

# 7<sup>th</sup> EU Diversity Charters Annual Forum

‘Selling Diversity in a World of Diversion’

## Event report

18<sup>th</sup> October 2016, Dublin





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### OPENING SESSION

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#### Maria Hegarty, Irish Diversity Charter

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The event started with welcoming words of Maria Hegarty, founder and managing director at Equality Strategies Ltd. Maria Hegarty has worked at international, national and regional level with policy makers, public bodies and companies for over fifteen years. She was a founder member of the Diversity Charter Ireland in 2012.



She started by thanking the European Commission and the department for Justice and Equality of Ireland for partnering with Diversity Charter Ireland to make this event a success. She then shared the historical significance of Dublin castle where the event took place: for over 800 years Dublin Castle has been at the heart of Irish history. From the founding of the first Celtic settlement in the 1st century A.D. to every Presidential inauguration since the foundation of the State, the site has stood witness to some of the most pivotal events in the country's history.

2016 is an important date since a hundred years ago the proclamation that led to the establishment of the Irish State envisaged a republic of religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities.

Dublin castle resonates with a very clear Diversity message, it was here when in 1990 the first female president of Ireland, Mary Robinson, was sworn into office and it was here in 2015 when Ireland celebrated becoming the first country in the world to vote in a referendum to introduce an equal right to civil marriage for same-sex couples.

Maria Hegarty emphasized the work of the European Commission in promoting equality and diversity at the workplace and supporting Diversity Charters in their work to engage companies to lead the way in equality and diversity at the workplace.

Frances Fitzgerald, Minister for Justice and Equality



Frances Fitzgerald was appointed Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016. She previously served as Minister for Justice and Equality and Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. She represents the constituency of Dublin Mid-West. Frances introduced the legislation for the holding of the Marriage Equality referendum. In November 2015, Frances Fitzgerald signed the Commencement Order for the Marriage Act 2015, which officially made marriage equality a legal reality.

Frances Fitzgerald has overseen the enactment of the Children and Family Relationships Act, which provides for the most comprehensive reform of family law since the foundation of the State. She has worked at EU level, as part of the Justice & Home Affairs Council of Ministers to respond to the migration crisis facing Europe. Frances Fitzgerald has ensured that Ireland is living up to its international humanitarian obligations by establishing the Irish Refugee Protection Programme to accept refugees under official relocation and resettlement programmes.

Frances Fitzgerald started by stating the Irish public services thrive to be more attractive and inclusive of diversity through the implementation of a Plan with a vision: the people to be served equally, efficiently and with respect. Everyone is a public service user and thus deserves to get equal treatment. She stressed her own responsibility, as Minister for Justice and Equality to ensure diversity in her staff and agencies.

She underlined that progress has been made in many areas: people no longer need to leave the public service when getting married; there has been increased female employment; improvement in leadership roles in private sector and public life etc. But more work still needs to be done. Our democracies are incomplete if the female participation is only 20%. The targets need to be set far higher in the years ahead.

Diversity and equality should not only be words. These concepts need to mean something tangible. It is not only important to have a clear vision but also to implement it in every part of the organisation.

There are still, in Ireland and elsewhere examples of intolerance reported in media and in social media. That kind of comments cannot be tolerated. Reported racist attacks have increased across Europe, particularly against migrants. Some countries forbid women to study, work or own properties or even go out in public without an accompanying man, which shows us the great amount of work that still needs to be done internationally. Frances Fitzgerald also mentioned the great value of experience from the elderly that cannot be disregarded and the danger still faced by members of the LGBTI community.

Frances Fitzgerald said she is conscious of the leadership role they need to play internationally regarding the appalling discrimination faced, for instance, by members of the travelling community or persons from different socio-economic groups. Many challenges remain and the government has a role to play to provide the services needed to reduce inequality in the society: childcare services, social welfare payments to help eliminate poverty

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etc. These ongoing challenges need to be made an ongoing priority in public budget since equal opportunities benefit everyone and make society more just and fair.

One of the advantages of being part of the European Union is the benefit from the strong leadership in relation to equality over the decades.

There are strong incentives to bring diversity forward. All evidence suggests that the organisations benefit when they reflect the diversity that exists in the wider community. For instance, gender balance on boards is linked to organisational performance. More generally, a diverse workforce reduces the risk of stagnation.

On the other hand, exclusion can breed radicalization, potentially of ethnic minorities and religious groups, which increases the risk of terrorism. Frances Fitzgerald affirmed they are consistently trying to address those issues and protect the most vulnerable people through the constant improvement of the legal arsenal; the latest addition being the prohibition of discrimination against transgender people.

*"We cannot be complaisant, we cannot settle for good enough. We need to reject the excuses, we can't rely in past achievements in hope they will somehow be paying off. We cannot let our most precious resources, in Ireland and in your own countries, our people, to feel as though they are less than any other citizen."*

Frances Fitzgerald concluded by saying that diversity and equality are not just words. They are the basis of successful companies, strong communities and a brighter future.

### Tiina Astola, Director General for Justice and Consumer, European Commission

Since 1 February 2016, Tiina Astola is Director General for Justice and Consumers at the European Commission. The DG deals with civil justice including contract and company law, criminal justice, fundamental rights, including data protection and free movement, equality and consumer law and policy. Before joining the European Commission, she was Permanent Secretary of the Finnish Ministry of Justice and prior to that she worked for the Finnish Ministry of Finance and the Finnish Foreign Trade Association.

Tiina Astola underlined the variety of the audience: people coming from different backgrounds and professions, businesses, media representatives and diversity charters. We have learned from diversity management movement that putting together people with different background boosts innovation, out-of-the-box thinking and creative solutions.

The focus of communicating diversity, which is the main topic of this conference, is common to both journalists and businesses.

A steady rise in discriminatory attitudes towards ethnic and religious minorities and LGBTI people has been observed. At the same time, elderly people thrive to keep their jobs or find new ones. Journalists are in the forefront of the fight against such intolerable attitudes: they are champions of diversity.



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When they portrait the everyday life of discriminated groups, they can provoke reaction of empathy because what happens to some people may happen tomorrow to us, our children, our friends if we do not fight against discrimination. The finalists of the European Journalists Awards on Diversity are examples of diversity champions.

Tiina Astola said the connection between media and fundamental rights remain one of the Commission's top priorities. Hence, the topic of the second annual colloquium on fundamental rights is media pluralism. Key issues such as media independence from political and financial pressure, and protection of journalists against hate crime and hate speech will be explored on that occasion.

Diversity is really the business of businesses. A company promoting an inclusive workplace will benefit with better productivity and competitiveness. Companies are ideal places to advance diversity management in the EU. The latest Eurobarometer reflects that society is becoming more and more diverse which is an asset in terms of skills and talent. Eighty percent of European citizens are in favour of diversity management at the workplace.

However, the migration and terrorism crisis have both deeply upset EU citizens and affected the conditions in which diversity practitioners work. Today, more than ever, we need to open our minds and take a broader approach to the benefits of diversity.

Tiina Astola highlighted the role of Diversity Charters in helping businesses promote diversity in the workplace. Seventeen Member States in European Union have implemented a Diversity Charter at national level. It is high time to spread the diversity management movement across Europe.

*"Times are changing. Diversity is a golden opportunity we can't afford to miss."*

### Cécile Kyenge, Member of the European Parliament

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Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, born in the Democratic Republic of Congo, is a Member of the European Parliament since May 2014. She is also member of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee and vice-chair of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. Graduated in Medicine and Surgery in Italy, she was elected in 2013 member of the Chamber of Deputies and become Minister for Integration.

Cécile Kyenge started her speech with a quote of Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations who said "Better results will be produced with women's participation, no matter in which field." The European Union is funded on the shared principles of liberty, democracy, respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is fundamental to recognize that every individual is of equal worth and should have access to equal opportunities. Discrimination undermines those shared values.

The motto of the European Union is: United in Diversity. Europeans have come together to work for peace and prosperity being enriched by their many different cultures, traditions

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and languages. Diversity is a source of strength to be promoted and celebrated. The only alternative to diversity is uniformity, which creates intolerance and hate.

Working, living and succeeding together depends on our mutual respect for differences and tolerance. Unity and diversity go hand in hand. Equality, liberty, dignity, tolerance, respect, multiculturalism are at the very heart of the European Union.

Despite having one of the most advanced non-discrimination legal framework in the world, many Europeans feel discrimination continues to be widespread.

Cécile Kyenge used figures from the Eurobarometer to illustrate her position: 64% of EU citizens think discrimination on the ground of ethnic origins is the most widespread form of discrimination in the EU, followed by discrimination on basis of sexual orientation (58%), gender identity (56%), religion or belief (50%), disability (50%), age (42%) and gender (37%). Cécile Kyenge condemned the fact that Muslim people and especially, Muslim women tend to experience the most severe labour market discrimination. Recent available data show that people of African descent in Europe face systematic forms of racism and, so far, no national or EU policy has been developed specifically to combat racism and discrimination against people of African descent.

Addressing the challenges of discrimination require that both cultural dialogue and concrete measures are integrated in a transversal way to policy areas such as children and youth policy, education, migration, audio-visual, security, internal affairs, women rights and employment.

Addressing discrimination issues also requires a deeper sense of responsibility of politicians, public figures and opinion leaders to stand firm against nationalism and populism and reject discrimination in all its forms. Recent crisis are fuelling climate of fear and hatred across Europe. There has been a constant stream of concerning comments from politicians all across Europe sharing false information and engaged in hate speech for political gain. Actions such as these are ever more damaging when they are propagated by political leaders.

On the importance of communicating diversity: each community deserves to be represented fairly and sensibly in the public sphere. In that regard, media plays a major role. However, the current situation exacerbates the discrimination of certain minority groups.

The economic crisis and unequal wealth distribution are contributing factors to worsening positions of these groups in political debates. Europe faces even more challenges in the future.

Challenges can only be met if society recognizes its core diversity. The role of the media is critical in that respect. If media organisations fully embrace this responsibility, they can greatly contribute to social cohesion. If there is a common European identity to be achieved, it will be on common values and respect for equal worth of every individual.

### **Business leaders panel: Communicating Diversity Messages – The Challenges for Business Leaders Today**

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#### **Margot Slattery, CEO Sodexo Ireland**

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Margot Slattery is part of Sodexo's global LGBTI network leadership team and under her leadership, Sodexo was a founding partner and signatory of Ireland's Diversity Charter and

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named in the 2016 Top Ten Best Places To Work for LGBT equality in Ireland at the GLEN Workplace Equality Awards.



Sodexo is the 18<sup>th</sup> largest employer in the world with 430 000 employees of 132 nationalities in 80 countries. Diversity is therefore an advantage for them and a key part of their global strategy. Diversity enhances the quality of life and leads people to engage and truly believe in what they do.

Their strategy communication is the most challenging part of their communication. One of the major keys of success is for senior management to take ownership of the diversity messages. Once done, the biggest challenge is to ensure that the message reaches the frontline staff and that it is not just rhetoric but lived. Diversity needs to go beyond just a conversation or an email: implementation is key.

To achieve this, Margot Slattery shared the various channels they use to cascade their messages: emails, intranet, games, magazines, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, blogs, leaflets and press coverage in local and national press. How communication is interpreted is also a challenge; they try to circulate as much tangible material as possible so that people get a uniform idea of the message.

Sodexo also thrives to take diversity across all they do to make it something felt and lived every day. Communication is key, but it is also essential to live up to the standards set up.

### Gerry Kilcommins, VP Global Vascular operations, Medtronic

Gerry Kilcommins holds responsibility for manufacturing operations and supply chain across multiple worldwide locations at Medtronic. Since joining the healthcare company, Gerry has held various engineering and operations roles, including, until recently, the role of General Manager of the Medtronic Shared Site in parkmore, Galway. Medtronic counts 85,000 employees in 155 countries.

In 2008, Gerry was recognized with a Medtronic Wallin Leadership Award. During 2011, Gerry held the position of President of the American Chamber of Commerce, Ireland. Currently, he is chairman of the Irish Government sponsored Action Plan for Jobs West region enterprise initiative.



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The focus on diversity and inclusion comes from Medtronic's heritage. Recognizing the personal worth of all employees by providing an employment framework that allows personal satisfaction in work, security, advancement opportunities and means to share the company's success is one of their mottos. Their inclusive and diverse culture contributes to the acceleration of their growth strategies (Therapy Innovation, Globalization, and Economic Value) and enables them to fulfill the Medtronic Mission: contributing to human welfare by the application of biomedical engineering to alleviate pain, restore health and extend life.

An Industry Perspective of the evolution of inclusion and diversity includes how globalization over the last 50 years has caused companies to move from viewing inclusion and diversity as a regulatory obligation towards embracing the business case for inclusion and diversity of thought in driving innovation and business results.

At Medtronic, creating a workplace of inclusion is recognized as a key driver for business success. They are communicating to their leaders (and all employees) that diverse teams and working in an inclusive environment will increase team success and overall company success.

Their commitment in ensuring everyone's voice is heard is reflected in a goal set across his business area for all employees to seek opportunities to increase engagement and that of their colleagues in making a difference within Medtronic.

Medtronic identified 3 key levers to ensure D&I success:

**Leadership commitment;** Need for active leadership and involvement from CEOs and all leaders. Senior management needs to be committed while taking personal responsibility.

**Measurement & accountability** – Quantitative and qualitative metrics drive insights and increase the ability to hold people accountable for outcomes. Behavioral changes have been observed as a result.

**Integrated and holistic approach**– Integration of inclusion and diversity into our business processes and operating mechanisms. They now consciously seek to develop diverse teams because they realized it led to broader perspectives, better discussions, improved solutions and increased innovation.

Gerry Kilcommins insisted on the importance of inclusion. "Diversity is what you have, inclusion is what you want" and concluded his speech with a quote from Stephen R. Covey: "Strength lies in differences, not similarities".



Jacqueline Celestin-André, International Diversity Director, L'Oréal

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Jacqueline Celestin-André is International Diversity Director based at L'Oréal HQ in Paris, reporting to L'Oréal's Chief Diversity Officer, with two responsibilities within the D&I team. First, "Diversity Marketing" is a strategic axis she developed to focus on leveraging the diversity of consumers for sustainable growth. Moreover, she manages the Diversity and Inclusion Communication (internally & externally), by developing a digital footprint with tools such as L'Oréal Diversity Report and Twitter thus

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contributing to efforts to emphasize the contribution of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) to business success.

L'Oréal is the first cosmetic group worldwide. Present in 140 countries, the 32 brands employ 82,900 employees. Jacqueline Celestin-André shared with the audience L'Oréal's one mission: Beauty for ALL. It means offering women and men worldwide the best of cosmetics innovation quality, efficacy and safety to satisfy their desires and all their beauty needs in their infinite diversity. Therefore, promoting diversity is a strategic topic for them both for Human Resources: attracting and retaining the best talents by respecting all employees, creating a sense of belonging and for Marketing: an inclusive marketing permits target addition and attracting new consumers.

Communication can be a game changer both to internal and external audience. The effectiveness of the strategy will depend on how well the communicators know the audience. Both audiences can be reached through social media which, when managed efficiently with strategic content plans and guidelines, can be powerful tools to raise awareness. L'Oréal has definitive objectives for each audience. For instance, they want employees to understand and appropriate the message, the HR community to be informed, engaged, connected to support and advance D&I agenda, and they want managers to convert into "Diversity Agitators", make it a strategic driver in business functions. Measuring the impact of the communication strategy through KPI's dashboard and improvement on e-reputation is of key importance. Basing messages on concrete results permits to anchor diversity in reality.

### Diversity is good for our minds: a different perspective

#### Alice Odé, Dutch Diversity Charter

The Dutch Diversity Charter was launched last July. For one year and a half, they worked on building a wide network of companies and governmental organizations motivated in investing in Diversity and Inclusion. In that respect, communication strategy was pivotal. Alice Odé explained that the most effective way to reach companies was to use their own networks. For instance, the Dutch Diversity Charter's team was able to reach for SMEs attending the Rotterdam Platform for SMEs' social event or for firefighters through the fire brigades national network.

Alice Odé stated that communication can also have a more far-reaching objective. This is evident through Richard Crisp's (below) work who studied the effect on the brain in respect of communication between different communities and different groups. Not only intercultural communication helps to promote tolerance but it can also foster innovation and creative thinking.



#### Richard Crisp, author, blogger, scientist and Professor of Psychology at the Aston School of Business

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Richard Crisp is an award-winning scientist, writer and educator in the field of social psychology. He has published over 150 academic papers and is author of several books. His research on the psychology of social and cultural diversity has been recognized with numerous awards including the prestigious British Psychological Knowledge Society President's Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychological Knowledge. He is Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences, Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Applied Social Psychology and Director of the Behavioural Science Laboratory at the Aston Business School.



Richard Crisp started his speech reminding the audience that we are living in an increasingly diverse society. He wondered how we can prevent diversity to turn into division and instead promote tolerance. Although there is an obvious moral case to Diversity and Inclusion, Richard Crisp focused on the business case of Diversity.

Social psychologists wondered which factors of prediction for success of groups of MBA students facing a problem required creative solution. They showed a direct correlation between the number of people who had lived abroad and the chances of success. Several studies showed that link between creativity and diversity:

- Living abroad fosters creativity (Maddux et al. 2009)
- Exposure to **minority viewpoints** produces more divergent thinking (Nemeth, 1986)
- **Diverse groups** produce higher quality ideas (McLeod et al., 1996)
- Exposure to **gender diversity** promotes cognitive flexibility (Gocłowska & Crisp, 2012)

Richard Crisp wondered why there is a positive correlation between diversity and creativity. We structure our knowledge about the world in categories and within those categories knowledge is organized from typical to atypical, from more accessible to less accessible. This categorization of the world works from fruits to furniture but also for people. For instance, when thinking of a mechanic, the probability to picture a male mechanic is rather high. When encountering people who do not conform to the stereotypes we have in our minds, there is a psychological effect. Diversity surprises us and surprise is interesting psychologically because it puts us in a place where we can no longer rely on our memories. When meeting a female midwife or a male mechanic, we can rely on our memory of past experiences with female midwives and male mechanics to shape our interactions with them. We can no longer do so when meeting atypical persons. Creativity is all about not relying on memories but thinking of new ways to do things. Cognitive inhibition, the ability to not think about something existent,

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is one of the key factors to foster innovation and creativity. Diversity improves our cognitive inhibition skills by calling to the same part of the brain that does not rely on existing knowledge. Therefore, people tend to be significantly more creative after diverse experiences. Moreover, improved cognitive inhibition skills are linked to better negotiation skills because negotiation is all about inhibiting one's own point of view to fully understand the other person's position.

The interest of this research is to provide intrinsic motivation for persons to drive desire for diversity and self-improvement. Showing people the benefits of diversity for their minds can motivate them to foster more and more diversity in order to improve their cognitive flexibility and their innovation skills. Richard Crisp advocates to people that there are scientifically established benefits for their minds.

*"Diversity is as beneficial to the mind as a daily run is good for the body"*

Richard Crisp stressed the need to be mindful of our corporate cultures, and create conditions conducive to drawing out the dividends diversity can provide. Without these conditions in place, diversity will be ignored, coalesce around fault lines, and possibly make things worse. With these conditions in place, a diverse workplace can be key to promoting productivity, innovation and growth.

### **The Online Learning Network**

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Martina Murray of Diversity Charter Ireland introduced the Online Learning Network, whose aim was to ensure that a real exchange of learning was experienced while also enhancing the social media profile of the Charters and their signatories. Participants were encouraged to connect to each other live, ask each other questions and highlight interesting developments or experiences via the Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn social media platforms using the Diversity Forum hashtag #DiversityEU.

Kerstin Tote and Kelly Grossthal had both agreed to act as Social Media Rapporteurs for the day and presented a short summary of online activity and developments as part of the closing session.

### **Diversity Practitioners Panel: Communicating Diversity Messages – The Challenge of Promoting the Benefits of Diversity**

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The panel was chaired by Katarina O'Nell of the Swedish Diversity Charter.

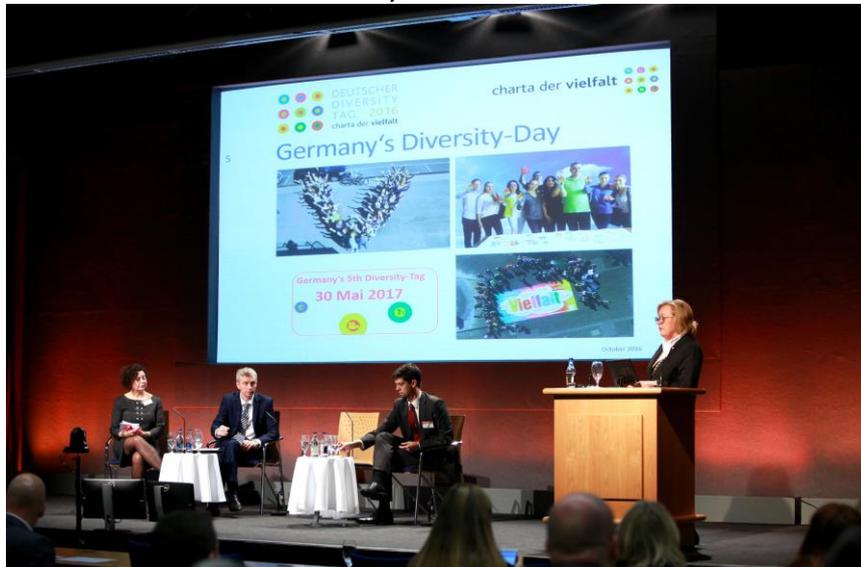
#### **Aletta Gräfin von Hardenberg, General Manager, Charta der Vielfalt Germany**

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Aletta Gräfin von Hardenberg is the General Manager of the German Charta Der Vielfalt (German Diversity Charter). The association Charta der Vielfalt is an economic initiative and is enhancing the diversity spirit in companies, organizations and public

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sector institutions in Germany. State Chancellor Angela Merkel is a sponsor of the Charta initiative. Until February 2011, Aletta Gräfin von Hardenberg was responsible for Deutsche Bank in their Global Diversity Team.



Aletta Gräfin von Hardenberg talked about the business case of the Charter initiative. With Diversity being a journey, German Diversity Charter supports their signees to do that journey by telling their stories and create their own business case. They encourage companies to highlight the success stories and show the importance of a good diversity management for their organizations, society and customers. Diversity is a strategic topic and as such should be included in all aspects of the company's life.

Diversity Charters are voluntary commitments with several aims:

- Fostering a culture based on mutual respect and open-mindedness.
- Appreciating the potential this represents.
- Making diversity the subject of internal and external dialogue.
- Include employees in the process.

For ten years, the German Diversity Charter has adopted a holistic diversity approach based on the different dimensions of diversity. They also focus on what people have, who they are and not on their differences which enabled them to have 2,400 signatories and 20 paying supporting members.

The communication strategy of the German Charter lies on social media, a very active website, newflashes and several social events throughout the year. In 2013, Diversity days started as an important national initiative offering signees all over the country the opportunity to tell their stories. The motto "V for Vielfalt" met a huge success on social media. For their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, they launched an initiative called Charta der Vielfalt on tour to reach out to new signees, SMEs, public employers and new groups and networks in regions. They travelled to 10 German cities in 10 weeks.

Aletta Gräfin von Hardenberg shared her will to multiply the initiatives in favor of diversity in the future to attract more and more signees and draw the attention of the local press to increase the visibility of the Charter regionally.

**Francisco Saiao Costa, Communication and Marketing Sociedade de Advogados FCB Portugal**

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Francisco Costa, Business Developer at FCB Sociedade de Advogado (Lisbon, Portugal) holds a degree in International Relations, a Post-graduation in Communication and Marketing and a Master's degree in International Marketing. Currently responsible for the Firm's Business Development Department, before that Francisco Costa served the Portuguese Government at AICEP – Trading and Investment Agency. He was also the President of the Youth Atlantic Treaty Association between 2013 and 2015, an NGO for young professionals across the Euro-Atlantic area.

Francisco Costa offered the perspective of a smaller organization about how some of the initiatives taken by bigger companies can also work in smaller firms. Even in law firms that are not known for their diversity.

Portuguese society can still be considered traditional in the sense that many topics discussed during the day such as same-sex marriage or gender equality have yet to reach a consensus in Portugal. Law firms are amongst the less inclusive environments in the country with a lot of misogyny adverse to change and being purely business-oriented. FCB law firm started their diversity policy 6 months ago and is already getting results showing that quicker results can be achieved in smaller entities even in a less inclusive context.

The first challenge Francisco Costa met when presenting diversity to his board of managers was the idea that diversity does not represent any profit. Being a top-down approach as in most law firms in Portugal according to Francisco Costa, diversity encounters incomprehension from the firm's partners. Francisco Costa focused on the added value of a diversity policy - and the return on investment it could bring. That phase is critical because a decision from the top management is necessary to continue the work on this topic. Francisco Costa insisted on the importance of implementing a diversity policy for his law firm which would contribute to their reputation; the best practices they could get; the opportunity for the company to pave the way; and be a leader by gaining a competitive advantage.

The first assessment made by Fransisco showed that the workforce was already very diverse: sstaff comprises a rich mixture of different races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, sexual orientations, cultures and primary languages, amongst others. They are associated members of several national and international working groups and platforms, whose main goal is to discuss Corporate Social Responsibility. Moreover, the firm is committed to Corporate Social Responsibility through several initiatives: pro bono work, supplemental community service activities, environmental friendly initiatives etc.

Francisco Costa identified several reasons why diversity initiatives failed:

- Lack of Commitment at the top
- Failure to assess the Firm's environment
- Overemphasis on recruitment and hiring

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- Failure to include diversity objectives in the organization's strategic plan (ad hoc initiatives)
- Lack of understanding of diversity phases (1-0 phase)
- Ignoring the importance of training and development (building awareness and alliances)
- "Cultural incompetence": inability to avoid the 'sameness'

To address the challenges of promoting diversity, Francisco Costa worked on a clear definition of diversity and the capacity to value Diversity, conduct self-assessment, manage, appreciate and leverage the dynamics of difference, acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge, adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of its employees – (as well as clients) and communities they represent.

Francisco Costa concluded by stating:

- Diverse social interaction is a goal – but so is creating safe spaces where groups can celebrate and seek out their cultural peers
- The idea of place making is vital – people must be represented through familiar cultural symbols in the shared spaces
- Extensive and ongoing community participation is critical to the success of a multicultural place
- Equal treatment and access to opportunities should be seen as a crucial element to validate any diversity policy and not as a discriminatory element.

### Davin Roche, Director of Workplace Diversity, GLEN

Under Davin Roche's directorship GLEN established Diversity Champions, Ireland's award winning network of employers committed to LGBTI workplace inclusion and the Workplace Equality Index Ireland's annual benchmark of best places to work for LGBTI equality. Davin led the Business for Yes Equality campaign during Ireland's marriage equality referendum in 2015. His career spans 25 years and he has worked in a range of public bodies and community organizations on equality, community development and advocacy.

Davin Roche shared that the referendum sent a signal to the LGBTI community. GLEN started working on workplace equality in 2012 following a clear and strong demand from LGBTI employees who wanted to be able to bring their whole selves to work. Back then, it was a challenging time to start working on that topic due to the financial, economic and political crisis. Gender identity was completely overlooked; there were few visible LGBTI leaders and networks.

GLEN started focusing on the specific work experience of LGBTI groups. One of the specificity is the choice to be out or not at the workplace, to conceal a part of one's identity or not. The research showed that LGBTI people tend to have worse experience of bullying and harassment at the workplace and lower performance in a hostile work environment. The cost



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to the organizations in terms of absenteeism, lower performance and hiring new persons is significant.

An organization's work on LGBTI equality shows the maturity of that organization on the overall diversity journey. A frequent indicator for not having LGBTI initiatives at the workplace is the lack of complaints from employees. Lack of visibility is not a neutral element when it comes to assessing the inclusiveness of a workplace. If there are no visible role models, no LGBTI leaders or employee network, no LGBTI references in the training, the workplace probably does not constitute an inclusive workplace for LGBTI people.

The referendum gave the opportunity to several companies to be bold on their communication on diversity and to start interesting debates about how serious their will to include diversity was. Those companies were rewarded with huge social media presence and positive visibility on media. Companies used Diversity and Inclusion positions in their branding to increase their clientele such as banks showing same-sex couple planning the future. Hundreds of companies said that the referendum on same-sex marriage is a social issue with an impact on business. After the referendum, some people tended to believe that marriage equality had then been achieved but the referendum did not completely alleviate the issue. .

The organizations with the most effective communication have a consistent, authentic and credible message. This message is shared by key persons in the organizations and supported by an engaged HR team and engaged community of LGBTI staff and allies. The message would be even stronger if LGBTI staff and allies were invited to contribute to the D&I policy and valued for their contribution.

### Parallel Master Class: Employee Engagement



Asa Nilson Billme works as an expert and consultant within the area of Diversity and Inclusion. Her expertise lies within the strategic area – within operational, organizational and business development through Diversity and Inclusion. Her experience ranges from advisory and consultant services, to analysis and strategic planning, project management, training, and implementation etc. She has produced a number of tools and materials, training and workshops traditional as well as e-

learning.

With nearly 20 years in the HR area, Marie Nilsson is an experienced professional in diversity management, leadership development, mentoring and talent programs, recruitment, IT industry, LGBTI, transgender case manager, work-life integration and intercultural communication. More than 6 years of Marie Nilsson's life she has been spent abroad in both Syria and the United Kingdom. Today, she is Diversity Engagement Leader for the Nordic region in IBM.

Asa Nilson Billme talked about some key figures and the definition of employee engagement. Employee Engagement refers to a measurement of a person's feeling of

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inclusion in an organization. Data shows that employee engagement is becoming more and more important to companies: 78% of business leaders rate retention and engagement as urgent or important in the Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends research. Glassdoor ratings and similar ratings are carefully watched by HR leaders. Employee Engagement is becoming one of the biggest competitive differentiators in business. Indeed, the Gallup research has confirmed high correlation between employee engagement and performance scores in customer ratings, profitability, productivity, turnover, safety indications, theft, absenteeism, patient safety incidents and quality. Employees with the highest level of engagement perform 20 % better and are 87% less likely to leave the organization, according to a survey by Towers Perrin. The Hay Group study found engaged employees were as much as 43% more productive.

Employee engagement is directly linked to diversity management: companies that disregard diversity have higher percentage of disengaged workers. High correlation exists between Diversity & Inclusion and performance scores such as productivity, turnover, absenteeism, creativity, innovation, customer ratings and engagement. Marie Nilsson illustrated the benefits of that approach with the IBM example. A recent research report from IBM Smarter Workforce Institute showed that performance confidence scores almost three times higher in a strong diversity climate (77% vs. 28%) employee engagement is three times higher (76% vs 24%) and innovation scores four times higher (71% to 16%). Marie Nilsson affirms employee engagement presents key benefits for both the individual and the company. Since 1995, IBM fostered the creation of Business Resource Groups based on affinity. In 2016, 265 Business Resource Groups were identified. Business Resource Groups discuss and carry out activities related to their focus area with the ultimate goal of enhancing the success of IBM's business objectives. They also work to support at least one of the four work streams: Recruitment and Hiring, Talent Development, Employee Retention or Market Development.

The participants of this masterclass discussed with the experts and one another why and how should we work with employee engagement from an inclusive perspective.

### Parallel Master Class: Unconscious Bias

Mary Lou Kennedy is a professional mediator and conflict management specialist. She is a certified user of the Conflict Dynamics Profile (CDP) with the Centre for Conflict Dynamics, Eckerd College, Florida and a master trainer with the Institute of Workplace Dynamics, Paris. Mary Lou is also a certified CINERGY Conflict Management Coach and Trainer with extensive experience and expertise in working with companies and organizations in the effective management of conflict.

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Mary Lou Kennedy started with a discussion around the notion of conflict. Conflicts provide us with opportunities. Handled correctly, they lead to improvements. Are conflicts inevitable? Some people say it is human nature. Due to different perceptions conflicts arise. Mary Lou Kennedy posed a question: am I in conflict with you if I have a different perception? Is there such thing as an incompatible difference?

The participants were invited to think of why conflicts occur. What do conflicts bring to us? What would life be like if there were no conflicts? There would probably be no change or innovation and we would be bored, the participants replied. Conflict is a disruption in life that can lead to change.

Marie Lou Kennedy shared that we have all integrated patterns that we unconsciously play out during conflicts and that determine the way we approach and behave in conflict. The good news is that we can change the terms of the outcome of repetitive conflict by bringing new energy and becoming conscious of and unpack the patterns we all carry. The first thing to do is to wonder what triggers the situation. It can be perceived as something incompatible with our values or having an unmet need for instance. We then make assumptions on the reason why that person did what they did and look for a negative motive to match the negative feeling we experience. Empathy and true dialogue without assumption can be a good way to get out of a conflict by allowing ourselves to be vulnerable and showing emotions.

Participants of that master class were given the opportunity to examine their unconscious bias in interpersonal conflict and the impact thereof on our destructive or constructive responses and behaviors. Through a series of exercises, participants examined their predominantly unconscious motivation in conflict with a view to becoming consciously conflict competent.

### Parallel Master Class: Measurement and Metrics

Fella Imalhayene holds a dual degree in management and philosophy and has worked for over ten years on the management of diversity. In 2004, alongside institutional partners, she worked on the French Diversity Charter. She developed tools to ensure the implementation of this charter and she led surveys to monitor its application by the signatory companies. In 2010, she extended the activities to Europe by participating in the European Platform of

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Diversity Charters. Since 2014, she acts as a diversity expert (JLO Conseil) and supports large companies in the definition and implementation of their diversity action plan. These 12 years of experience have allowed her to define her approach of diversity management, based on the recognition of uniqueness of every individual to the company's performance.

Fella Imalhayene started the master class by sharing a few relevant figures under the form of a quiz: 58% of companies who have set up a diversity policy show their employee motivation grow and 57% see their brand image improved. Only 15% of European executive board is represented by women and the wage gap between men and women costs Europe 325 billion every year. Those figures illustrate the importance of measuring diversity.

When it comes to diversity measurement, one has to wonder what one wants to measure: improvement on the action plan? Diversity of the workforce? Impact on financial ground? Fella Imalhayene focused on how measurement processes are built in companies and how KPI's are chosen. Indeed, law allows the measure of some criteria but not all. For instance, statistics on age or gender are legal but not on sexual orientation and religious beliefs. Once your KPI's are legal, defining which ones are a priority is the next step. L'Oréal, for instance, let each region choose their own top priority: it is a way to include and motivate them.



To measure the improvement of the action plan, you can determine KPI's for each important item. To measure improvement regarding recruitment, you can monitor the percentage of women hired and compare it to the percentage of women received in job interviews. To measure improvement on training and awareness, you can count how many HR persons or managers were trained etc. Choosing the most relevant KPI's amongst the many that exist is an important part of your measurement process.

Qualitative data should not be overlooked and can be harvested from dialogue with stakeholders or self-assessment of the HR recruitment process through "mystery candidates" for instance.

The master class allowed participants to deal with questions as to the best kind of indicators and the need to define them clearly to show the impact of a diversity policy through a series of exercises and discussions.

### [Parallel Master Class: LGBTI in the spotlight](#)

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Graham Sparks is VP Diversity and Inclusion at Shell where he is responsible for developing and implementing business focused Diversity and Inclusion strategies and policies across Shell. At Shell for 30 years, Graham Sparks has broad experience including roles in Human Resources, sales, marketing, business, management and manufacturing. He is a chemical engineer by profession and is a member of the advisory boards of Women's international networking, Catalyst Europe and workplace Pride.

Sjoerd van den Reek is a Legal Counsel within the Dutch practice responsible for managing complex, risky and high-value international and commercial contracts. He has a 9-year-experience as legal advisor. Since 2013, Sjoerd van den Reek is actively involved with the LGBTI network of Accenture, where he is jointly responsible for internal events, client related events and communication with other corporate LGBTI networks in the Netherlands.

Account director, Alice Tolan has worked in sales at EIR Business for more than 30 years. She has worked with some of Ireland's leading businesses including CRH Group, Independent News and Media, HCL, Symantec, IBM and Ericsson. She ignited EIR's focus on diversity and Inclusion some years ago and was instrumental in EIR signing the Diversity Charter in 2013. In 2014, within EIR, Alice Tolan worked alongside CSR and Procurement to create an innovative session focused on the importance of Diversity and Inclusion in Procurement, moderated by IBEC. In September 2016, Alice Tolan was awarded the prestigious title of "Ally of the year" at the Workplace Equality Index Awards.



The European Commission released a new publication on 26 September 2016 on the business case for diversity of LGBTI. Not so many Diversity Charters are currently working on this topic, so this publication aims at filling this gap. An inclusive workplace allows employees to flourish. Therefore, companies should build a business case for LGBTI inclusion as they do for any other relevant issue (the Equality Index could be a very good starting point.). The bottom line is that inclusive, diverse societies are better for business and better for economic growth.

To build the business case, it is also important to:

- Establish cross-sector or same sector partnerships with other organisations to spring innovation.
- Ensure the Board's involvement and support

Davin Roche presented the Business for Yes Equality Campaign: on 22 May 2015, same-sex

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marriage referendum occurred in Ireland. As part of the Yes Equality Campaign, companies were asked to sign a pledge in favor of civil marriage equality. This campaign aimed at showing that marriage equality is a business issue, and not a marginal topic and convert votes (from no to yes) at the workplace.

Working in collaboration with IBEC, the group that represents Irish business, the Business for Yes Equality Campaign, aimed at mobilizing companies around Ireland to claim that marriage equality is good for employees, good for business and good for the country. This campaign also offered companies an opportunity to engage with staff at a different level. In general, it was easier to gain the support of smaller companies rather than big multinational groups (internal structure is more complex, need to engage with and gain support of multiple teams and management levels).

Graham Sparks and Sjoerd Van der Reek talked about the collaboration between Shell and Accenture to increase LGBTI workplace inclusion. Ensuring an inclusive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) employees across the globe is a key and integral part of Accenture's global inclusion and diversity strategy. Accenture's Global LGBT Network brings the LGBT community and allies together for networking, mentoring and information sharing. The first Global Network was created back in 2003 and it has been instrumental in helping to craft inclusive recruitment and retention policies and adopt guidelines that make Accenture one of the most inclusive and progressive companies in the world for LGBT people.

Experts shared with the group an external perspective: LGBTI people are more likely to be the targets of hate and violence than any other minority group.

The Straight Ally Program: both Shell and Accenture have signed the 'Declaration of Amsterdam' to ensure improvement in the workplace for LGBTI people. As a consequence, they both have implemented policies to support the LGBTI community. Among them the Straight Allies Program where employees outside of the LGBTI community act as catalysts for inclusion and raising awareness for LGBTI equality. Being an ally means to be aware, show support, talk about it, intervene and be involved.

What to take home:

1. Set clear goals and milestones
2. Ensure sponsorships and collaborations
3. Raise awareness and be visible
4. Develop a business case
5. Nurture Employee Networks
6. Review process and policy
7. Attract talent and costumers
8. Integrate and sustain through an Inclusion and Diversity Roadmap

In this master class, participants have learned about practical case studies from companies in Europe that have undertaken a range of diversity initiatives to support LGBT employees. Participants also heard about the business case for LGBT inclusion.

### Closing session

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Social Media Rapporteurs Kerstin Tote and Kelly Grossthal thanked the Forum participants for engaging so actively with the Online Learning Network. They reported that as a result of the online activity the #DiversityEU hashtag received 250,000 impressions before it started trending in four countries - Ireland, Spain, Belgium and Italy. One of the most popular learning points shared on the Twitter platform was the following tweet from Cécile Kyenge: "We are strong, not in spite of our differences, but because of them #DiversityEU".

### David Stanton, Minister of State for Justice with special responsibility for Equality, Immigration and Integration, Ireland

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David Stanton stressed the numerous key learnings and the energy brought to participants by this successful event. He strongly supported the idea that diverse workforce, when well-managed, is a powerful engine for companies to improve performance. He added that we need to broaden our learnings from this conference from the working environment to our personal lives.

As part of his activity as Minister of State for Justice, his responsibility is to guarantee the implementation and development of equality legislation in Ireland to keep improving the daily and working life of individuals in this country. One of David Stanton's top priorities is the development of a new National Roma and Travelers' Inclusion Strategy for the next four years. Public consultation has been organized to involve the citizens in this work. David Stanton will continue the dialogue with the European Union on that issue. The recognition of travelers as a specific ethnic group in Ireland is one of the measures currently being examined. One million euros of budget have been allocated to the implementation of that strategy.



Public consultations are also taking place at the moment to develop a Disability Inclusion Strategy. David Stanton stressed the positive outcome for the LGBTI community of the same-sex marriage referendum and emphasized that this did not signify the end of discrimination for LGBTI people. As a result, David Stanton started working on a new LGBTI Inclusion Strategy that will be developed on an inter-departmental basis.

David Stanton underlined the increasing diversity Ireland is facing. By choice and necessity, for many years, Irish people migrated from their country and faced racism, segregation and unwanted negative publicity.

*"Therefore, we have a moral and social duty to assist those most in need and represent a welcoming environment to the greatest extent possible."*

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The new Migrant Inclusion Strategy will include a strong anti-racism component to face the increasing anti-migrant sentiments. David Stanton stated that it is our common responsibility, to welcome our fellow human beings.

The power of social media is also used to spread invectives, hateful mistruths, racist and sexist insults. David Stanton recommended employers to think of ways to prevent their employees into engaging in this sort of negative commenting.

[Lina Papamichalopoulou, Head of Unit non-discrimination policies and Roma coordination, DG Justice and Consumers, European Commission](#)

Lina Papamichalopoulou shared her pleasure about the fruitful bilateral discussions with the Irish authorities about Roma and travelers. She thanked everyone involved in the preparation of the 7th Annual Forum of Diversity Charters and the Journalists Awards on Diversity.



The follow up of this conference will be published on DG Justice website including the reproduction in English of the 3 winning articles of the Journalist Awards which will also be promoted through all possible channels.

At the workplace, nobody cares if you are left handed or right handed, 5 centimeters taller or shorter, size 12 or 14. We all look different, each one of us in unique. We are stronger because we are different and therefore able to complement each other.

*"We might be diverse but we are equals and there is no way around that."*