been a role model to its peer organizations when it comes to reaching gender parity, notably by deploying a dedicated Gender and Diversity Division.

Regarding gender and diversity initiatives, the IADB's has in place three strategic lines of action (IADB, n.d. c):

- supporting integration of actions that promote (gender) equality and address diversity issues,
- distilling innovative approaches to advance in area of gender equality and diversity,
- collecting and examining data on their current initiatives to evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts and adjust future policies.

What is more, the IADB has in place two concrete tools to spur its gender and diversity agenda. First one is the IADB's gender and diversity sector framework. This document guides the organization's work on policies and includes evidence-based actions that the IADB will execute to address gender and diversity related challenges. More specifically, in the said framework IADB sets out two dimensions of success – one to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and children and the other to enhance development and inclusion of diverse populations such as indigenous people and Afro-descendants. Specific lines of action, operational activities as well as knowledge activities are listed for both dimensions (AIDB, 2017).

The second tool are the AIDB's gender and diversity action plans. IABD (n.d.) describes the said action plans as detailed guides that support the implementation of their Operational Policy on Gender equality as well as mainstream related principles throughout all the IADB's actions. The action plans span over three years, the current one being effective between 2022 and 2025. Besides the objectives and main areas of action, the action plans also include a detailed section on project execution – how the progress on gender and diversity areas of actions is being monitored and evaluated. The execution of each action plan is followed by a detailed implementation report.

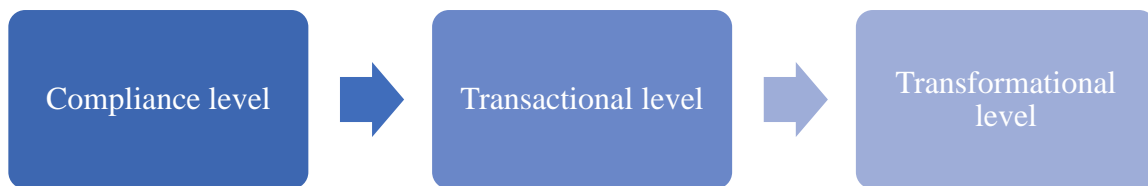
1.7 Delivering impact through D&I

1.7.1 From transactional to transformational D&I approach

According to ILO (2022), there are three different levels of maturity an organization can be at considering their approach to D&I. At the early stage of compliance, the organization's main goal is to adhere to the national legislation or policy to avoid legal consequences. Next is the transactional stage where different D&I initiatives are practiced, however with unclear strategic goals, achieving modest impact. At the most mature, transformational level, D&I efforts are embedded in all aspects of an organization's activities and employee life cycle. D&I initiatives are closely aligned with the organization's strategy, which is led by a diverse senior management team, accountable for workplace D&I.

Figure 2 shows the three different maturity levels of an organization's approach to D&I as introduced by ILO (2022).

Figure 2: Maturity levels of organization's approaches to D&I



Adapted from ILO (2022).

Furthermore, ILO (2022) proposes four principles on how an organization can progress to the transformational level of D&I.

1. D&I equals both strategic and cultural change.

There needs to be a shift from thinking that D&I are a matter of the HRM department to recognizing that they are actually a corporate responsibility and part of the organization's broader strategy. Based on this shift, the organization's culture will have the potential to change. Leaders need to be aware that changing the existing organizational culture is a difficult process that requires patience and full support from the top management (Gutterman, 2022). Approaching D&I as an isolated situation is not sufficient – it asks for ongoing management that is both systemic and strategic (Young & Jones, 2019).

The ILO (2022) survey findings speak in favor of taking a strategic and culture change approach to D&I. Indeed, 50% of the survey respondents indicated that D&I initiatives in their workplaces are sufficiently resourced and identifiable. Those same respondents also reported higher levels of workplace inclusion due to their individual needs being met and felt more encouraged and supported with respect to their career progression.

Finally, these respondents were also more likely to openly communicate on proposed improvements regarding the processes within the organization.

2. Top management is diverse.

Composition of the top leadership should reflect the organization's approach to D&I. Nishii & Özbilgin (2007) find out that composition of top management impacts how effectively an organization engages in diversity management. This is since diverse management teams that have had international work experience score high in cultural intelligence and are more likely to adopt a proactive approach in diversity management. ILO (2022) survey uncovered that when women account for at least 40% of top management positions, respondents felt more valued at the workplace for their authenticity. Additionally, women felt that they can express themselves openly when the representation of women in top management is 40% or higher. Lastly, Opstrup & Villadsen's (2015) research study confirmed that gender diversity in top management is linked to a better organizational outcome (e.g. financial performance).

3. D&I aspects are embedded in the entire employee lifecycle.

Derven & Gundling (2014, pg. 12) encourage organizations to undertake a comprehensive approach to employee lifecycle when deploying D&I. From hiring procedures, training, appraisals, performance evaluations and even offboarding/retirement. D&I has to be intertwined in all employee-organization touchpoints and spearheading all its processes. As such, customized D&I policies and initiatives should address the different needs of minority groups to support them and provide equal opportunities. The ILO (2022) survey reports that respondents who work in an organization with established D&I policies are 9% likelier to feel respected and 18% likelier to work in a flexible arrangement and report inappropriate behavior in the workplace.

4. Accountability on D&I is shared.

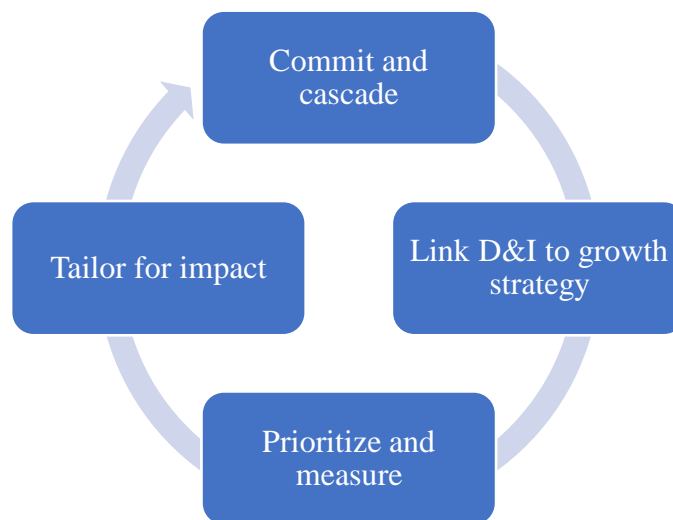
Abad & Wynn (2022) underline that especially after COVID-19's impact on sense of belongingness, D&I activities ask for a collective action rather than acts from a few change agents. Disseminating the responsibility for D&I will hold all employees accountable and create a broader sense of ownership. While the top management should lead by example when it comes to D&I, all employees need to be responsible for their behaviors and commit to ban any form of discrimination. Organizations can shift towards a more inclusive work environment by supporting open conversations and providing trainings against bias (Harvard Business Review, 2021). In the ILO survey (2022), 71% of respondents indicated that their top management is accountable for acting as D&I role models and 73% said that all employees within their company are held accountable when it comes to supporting D&I.

1.7.2 Building an impactful D&I strategy

Considering that paying attention to D&I can indeed benefit organizations in many aspects – the link to financial performance, attracting diverse talent, improving the social image and organizational climate – the question remains on how a D&I strategy should be set up to ensure employee commitment and reap success.

Figure 3 shows the four imperatives McKinsey (2018) identified in their report that organizations should consider so that their D&I efforts result in real impact and long-term sustainability. The report states that D&I initiatives receive most cognition when they correspond to the ethos of the organization as well as its growth priorities.

Figure 3: Four imperatives for development of an impactful D&I strategy



Adapted from McKinsey (2018).

1.7.2.1 Commit and cascade

According to McKinsey (2018, pg. 26-28); Ng & Wyrick (2011, pg. 368-376); ILO (2022) the commitment to D&I initiates at the top management level and is then cascaded further down. Not only do top leaders act as role models, but also signal centralized support to the initiatives and ensure the allocation of sufficient resources. Deloitte's research (2018) proves that leaders' behavior accumulates up to a 70%-point difference in perceptions of whether staff feels very included in the workplace or not. According to a survey Harvard Business Review (2021) conducted, 50% of respondents¹² said their D&I progress is lagging due to a lack of leadership's commitment.

¹² Respondents were leaders from North American organizations.

1.7.2.2 Link to growth strategy

Building on the commitment momentum, D&I initiatives really thrive when an organization can link their D&I objectives to their growth strategy. Data supported understanding of how D&I links to an organization's value drivers is inherent. This enables the organization to identify and acquire diversity attributes that are relevant and purposeful (McKinsey, 2018, pg. 26-28). For example, the Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation loosened their policy on only recruiting candidates from their member countries to non-member nationality candidates as well so their policy advice can have a wider impact across the globe. For their policies to be able to address the socio-economic issues on a global scale, inputs from colleagues from all around the world are vital.

1.7.2.3 Prioritize and measure

Oftentimes organizations mistakenly think that implementing all possible D&I initiatives and programs will yield best results. Adversely, prioritizing the D&I initiatives is essential to enable a close alignment between the organization's ethos and D&I strategy (2018, pg. 26-28). To make prioritizing a more tangible task, experts suggest using D&I data and metrics. Metrics will help identify areas where the organization is lacking and need more attention. Howson (2021) discusses that establishing D&I Key Performance Indicators (hereinafter KPIs) ensures a springboard for facilitating an equitable and inclusive workforce. Setting specific objectives helps hold accountability well and allows to track progress.

1.7.2.4 Tailor for impact

Lastly, while there is a need for the D&I strategy to be coherent across the entire organization to ensure a certain level of consistency, the adaptation to specific contextual, geographic and socio-cultural circumstances shouldn't be neglected. Tailoring D&I initiatives allows for a wider stakeholder engagement and enhances ownership (McKinsey, 2018, pg. 26-28). McKinsey study (2015) indicates that many organizations pursue a common diversity program for all stakeholder groups. Such generalization results in making little general progress instead of evident progress in the selected areas. Accordingly, D&I initiatives should be tailored to the specific needs of different diversity groups (e.g. gender initiatives most likely won't address the issues ethnic minority members are encountering).

2 EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

2.1 Research plan and methodology

This research work is a result of an inductive research approach as it stems from the author's interest and work experience. In the first chapter, a comprehensive overview of the D&I topic, its meaning in the contemporary workplace setting and the different practices it encompasses were presented. This chapter consists exclusively of secondary sources.

The second chapter, empirical analysis is essentially a case study of the selected international NPO (hereinafter Organization). Zainal (2017) describes a case study as a research method used to examine data within a specific context. The use of the case study method makes it possible to explore and understand a complex issue. It thus turns out to be the most adequate research method when a holistic and in-depth examination is required.

For the purposes of this case study, a qualitative analysis of data collected from primary data sources (semi-structured interviews of persons employed at the Organization) will be conducted. In this regard, it is important to stress that the fact that the interviews are semi-structured will allow the interviewees to express their genuine thoughts and opinion on the topic as well as incite a natural flow of the conversation, considering that the topic discussed is of sensitive nature. Secondly, publicly available secondary sources will be analyzed. The secondary sources used for this case study will be various online sources such as the Organization's website and its Diversity and Inclusion Report from 2022.

2.2 Research process

The research process began by analyzing the publicly available resources about the Organization in general as well as its D&I initiatives. The purpose of this analysis was to become acquainted with the existing state of the Organization's D&I strategy and then prepare interview questions that are context-appropriate and can capture meaningful information. Mesec (1998) welcomes such an approach to qualitative analysis stating that when the understanding (of the context) is better, better questions are proposed.

Next, interview questions for the semi-structured interviews were formed. According to Kordiš and Smrdu (2015, pg. 40-41), semi-structured interviews are the most common form of acquiring qualitative data. Questions are of an open type; they can follow a certain preliminary frame and schedule or can be completely spontaneous. Moreover, semi-structured interviews prove to be most suitable when researching opinions and point of views of people on the research topic. The authors also note that semi-structured interviews are more flexible and enable to capture the affectuous aspects as the answers provided are more spontaneous and personal.

For this research work, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with 9 Organization's employees. While one interviewee works in HRM, the other interviewees are members of different ERGs within the Organization. Interviews were carried out between 15 March and 18 April 2023, lasting between 40 and 60 minutes. The envisioned interview structure was to go over the 10 questions that covered topics on the importance of the D&I agenda in international NPOs in general, the Organization's current D&I initiatives, as well as managers' ownership and staff accountability on D&I (see Appendix 3). The prepared interview questions, however, served only as discussion guidelines to allow for a candid conversation.

Once the interviews were carried out, interview transcripts were prepared to systematically organize the qualitative data collected. To conduct the qualitative data analysis, coding of the interview transcripts was done. Kordiš and Smrdu (2015, pg. 53) describe coding as a process of categorizing qualitative material units. Coding begins with preparing concrete summaries of selected units within the material collected in interviews (lower-order categories) and continues in the direction of greater general and abstraction (higher-order categories).

The systematic organization of the data collected served as an input for the last chapter of this thesis, dedicated to the interpretation of results.

2.3 About the Organization

2.3.1 Mission and work

The examined Organization is an intergovernmental entity headquartered in France. Its two main outputs are creating policies which enhance the society's living standard. The Organization, established in 1960, cooperates closely with governments, wider society and public policy makers to provide evidence-based standards and create solutions that address different social, economic and environmental challenges (Organization, n.d.).

The Organization currently consists of 38 member countries which fund its operations. The amount of each member country's financial contribution depends on their economic size. Member countries engage with the Organization's experts to develop policies and standards tailored to specific country's circumstances, use the Organization's data reservoir for benchmarking purposes and participate in country reviews created to encourage performance improvement (Organization, n.d.).

The Organization's work is driven by the following core values: objectivity, openness, boldness, pioneering and ethics. Secretary-General chairs the highest decision-making body, the Council, which is composed of member country ambassadors and the European

Commission. The work of the Organization is conducted by several directorates and corresponding divisions which report to the Secretary-General (Organization, n.d.).

2.3.2 Main figures

The Organization has four different employee categories: Officials, Temporary staff, Interns and Persons on loan. The total headcount of the Organization’s staff on 31 December 2021 (hereinafter cut-off date) was 3,979. According to its Diversity and Inclusion report (2021), the Organization’s staff is comprised of 3,407 Official staff members and members of Unclassified staff category (together accounting for 85.6% of total staff headcount), 254 members of Temporary staff (6.4%) staff category, 81 Persons on loan (2%) and 237 Interns (6%) (Organization, 2022).¹³

The Diversity and Inclusion report provides a more detailed breakdown of staff diversity for Official staff category only. The Organization employs Official staff from all its 38 member countries. Due to its headquarters being placed in France, most Officials are French (943¹⁴), followed by British (336) and American (292) nationals. Together with Italians and Germans, the latter groups of nationals form the most represented nationalities within the Organization, accounting for 60.7% of all the Organization’s Official staff. Least Officials come from Luxembourg (3), Costa Rica (4) and Latvia (7). Some of the Organization’s special programs are also sponsored by non-member countries which means that the Organization employs Official staff from non-member countries as well. In 2021, 125 members of the Organization’s Official staff held a non-member country nationality (Organization, 2022).

Table 1 shows the proportion of Officials grouped by nationality representation on the cut-off date.

Table 1: Organization’s Officials grouped by nationality representation on cut-off date

Member country	Share of total headcount (in %)
France, United Kingdom, United States, Italy, Germany	60.7
Canada, Spain, Australia, Ireland, Japan	17.7
Mexico, Belgium, Poland, South Korea, the Netherlands	8.7
Portugal, Greece, Hungary, Sweden, New Zealand	5.2
Türkiye, Austria, Denmark, Chile, Finland	3.7

¹³ Data is based upon the workforce composition as on the cut-off date.

¹⁴ All data and figures hereafter refer to the Official staff category only.

Table 1: Organization’s Officials grouped by nationality representation on cut-off (cont.)

Colombia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Israel, Czech Republic	2.1
Estonia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Iceland, Norway, Latvia, Costa Rica, Luxembourg	1.8

Source: Adapted from the Organization (2022).

With respect to gender diversity, women accounted for 55.9% Officials. Among the three employment groups the Organization has – i) Professional, ii) Senior Management and iii) Support, Technical and Linguists – women have the highest share in Support, Technical and Linguists functions (70.6%), meanwhile the Professional employment group is rather balanced (women account for 48.1% of all roles). Men are slightly more represented in Senior Management positions (women account for 45.2%) (Organization, 2022).

Regarding age diversity, most Officials are between 31 and 50 years old. The Organization has three main job families, i.e. i) Corporate Management and Administration, ii) Policy Research and Advice and iii) Executive Leadership. Most Officials employed in the Policy Research and Advice job family fall within the group range of 31 to 40, whereas most Officials in the Corporate Management and Administration group fall within the group range of 41 to 50 years old. Most Senior Management Officials are between 51 and 60 years old (Organization, 2022).

2.4 Research results

2.4.1 Organization’s D&I initiatives

According to the Organization’s Diversity and Inclusion report (2022), the idea to encourage greater diversity first emerged in 2007, following the publishing of a HRM reform package. Two years later, the first Diversity and Inclusion report was released, offering an insight into the Organization’s diversity metrics and sharing them with staff. As years progressed, the conversation around the D&I agenda and its impact on staff’s wellbeing started to get more attention which resulted in an increased need to roll-out more dedicated D&I initiatives (Organization, 2022).

2.4.1.1 Diversity and Inclusion Report

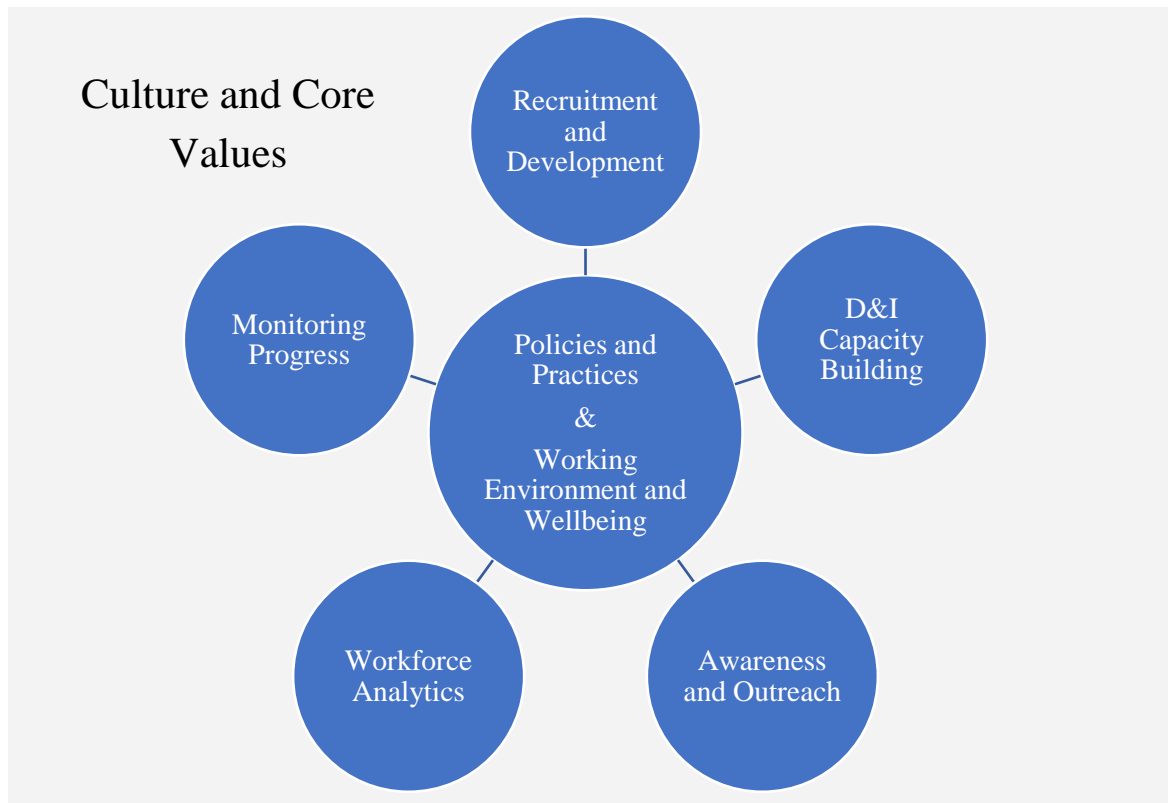
The Organization prepares a Diversity and Inclusion Report on a yearly basis. In the report, staff data across different diversity aspects are presented as well as the D&I activities. Until now, the Organization has been reporting on three main diversity dimensions, i.e. age, gender and nationality. To increase its commitment to achieve greater diversity and transparency, the Organization made the Diversity and Inclusion Report publicly available for the first time in 2021 (Organization, 2022).

The last Diversity and Inclusion Report was published in 2022 and encompasses main statistics and trends on the Organization’s staff in 2021. More specifically the report contains information on employment categories, grade groups and diversity statistics. The said report also presents the ongoing initiatives the Organization is practicing to encourage an inclusive work environment; it is concluded by describing the Organization’s ERGs (Organization, 2022).

2.4.1.2 Diversity and Inclusion Framework

In 2020, the Organization launched a Diversity and Inclusion Framework focusing on five elements that will drive their D&I agenda in the upcoming years. Figure 4 shows the Framework which consists of five different components. The connecting tissue between all five elements is the Organization’s culture and its core values (Organization, 2022).

Figure 4: The Organization’s Diversity and Inclusion Framework



Adapted from the Organization (2022).

2.4.1.3 Recruitment

The Organization encourages diversity through their recruitment channels by offering a variety of special corporate programs. These programs help to ensure better access to the opportunities for different audiences. More specifically, the Organization offers (n.d.):

- Internship Program dedicated to students enrolled in a full-time degree study program (Bachelor, Master or PhD) to work on the Organization’s policy area projects or in corporate functions.
- Young Associates Program dedicated to recent undergraduate students, allowing them to join the Organization as an Official staff for two years and work in the policy area research and analysis.
- Persons on Loan Program allowing borrowing staff from external institutions to the Organization for a predetermined period.
- Junior Professional Officer Program allows the public sector servants to temporarily work at the Organization and contribute with their national perspectives and unique work background.

The Organization has in place partnerships with specific universities and professional networks that enable a diverse talent pipeline. To encourage diversity in the recruitment process, special guidelines were created for the hiring teams so that they consider diversity aspects during recruitment and ensure appointments are merit-based (Organization, 2022).

2.4.1.4 Training on Diversity

The Organization offers different tools and trainings to build internal capacity on D&I. Trainings dedicated to inclusive leadership, managing unconscious bias and supporting the inclusion of people with disabilities are available. In 2022, an interactive training dedicated to raising awareness and including people with disabilities was created to facilitate their onboarding and work experience at the Organization. Furthermore, diversity trainings to encourage the dialogue on D&I within directorates were rolled-out. In 2021, the Organization established a guide on the use of gender pronouns and gender inclusive language (Organization, 2022).

2.4.1.5 Raising awareness on D&I

In 2021, the Organization held its first D&I event dedicated to racial and ethnic diversity to discuss how the Organization can become a more diverse and inclusive workplace. Staff members from diverse ethnic backgrounds contributed to the event by sharing their testimonials and challenges. Furthermore, the Organization updated their careers website and even created a webpage dedicated to D&I exclusively (Organization, 2022).

The Organization’s Human Resources service undertakes different presentations and visits career fairs in order to raise awareness about the employment opportunities it offers. As part of the Organization’s digital outreach efforts to increase diversity, targeted LinkedIn campaigns are carried out, allowing to reach an even broader and more diverse audience (Organization, 2022).

2.4.1.6 Monitoring and analytics

The Organization conducts staff analytics throughout different steps of their employment lifecycle to improve the decision-making and assess the impact of D&I efforts. In addition to the Diversity and Inclusion Report, the Organization also submits staff profile statistics and data on senior recruitments to the Council on a regular basis (Organization, 2022).

To evaluate the maturity of their D&I initiatives compared to other organizations, as well as to monitor progress, the Organization undertakes a third-party audit run by Economic Dividends for Gender Equality (hereinafter EDGE). According to EDGE (n.d. a), organizations certified by them demonstrate true commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion as they are being assessed against the highest global standards. On their journey towards workplace gender equality, the organizations can progress through three certification levels, i.e. Assess (beginner level), Move (intermediate level) and Lead (highest level) (EDGE (n.d. b).

EDGE assessment process evaluates where an organization stands regarding gender equality and inclusion. This is estimated following a rigorous qualitative and quantitative analysis which includes measuring an organization's staff gender balance, policies and practices in place, pay equity and conducting a staff survey to capture employee perspectives on D&I (EDGE, n.d. a). The Organization already received the EDGE Assess certification two times (in 2018 and 2020), which recognized their progress towards reaching workplace gender parity.

In 2022, the Organization underwent an additional evaluation called EDGEplus which measured intersectionality between gender and other diversity aspects such as sexual orientation, race and disability status. This offered additional insights into the staff diversity data as well as formed a foundation to address intersectionality within the Organization. In the same year, the Organization also progressed to the higher, Move certification level (Organization, 2022).

Another assessment exercise the Organization practices is called the Upward Feedback survey which staff answers to provide constructive and anonymous feedback to their managers. The questions in the survey include evaluating the managers' ability to drive diversity and whether their management approach is inclusive. Once concluded, managers receive a detailed report of the results (Organization, 2022).

2.4.1.7 Employee Resource Groups

The Organization currently has seven ERGs. Their activities drive the D&I agenda and bring attention to the diversity aspects that could be improved. They collaborate closely with the Organization's gender and diversity champion to discuss new ideas and share best D&I practices (Organization, 2022).

In 2021 the Organization appointed a gender and diversity champion who also acts as a chair of the Gender Equality Taskforce. Gender and diversity champion's main role is to promote and raise awareness about the D&I by engaging with stakeholders across and outside the Organization. The Organization's gender and diversity champion represents the Organization at D&I related discussions with the member countries and at other external forums. As a spearhead of inclusivity, the diversity champion encourages diversity discussions and new approaches on how different staff groups can feel as integrated as possible (Organization, 2022).

Each Organization's ERG brings together staff with similar interests/background/objectives. Within the Organizations the following ERGs have formed (2022):

- ERG which brings together colleagues from multicultural and different ethnic groups. Its main mission is to contribute to the Organization's understanding of diversity as an asset and to support minority groups by experience sharing.
- ERG which welcomes members of all sexual orientations and gender identities. This ERG brings together members that believe in equal opportunities for all. Its members raise awareness on inclusiveness of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex staff and contribute to the revision of different corporate policies.
- ERG, which connects and empowers women across the Organization to uncover their professional capabilities, finds a work-life balance in addition to promoting appointments of women in leadership positions. This ERG organizes various discussions and round table talks to address wellbeing challenges and gender bias among others.
- ERG which forms a community of interns to enhance their internship experience at the Organization. This ERG hosts different social events, thematic discussions and informative career development sessions. Its activities also include making proposals to the Organization that would enable candidates from different backgrounds to participate in the Internship program.
- ERG which brings attention to the challenges of individuals that want to balance parenting responsibilities and work. It sheds light on parent issues and work-life balance that staff is experiencing, while identifying mechanisms that enable feasible working conditions for staff wanting to build a family.
- ERG which is dedicated to the temporary staff community, allowing them to exchange experience, socialize and support each other on practical aspects pertaining to their employment category.
- ERG which brings together members that protect the professional interests of the Organization's staff. This ERG has in place a special body dedicated to diversity which examines opportunities to improve the workforce diversity, notably developing a diversity policy that focuses on more complex aspects of diversity. As an advocate for equality, this ERG presents proposals on setting up fair hiring and promotion practices

and holds outreach events to broaden the knowledge on unconscious bias and inclusive behavior.

2.4.2 Perception on D&I interview results

Table 2 shows general demographic and work-related information which the nine interviewees shared.

Table 2: General information about the interviewees

	Demographic information	Work information	ERG
Interviewee 1	Female, 28 years, German	Official, policy analyst	Former ERG member
Interviewee 2	Male, 42 years, Israeli	Official, deputy head of a sub-division	HRM
Interviewee 3	Female, 59 years, Canadian	Official, division director	Coordinator at one of the ERGs
Interviewee 4	Female, 34 years, French and Togolese	Official, economist	ERG member
Interviewee 5	Male, 34 years, French and Togolese	Official, works as an economist	ERG member
Interviewee 6	Female, 40 years, did not disclose nationality	Official, policy analyst	ERG member
Interviewee 7	Male, 21 years, British	Intern in policy analysis	Head of social events at one of the ERGs
Interviewee 8	Female, 40 years, American	Official, division team lead	ERG member
Interviewee 9	Male, 34 years, British	Official, policy and analysis	Former board member of one of the ERGs

Source: own work.

The interview transcripts were analyzed with the objective of forming systematic categories with common thematic attributes. Accordingly, the analysis of the transcripts resulted in seven thematic categories which were supported by the corresponding interview question(s).

Table 3 shows the seven thematic categories and the corresponding interview questions.

Table 3: Interview categories

	Category	Corresponding interview question(s)
1	Importance of the D&I agenda	Do you think the D&I agenda plays an important role when managing the contemporary workforce? If so, why should it be considered and what aspects in particular?
2	D&I agenda in the Organization's context	Why is it important for the Organization to be adopting D&I initiatives/policies?
3	Awareness and communication about the D&I	<p>Are you aware/familiar of the current D&I initiatives that the Organization has in place? Which diversity areas do you think the Organization is doing well and which areas would deserve more attention?</p> <p>Do you feel the staff feels informed and empowered enough to contribute to the D&I agenda of the Organization? If not, what is impeding you from that?</p> <p>Are the D&I initiatives within the Organization effectively communicated, and staff feels knowledgeable about different actions taken/planned?</p>
4	Ownership and accountability	Do you think that the Organization's management is taking ownership of the D&I agenda within the Organization? In your opinion, is the D&I agenda within the Organization an "HRM matter" or a collective one, or rather is accountability on the D&I shared?
5	D&I practices other international organizations	Are you aware of any D&I initiatives that other international non-profit organizations are doing, and the Organization could consider as well?
6	Fostering an inclusive work environment	Do you think the Organization is fostering an inclusive work environment where staff feels valued, is given equal opportunities and have access to all means that enable them to contribute to the Organization's work and goals?
7	Monitoring and measuring D&I	Does the Organization, in your opinion, adequately measure D&I metrics and monitor progress? Do you think the Organization should set specific objectives and establish KPIs relating to the D&I goals it wants to achieve?

Source: own work.

2.4.2.1 Importance of the D&I agenda

Table 4 shows the interview answer attributes that relate to the category “Importance of the D&I agenda”.

Table 4: Answer attributes related to the importance of the D&I agenda

Category	Attributes
Importance of the D&I agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moral obligation and matter of justice - Research evidence and work-life examples on the positive aspects of diversity - Exclusion and “diversity washing” lead to poor outcomes

Source: own work.

All interviewees agree that the D&I agenda plays an important role when managing the contemporary workforce. Not only is it “the right thing to do” and a moral obligation; according to the interviewees, D&I agenda is also a matter of justice. Interviewee 5 indicates that exclusion and concentration of power is “not only morally wrong, but also counterproductive in terms of economic wellbeing and does harm to everybody, even those on the top.” Interviewee 2 highlights that there is also a strong business case for diversity. They point out that a lot of evidence and research exists confirming that diverse teams perform better and inclusive workplaces have more efficient teams and better staff wellbeing overall.

Interviewees 3 and 4 describe how diversity positively affected work within their teams. Interviewee 3 works in the competition field where “diverse staffing drives different outcomes and has a positive impact on the type of work that is done.” The interviewee goes on to describe the example of case prioritization – “more diverse teams are more likely to identify different potential cases or areas for investigation than if it was a homogeneous team. Men are interested in different cases than women (...) which leads to better outcomes and provides more sensitivity on the goals of competition (consumer welfare).” Interviewee 4 works in the entrepreneurship field where it was found that “having mixed gender teams leads to better return on investment for startups that are seeking investment.”

Interviewee 7 highlights that the D&I topic does get a lot of vocal attention, however, many gestures are oftentimes mistaken for a genuine effort to make a real impact. Interviewee 6 supports this thought by stating that there is still a lot of “diversity washing” while interviewee 7 raises a concern about limited outcomes of different D&I efforts that are not intentionally set. As an example, interviewee 7 states: “Occasionally, some (D&I) efforts can lead to a very limited, one-dimensional environment. I could not take my initial internship position role because of this unspoken nationality quota. In similar cases, such

decisions can even lead to a poorer performance. Diversity considerations are important but can be very tokenistic and, even more, can contravene genuine diversity attainment.” Interviewee 4 also agrees that diversity is important, however “unfortunately in many organizations, diversity is still perceived (only) as something that is nice to have.”

2.4.2.2 *D&I agenda in the Organization’s context*

Table 5 shows the interview answer attributes that relate to the category “D&I agenda in the Organization’s context”.

Table 5: Answer attributes related to D&I agenda in the Organization’s context

Category	Attributes
D&I agenda in the Organization’s context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Organization as a role model - Positive implications on the Organization’s output - Key value to attract, recruit and retain talent - Organization’s constitution and political pressure - Diversity not embedded in the organization’s culture

Source: own work.

The interviewees emphasize the Organization should be a role model when it comes to D&I because of its representative and political function. Additionally, interviewee 1 indicates that D&I has an important influence on the Organization’s output as it reduces the bias component in their work. Interviewee 9 finds great importance in the Organization adopting different D&I initiatives to be able to attract, recruit and retain the best talent and to not “inadvertently discriminate against people who would be very qualified for the job.” Interviewee 9 further highlights that with diversity, the Organization can benefit from collective talent, not just individual one as “(...) it is important to have a variety of different experiences, viewpoints and talents in the room.” D&I also uniquely links to the constitution of the Organization (which is member-driven), with nationality being one of the most accentuated aspects of diversity. Interviewee 2 indicates that “If we were a national company, the nationality would have less of an impact. But given the way we are structured; nationality plays an important role as we represent and work with governments across the whole world.” Interviewee 8 is of the opinion that it is crucial for the Organization to be adopting different D&I initiatives because “The Organization is historically positioned as a member club, so by definition has an exclusionary nature to it as opposed to other institutions that are more inclusive in their original mandate.” Interviewee 2 indicates that “member countries give guidelines on the gender and nationality diversity aspects (...)” and that “there is a political pressure of members to see higher representation of their nationals at the

Organization.” The same interviewee adds that the divergent views of different member countries ask for a more tailored approach – without consensus no actions can be taken which slows down the Organization’s pace of moving forward with the D&I agenda. One such example are the D&I target objectives – the Organization does not have them because member countries cannot agree on them. Interviewee 3 also talks about the challenge of some member countries not believing in the beneficial aspects of diversity. Consequently, these countries push back on diversity initiatives. The interviewee claims this is due to the different evolutionary history of each member country. Interviewee 7 adds that the issue is wider than the Organization’s context: “There are certain nationalities that are more represented at the Organization. In most cases, staff of these nationalities come from families that are well off and have better access to resources/education. This means that the socioeconomic background of staff at the Organization is not very diverse because people with less means have less chance to reach a certain level of attainment that is required by the Organization.”

Moreover, the Organization’s HRM department must go to the Council to consult on any changes which makes HR policies very static and hard to change. Interviewee 3 says: “We go to the Council to decide on HR policies rather than having experts decide on HR policies – we have diplomats that are concerned about their budgets deciding on HR policies. The whole decision-making process is counter towards being flexible and forward looking.”

Interviewee 3 thinks that there is a lack of understanding at the Organization on why diversity is important. According to them, there is not enough training informing managers and staff about the benefits of diversity. Moreover, the Organization’s policies do not reflect its aspirations to be diverse (e.g. conversion process). Interviewee 7 also perceives it is crucial for the staff to understand how diversity feeds into their work. The interviewee explains that “Diversity is strongly linked to the ethos of the Organization and how we view our own work and community (...). It is a conceptual thing which is not yet embedded at the Organization.”

2.4.2.3 Awareness and communication about the D&I agenda

Table 6 on the following page shows the interview answer attributes that relate to the category “Awareness and communication about the D&I”.

Table 6: Answer attributes related to awareness and communication about the D&I

Category	Attributes
Awareness and communication about the D&I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overfocus on certain diversity aspects - Internal systemic impediments - Diversity as embedded value, not specific initiatives

Table 6: Answer attributes related to awareness and communication about the D&I (cont.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of awareness/knowledge on how to contribute
--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Source: own work.

Interviewee 2 emphasizes that there are many D&I initiatives that the Organization introduced in recent years. Among those are also grassroots initiatives allowing staff to contribute through different ERG networks.

Many interviewees point out that a lot is being done in the D&I area, however there is still room for improvement. Interviewee 5, for example, criticizes Organization’s tendency to over focus on nationality diversity (“We have people from different countries, but looking at their educational backgrounds, most of them come from 4 or 5 different universities which is not really diverse. We should define what diversity means and its purpose in the context of the Organization.”). Other interviewees share a similar opinion and add some other diversity aspects that the Organization should pay more attention to socio-economic background (interviewee 7), race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability status (interviewee 8). Interviewee 9 adds to the aforementioned by saying that the Organization overlooks diversity of “background, thought, discipline, expertise and even neuro diversity.” Interviewee 2 indicates that the Organization should think about how to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in the future and limit stereotypes that impact their careers.

Interviewee 9 indicates that there are systematic processes in place which undermine the Organization’s ability to make the most of diversity. Apparently, “(...) there is a tendency among hiring managers to use backgrounds, qualifications and areas of specialist expertise as a proxy that someone is well qualified to do a particular job. There is a high emphasis on specialist subject knowledge and an under-emphasis on being a generalist and having transferable skills.” Interviewee 1 shares the same thoughts regarding the internal processes acting as an impediment to diversity – “(...) sometimes, it is not only the hierarchical structure of the Organization impeding to implement changes but, on many occasions, it is unclear who actually decides, and you do not know who to turn to in order to propose changes.” Interviewee 1 also acknowledges that although there are challenges when it comes to capturing diversity data, “it is still possible to design hiring processes/talent management processes that are equal across different economic groups or do not exclude people with different disabilities.” In their opinion, the design of internal HR policies would need to be revisited.

When it comes to the question of communication and awareness of the Organization’s D&I initiatives, opinions diverge among the interviewees. Some interviewees feel informed about the Organization’s D&I initiatives (interviewees 1 and 9). Some even make reference to specific different initiatives like the training on bias and the EDGE survey (interviewees 1, 6, 8, 9), newsletters, Diversity and Inclusion Report (interviewee 9) which the Organization has undertaken. Nevertheless, some interviewees feel (only) somewhat informed about the

Organization’s D&I initiatives (interviewees 7 and 8), while some think the Organization has no formal D&I initiatives in place whatsoever (interviewees 5 and 6).

Interviewee 9 stresses that “Sometimes it feels almost impossible to find basic information about D&I.” and that “(...) the best way to communicate about D&I is to actually not talk about it at all, it should be the way we operate.” The interviewee continues to say that the Organization should consider the implication different (diversity) tools have and how they affect staff differently. Interviewee 2, who works in HRM, indicates that staff could be more aware and HRM could communicate more. However, the interviewee thinks that even without communication, the D&I starts at the level of each individual and how they interact with their colleagues (discriminatory behavior versus inclusive behavior). In their opinion, being aware of different D&I initiatives starts with “(...) staff and managers being aware of their entitlements and rights. It is being able to share views and concerns. It is broader than discussing the three actions HRM decided to go with in order to promote diversity, it is much more holistic.”

Interviewee 5 thinks there is a need to appoint a diversity champion who “(...) would promote and advocate for diversity and have resources for a more structured approach to developing different initiatives.” Moreover, staff should be informed on how they can contribute to diversity at their level. Interviewee 4 shares that staff is not familiar enough with the diversity topic in general as they are not necessarily part of any minority group. Accordingly, the interviewee suggests a formal message should be communicated from the top as this would attract staff’s attention around diversity and motivate them to actively contribute to D&I.

2.4.2.4 Ownership and accountability

Table 7 shows the interview answer attributes that relate to the category “Ownership and accountability on D&I”.

Table 7: Answer attributes related to ownership and accountability on D&I

Category	Attributes
Ownership and accountability on D&I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managers vested with a lot of responsibility - Inconsistent implementation of internal policies - Different opinions on HRM’s role - Accountability on D&I should be shared

Source: own work.

Regarding the D&I ownership, interviewees have mixed opinions when it comes to managers’ role to drive the D&I agenda. Interviewee 1 says that some managers at the Organization are not best suited to drive the D&I agenda as they are in their position because

of their tenure and technical expertise, not necessarily because of their people management skills. Many interviewees (interviewees 2, 3, 7 and 8) think that senior managers are vested with a lot of responsibility when it comes to managing their teams and making staffing decisions. Accordingly, they should be held more accountable than other staff. Interviewee 5 indicates that managers' ownership is key as leaders' values reflect in the organization's culture and consequently the hiring process. Interviewee 3 supports this argument by indicating that "Structure at the Organization leaves an enormous amount of leeway and decision-making power for managers and there is very little recourse because the staff rules and ethics guide always suggest going to your manager. Consequently, the power of managers to influence the D&I agenda is remarkable." Interviewee 9 indicates that managers have started to reflect more when it comes to diversity and staffing decisions, however they are still "(...) underperforming in their ability or duty to bring in alternative and diverse expertise to the Organization, but also actively working against it by insisting that people that they recruit have to have specialist expertise in particular areas."

Interviewee 8 thinks that D&I ownership varies across the Organization and links it to what is called the "manager lottery" – "(...) huge differences in how different policies are being implemented and applied." They go on to suggest that having diversity training as part of managers' professional training should be regular and ongoing and emphasize that "There is very limited training at the Organization once someone becomes a manager in terms of onboarding and skills elements."

Discussing the matter of accountability on D&I, interviewees agree it should be shared. Interviewee 2 highlights that it is staff's interactions and behavior that make up the work environment, and accordingly, the responsibility of supporting D&I lies with everyone.

Regarding HRM's role, interviewee 1 argues "It is HRM's role to design the structures (contract types, performance measures, etc.) in a way that allows for maximum diversity and inclusion." The same interviewee also adds that the Organization's HRM service should be more assertive when it comes to implementing HR policies as the Organization "is not a democracy but a clearly established hierarchical entity." Interviewee 8 shares similar thoughts by indicating that hiring manager's ability to reduce bias is oftentimes limited by the Organization's internal systems (for example, being unable to obtain longlists of candidates without gender and nationality). Interviewee 7 continues this argument by saying that "it is up to HRM to support (the D&I agenda) and provide knowledge and resources to managers making these decisions to achieve D&I goals."

2.4.2.5 D&I practices in other international organizations

Table 8 shows the interview answer attributes that relate to the category "D&I practices in other international organizations".

Table 8: Answers attributes related to D&I practices in other international organizations

Category	Attributes
D&I practices in other international organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HRM as a decentralized function - Diversity initiatives benefit all staff - Internal programs that support diversity

Source: own work.

When asked to share examples of good practice that other international organizations are doing and which the Organization could learn from, the interviewees share ideas which mainly link to internal HR systems and responsibilities of certain groups within the Organization to actively advocate for D&I.

Interviewee 1 highlights staff diversity at the Organization would increase if sufficient effort was made to limit any kind of informal hiring. As an example, the interviewee proposes to centralize the hiring of interns and temporary staff in order to avoid appointments based on connections. They state the European Parliament internship program as an example where the hiring of interns is centralized and managed by the HRM department only.

Interviewee 2 acknowledges the great efforts of the Asian Development Bank around inclusion of people with disabilities. The interviewee expresses the need to make progress in the area of race, ethnicity and socioeconomic diversity and to collect data more systematically.

Interviewee 8 points out the empirical evidence proving that “Organizations that work better for minority groups also work better for everybody else.” In their opinion, many of the efforts done to advocate the rights of minority groups would benefit the Organization’s staff in general. More specifically, the interviewee believes the Organization would benefit from hiring an external consultant to create a D&I plan. This would allow putting the D&I ownership on D&I “(...) on the historically powerful groups within the Organization” and prevent that minority group members must advocate for their rights themselves. The interviewee thinks that those who need help most cannot advocate for themselves due to different reasons such as fear or cultural background. Adversely, the dominant group (managers), should be the voice of minority groups.

Interviewee 9 shares that many European Union institutions operate using a compulsory team rotation system. Such a system allows staff to “(...) benefit from opportunities to grow their skills, increase their diversity of knowledge whilst also promoting mixing of knowledge and skills throughout the organization.”

2.4.2.6 *Fostering an inclusive work environment*

Table 9 shows the interview answer attributes that relate to the category “Fostering an inclusive work environment”.

Table 9: Answer attributes related to fostering an inclusive work environment

Category	Attributes
Fostering an inclusive work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upskilling opportunities - Structural challenges at the Organization - Low awareness on inclusion in management - Hidden discrimination - Lack of proactiveness on banning discrimination

Source: own work.

When asking whether the Organization is fostering a work environment where staff feels valued and is given equal opportunities, the answers range between yes and somewhat. Interviewee 7 praises the many training and upskilling opportunities the Organization offers to staff which “(...) means valuing human capital in a way that people are here to learn, develop.”

Many interviewees (interviewees 1, 8 and 9) agree that there are “some structural challenges that make staff not necessarily feel safe and included.” This implies mainly to contractual modalities of Temporary staff at the Organization. Interviewee 1 describes their experience working as a Temporary staff in the past by saying “this is a group that is worse paid than Official staff and does not have the same benefits (e.g. pension and healthcare rights). It is obvious they are not included in the Organization the same way as Officials.” As an Official they now feel included. The said interviewee states an example where Temporary staff can transition to the Official staff category which depends on the team’s budget and not only merit – “(...) in these cases, your opportunities do not only depend only on merit but also on luck (...). Sometimes it is more about being at the right place at the right time.” Interviewee 2 points out managerial capacity and awareness about the D&I (or better said lack thereof) as factors preventing from fostering a more inclusive environment. The interviewee believes that internal HR policies are sound, however it is the inconsistency in their implementation that creates a problem. The same interviewee also reiterates the importance of instilling a culture of inclusion in the mid-level and senior management “(...) because they are the ones who set the D&I tone with their decisions.”

Interviewees 3, 5 and 6 agree that the degree of inclusive work environment varies at the Organization and is a consequence of its decentralized structure. Interviewee 6 indicates that when it comes to inclusion “there is a lot of dependence on the directorate's culture, and even

on the division’s and team’s culture.” As an example, interviewee 6 says that in their division, a lot of people remain in junior levels for a long time because their manager believes one should reach a certain age in order to progress to a higher grade. Similarly, interviewees 3 and 9 elaborate on the issue of ageism at the Organization, where opportunities are restricted from certain age groups being considered too young. Although this topic has never been directly addressed, interviewee 9 explains to “(...) have seen numerous indirect examples of it. And we all know this is usually how discrimination operates.”

Interviewee 9 believes the Organization could be more proactive in its actions to fight discrimination. They think that there is a confidence at the Organization that there is no discrimination, and for this reason it is not considered a high priority. The interviewee wishes the Organization would take a more proactive approach and not be satisfied with complacency.

2.4.2.7 Monitoring and measuring D&I

Table 10 shows the interview answer attributes that relate to the category “Monitoring and measuring D&I”.

Table 10: Answer attributes related to monitoring and measuring D&I

Category	Attributes
Monitoring and measuring D&I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purposeful KPI planning - Linkage between D&I initiatives and what is driving them - Expanding the diversity data reservoir - Rethinking the approach on collecting D&I data

Source: own work.

With respect to monitoring and measuring D&I, the interviewees agree this is something of high importance for the Organization and would deserve more attention. Interviewee 9 adds that KPIs and objectives should be behavior and practice based. This would allow the Organization to assess its maturity in terms of its practices and processes, as well as benchmark against other organizations. Interviewee 7 adds to this by saying that it is crucial for the Organization to understand what the diversity objectives actually are. Interviewee 2 warns about the lack of consensus around the KPIs which is linked to the political aspect of the Organization and its constitution (consensus-based decision making).

Interviewee 9 states that although the Organization is doing well in terms of monitoring, there is a lack of linkage between the internal HR policies and what is driving them. Apparently, there is often a divergence between the HR policies and the purpose they serve

(“The measurement at the Organization is fine, but the monitoring of the different initiatives and what is driving them should be given more attention”). Interviewee 7 shares the same opinion and indicates that “(...) we need diversity for genuinely constructive reasons, not just for the sake of it.”

Interviewee 6 points out that not enough data on different aspects is being collected which is limiting the Organization’s ability to have a holistic and real overview on its staff’s diversity. They support this thought by saying “if there is no data, there is no proof of a problem and no drive to do something about it. It might make sense from a communication perspective but less so from the wellbeing perspective. We should aim to have data on ethnicity, race, disability.”

Regarding the data sensitivity when it comes to diversity, interviewee 9 states that it is useful to look at the latest practices and recommendations on how to approach people when inquiring about delicate topics. In their opinion, staff should always be given the voluntary option to disclose such information and acknowledges that “(...) like all other social data, this also has a lot of caveats around it.” Interviewee 2 sees a part of the solution in cultivating and socializing the diversity thought within the Organization so staff feels more comfortable to address it and disclose such information.

3 DISCUSSION

Analysis of the publicly available information about the Organization as well as interview answers showcase that the Organization is making effort to progress with the D&I agenda and foster an inclusive work environment. The following subchapters will collate the case study highlights and link them to the theoretical concepts from the first chapter to try to answer the research questions.

3.1 Theoretical Contributions

3.1.1 The importance of D&I

The interviewees stated various reasons as to why D&I plays an important role when managing the contemporary workforce – D&I as a matter of justice, exclusion being counterproductive, their impact to overall staff wellbeing, better team performance as well as the business case for D&I. The listed reasons are in line with various research done on the D&I topic (Hays-Thomas, 2016; McKinsey, 2018 & Bourke, 2016). These answers also reinforce Cox & Beale’s (1997) as well as Morley’s (2018) arguments on the positive implications of good diversity management on an organization’s performance. The interviewees stated diversity considerations as one of the factors that contribute to employer’s reputation which is consistent with Rivera’s (2012) and Kristof’s (1996) theory on P-O fit.

Moreover, the interviewees warned about the misuse of terms D&I where tokenistic gestures are highlighted instead of purposeful actions. What interviewees referred to as “diversity washing” can oftentimes lead to a very limited, one-dimensional environment. This is aligned with McKay & Avery’s (2005) conclusion that solely executing different diversity initiatives will not ensure retention and integration of minority group members.

3.1.2 D&I in the context of International Non-Profit Organizations

The interviewees saw great importance in the Organization adopting different D&I efforts because of its representative function due to which the Organization should act as a role model for other organizations. These arguments are aligned with Nesbit & Gazley’s (2011) as well as Mason’s (2020) idea of NPOs’ role in the D&I area as diffusers of good D&I practices, mediators and facilitators of change. Moreover, the interviewees argued that diversity has a positive impact on the Organization’s output, bringing together various perspectives of colleagues from different backgrounds, consequently making their work less biased. This confirms Shin & Park’s (2013) theory on how diverse staff greatly contributes to an organization’s success with the richness of their knowledge, experience and unique perspectives.

Interviewees did not neglect the fact that the Organization is a member driven entity which has an influence on the D&I agenda. It was acknowledged that the Organization is historically positioned as a “members’ club” and accordingly has an exclusionary nature to it – member countries strive to increase the representation of their own nationals. Therefore, the Organization’s delegates somewhat control and lead the Organization’s D&I agenda and its objectives, instead of HRM experts. These answers support AbouAssi’s (2015) argument about the suppressive effect funding members can have on an organization. Considering the Organization is consensus-based, the flexibility and speed of decision-making is subject to (sometimes) lengthy negotiations which act as a barrier to progress with the D&I agenda. The latter is in line with Solebello, Tschirhart & Leiter’s (2016) theory on paradox of inclusion and exclusion in membership associations, arguing about efforts of organizations, historically positioned as membership clubs, trying to foster inclusivity.

Interviewees pointed out that the Organization overfocuses on certain diversity aspects (i.e. gender and nationality) and would wish to see more progress is made in other areas (socio-economic background, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability status). The overfocus on certain diversity aspects corresponds to ILO’s (2022) findings that most organizations’ D&I policies focus on gender and age while modest attention is given to other aspects (disability, sexual orientation, etc.) as well as Shin & Park’s (2013) prediction that organizations predominantly focus on demographic diversity attributes as part of their diversity management efforts. Interviewees linked the overfocus issue to the internal processes which undermine the Organization’s ability to make the most of diversity. The internal impediments mentioned were:

- HRM processes which impede non-biased hiring and promotion.
Hiring managers use backgrounds, qualifications and areas of specialist expertise as a proxy for someone being well qualified to do a particular job. Hiring managers are only presented with guidelines on D&I which means that diversity aspects are oftentimes not considered properly throughout the hiring process and are of secondary importance only.
- Management awareness and ownership of D&I.
Managers are vested with a lot of responsibility regarding staffing decisions. Accordingly, they should be held more accountable to promote diversity within the Organization. However, many managers are in their position because of tenure and/or technical expertise instead of people management skills which are indispensable when it comes to implementation of D&I policies. A lack of D&I training when onboarding managers was also pointed out.
- Inconsistency in implementing HR policies.
There are big differences in how HR policies are implemented throughout the Organization. This is partly because of the phenomenon called “manager lottery” which explains big differences in how managers implement the same policies. Interviewees link this issue to the HRM’s (too small a) role in governing and making sure the guidelines are something managers must comply with. Namely, the HRM’s role is perceived only as advisory, leaving the actual implementation of policies completely subject to manager’s decision with no monitoring in place.
- Diversity not embedded in the workplace culture.
Diversity is still not completely embedded in the Organization’s (workplace) culture and the way it functions. There is a lack of understanding among managers as well as staff on why diversity is important and how it feeds into their work.

The above findings contradict some of the D&I practices scholars and research suggest. For example, Denhardt & Vinzant (2000); Lapuente & van de Walle (2020); Tatli & Ozbilgin (2009) as well as Creary et al. (2020) stress the important role of senior management to act as advocates and change agents for D&I. The D&I strategic vision and rationale should create a solid foundation for the middle management to cascade the D&I efforts into the daily work context. Their involvement is critical as it adds legitimacy to diversity goals and instills diversity into the workplace culture. To deliver on the D&I agenda, training of managers is a prerequisite.

There are, however, similarities between the inconsistency of HR policies implementation and conclusions Schwartz et al. (2015) made which argue that many NPOs communicate extensively on their diversity efforts but fail to act on it. Moreover, Schwartz et al. (2015) argue that NPOs tend to justify the poor implementation with budget constraints.

From the received answers, it seems that diversity is still not completely immersed in all of the Organization’s functions and processes. This puts the Organization in the transactional level of ILO’s D&I maturity level framework. A shift in perceptions would have to occur,

making staff aware that D&I are subject to shared responsibility and that diversity is part of the Organization's identity (Gutterman, 2022).

3.1.3 D&I initiatives as part of HRM strategy

Research of the secondary sources available indicated that the Organization has many different D&I initiatives in place. To recall, the Organization prepares its Diversity and Inclusion Report on an annual basis, has in place a D&I Framework, different corporate programs (Internship program, Young Associates Program, Person on Loan, etc.), offers diversity training, attends external events to raise awareness about the Organization as a potential employer, monitors staff analytics to improve staffing decisions, cooperates with a third party audit on D&I and supports the functioning of seven ERGs. The latter initiatives are aligned with Derven & Gundling's (2014) recommendations on undertaking a comprehensive approach when deploying D&I.

Based on the interviewees' answers, the awareness on aforementioned initiatives differs. Even though some interviewees think there are no initiatives in place whatsoever, they continue to state examples of some, which indicates there is a lack of understanding what diversity initiatives even are. This finding is distant from McKinsey's (2018) recommendation to implement D&I initiatives that are linked to organization's value drivers as this enables understanding which diversity attributes are relevant for an organization. Linking the D&I policies with their value drivers is also something that was emphasized throughout the interviews.

Furthermore, the interviewees support the idea of having senior management and top leadership more invested in the D&I and receiving more communication from the top. According to them, this would increase visibility of the different initiatives and make staff more committed to making a change. The latter arguments are supported by McKinsey's study (2018); Ng & Wyrick (2011); Roberts & Mayo (2019); Wolfgruber & Einwiller (2023) who share the opinion that a successful D&I strategy should begin in the top management and cascade to ensure full commitment as well as resources needed. While all employees should commit to prevent any discriminatory actions, managers are vested with additional responsibility to champion workplace D&I.

Lastly, the interviewees indicated that there is a need to make staff more aware on how they can contribute to the D&I agenda at the Organization. Nishi & Özbilgin (2007) believe top management should equip teams with knowledge and skills to know how to participate in the D&I journey.

3.1.4 Fostering an inclusive work environment

The interviews showed different opinions on the question whether the Organization is fostering an inclusive environment. While some feel included and treated fairly, others pointed out deficiencies in the Organization's efforts to foster inclusivity. Some address the inequalities when it comes to contractual modalities of staff, especially those on temporary contracts, and the different treatment they receive. This causes the group of colleagues on temporary contracts to feel excluded compared to Official staff.

Two previously mentioned points were reiterated in the context of the question on work environment inclusivity – i) the inconsistent implementation of HR policies which depends on the managerial capacity to deliver diversity objectives and ii) the Organization's existing workplace culture. Interviewees criticize the inconsistent implementation of HR policies which influences their career paths within the Organization. This is indirectly connected to the importance of instilling a culture of inclusion in the mid-level and senior management who are heavily involved in staffing decisions and set the D&I tone in their teams.

Finally, a criticism is made towards the Organization's complacency regarding discriminatory acts. The interviewees would wish to see a more proactive approach towards fighting any form of discrimination.

3.1.5 Good D&I practices

The interviewees shared some practices that the Organization could consider adopting. Rather than specific initiatives which other organizations are doing, the behaviors, attitudes and actions interviewees wish the Organization practiced, were mentioned. Interviewees highlighted, among other things, the need to prevent all types of informal hiring and to strengthen the role of HRM when it comes to guidance on hiring processes.

Moreover, the interviewees emphasized the need to systematically collect data on diversity and set KPIs and objectives that are behavior and practice based. This would allow the Organization to assess the maturity of its practices as well as benchmark against other organizations. This argument is consistent with McKinsey's (2018) conclusion that D&I metrics help an organization to assess its maturity level in terms of D&I as well expose areas where improvement is needed. Based on interviewees' opinions, capturing diversity data that goes beyond nationality, age and gender would enable the Organization to establish meaningful internal policies with a clear understanding on what is driving them. This is in line with Casper, Wayne & Manegold's (2013) study showing that examining deeper-level diversity attributes (attitudes, values) yields better results than solely focusing on "surface-level" attributes such as gender, age and nationality.

Lastly, the interviewees suggest that dominant groups within the Organization (managers) should make a more conscious effort to advocate for diversity and act as a voice for minority

groups. In their opinion, it is not fair nor feasible that only minority group members should be the ones to advocate for change. D&I initiatives benefit all employees and should therefore be voiced through internal stakeholders who have the influence and resources to initiate change. This argument is supported by the already mentioned leadership's commitment to D&I and management's responsibility to act as the main advocate for D&I (McKinsey, 2018; Ng & Wyrick, 2011; ILO, 2022; Lundy et al., 2021; Creary 2020).

3.2 Practical Implications

Based on the presented findings, it is evident that D&I have become an integral part of how organizations function and an enabler, allowing them to achieve their objectives and be more effective whilst doing so. More particularly, the case study of the Organization is examined, showcasing how D&I apply to the context of international non-profit setting.

The outcomes of this research implicate that an organization that takes a proactive approach with diversity can reap the profits in form of better-quality output, reduced bias, enhanced employer image (reputation), improved collaboration and engagement of teams that are more flexible, and overall create a healthier organizational climate of respect and understanding (Bourke, 2016; Cox & Beale, 1997; Riordan, 2014; Morley, 2018).

The Organization is currently at the transactional level of its D&I maturity. The case study reaffirms the importance of workplace culture and how it influences employee behavior and their reactions to (HR) internal policies. The Organization's case reinstates the need for organizations to partake in both strategic and cultural change to ensure D&I become part of the organizational culture and diversity is considered throughout the entire employee life cycle processes (Young & Jones, 2019). In such an organizational environment, the accountability on D&I is shared and employees feel a collective need to prevent any type of discrimination, prejudice or unfair treatment and remain accountable for their actions. Organizations can shift towards a more inclusive work environment by supporting open conversations and providing trainings to reduce bias (Harvard Business Review, 2021).

While workplace policies present an important foundation for a change and lay out the principles on D&I (ILO, 2022), it is uncovered that in order for diversity to have a positive impact on an organization's output, a clear understanding of how it feeds into the work and mission of a particular organization is necessary. A link between different diversity aspects and how those influence the work of an organization needs to be examined and understood. Data supported understanding of how D&I links to organization's value drivers is necessary to then be able to create purposeful D&I policies. An excellent example of evidence-based D&I initiatives can be found in Sodexo's case and their 40-60 ratio on composition of leadership teams that was determined following the results of a gender study the company conducted.

Moreover, it is important that organizations go beyond monitoring and examining solely the surface level diversity aspects such as gender, age and nationality. With the increasing complexity of D&I definitions as well as fluidity of self-identification (Combs, Milosevic & Bilimoria, 2019; Weisinger, Borges-Mendez & Milofsky, 2016), organizations should consider diversity as a multi-layered and intersectional concept. To adopt a comprehensive approach to organizational diversity, Shin & Park (2013) propose using the three-category framework, giving special attention to the diversity attributes in organizational and socio-cognitive categories. While the demographic diversity attributes are easier to detect, the other two categories should be given equal attention to try to fully capture the complexity of employee diversity.

Lastly, leadership's commitment to D&I proves as an indispensable factor towards building a workplace culture where staff perceive diversity as something positive and are collectively committed to creating an inclusive environment (Ozbilgin, 2009). Senior management should act as a role model and signalize support to D&I initiatives by allocating the necessary resources. The D&I agenda should then be cascaded down the organization ladder through middle management which ought to ensure integration of diversity into the daily work context (Denhardt & Vinzant, 2000; Lapuente & van de Walle, 2020). Creary et al. (2020) propose a series of actions (providing diversity training to model behaviors of middle management, managers attending meetings of affinity groups and providing access to online resources) to ensure managers are adequately trained and informed to convey the diversity message and instill it into the workplace culture.

3.3 Research Limitations and Future Research Directions

It is important to acknowledge that the number of interviewed staff was rather low (nine) and therefore cannot be considered a representative sample for the entire Organization as it employs around 4,000 people. Consequently, it is impossible to conclude that this research is statistically representative. Nonetheless, increasing the number of interview staff would require the research to expand over a longer period of time considering semi-structured interviews are a very labor-intensive research approach. Accordingly, the interviewees' answers represent only a small part of the perceptions on D&I that could have been captured within the Organization. As the interviewees were selected based on the author's decision to interview colleagues from different ERGs, it can be concluded that sample bias is present to a certain extent.

Additionally, as it is impossible to apply the same methods of analysis in the case of qualitative research as for the quantitative, the research is largely based on opinion and judgment, rather than statistically proven causality.

Although a lot of studies about D&I have been done in relation to the workplace environment and employee wellbeing, there is yet not many studies in the context of NPOs. Accordingly, it would be beneficial to encourage more research on D&I is done within such organizations

as it is evident that there are many specifics on how D&I is perceived and practiced in this kind of environment. More specifically, it would be interesting to see an upgrade to AbouAssi's (2015) research on the link between NPO's dependence on their funding members and suppressing effects on the D&I that might occur in such a context. Even though many authors like Nesbit & Gazley (2011); Mason (2020); Mastracci & Herring (2010); AbouAssi (2015); Hayes (2012); Weisinger, Borges-Mendez & Milofsky (2016) and Schwartz et al. (2015) already conducted researches on D&I in the non-profit field, it could be useful to do a comparison analysis and even a cross-initiative study to see to what extent the D&I initiatives differ according to the organization's context (private or non-profit sector) and whether there are any good practices both sectors could learn from each other.

CONCLUSION

This master's thesis examines D&I in the context of international NPOs. Leading up to the empirical part, the first chapter begins by explaining what D&I concepts encompass as well as elaborates on the practice of diversity management in the workplace context. A conclusion is reached that due to the increased fluidity of self-identification, both D&I became complex concepts, however imperative aspects to consider when managing the contemporary workplace.

Next, arguments on increased importance of D&I nowadays are explained (demographic shifts of the 21st century workforce, socio-economic changes as a consequence of globalization, changed design of work) as well as arguments that support the business case for D&I. From the aforementioned, it is derived that effective diversity management brings about many positive effects such as reduced employee turnover, better team engagement, higher participation in decision making and helps foster a healthy organizational climate of respect and understanding. The chapter further elaborates on the common contemporary D&I practices (e.g. diversity training, internal advocates for diversity workplace policies and others).

Different aspects of D&I within international and non-profit settings are explained along with real-life examples (e.g. Sodexo, Accenture, UN, IADB). It is concluded that the non-profit sector is still lagging behind when it comes to D&I despite the importance of their function to act as role models for the private sector entities. To conclude the theoretical background overview, different approaches on how an organization can reach the highest level of D&I maturity (transformational) are described. In this context, principles like cultural change, management ownership, monitoring progress with D&I metrics and shared accountability are discussed.

In the empirical part, an introduction is made to a case study of an intergovernmental organization consisting of 38 member countries and almost 4,000 employees. Answers from semi-structured interviews conducted with nine employees allow to assess the

Organization's current state regarding D&I and identify areas that require further attention in the future. It is concluded that the Organization is doing considerably well when benchmarking the research results to suggestions from different scholars. The Organization has implemented various D&I initiatives throughout the past years, has in place seven ERGs, offers different trainings to eliminate recruitment bias and is putting effort to cultivate an inclusive work environment. Nonetheless, the interview answers uncover some disparities and areas of improvement that the Organization should focus on in order to reach the highest level of D&I maturity (transformational level). Namely, more effort needs to be invested in educating and informing staff and managers on how D&I feeds into their work and the positive effects they bring about. This, in combination with management that takes ownership on D&I agenda and acts as advocate for diversity, will help breed a culture of acceptance and equality within the Organization, thus creating a more inclusive workplace. For the D&I agenda to "fit in" the Organization's context and serve the needs of different minority groups, a clear link between the different diversity initiatives and how those contribute to the work of an organization (i.e. what is driving them) needs to be examined and understood. The latter, combined with systematically capturing and monitoring diversity data, will allow to create purposeful and context-appropriate D&I policies in the future as well as foster an inclusive workplace culture of equality where unique traits of staff are valued and everyone receives fair treatment.

REFERENCE LIST

1. Abad, M. V., & Wynn, A. (2022). Building resilience in diversity and inclusion programs. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 63(4), 1–3.
2. AbouAssi, K. (2015). Testing resource dependency as a motivator for NGO self-regulation: Suggestive evidence from the global south. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 44, 1255–1273.
3. Accenture. (n.d. a). *Our commitment to inclusion and diversity*. Retrieved March 3, 2023 from <https://www.accenture.com/in-en/about/inclusion-diversity-index>
4. Accenture (n.d. b). *Driving the accessibility advantage at Accenture*. Retrieved March 3, 2023 from <https://www.accenture.com/fi-en/case-studies/about/driving-accessibility-advantage>
5. Accenture. (2021, 20 September). *How our Accessibility Centers are helping Accenture accelerate a culture of equality*. Retrieved March 3, 2023 from <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/blogs/how-accenture-does-it/how-our-accessibility-centers-are-helping-accenture-accelerate-a-culture-of-equality>
6. Accenture. (November, 2022). *Fact Sheet*. Retrieved March 3, 2023 from <https://newsroom.accenture.com/fact-sheet/>
7. Adobor, H., & McMullen, R. (2007). Supplier diversity and supply chain management: A strategic approach. *Business Horizons*, 50(3), 219–229.
8. Badgett, M. V., Durso, L. E., Mallory, C., & Kastanis, A. (2013). *The business impact of LGBT-supportive workplace policies*. Retrieved February 4, 2023 from

<https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Impact-LGBT-Support-Workplace-May-2013.pdf>

9. Bantel, K. A., & Jackson, S. E. (1989). Top Management and Innovations in Banking: Does the Composition of the Top Team Make a Difference? *Strategic Management Journal*, 10, 107–124.
10. Bear, S., Rahman, N., & Post, C. (2010). The Impact of Board Diversity and Gender Composition on Corporate Social Responsibility and Firm Reputation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 97, 207–221.
11. Bernstein, R. S., & Bilimoria, D. (2013). Diversity perspectives and minority nonprofit board member inclusion. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 32(7), 636–653.
12. Bourke, J. (2016). *Which Two Heads Are Better Than One? How Diverse Teams Create Breakthrough Ideas and Make Smarter Decisions*. Australia: Australian Institute of Company Directors.
13. Buera, F. J., & Kaboski, J. P. (2012). The Rise of the Service Economy. *American Economic Review*, 102(6), 2540–69.
14. Buse, K., Bernstein, R. S., & Bilimoria, D. (2016). The Influence of Board Diversity, Board Diversity Policies and Practices, and Board Inclusion Behaviors on Nonprofit Governance Practices. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 133(1), 179–191.
15. Casper, W. J., Wayne, J. H., & Manegold, J. G. (2013). Who will we recruit? Targeting deep- and surface-level diversity with human resource policy advertising. *Human Resource Management*, 52(3), 311–332.
16. Cencki, A. T., Zimmerman, J. M., & Bircan, T. (2019). The effects of employee resource groups on work engagement and workplace inclusion. *The International Journal of Organizational Diversity*, 19(2), 1–19.
17. Colgan, F., & McKearney, A. (2012). Visibility and voice in organisations: lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered employee networks. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 31(4), 359–378.
18. Combs, G. M., Milosevic, I., & Bilimoria, D. (2019). Introduction to the Special Topic Forum: Critical Discourse: Envisioning the Place and Future of Diversity and Inclusion in Organizations. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 26(3), 277–286.
19. Cox, T., Jr., & Beale, R. L. (1997). *Developing competency to manage diversity: Readings, cases & activities*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
20. Creary, S. J., Rothbard, N., & Scruggs, J. (2021, July 1). *Improving Workplace Culture Through Evidence-Based Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Practices*. Retrieved May 19, 2023 from <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/8zgt9>.
21. Creary, S. J., Rothbard, N., Mariscal, E., Moore, O., Scruggs, J., & Villarmán, N. (2020). *Evidence-based solutions for inclusion in the workplace: Actions for middle managers*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania.
22. Daniels, C. (2001). Too diverse for our own good? *Fortune*, 144(1), 116–116.

23. Davidson, M. N., & Ferdman, B. M. (2001). *Diversity and inclusion: What difference does it make?* PsycEXTRA Dataset. Retrieved May 19, 2023 from <https://doi.org/10.1037/E576912011-006>
24. Deloitte (2011). *Only skin deep? Reexamining the business case for diversity.* *Human Capital Australia*. Retrieved on April 4, 2023 from https://www.ced.org/pdf/Deloitte_-_Only_Skin_Deep.pdf
25. Deloitte. (2018, 22 January). *The diversity and inclusion revolution: Eight powerful truths.* Retrieved May 15, 2023 from <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/deloitte-review/issue-22/diversity-and-inclusion-at-work-eight-powerful-truths.html>
26. Denhardt, J., & Vinzant, D. (2000). Private sector strategic management. In J. Rabin, G. Miller, & W. Hildreth (Eds.), *Handbook on strategic management*, 2nd ed. (pg. 493–513). Florida: Marcel Dekker, Inc.
27. Derven, M., & Gundling, E. (2014). *Leveraging diversity & inclusion for a global economy.* United States of America: Association for Training and Development.
28. Dobbin, F. & Kalev, A. (2018). Why Doesn't Diversity Training Work? The Challenge for Industry and Academia. *Anthropology Now*, 10(2), 48–55.
29. Dutton, K. (2018). Increasing diversity, awareness, and inclusion in corporate culture: investigating communities of practice and resource groups among employees. *Development and Learning in Organizations*, 32(6), 19–21.
30. EDGE. (n.d. a). EDGE Certified Organizations. Retrieved March 15, 2023 from <https://www.edge-cert.org/certified-organizations/>
31. EDGE. (n.d. b). Three Levels of EDGE Certification. Retrieved March 15, 2023 from <https://www.edge-cert.org/certifications/certification-levels/>
32. Ernst & Young (2022). *Addressing generational preferences in the workplace.* Retrieved January 21, 2023 from https://www.ey.com/en_us/diversity-inclusiveness/the-2022-ey-us-generation-survey
33. Ferdman, B. M., & Brody, S. E. (1996). Models of diversity training. In D. Landis & R. S. Bhagat (Eds.) (1996). *Handbook of intercultural training*, 2nd edition (pg. 282–203). California: Sage.
34. Friedman, R., & Holtom, B. (2002). The effects of network groups on minority employee turnover intentions. *Human Resource Management*. 41(3), 405–421.
35. Garavan, T. N. (1997). Training, development, education and learning: Different or the same? *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 21, 39–50.
36. GM (n.d.). *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.* Retrieved March 13, 2023 from <https://www.gmsustainability.com/priorities/developing-talented-people/diversity-equity-and-inclusion.html>
37. Goodman, N.R. (2013). Taking diversity and inclusion initiatives global. *Industrial and Commercial Training*. 45(3), 180–183.
38. Gorenšek, T. (2022). Covid-19 krepí pomen raznolikosti in vključevanja zaposlenih. *HR&M*, 8(39), 47–48.
39. Green, W. M. (2011). *Learning to acculturate, learning for change: employee networks as communities of practice* (doctoral dissertation). Retrieved April 10, 2023 from

- Learning to acculturate, learning for change: Employee networks as communities of practice (researchgate.net).
40. Green, W. M. (2018). Employee resource groups as learning communities. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, 37(7), 634–648.
 41. Grissom, A. (2018). The Alert Collector: Workplace Diversity and Inclusion. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*. 57. 243. 10.5860/rusq.57.4.6700.
 42. Gutterman, A. (2022). *Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace*. Retrieved February 5, 2023 from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4085736
 43. Harvey, B. H. (1999). Technology, diversity and work culture - key trends in the next millennium. *HR Magazine*, 44, 58–59.
 44. Hayes, J. (2012, November). *Is the nonprofit sector doing enough for diversity? Profiles in Diversity Journal*, 14. Retrieved May 17, 2023 from <http://www.diversityjournal.com/9897-is-the-nonprofit-sector-doing-enough-for-diversity/>
 45. Hays-Thomas, R. (2016). *Managing Workplace Diversity and Inclusion: A Psychological Perspective* (1st ed.). New York: Routledge.
 46. Howson, C. (2021, 21 May). *To make real progress on D&I: move past vanity metrics*. Retrieved April 10, 2023 from <https://hbr.org/2021/05/to-make-real-progress-on-diversity-and-inclusion-move-past-vanity-metrics>
 47. Harvard Business Review. (2021). *Creating a Culture of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Real Progress Requires Sustained Commitment*. Retrieved May 2, 2023 from <https://hbr.org/sponsored/2021/09/creating-a-culture-of-diversity-equity-and-inclusion>
 48. IADB (2017, November). *Gender and Diversity Sector Framework Document (internal document)*. Retrieved March 2, 2023 from <https://www.iadb.org/en/about-us/sector-policies-and-sector-framework-documents>
 49. IADB (2022, October). *IDB Group Gender and Diversity Action Plan 2022-2025 (internal document)*. Retrieved March 2, 2023 from <https://www.iadb.org/en/gender-and-diversity/gender-and-diversity>
 50. IADB. (n.d., a). *About Us – Key Facts*. Retrieved March 2, 2023 from <https://www.iadb.org/en/about-us/key-facts>
 51. IADB. (n.d., b). *About Us – Overview*. Retrieved March 2, 2023 from <https://www.iadb.org/en/about-us/overview>
 52. IADB (n.d., c). *Gender and Diversity*. Retrieved March 2, 2023 from <https://www.iadb.org/en/gender-and-diversity/gender-and-diversity>
 53. Ibarra, H. (1993). Personal networks of women and minorities in management: A conceptual framework. *Academy of Management Review*, 18(1), 56–87.
 54. International Labor Organization. (2022, April 6). *Transforming enterprises through diversity and inclusion* (report). Retrieved February 4, 2023 from https://www.ilo.org/actemp/publications/WCMS_841348/lang--en/index.htm
 55. Jackson, S. E., May, K. A., & Whitney, K. (1995). Understanding the dynamics of diversity in decision making teams. In R. A. Guzzo & E. Salas (Eds.), *Team decision making effectiveness in organizations* (pg. 204-261). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

56. Jonsen, K., & Özbilgin, M. (2014). Models of global diversity management. In Ferdman B., Deane B. (Eds.), *Diversity at work: The practice of inclusion* (pg. 364-390). San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.
57. Kang, C. H., & Cnaan, R. A. (1995). New Findings on Large Human Service Organization Boards of Trustees. *Administration in Social Work*, 19,17–44.
58. King, E. B., Gulick, L. M. V., & Avery, D. R. (2010). The Divide Between Diversity Training and Diversity Education: Integrating Best Practices. *Journal of Management Education*, 34(6), 891–906.
59. Kirton, G. (2020). Chapter 4: Diversity and inclusion in a changing world of work. In *The Future of Work and Employment* (pg. 49-64). United Kingdom: Edward Elgar Publishing.
60. Kirton, G., & Greene, A. M. (2009). The costs and opportunities of doing diversity work in mainstream organisations. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 19(2), 159–175.
61. Kordeš, U., & Smrdu, M. (2015). *Osnove kvalitativnega raziskovanja*. Koper: Založba Univerze na Primorskem.
62. Kristof, A. L. (1996). Person-organization fit: An integrative review of its conceptualizations, measurement, and implications. *Personnel Psychology*, 49(1), 1–49.
63. Kuczynski, S. (1999). If diversity, then higher profits? *HR Magazine*, 44, 66–74.
64. Lapuente, V., & Van de Walle, S. (2020). The effects of new public management on the quality of public services. *Governance*, 33(3), 461–475.
65. Larkey, L. K. (1996). The development and validation of the workforce diversity questionnaire. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 9, 296–337.
66. Lundy, J., Keast, R., Farr-Wharton, B., Omari, M., Teo, S., & Bentley, T. (2021, October 2021). Utilising a capability maturity model to leverage inclusion and diversity in public sector organisations. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 80(4), 1032–1045.
67. Mak, K. (1994). Workforce 2000 demographic changes and their impacts. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 17(3–4), 465–505.
68. Mason, D. P. (2020). Diversity and Inclusion Practices in Nonprofit Associations: A Resource-Dependent and Institutional Analysis. *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, 6(1), 22–43.
69. Mastracci, S. H., & Herring, C. (2010). Nonprofit management practices and work processes to promote gender diversity. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, 21(2), 155–175.
70. McGrath, J. E., Berdahl, J. L., & Arrow, H. (1995). Traits, expectations, culture and clout: The dynamics of diversity in work groups. In S. E. Jackson & M. N. Ruderman (Eds.), *Diversity in work teams* (pg. 17–45). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
71. McKay, P. F., & Avery, D. R. (2005). Warning! Diversity recruitment could backfire. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 14(4), 330–336.
72. McKeon, K. (2020, 18 June). *How to develop an employer branding strategy in 2020. The Manifest*. Retrieved April 10, 2023 from <https://themanifest.com/digital-marketing/employer-branding-strategy-2020>.

73. McKinsey (2015, February). *Diversity Matters*. Retrieved January 22, 2023 from <https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/mckinsey/business%20functions/people%20and%20organizational%20performance/our%20insights/why%20diversity%20matters/diversity%20matters.pdf>
74. McKinsey (2018, January). *Delivering through Diversity*. Retrieved 22 January 2023 from https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/mckinsey/business%20functions/people%20and%20organizational%20performance/our%20insights/delivering%20through%20diversity/delivering-through-diversity_full-report.pdf.
75. McKinsey (2022, December 7). *Effective employee resource groups are key to inclusion at work. Here's how to get them right*. Retrieved January 29, 2023 from <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/effective-employee-resource-groups-are-key-to-inclusion-at-work-heres-how-to-get-them-right>
76. Mesec, B. (1998). *Uvod v kvalitativno raziskovanje v socialnem delu*. Ljubljana: Visoka šola za socialno delo.
77. Morley, T. (2018). Making the business case for diversity and inclusion: short case studies and research papers that demonstrate best practice in HR. *Strategic HR Review*, 17(1), 58-60.
78. Nesbit, R., & Gazley, B. (2011). Patterns of Volunteer Activity in Professional Associations and Societies. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 23(3), 558–583.
79. Ng, S. W. E. & Wyrick, R. C. (2011, December). Motivational bases for managing diversity: A model of leadership commitment. *Human Resource Management Review*. 21(4), 368–376.
80. Nishii, L. H. & Özbilgin, M.F. (2007). Global diversity management: towards a conceptual framework. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18(11), 1883–1894.
81. Nishii, L. H. (2013). The benefits of climate for inclusion for gender-diverse groups. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(6), 1754–1774.
82. OECD. (2020, September). *Diversity at work: Making the most out of increasingly diverse societies*. Retrieved May 15, 2023 from <https://www.oecd.org/els/diversity-at-work-policy-brief-2020.pdf>
83. Opstrup, N., & Villadsen, A. R. (2015). The right mix? Gender diversity in top management teams and financial performance. *Public Administration Review*, 75(2), 291–301.
84. Paluck, E. L. (2006). Diversity training and intergroup contact: A call to action research. *Journal of Social Issues*, 62(3), 577–595.
85. Paluck, E. L., & Green, D. P. (2009). Prejudice reduction: What works? A review and assessment of research and practice. *Annual review of psychology*, 60, 339–367.
86. Pelled, L. H., Ledford, G. E., Jr., & Mohrman, S. A. (1999). Demographic dissimilarity and workplace inclusion. *Journal of Management Studies*, 36, 1013–1031.

87. Phillips, B. N., Deiches, J., Morrison, B. et al. (2016). Disability Diversity Training in the Workplace: Systematic Review and Future Directions. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 26, (264–275).
88. Prime, J. & Salib, E. R. (2014). *Inclusive leadership: The view from six countries*. Catalyst, New York. Retrieved January 31, 2023 from https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/inclusive_leadership_the_view_from_six_countries_0.pdf
89. Riordan, C. M. (2014, 5 June). *Diversity Is Useless Without Inclusivity*. Retrieved April 10, 2023 from <https://hbr.org/2014/06/diversity-is-useless-without-inclusivity>.
90. Rivera, L. A. (2012). Hiring as cultural matching: The case of elite professional service firms. *American sociological review*, 77(6), 999–1022.
91. Roberge, M. E., van Dick, R. (2010, December 4). Recognizing the benefits of diversity: When and how does diversity increase group performance? *Human Resource Management Review*, 20(4), 295–308.
92. Roberson, L., Kulik, C. T., & Pepper, M. B. (2003). Using needs assessment to resolve controversies in diversity training design. *Group & Organization Management*, 28, 148–174.
93. Roberts, L. M., & Mayo, A. J. (2019, 14 November). *Toward a racially just workplace*. Retrieved January 29, 2023 from <https://hbr.org/2019/11/toward-a-racially-just-workplace>.
94. Rolf, S., Schlachter, S. & Welbourne, T. (2016). Leading Sustainable Global Change from Within: The Case of Environmental Employee Resource Groups. *Employment Relations Today*, 43, 17–23.
95. Rynes, S., & Rosen, B. (1995). A field survey of factors affecting the adoption and perceived success of diversity training. *Personnel Psychology*, 48, 247–270.
96. Scarborough, W. J., Lambouths, D. L., & Holbrook, A. L. (2019). Support of workplace diversity policies: The role of race, gender, and beliefs about inequality. *Social Science Research*, 79, 194–210.
97. Schwartz, R., Weinberg, J., Hagenbuch, D., Scott, A. (2015). *Perceptions of Diversity in the Workplace*. Retrieved February 18, 2023 from https://www.smash.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/voice_of_nonprofit_talent.pdf.
98. Shin, H. Y., & Park, H. J. (2013). *What are the key factors in managing diversity and inclusion successfully in large international organizations?* Retrieved 15 February 2023 from Cornell University, ILD School, site: <https://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/74511>.
99. Shore, L. M., Randel, A. E., Chung, B. G., Dean, M. A., Holcombe Ehrhart, K., & Singh, G. (2011). Inclusion and diversity in work groups: A review and model for future research. *Journal of management*, 37(4), 1262–1289.
100. Smithson, J. & Lewis, S. (2000), Is job insecurity changing the psychological contract? *Personnel Review*, 29(6), 680–702.
101. Sodexo. (n.d. a). *About Us*. Retrieved March 2, 2023 from <https://www.sodexo.com/about-us.html>.

102. Sodexo (n.d. b). *Promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion*. Retrieved March 3, 2023 from <https://www.sodexo.com/home/corporate-responsibility/responsible-community-diversity/diversity-equity-inclusion.html>
103. Solebello, N., Tschirhart, M., & Leiter, J. (2016). The paradox of inclusion and exclusion in membership associations. *Human Relations*, 69(2), 439–460.
104. Syed, J. & Memoona, T. (2017, December). *Global Diversity Management*. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Business and Management. Retrieved May 5, 2023 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323004237_Global_Diversity_Management.
105. Tatli, A. & Ozbilgin, M.F. (2009). Understanding diversity managers' role in organizational change: towards a conceptual framework. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Science*, 26, 244–258.
106. Thier, J. (2022, 4 October). *Companies eliminating degree requirements open the door to giving your remote job to someone else*. Retrieved March 3, 2023 from <https://fortune.com/2022/10/04/companies-eliminating-college-degree-requirements-increases-job-competition/>
107. Tsui, A., Egan, T., & O'Reilly, C. (1992). Being different: Relational demography and organizational attachment. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 37, 549–579.
108. UN. (2014). *Employment and accessibility for staff members with disabilities in the United Nations Secretariat* [internal document]. Retrieved May 19, 2023 from <https://undocs.org/ST/SGB/2014/3>
109. UN. (2019). *Disability Inclusion Strategy* (internal document). Retrieved March 2, 2023 from https://www.un.org/en/content/disabilitystrategy/assets/documentation/UN_Disability_Inclusion_Strategy_english.pdf
110. UN HR Portal (n.d.). *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*. Retrieved March 2, 2023 from <https://hr.un.org/page/diversity-equity-and-inclusion>
111. UNSCEB. (2021). *Personnel by location of duty*. Retrieved March 2, 2023 from <https://unsceb.org/hr-duty-station>
112. Van der Walt, N., Ingley, C., Shergill, G.S., & Townsend, A. (2006). Board configuration: are diverse boards better boards? *Corporate Governance*, 6(2), 129–147.
113. Watts, P. (1987). Bias busting: Diversity training in the workplace. *Management Review*, 76(12), 51.
114. Weisinger, J. Y., Borges-Méndez, R., & Milofsky, C. (2016). Diversity in the nonprofit and voluntary sector. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 45(1), 3S–27S.
115. Welbourne, T.M., Rolf, S. and Schlachter, S. (2015). Employee resource groups: an introduction, review and research agenda. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 2015(1), pg. 15661.
116. Wentling, R. M. & Palma-Rivas, N. (1999). Components of effective diversity training programmes. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 3, 215–226.
117. Wentling, R. M., & Palma-Rivas, N. (2000). Current status of diversity initiatives in selected multinational corporations. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 11, 35–60.

118. Winters, M. F. (2008). *Top-down vs. bottom-up: Successfully implementing diversity initiatives*. Retrieved on September 30, 2023 from <https://www.workinfo.org/index.php/articles/item/852-top-down-vs-bottom-up-successfully-implementing-diversity-initiatives>
119. Wolfgruber, D., & Einwiller, S. (2023). Diversity, Inclusion, and Communication: The Role of Internal Communication in Creating an Inclusive Work Environment. In *(Re)discovering the Human Element in Public Relations and Communication Management in Unpredictable Times* (pg. 81–97). United Kingdom: Emerald Publishing Limited.
120. Young, C. & Jones, R. (2019). *Risky business: why diversity and inclusion matter. Into the future: building skills and capabilities for a diverse and inclusive workforce, workshop synthesis and key research findings*. Retrieved 5 February 2023 from https://vuir.vu.edu.au/41158/1/diversity_and_inclusion_workshop_report_final_rev-c.pdf
121. Zainal, Z. (2017). Case Study as a Research Method. *Jurnal Kemanusiaan*, 5(1). Retrieved on May 15, 2023 from <https://jurnalkemanusiaan.utm.my/index.php/kemanusiaan/article/view/165>

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Povzetek (Summary in Slovene language)

Delovna sila 21. stoletja je bolj raznolika kot kdajkoli prej. Njene značilnosti in vrednote se v veliki meri spreminjajo zaradi vpliva globalizacije, ki prepleta naše vsakdanje življenje in delovno kulturo. Koncepta raznolikosti in vključenosti na delovnem mestu imata zato že nekaj časa vidno mesto v poslovni literaturi. Kar se je začelo kot ozka definicija raznolikosti (predvsem demografske značilnosti posameznikov), se je razvilo v širok koncept, ki upošteva različne nianse. Če je namen managementa raznolikosti v organizacijo privabiti ljudi iz skupin, ki so manj zastopane, se vključenost ukvarja z zagotavljanjem, da ti drugačni ljudje postanejo popolnoma sprejeti, dosežejo enako produktivnost in prejmejo pošteno nagrado za svoje delo (Hays-Thomas, 2016). V sodobnem kontekstu delovnega mesta veljata oba koncepta za nepogrešljivi orodji uspešnega vodenja zaposlenih in podlaga za izkoristek in razvoj posameznikovega potenciala.

Z uporabo obeh pojmov v kontekstu organizacij in ravnanja z ljudmi pri delu, se je začelo razvijati področje managementa raznolikost. Management raznolikost se ukvarja z managementom ozadij, znanja, izkušenj in drugih značilnosti zaposlenih na način, ki omogoča učinkovito doseganje organizacijskih ciljev. Že leta 2001 je Daniels nakazala, da upravljanje raznolikosti ni več poslovna izbira, temveč imperativ, saj je več kot 75% Fortune 1000 podjetij že izvajalo različne pobude na področju raznolikosti.

Organizacije z globalno prisotnostjo imajo svoje dejavnosti razpršene po vsem svetu. Velike demografske spremembe in tehnološki napredki pa zahtevajo od organizacij premislek o tem, kako uspešno privabiti, obdržati in razvijati talente. Neprofitni sektor je pogosto kritiziran zaradi podpovprečnih rezultatov na področju zagotavljanja reprezentacijske raznolikosti. Hayes (2012) opiše delovno silo neprofitnega sektorja v ZDA na sledeči način: *»V neprofitnih organizacijah je približno 82 odstotkov zaposlenih belcev. «* Posledično sestava zaposlenih v neprofitnih organizacijah ne odraža značilnosti delovne sile 21. Stoletja (Weisinger, Borges-Mendez & Milofsky, 2016).

Sledenje minimalnemu trudu na področju raznolikosti in vključenosti ne zadostuje več – če želijo organizacije privabiti vrhunske talente, morajo delovati v vlogi zagovornikov raznolikosti in proaktivnega pristopa proti marginalizaciji ranljivih skupin ter spodbujati vključenost (Grissom, 2018).

Koncepta raznolikost in vključenost predstavljata v današnjem delovnem okolju temelj zdrave organizacije, ki bo dolgoročno lahko kos dinamiki trga dela, in sta predpogoj, da organizacija v celoti izkoristi potencial svojih zaposlenih. Magistrsko delo skuša bolje razumeti različne vrste pobud na področju raznolikosti in vključevanja, ki jih mednarodna neprofitna organizacija lahko izvaja kot del svoje strategije upravljanja s človeškimi viri. Magistrsko delo identificira in analizira trenutne pobude na področju raznolikosti in vključevanja določene mednarodne neprofitne organizacije, skuša razumeti kako slednje dojemajo različni deležniki v dotični organizaciji in predlagati izboljšave.

Appendix 2: UN’s entity accountability framework - 15 system indicators

C. Indicators

LEADERSHIP, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT	INCLUSIVENESS	PROGRAMMING	ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE
1. Leadership	5. Consultation with persons with disabilities	9. Programmes and projects	13. Employment
2. Strategic planning	6. Accessibility	10. Evaluation	14. Capacity development for staff
3. Disability-specific policy/strategy	6.1. Conferences and events	11. Country programme documents	15. Communication
4. Institutional set-up	7. Reasonable accommodation	12. Joint initiatives	
	8. Procurement		

INDICATOR 1: LEADERSHIP		
APPROACHES REQUIREMENTS	MEETS REQUIREMENTS	EXCEEDS REQUIREMENTS
Senior managers internally and publicly champion disability inclusion	Senior managers internally and publicly champion disability inclusion Implementation of entity disability policy/strategy is reviewed by senior management annually, with remedial action taken as needed	Senior managers internally and publicly champion disability inclusion Implementation of entity disability policy/strategy is reviewed by senior management annually, with remedial action taken as needed A specific senior-level mechanism is in place for ensuring accountability for disability inclusion

Appendix 3: Interview questions

PERCEPTIONS ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Semi-structured interview questions

Would you please introduce yourself, elaborating a bit more in details about your role at the Organization, how long have you worked at the Organization as well as your age and gender?

1. Do you think the D&I agenda plays an important role when managing the contemporary workforce? If so, why should it be considered and what aspects in particular?
2. Why is it important for the Organization to be adopting diversity and inclusion initiatives/policies?
3. Are you aware/familiar of the current D&I initiatives that the Organization has in place? Which diversity areas do you think the Organization is doing well and which areas would deserve more attention?
4. Are you aware of any D&I initiatives that other International Non-Profit Organizations are doing, and the Organization could consider as well?
5. Do you think the Organization is fostering an inclusive work environment where staff feels valued, is given equal opportunities and have access to all means that enable them to contribute to the Organization's work and goals?
6. Do you think that the Organization's management is taking ownership of the D&I agenda within the Organization? In your opinion, is the D&I agenda within the Organization an "HRM matter" or a collective one, or rather is accountability on the D&I shared?
7. Do you feel staff feels informed and empowered enough to contribute to the diversity and inclusion agenda of the Organization? If not, what is impeding you from that?
8. Are the D&I initiatives within the Organization effectively communicated, and staff feels knowledgeable about different actions taken/planned?
9. Do you think that the Organization's D&I agenda is well aligned with the Organization's growth strategy?
10. Does the Organization, in your opinion, adequately measure D&I metrics and monitor progress? Do you think the Organization should set specific objectives and establish KPIs relating to the D&I goals it wants to achieve?

Appendix 4: Interview summaries

Interview with interviewee 1

1. Do you think the D&I agenda plays an important role when managing the contemporary workforce? If so, why should it be considered and what aspects in particular?

Absolutely, D&I plays an especially important role at the Organization because of our representative and political function. D&I is important for the work that the Organization does so there is less bias in the output we deliver. It's also a moral thing, the right thing to do in a globalized world and it seems intuitive to have people from all over the world included.

2. Are you aware/familiar of the current D&I initiatives that the Organization has in place? Which diversity areas do you think the Organization is doing well and which areas would deserve more attention?

The Organization focuses on nationality, gender and age because we have data on these, and it is what the member countries would like us to focus on. I would like to add socio-economic background and disability. I understand these aspects are harder to measure from the HR perspective as this is a very intimate topic. Staff would not necessarily like to share if they have a personality disorder and they might fear how other colleagues will perceive them. Nonetheless, even if we don't capture all this data, it is still possible to design hiring processes/talent management processes that are equal across different economic groups or not exclude people with different disabilities. In my opinion, the design of HR policies would need to be revisited.

While having a bit of an obligation from the member countries to closely monitor some particular D&I dimension, this should not impede the leadership to go beyond what is reported. My fear is that HRM has limited resources which then limits the efforts put in the D&I area. We could start with paying interns in a way that they can sustain themselves, same goes for temporary staff. There should be no informal hiring, especially of interns. And this is all related to socio-economic backgrounds excluding those that are less privileged. Access to such programs should be equalized. I think for official positions the hiring process is more transparent and fairer although having contacts will always help. Paying junior, temporary staff in a way that allows them to be independent and having a transparent hiring process are two key aspects that would improve the Organization's D&I efforts.

3. Are you aware of any D&I initiatives that other International Non-Profit Organizations are doing, and the Organization could consider as well?

The European Commission has their Bluebook traineeships, they have a centralized HRM department who assigns interns to each department. It is a very centralized selection and assignment process. At the Organization, the recruitment of interns is very decentralized.

Leadership should prohibit informal hiring and set a limit for the number of interns a team can welcome as well as minimum internship duration. This way, the hiring of interns through connections would be limited. At the Organization, the HRM department should be more assertive considering the direct appointments.

In addition, I think that currently the recruitment of interns is very complicated for the hiring teams. The candidate pools are very extensive, and it takes time to screen all relevant applications. Instead, we could switch to posting internship opportunities rather than having only one general requisition. This would also limit informal hiring because all positions would need to be posted online. Same would apply for temporary staff.

I also got accepted for the Bluebook traineeship which I did not end up choosing in the end but received a follow-up survey collecting various information on diversity and inclusion, including the socio-economic background and disability which I found very interesting and useful.

I think all International Organizations are problematic when it comes to the D&I area. For example, at the UN interns do not get paid at all for the internships. So, in some cases it is even worse than at the Organization. I was very impressed by a former manager at Siemens in one of the past events – she spoke about D&I and argued that she made sure that at Siemens there is no informal hiring because this does not positively contribute to D&I.

4. Do you think the Organization is fostering an inclusive work environment where staff feels valued, is given equal opportunities and have access to all means that enable them to contribute to the Organization's work and goals?

As a previous temporary staff, I say that not all staff is equal and given the same opportunities because this is a group that is worse paid than official staff and does not have the same benefits (e.g., pension rights, healthcare rights), it is obvious they are not included in the Organization the same way as officials. One example, temporary staff are not allowed to telework from abroad which is a basic right for Officials. Now, as an Official, I feel that I am given equal opportunities as my colleagues. I also hear the same from other colleagues that are temporary staff, that they feel excluded, and this puts a lot of pressure on these young talents who cannot rely on their families and maybe even have student loans to pay off.

HR and leadership are making efforts to improve the aspect of inclusivity, but they cannot really change on the ground what is happening. For me, the structural differences across different staff groups are a major impediment to inclusivity in the Organization's work environment.

Another example is that temporary staff can transition to become Official – in a lot of cases this was not possible because of the limited budget the team has. So, in these cases your opportunities do not only depend only on merit but also on luck – whether there is budget, if

you get along with your manager and colleagues. Sometimes it is more about being at the right place at the right time.

5. Do you think that the Organization's management is taking ownership of the D&I agenda within the Organization? In your opinion, is D&I agenda within the Organization an "HRM" matter or a collective one, is accountability on the D&I shared?

HRM's role would be to design the structures (contract types, performance measures, etc.) in a way that allows for maximum diversity and inclusion. I am aware HRM cannot influence all and am conscious this is a collective effort. The Organization has a lot of very self-motivated and curious individuals because they love the diversity and vibrance that this organization is in the first place. They are there because they like the different languages and that they get to work with colleagues from different countries. Our colleagues are individuals that appreciate this diversity and accordingly I am optimistic they would do their best to support the D&I agenda at the Organization.

Management's ownership – some managers at the Organization are managers because they are very good in the technical fields they work in and have been in that position for a long time. I doubt they are best suited to drive the D&I. There is a tendency that when you are hiring, you want to hire someone like you. There are more women at the Organization in the support functions – it is not healthy for the Organization if the middle managers are predominantly males while women are more in the support functions. Gender parity is important. The more diversity you have on the managerial level, there is less chance for bias.

6. Do you feel staff feels informed and empowered enough to contribute to the diversity and inclusion agenda of the Organization? If not, what is impeding you from that?

If you take a course on diversity and do not have intrinsic motivation, the situation will not change much. But if you are a mother and come back from leave and are left out from important projects, the D&I aspects become much more important to you. I really believe that this experiential awareness is a very important factor to making staff committed to D&I.

My personal contribution to the D&I is very small – I help create networks between temporary staff, so they feel empowered because they know each other and feel more included among their peers. When interns are recruited, I ask how they were identified (from the official candidate list or not), I welcome new colleagues and appreciate the special skill sets different colleagues have (not everyone has to have the same skill set).

Impediment to contributing more – I was engaged with the temporary staff network and was invited to interesting discussions. Although there is a steep hierarchy at the Organization it is sometimes also a bit vague on who takes what decisions and responsibility. Sometimes colleagues, especially young people, cannot speak their opinion because of rigid structures that cannot be changed just because something has been a standard practice for a long time.

Even if young colleagues have ideas, they would want to share related to D&I they sometimes do not voice them because they wouldn't be heard, this was also my personal experience.

In general, I think that staff can contribute, they have access to trainings, for example. I think temporary staff is a very vulnerable group of staff that do not feel very empowered enough to contribute to the D&I agenda. Sometimes it is not only the hierarchical structure of the Organization impeding to implement changes but, on many occasions, it is unclear who actually decides, and you do not know who to turn to in order to propose changes.

7. Are the D&I initiatives within the Organization effectively communicated, and staff feels knowledgeable about different actions taken/planned?

I am aware of the bias training and the EDGE survey, I think these are good efforts but enabling a diverse workforce is more linked to structures that are in place (type of contracts, recruitment processes, management approaches). I think this is much more important than half an hour of bias training. There should be very clear HR processes and structures in place that everyone must comply with. Not that all D&I depends on this one manager or team. I think what HRM says should be obligatory, it should not be the case that directorates can deviate from this. The Organization is not a democracy but a clearly established hierarchical entity.

8. Does the Organization, in your opinion, adequately measure D&I metrics and monitor progress? Do you think the Organization should set specific objectives and establish KPIs relating to the D&I goals it wants to achieve?

I think it is positive that the EDGE survey is conducted and that the aspects that are easy to measure are monitored. In terms of age and gender I think it would be nice to have KPIs. For nationality, members have avoided having KPIs in case they cannot find suitable people from a specific member country. At the moment, the Organization only has guiding principles regarding the nationality diversity which I think is more appropriate than setting quotas. The staff structure needs to reflect the D&I goals of the Organization, not so much the different dashboards including data that we measure.

Interview with interviewee 2

1. Do you think the D&I agenda plays an important role when managing the contemporary workforce? If so, why should it be considered and what aspects in particular?

Yes, it plays an important role when it comes to the Organization. Our member countries give guidelines on the gender and nationality diversity aspects, notably on the senior management composition. There is a political pressure of members to see higher

representation of their nationals at the Organization. We must be mindful of this because in the end, we are a member-driven organization.

Because member countries fund our existence there is a more tailored approach due to the divergent views and the fact that some countries that are well represented prefer keeping things as they are (this way they have more impact through their nationals). On the other side, the countries that are less represented want to introduce a lot of changes and want the Organization to be much more proactive. In a sense it ties our hands because we can't persuade all members and cannot move forward if there is no consensus as to the actions we want to take. Without the consensus we can move forward but it takes much more time (e.g., target objectives, KPIs – we cannot set this because member countries cannot agree on it). This is what we need to work with.

Also, there is a strong business case for diversity, if you do it right. Accordingly, the overall answer is yes, diversity is important.

2. Why is it important for the Organization to be adopting diversity and inclusion initiatives/policies?

For the Organization all dimensions of diversity are important. If we were a national company the nationality would have less of an impact but given the way we are structured it plays an important role as we represent/work with governments across the whole world. We cannot ignore that nationality is one of the most highlighted aspects.

On the other hand, the Organization is a bit different because we try to create policies that have a positive effect to people's wellbeing and this is not usually linked to nationality but rather other types of characteristics, including socio-economic background, race, sexual orientation, gender etc, and this needs to be reflected in our workforce so we can actually cater to the needs of individuals from different backgrounds. In this sense, nationality would not play the most important role and asks for a different type of approach. But then again, working for our member countries, this is what we must work with.

3. Are you aware/familiar of the current D&I initiatives that the Organization has in place? Which diversity areas do you think the Organization is doing well and which areas would deserve more attention?

We have made progress in gender and data speaks for itself. I am concerned about having the opposite trend in the upcoming year – having a strong female majority across all roles at the Organization. This is becoming evident looking at the talent pipeline for corporate roles and jobs, internships, young associates. We have reached gender parity in senior roles which was very important. We need to be mindful that we need gender parity and more male representation at the same time.

There is a trend of men that underperform women in academia as well as different types of sectors, so I think that what we saw until now is changing. We should think on how to support men or how to make sure that there are equal opportunities for women and men and that the stereotypes that impact men and their careers are addressed.

4. Do you think the Organization is fostering an inclusive work environment where staff feels valued, is given equal opportunities and have access to all means that enable them to contribute to the Organization's work and goals?

It depends. Overall, looking at different benchmarks and analysis we are doing well but could be doing much better. We have various issues that prevent us from having a more inclusive working environment. This includes, in many cases, managerial capacity or awareness. At the end of the day, our policies are fine. Of course, they could be improved (allowances, leaves), but relatively speaking, our policies are good, the problem is how we apply them which is not consistent and staff members bring this up often. We still must instill a culture of inclusion in the mid-level and senior management because they are the ones who set the D&I tone with their decisions.

5. Do you think that the Organization's management is taking ownership of the D&I agenda within the Organization? In your opinion, is D&I agenda within the Organization an "HRM" matter or a collective one, is accountability on the D&I shared?

Accountability on D&I is something that we all need to be responsible for, from the Secretary-General to an intern. At the end of the day, it's the remarks we make, our behavior and our personal interactions that make the work environment. This is something we all need to be mindful of.

Senior managers should be held more accountable. There is an objective to hold managers more accountable as they oversee their teams and make a lot of staffing decisions, so they are given a lot of power. Overall, we saw more commitment on behalf of the management lately, including appointing the DSG as champion for gender diversity. Of course, more needs to be done in this direction.

6. Do you feel staff feels informed and empowered enough to contribute to the diversity and inclusion agenda of the Organization?

In recent years we have been successful in allowing a lot of grassroot initiatives through ERGs, we have supported the creation of many of them, we work with them and provide small financial contributions to the extent we can. Accordingly, staff has more opportunities to contribute through different networks. Could this be enabled even more? Yes, but overall, the trend is very positive. Staff feels more empowered to act, do more and advocate through ERGs.

7. Are the D&I initiatives within the Organization effectively communicated, and staff feels knowledgeable about different actions taken/planned?

Even without policies it is about how you interact with people. You have to ask yourself whether you behave in a way that is inclusive. It starts with small things – if you are in a call with a colleague and you don't let them speak or prevent colleagues from sharing their opinion. You should not need policies to be capable and aware of this. It is common sense. It goes across different elements, saying no when someone needs to leave early from work. It is not even a matter of nationality; it is about being a person that is understanding to the needs of other people.

We have different trainings, but it is not only that, it is staff and managers being aware of their entitlements and rights. It is being able to share views and concerns. It is broader than discussing the three actions HRM decided to go with to promote diversity, it is much more holistic. Nonetheless, staff could be more aware, and we could communicate more. Again, with the limited resources available we try to do our best (diversity report, EDGE presentation). No, the staff is not aware enough, but we are doing our best within the capacity that we have.

8. Are you aware of any D&I initiatives that other International Non-Profit Organizations are doing, and the Organization could consider as well?

Asian Development Bank, for example, they are doing very great with disability inclusion, we could do much more with respect to that. It would also be nice to collect data more systematically and give staff members the possibility to identify themselves, either when they join or after they join the Organization, on a voluntary basis. There is more to do around race and ethnicity, we could also promote more socio-economic inclusion. The thing is that in many cases this depends on the environment we are working with, mainly with respect to budget and regulations.

9. Does the Organization, in your opinion, adequately measure D&I metrics and monitor progress? Do you think the Organization should set specific objectives and establish KPIs relating to the D&I goals it wants to achieve?

There is a lack of consensus around any KPIs, which is the political aspect of this Organization. The second point is about data. While we do have data on gender, nationality and age, we do not collect data on other dimensions. Without that it is hard to build any KPIs and measure progress.

We have tried to move forward, e.g., with the EDGE survey, and included other dimensions that D&I report does not ask about as well. This needs to be something that we cultivate and socialize within the Organization, so people are more comfortable with it. It is something that we need to do, push for and again, the environment as well as the culture that we have might be impeding the progress we'd wish to see.

10. Do you think that the Organization's D&I agenda is well aligned with the Organization's growth strategy?

We would first have to align on what even is the growth strategy of the Organization. We want more members but at the same time not too many. There is no end goal when it comes to diversity. It is something that constantly develops and changes over time. I would like to see a workforce that reflects our member countries and beyond as well as the heterogeneity of society that we live in. In this sense, we must have a culture that is inclusive and to allow people to realize their potential and be vocal, express their views, and express themselves.

You cannot have people coming in the Organization and be a wallflower, we want that staff is engaged,, which is the purpose of having an inclusive environment. There is no end goal, but we need to do better to reflect the structure of the society that we live in. The Organization is much more flexible when it comes to interacting with more senior staff. In many International Organizations you do not cross your manager's boundaries or don't communicate with anyone who is above your manager. The Organization allows for more interactions which are less hierarchical in a way.

Interview with interviewee 3,4,5 and 6

1. Do you think the D&I agenda plays an important role when managing the contemporary workforce? If so, why should it be considered and what aspects in particular?

Interviewee 5: Yes, it is. Sometimes at the Organization the concept of diversity is more a platitude. It is highlighted that D&I is important because we have people from different countries but looking at their education backgrounds most of them come from 4 or 5 different universities which is not really diverse. We should define what diversity means and its purpose in the context of the Organization. It should not be just for its own purpose and a façade, but for the content of our work and how we think. So, people from diverse backgrounds should be recruited. In our division we recruit a lot of staff from specific regions in West Africa so in terms of expertise, they know the region. We also pay a lot of attention to gender balance.

Interviewee 6: There is still a lot of diversity washing and at the Organization only gender and nationality are considered which is very limited. Also, the evidence is still very weak or uncovered. There is a lot of evidence behind the fact that diverse teams perform better. This could be used at the Organization to promote D&I. This is followed by the buy in. Managers need to be showcased how diversity adds value to make them more engaged. Communication should be evidence-based which would encourage diversity when making staffing decisions.

Interviewee 3: Within our policy area, competition, we see that diverse staffing in competition agencies drives different outcomes and has a positive impact on the type of work that is done. Example of case prioritization – more diverse teams are more likely to identify

different potential cases or areas for investigation than if it was a homogeneous team. Males are interested in different cases than women – women will have more interest in cases related to basic food stuff and supplies for sectors that are women dominated (e.g. hairdressers). We also know that boards of senior management that are diverse are less likely to form cartels because there is less trust, the trust network is disrupted. Diversity helps lead to better outcomes and provides more sensitivity on the goals of competition (which is consumer welfare). Now, we are starting to consider whether competition should also address outcomes for specific groups such as women, unemployed and other marginal groups. Without diversity in the competition agency's staff that the Organization has, there would be less interest in pursuing different outcomes for competition.

Interviewee 4: There is strong evidence that diversity is an asset, a lot of studies in terms of gender, race and educational background have been done. A lot of studies have been done in terms of the research environment (quality of papers was better when created by diverse teams). In my current work area of entrepreneurship, there is evidence that having mixed gender teams leads to better return on investment for startups that are seeking investment. There is less emphasis made on the evidence made but it is clear that diversity is not something that is nice to do but pragmatic to do. Diversity is very important when it comes to the contemporary workforce but unfortunately in many organizations, diversity is still perceived as something that is nice to have and at the Organization there is little attention and effort given to go beyond the nationality aspect.

8. Are the D&I initiatives within the Organization effectively communicated, and staff feels knowledgeable about different actions taken/planned? How could this be changed so staff is more aware of it?

Interviewee 4: The only D&I initiatives at the Organization are with respect to gender and nationality. For gender there are guidelines to have 50% of female candidates on shortlists. But there are no advanced D&I initiatives at the Organization that are binding, at least to my knowledge. For EDGE there were questions on ethnicity but in the report, this was not communicated. Because of the low response rate this was not included in the D&I report and accordingly it does not contribute much to the monitoring or tracking of progress in D&I area.

Interviewee 5: I am not aware of any diversity initiatives led by the Organization. With respect to recruitment of staff – diversity in terms of nationality and gender is very encouraged – in the shortlist there should be balance in terms of gender, for the nationality it is a bit different. Recruitment at the Organization is based on merit and qualification, not on quota as at the UN. Sometimes this is an issue because managers want to hire French, German, Italian but they were advised not to do that but to recruit a person from a less represented country. There is no quota per se, but managers are aware they should pay attention to nationalities of appointed candidates. A way how we encourage more diversity would be to have a champion that would promote and advocate for diversity and have

resources for a more structured approach to developing different initiatives. For the staff, people (i.e., staff) should be informed on how they can contribute to the diversity on a daily basis at their level.

Interviewee 3: From my experience working at the Organization as well as being part of the ERG I think there is a lack of understanding amongst the staff why diversity is important. If you ask staff, they will respond that yes, it is important. But on the other hand, there is some pushback, because we have a lot of male staff that are not converted due to the need for gender parity, and it makes them doubt the benefits of diversity. Accordingly, diversity is a double edge sword – we have a situation where we have resentment from male staff because there is an unspoken gender quota. There is a lack of understanding and education, HRM often has a lack of resources to do trainings. There are very little trainings, there is training with respect to bias, but this does not suffice. There is a lot of talk that we have reached gender parity at the senior level positions but the impact of that is not reflected in change in policies or in quality of life for more junior staff. This is not having an impact through policies that reflect diversity.

Our HR must go to the Council which makes it different from other international organizations. And HR is afraid to go to Council to change any policies because they are worried that this will have a knock-on effect towards other policies as well. As a result, we are very static with our HR policies because there is a fear that unveiling this will open a whole can of worms. We go to the Council to decide on HR policies rather than having experts decide on HR policies – we have diplomats that are concerned about their budgets deciding on HR policies. The whole decision-making process is counter towards being flexible and forward looking. Also, we are in a multinational organization and there are many conservative countries here who do not believe in diversity. This is an added challenge. I am a Canadian and we are very conscious of diversity. Also, during my past work, when we were developing a gender toolkit, we had pushback. We wanted to include people that identify as women, but we knew there are countries at committee that would be against that and not make it acceptable. Many of the staff, colleagues, depending on where they are from, may not be so sensitive to diversity.

Moreover, another issue at the Organization is ageism. If you are not a certain age, despite your qualifications, you cannot be appointed to a certain grade, or there are reservations regarding the appointment. Or in another situation, if you are a woman with grown children, there is limited possibility for you to get a promotion and advance in your career as it is considered that your boat has sailed.

Interviewee 4: I would think that there are much more people that are just not familiar with the topic of diversity, they are used to being part of the environment where they are not necessarily part of any minority group. Speaking about the diversity at the workplace, a lot of people are not aware of the potential benefits, sometimes communicating about the better outcomes is not enough by itself. Sometimes the messaging coming top down makes an

opportunity for a new incentive. Yes, diversity can make the work environment better but it's actually now a priority for the organization, being communicated from the top makes it more appealing to staff. There are no format D&I initiatives coming from HRM. An official message from the top would make a meaningful impact because there are a lot of staff that are worried how they will be perceived by their managers if they are part of an employee resource group (they could come across more militant). Investing in messaging and communication would empower people more, considering that we do not have additional resources that could be invested in this.

Interviewee 6: In terms of empowerment, it remains a personal story, anything that comes top down will not create a permanent and powerful impact. Awareness about diversity issues came to me through work, by subject matter exposure. Inspiration and knowledge come through looking at what others do, in other ERGs as well. This can bring together people to join forces and make a difference. There is confusion between EDGE and EDGE plus - there is some work the Organization is doing but more efforts are needed.

5. Do you think the Organization is fostering an inclusive work environment where staff feels valued, is given equal opportunities and have access to all means that enable them to contribute to the Organization's work and goals?

Interviewee 5: From my own experience, I had worked in two different departments – in terms of diversity and inclusion, both departments are doing well, they give opportunity to people to share their perspectives and opinions. But still one thing is to have diversity in terms of gender and nationality and on the other to have a balance in terms of expertise and technical knowledge.

Interviewee 6: I do not think that the Organization is at a position to ensure equal opportunity for all because it is the way it is set up, there is a lot of dependence on directorate culture, and even division and team culture. In terms of opportunities there are different goals that are set at division or team level and very arbitrary. She knows a manager that believes until you become 35 you should not become an A2. This means that in this division a lot more people remain at junior levels than in other divisions.

Interviewee 3: I agree that the Organization's structure is very decentralized. In my division there have been more women than men and part of that has to do with the situation in the field of competition – a lot of women are heads of authority; a lot of women are in leadership roles, and this is reflected in the composition of our team. But much also has to do with the personality of the managers; the structure at the Organization leaves an enormous amount of leeway and decision-making power in managers/for managers and there is very little recourse because the staff rules and ethics guide it always suggests going to your manager. Managers are vested with a lot of power. We had an experience at our division when there was a male manager that was not too sensitive towards diversity and inclusion and created

a click of men around him. So, in addition to the decentralized structure of the Organization there is also this power that is vested in managers which can influence the diversity.

6. Do you think that the Organization's management is taking ownership of the D&I agenda within the Organization? In your opinion, is D&I agenda within the Organization an "HRM" matter or a collective one, is accountability on the D&I shared?

Interviewee 6: Things cannot change unless there is a shift in how people think. But this also heavily depends on each person's culture and personal principles according to which you make your choices. Values of the leadership are also very important which then has implications to the hiring process.

9. Could you give any advice on how the Organization could improve in terms of D&I in the future? Do you think there is something that the Organization could learn from other organizations with respect to D&I?

Interviewee 6: Do not shy away from discussion. Opening the conversation can change the diversity culture. We should have an environment where staff feels comfortable working and not being forced to fit a certain mold.

At WHO, there was an initiative about paying interns and they started paying their interns. At their team they want to set up a diversity program to make the internship more available to candidates from higher education institutions. This would encourage diversity in terms of socioeconomic background. Another proposal would be to have a minimum wage for interns – something that is sufficient to survive. A second thing would be to collect data – now, there is a convenient situation that for many diversity aspects there is no information on where things stand and no willingness to collect this information. If there is no data, there is no proof of a problem and no drive to do something about it. It might make sense from a communication perspective but less so from the wellbeing perspective. We should aim to have data on ethnicity, race, disability – this is something to pursue both in the short and long run. Also collecting data on harassment reports is important so the scope of the problem can be measured.

Interviewee 4: The Organization did a benchmarking review to revise the employment package. This could also be done in the D&I area so we are able to see where we could improve. We would need additional resources, but this is at the time where we are asked to be very mindful of the budget. Idea of the diversity champion is also very interesting so there is a face that staff can connect to this topic.

Interviewee 4: We do not face that much scrutiny from the outside as maybe other organizations that are being monitored very closely. We are still not as known as a name to the public as other international organizations. They have different initiatives, training of trainers, especially regarding disability we could learn from. At the World Bank there was external evaluation where an extremely non diverse environment was exposed which pushed

them to put in more effort into it. Sometimes an external push is needed to move things forward. Sometimes it is also nice to create opportunities for action so staff feels more motivated to contribute voluntarily.

Interview with interviewee 7

1. Do you think the D&I agenda plays an important role when managing the contemporary workforce? If so, why should it be considered and what aspects in particular?

On the front on whether it does - it gets a lot of vocal attention (e.g., the appointing the first women to DSG position). There are many gestures towards D&I, and these are important, they signal an effort is being made. I think that very often we can mistake this visibility with genuine change and whether it is genuinely making an impact. There is sometimes a misunderstanding of the roles of these sorts of gestures. Occasionally, whether through quota-based systems, such efforts can lead to a very limited, one-dimensional environment. I could not take my initial internship position role I was offered because of this unspoken nationality quota. In similar cases such decisions can lead to a poorer performance. Another dimension that is often swept under the rug at the Organization is the socio-economic background. Diversity considerations are important but can be very tokenistic and even more, can contravene genuine diversity attainment.

2. Are you aware/familiar of the current D&I initiatives that the Organization has in place? Which diversity areas do you think the Organization is doing well and which areas would deserve more attention?

I've read a bit around DICE because I was meant to be moderating a session they were preparing. But personally, I see very little. Due to my role in the ERG, being a head of social events, I was more familiar with them and made a conscious effort to look them up.

A big success point at the Organization is on gender – in middle management positions there is a push to increase the number of women. Oftentimes in International organizations or companies there is less push for penetration in the senior management positions, but I think this is not the case at the Organization. It is evident that there are a lot of women in high level management positions and not just for the sake of gender parity but because they really deliver great work.

Another positive point would be that the Organization has made great improvement in nationality diversity. Nonetheless, I am aware that my observation might be a bit biased because in our department we can have staff from non-member countries.

On the other hand, there are certain nationalities, like Italians and German, that outnumber other staff in terms of headcount. And here I would like to draw attention to the socio-economic aspect because a lot of these staff come from a background of being financially

well off, their parents have good education. Fundamentally, people that come from families that are well off tend to be better, academically, because they have access to more resources. So, I would say that this “issue” is more systemic than the Organization, it is about the ability of people with less means being provided with opportunities to reach a certain level of attainment that is required by the Organization.

3. Are you aware of any D&I initiatives that other International Non-Profit Organizations are doing, and the Organization could consider as well?

Cannot think of any on the spot.

4. Do you think that the Organization’s management is taking ownership of the D&I agenda within the Organization? In your opinion, is D&I agenda within the Organization an “HRM” matter or a collective one, is accountability on the D&I shared?

I think that fundamentally the way the Organization is structured and its divisions, their hiring procedures, the responsibility unavoidably falls on the managers and even teams’ level. Of course, it is up to HRM to support this and provide knowledge and resources to staff making these decisions to achieve D&I goals. But the ultimate responsibility is at the level where the hiring decision is being made.

Within my division there is a big sense of pride because we bring in candidates from non-member countries and there is a moral sense that this is correct and how it should be. The nationality diversity grants our division a plurality of perspectives and is reflected in the outcome of our work. In that sense, there is a strong understanding how this aspect of diversity feeds into our work and particularly why diversity is a good thing.

5. Do you feel staff feels informed and empowered enough to contribute to the diversity and inclusion agenda of the Organization? How do you think we could improve this in the future?

I think that diversity is strongly linked to the ethos of the Organization and how we view our own work and community. Minding that consciousness is very important. Diversity is not part of an everyday practice; it is a conceptual thing which is not yet embedded at the Organization. So, I think embedding these kinds of goals, initiatives within everyday work and office behavior are the holy grail and how you make it work. In terms of concrete ways how this could be done, it is much more difficult to say.

One thing that comes to my mind, the quota-based systems can serve their purpose to an extent – they force change in a very artificial way which does not really have a genuine alteration to the system as a consequence. However, very crucially, it introduces it to the systems and makes people become accustomed to it. But then attention needs to be paid to

the longer-term view. It can be helpful but is also a double-edged sword. Quotas are not a solution by themselves but a tool that is part of a much wider toolkit.

6. Do you think the Organization is fostering an inclusive work environment where staff feels valued, is given equal opportunities and have access to all means that enable them to contribute to the Organization's work and goals?

In a lot of ways yes – for example people can request from their managers a certain amount of work time per week dedicated to upskilling. This means valuing human capital in a way that people are here to learn, develop. But it is once again a case where there is a brilliant thing on paper in terms of policies and protection, but the dissemination of this information and translation into practice can be quite poor.

The Organization has a lot of flexible work arrangements such as flexible work time which give freedom and work autonomy to the staff. However, there is also a flipside to it. This lack of structure can lead to over-burning of work. People come into the office very early and leave very late on a regular occasion. I think just because the work is higher at a given time, it is not acceptable to demand from staff to work additional hours without additional compensation. Fundamentally, that is unfair. It is not demanded but it is certainly expected to work long hours in such circumstances.

7. Does the Organization, in your opinion, adequately measure D&I metrics and monitor progress? Do you think the Organization should set specific objectives and establish KPIs relating to the D&I goals it wants to achieve?

Any sort of attempt to promote an action without clear objectives is not overly useful. When it comes to D&I, it is a very difficult thing because what is the objective, is it gender parity? I would say probably not. I think understanding acceptable bounds is important. In the case of the Organization, the role of country objectives needs evaluation. My suspicion is that there is a need to go beyond that. We need diversity for genuinely constructive reasons, not just for the sake of it.

Interview with interviewee 8

1. Do you think the D&I agenda plays an important role when managing the contemporary workforce? If so, why should it be considered and what aspects in particular?

Generally speaking, yes. Most of the economies of the Organization's member countries were built upon systems of exclusion and concentration of power and wealth within the few, violating the fundamental rights of many people. That is not only morally wrong but also counterproductive in terms of economic wellbeing and does harm to everybody, even those "on the top". I view the D&I topic from the justice and inclusion perspective, not from the point of view that diversity is just something nice to have, different people.

2. Why is it important for the Organization to be adopting diversity and inclusion initiatives/policies?

Partly because the Organization is historically positioned so that it is part of a system exclusion and it is itself a member club, so its definition has an exclusion nature to it as opposed to other institutions that are more inclusive in their original mandate. I think there is tons of evidence demonstrating the importance of having an inclusive workplace in a variety of ways, that means that organizations are better performing, more efficient, more effective and have better staff wellbeing overall, for all staff.

3. Are you aware/familiar of the current D&I initiatives that the Organization has in place? Which diversity areas do you think the Organization is doing well and which areas would deserve more attention?

I would say I am somewhat familiar with them; I am aware of the EDGE and EDGE plus survey that they are commissioning. I am aware of how nationality and gender diversity are used in terms of recruitment processes. Apart from this, the Organization might be doing other things with which I am not familiar.

One area that stands out to me as an American is lack of representativeness within the nationality so what does the US represent in terms of other factors such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability status. I would say our delegation of staff is not representative of our national makeup and I would guess this is the same case for many other delegations as well.

I am surprised that there is not much awareness around disability and that seems like an area that would need more attention. I know there is excitement about EDGE plus and discussing other factors such as race and ethnicity but as far as I know there aren't any measures that were taken on that. I would say that this is one of the areas that would benefit from more attention at this stage. It seems like the focus has been on gender, but I am not sure if this is the case.

4. Are you aware of any D&I initiatives that other International Non-Profit Organizations are doing, and the Organization could consider as well?

One key thing for me is to make it about the dominant group, so how do you engage older white men into this conversation and put the responsibility on them regarding the disability and inclusion issues, so it is not like certain see the problem and then, for example, women have to advocate for gender equality and people with disability have to advocate for this area or parents have to advocate for parenting accommodations. What we see consistently from the empirical evidence is that organizations that work better for people in the minority groups also work better for everybody else. A lot of the things that we have been advocating for parenthood would also be beneficial to other staff.

So, addressing this issue of management lottery where policies are implemented in various ways, that would have great benefits for D&I. Because maybe the people that need help the most are not advocating for themselves. Maybe because they are temporary staff, and their contract is up for renewal or maybe just culturally it is less comfortable for them to advocate. So doing things universally could be very beneficial for everybody and help lift and support those staff that really need help. I am sure we could pay some consultant to make a D&I plan for the Organization, I really think we could learn from other's experience and put the ownership onto historically powerful groups within the Organization.

5. Do you think the Organization is fostering an inclusive work environment where staff feels valued, is given equal opportunities and have access to all means that enable them to contribute to the Organization's work and goals?

I would say for the most part. It varies a lot. There are some structural challenges that make staff not necessarily feel safe and included, for example temporary staff contracts that create a sense of insecurity and influence people differently. In general, I think there is an attempt to have an inclusive work environment. If I think of our competencies and the performance framework, I feel like those are a lot about having team spaces, having effective communication, listening to different viewpoints, negotiating, and compromises, I think that is important.

6. Do you think that the Organization's management is taking ownership of the D&I agenda within the Organization? In your opinion, is D&I agenda within the Organization an "HRM" matter or a collective one, is accountability on the D&I shared?

I think the ownership varies across the Organization. I think at the Directorate I work in; it is pretty well. But across the Organization I think what happens is what we call the manager lottery, huge differences in how different policies are being implemented and applied. For example, adjusted working hours for pregnant people or flexible time to breastfeed for lactating people or even just paying attention to the question of diverse hiring practices.

How do you build ownership across different managers? I guess it would have to be a part of their professional training. There is very limited training once someone becomes a manager, that is pretty weak within the Organization in terms of onboarding and skills elements. I suppose you would need to have more of a performance-based approach where it is linked to their recruitment.

I know we should not point to HRM about all the issues but just to state an example, I have asked a long time ago to just get the longlist of candidates without gender and nationality and that is not possible for some technical reason. Even so, if you just hit the gender, age and nationality, that would be helpful. Because once you get to the shortlist, then HRM looks at gender and nationality and says you have too many Italians on the list. And it is fine, but how many Italians did I have in the initial candidate pool to start with? Generally speaking, Italians are more represented so you would expect that even if I created the shortlist

randomly, I would have an overrepresentation of Italians, same for women. If the pool itself had more women, then the shortlist itself would have more women. Now you are asking me to remove women and Italians from this list I already created which is then introducing a bias that is unfair. If you did it blindly in the beginning, you would help me reduce my bias as a reviewer in the beginning already. At least you would have some minimum blind test review in the beginning. That is something that as a manager I am concerned about. But then when we get down to it, for me to be able to hire someone who I think is the best candidate, my possibility for reducing bias is limited by our system.

Or if you look at the way how gender and nationality are used – I am going to be up for conversion and am an American female. So, if I was smart, I would try to make sure I do not hire any women to our team and I don't hire any Americans to our team, it creates weird incentives that member countries nor the Organization would be in favor of.

And again, it is not an area where not a lot is known. A ton is known on how to make a less biased recruitment process, so I think just applying some evidence-based tools from other fields or other organizations would go a long way.

7. Do you feel staff feels informed and empowered enough to contribute to the diversity and inclusion agenda of the Organization? If not, what is impeding you from that?

8. Are the D&I initiatives within the Organization effectively communicated, and staff feels knowledgeable about different actions taken/planned?

If I were to say a very general statement, I would say very little is communicated by HRM. I think the EXD Essentials newsletters made a big improvement and some elements of the intranet have been updated recently. But sometimes it feels almost impossible to find basic information about D&I. The best way to communicate about D&I is to actually not talk about it at all, it should be the way we operate. To give an example, recently we started using Sonru during interviews. When I became the hiring manager for the first time, I asked whether we wanted to use that video recruitment tool and what we know about the discriminatory effects of this tool. Does it favor for example women over men, native English speakers versus those that are not, younger people over older people? The Organization is probably paying a company to be using this technology but when I asked this question no one was thinking about this or had no actual information. Also, testimonials from other colleagues are that this mainly tests whether the person could handle the use of technology and the stress. We should be considering the implications of different tools and different ways of working and how those affect different staff differently. That should become a normal way of working.

In the US, there are very strict rules on disability and the physical requirements of job descriptions that have to be included when you are doing hiring. And this is something that people do normally, you do not have to say we are making an effort trying to be more inclusive towards people with disabilities or different abilities, but it just becomes normal.

So, this is one of the comments I would make towards the different efforts HRM is doing in the D&I area – there is a general tendency that member states tie our hands but these issues have been around for many decades and it is also something that other international organizations are struggling with. I do understand we are in France, and we cannot ask people about race and ethnicity, but this is a surmountable problem. I think the Organization communicates plenty on the things they are doing but the issue might be that they are not doing enough.

10. Does the Organization, in your opinion, adequately measure D&I metrics and monitor progress? Do you think the Organization should set specific objectives and establish KPIs relating to the D&I goals it wants to achieve?

I would say our measurement is a bit disproportionate to the level of effort, maybe not in regard to gender, gender seems to be right on. I am not sure why we are measuring EDGE plus if we are not doing anything with it, the plus part of it I am not sure why we were presenting it as an exciting initiative if the whole point was just to measure. But I guess measuring is a good first step too. I was a bit underwhelmed when the consultant presented it.

I think there is in general a lack of monitoring of our policies and what is driving them. HRM needs to work more with Staff Association or others to really have a better sense of how we are monitoring things, what is working and what is not and what is driving how people are feeling about it. Because people's perceptions are changing, but the part on what is driving those changes and perceptions and does that relate to the measures that are being taken by the Organization, that seems to be a general weakness.

For example, the breastfeeding spaces, after many years we finally managed to get a breastfeeding space in the medical center but there is no real monitoring whether that is adequate or sufficient to meet people's needs. So, this is an example where something is set and said this is generally working and then you hear from women trying to use it that there is not sufficient space etc. So, generally I would say the measurement at the Organization is fine, but the monitoring of the different initiatives and what is driving them should be given more attention.

Interview with interviewee 9

1. Do you think the D&I agenda plays an important role when managing the contemporary workforce? If so, why should it be considered and what aspects in particular?

Yes, I think it is important. Why is it important? For two main reasons – on the individual level, the Organization wants to attract, recruit and retain the best and the brightest, as it should, being an international organization. For that, it is important that people feel that they are able to advance their career and feel included within the organization they are

considering joining or are already in. So that the Organization does not inadvertently discriminate against people who would be very qualified for the job. On the second, organization level, it is important that the Organization does not just benefit from the individual talent but collective talent and we know from all kinds of research and real life that it is important to have a variety of different experiences, viewpoints and talents in the room. Diversity and inclusion play a very important role in that.

2. Why is it important for the Organization to be adopting diversity and inclusion initiatives/policies?

3. Are you aware/familiar of the current D&I initiatives that the Organization has in place? Which diversity areas do you think the Organization is doing well and which areas would deserve more attention?

It is really visible (that the Organization pays more attention to certain aspects of diversity than others). Such an example is the D&I report, which focuses exclusively on nationality and age. These are privileged characteristics with respect to others. There is always more work that can be done on all of the diversity characteristics, that includes sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, different levels of disability and so on.

There are still things that could be done to improve, speaking as a former board member of an ERG, about the diversity and inclusion in terms of sexual orientation and gender identity but also, a really important and somewhat overlooked area at the Organization is diversity of background, thought, discipline, expertise and even neuro diversity. There are massively underappreciated areas of diversity and there are even systematic processes which undermine the Organization's ability to make the most of them.

I think there is a tendency among hiring managers to use particular backgrounds and qualifications and areas of specialist expertise as a proxy for someone being well qualified to do a particular job. There is a high emphasis on specialist subject knowledge and an underemphasis on being a generalist and transferable skills – which, in my personal opinion, are really important and becoming more important for organizations in general, to be more successful in their mandates and to make the most of diversity and inclusion.

A way we could go about this is tackling this bias among hiring managers that the best person for the job is necessarily going to be the person that is qualified in specific specialist subject matters. But also, in which posts are opened up and created within a specific team also lends itself to the assumption that the right person for that job has to be the specialist in the area of that job description, so that narrows things down immediately. And the third one, which is a personal issue of mine, is that the career progression process at the Organization forces people to apply through a recruitment process instead of having a dedicated career progression process. This means one has to apply for a job, for which they are not necessarily qualified, in order to get a promotion in one for which a person is overqualified.

Regarding the inconsistent implementation of internal policies, the Organization has a core competencies framework which I have read several times in different contexts, I do not know if everyone that needs to read it has read it.

Overall, I would suggest the Organization increases the diversity of thoughts, tackles ageism and makes the Organization recognize and value generalists more.

4. Are you aware of any D&I initiatives that other International Non-Profit Organizations are doing, and the Organization could consider as well?

I believe within the EU institutions there are compulsory rotations within teams that help people benefit from the opportunities to grow their skills, increase their personal diversity of knowledge and whilst also promoting that mixing of knowledge and skills throughout the organization.

6. Do you think the Organization is fostering an inclusive work environment where staff feels valued, is given equal opportunities and have access to all means that enable them to contribute to the Organization's work and goals?

Yes and no. For certain groups things are going well and the Organization is doing a good job. Overall, there is a complacency and a confidence that there is no discrimination, and we are good, it is not a top-of-the-agenda concern, so as long as we are not actively discriminating against any group, it is fine. I would like to see things go a step further than that. I also have heard and seen representations from other groups, particularly parents and prospective parents and temporary staff who are parents and prospective parents, that the precarity of their positions and support organization offers and the lengths of their contracts make life difficult for them.

Moreover, I think there is ageism at the Organization. I have heard indirectly that I have missed or almost missed opportunities because I am considered too young. I have been asked my age or heard my age reference as if it was a relevant factor to consider in whether to offer me a particular post or offer me a particular opportunity. I have never seen a kind of smoking gun situation over ageism, but I have seen numerous indirect examples of it. And we all know this is usually how discrimination operates. I have not seen so much ageism against people on the other end, that are more advanced age, but I am sure it exists there as well.

6. Do you think that the Organization's management is taking ownership of the D&I agenda within the Organization? In your opinion, is D&I agenda within the Organization an "HRM" matter or a collective one, is accountability on the D&I shared?

From what I have seen around managers, it has become more and more of a reflex to think 'we already have a certain number of men in this team, is there something wrong that we don't have enough representation of such and such group'. Personally, I always try to get

these questions into the recruitment process. I think this part is taken into consideration, the characteristic based things. But as I said before, I think hiring managers are not only underperforming in their ability or duty to bring in alternative and diverse expertise to the Organization, but also actively working against it by insisting that people that they recruit have to have specialist expertise in particular areas.

8. Are the D&I initiatives within the Organization effectively communicated, and staff feels knowledgeable about different actions taken/planned?

Yes, I think the efforts are quite well communicated. There are various channels through which that is done, messages from the Secretary-General, newsletters, Diversity Reports, so those ones are quite good. The overall strategy and objectives, we know do not yet exist, so that will be something to look forward to.

10. Does the Organization, in your opinion, adequately measure D&I metrics and monitor progress? Do you think the Organization should set specific objectives and establish KPIs relating to the D&I goals it wants to achieve?

Yes, we should establish KPIs and goals, but I would make them behavioral, practice based. So look at the organizational maturity framework in terms of practices and processes an organization might have, that is how benchmarks, such as the workplace pride benchmark, work. I am not convinced that counting the number of people with different skin color or different sexual orientation is particularly effective. Because that is the outcome, which obviously matters, but there are so many other metrics which are almost impossible to capture, like people that can consider working for an organization but then change their mind and never even apply because of some D&I related failing. That is impossible to gain data on. I think head counting only tells a very partial picture.

It is always effective to look at the latest practices, recommendations in terms of how you ask people what. Of course, these questions have to be optional, and you have to gather data within things like GDPR. It is something that has started happening at the Organization but like all other social data it has a lot of caveats around it.