Practical guide to launch and implement a Diversity Charter
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Practical guide to launch and implement a Diversity Charter
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INTRODUCTION

The European Commission and the EU Platform of Diversity Charters would like to see a Diversity Charter – a voluntary initiative for promoting diversity management, in each Member State.

This Guide is part of the drive towards diversity in Europe. This publication brings together the experiences of all the representatives of Diversity Charters and of the European Commission. It capitalises on several years of supporting the launch of new charters in countries where none previously existed. Launching a Diversity Charter needs certain expertise and many challenges and issues are likely to emerge during this process. This Guide is designed to better equip candidate organisations in dealing with such difficulties.

This Guide should be used as a basic document and source of inspiration for organisations interested, motivated and wishing to launch a Diversity Charter in their own country.

This guide contains:

- Practical information on how to construct and lead a Diversity Charter, including financial models, types of alliances and stakeholders, recruitment strategies, communication strategies and measuring the impact of a Charter;
- First-hand accounts and good practice of organisations that have managed to successfully implement a Charter in their country;
- The key factors of success of a Diversity Charter.

1. What is diversity in companies?

The concept of diversity refers to the many different types of people who make up a company. Each individual is unique in their specific features but at the same time they also share certain things in common with other individuals. More generally, the concept of diversity refers to the tolerance, respect and consideration that a company demonstrates in relation to each person's particular characteristics.

In the field of employment, a diversity policy is designed to better reflect the diversity of the national population in a company's workforce and to make the best use of the specific characteristics and potential of each person. A coherent diversity policy will generate an inclusive environment and allow all employees to feel well-integrated, respected and valued. This means implementing a policy for managing human resources that centers on recognizing and giving value to individual skills rather than on sub-optimal criteria, also called grounds for discrimination or protected grounds. The EU non-discrimination directives identify six protected grounds, meaning six individual characteristics upon which differential treatment should not be based:

- gender;
- sexual orientation;
- disability;
- age;
- religion or belief;
- racial or ethnic origin.

In other countries, such as France, additional criteria are enshrined in the law, including political opinion, physical appearance, place of residence, surname, etc.
Diversity management means mobilizing the differences and similarities of each person for the benefit of the company so that everyone can contribute to the development of business. Corporate diversity is a necessity which is an integral part of the overall strategy of the company: besides any ethical consideration, diversity in a company contributes to improving economic competitiveness. Diversity is therefore primarily a competitive advantage: it creates added value.

2. Why diversity?

Diversity can be enshrined in several different ways:

- Firstly, it entails complying with the law. Indeed, discrimination is prohibited both in the European legal order and in the national laws of the Member States.

- Secondly, implementing a visible and coherent diversity policy enables the company to project a positive image with regard to its employees, suppliers, customers, and public partners.

- Moreover, a diversity policy allows the optimisation of human resource management. Indeed, if a company only recruits or promotes white, male, heterosexual candidates, with no physical disability and from a single educational background, many other, potentially more skilled, candidates will be lost in the process. A diversity policy allows the company to widen its recruitment pool and to multiply access to employment of all talents.

- Finally, and most importantly, a diversity policy allows the company to optimise its economic performance. Naturally, the main objective of a company’s business is to achieve economic performance, whether it be a large group or an SME. Thanks to optimised management of human resources, a company will have many talents with different profiles and skills. The argument here is that a diverse and inclusive workforce is a source of more innovation and creativity. In fact, studies have shown that uniformity does not necessarily guarantee efficiency in group work. Likewise, diversity does not necessarily imply mutual misunderstanding and conflicts. On the contrary, studies show that diversity within a team, when it is properly managed, promotes constructive exchanges, reciprocal dynamism, emulating effects etc. Differences are stimulating and therefore increase the overall economic performance of the organisation. Moreover, diversity allows new markets to open up. In fact, the large number of different type of people recruited allows an expansion in the skills, networks and experience available to the company. Employees from different backgrounds will be more able to communicate with a customer-base that is itself diversified. This added value is likely to differentiate the company in the market place and allow it to advance over competitors.

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3. What is a Diversity Charter?

- Diversity Charter: nature and objectives

A Diversity Charter stipulates a number of measures to be implemented to promote diversity, non-discrimination and equal opportunities in the workplace. It is suggested that employers - regardless of the size of their structure, that want to combat discrimination and promote diversity in the company’s environment, both internally and externally, should sign this short document. Signing a Diversity Charter is also suggested to public institutions and associations also wishing to promote equality opportunities. Signing a Diversity Charter is a voluntary action which gives access to assistance: tools (guides, training, etc.) are offered to the company to ensure it develops a coherent and effective diversity policy.

Every Diversity Charter text is adapted to a country’s national culture as well as to its specific priorities and concerns. Accordingly, Diversity Charters may have an organisation, a strategy and a text that are slightly different depending on the country’s needs.

That said, all Diversity Charters which have emerged in Europe have certain common objectives, such as:

- Raising awareness of the importance of diversity and its socio-economic impact;

- Bringing together all stakeholders: companies, local governments, organizations combating discrimination, associations, the academic world... Diversity issues will only advance if they are supported by companies, the public authorities and the associative world. A Diversity Charter can be an ideal meeting point for these stakeholders;

- Promoting diversity, particularly among SMEs, since they employ the largest share of the active population and represent 98% of companies in Europe;

- Supporting the signatories of the Charter so that they achieve three key objectives:
  - Productivity and performance;
  - Quality of life with a good social level for European citizens;
  - Compliance with European directives and local legislation on non-discrimination.

- Developing tools to assist the signatories in implementing a policy of inclusion and promotion of diversity that is in line with the requirements of the Charter;

- Exchanging good practice with other members of the Diversity Charter Platform.
The various Diversity Charters in the EU

In 2004, France was the first country to introduce a Diversity Charter. In 2005 and 2006, the Brussels-Capital region and Germany followed suit. Spain and Italy joined the movement in 2009, and Austria and Sweden in 2010. In 2012, five countries adopted a Charter: Poland, Luxembourg, Finland, Ireland and Estonia. Denmark and the Czech Republic are launching their Diversity Charters in 2014.

Currently, fourteen Member States of the EU have a Diversity Charter, which represents more than 7,000 signatory organisations and more than 13 million employees affected.

4. What European legal directives are there?

• Non-discrimination within the EU

Non-discrimination is a principle in the primary law of the EU (Articles 18 and 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Title III of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU). Non-discrimination therefore appears at the very top level of community standards and the ensuing acts adopted by the European institutions are valid only when they comply with this top-ranking standard. The inclusion of non-discrimination in the primary law of the EU constitutes a fundamental safeguard. Furthermore, the EU has also issued a number of directives applying the principle of equal treatment between people first in the employment sector and then regarding access to goods and services or access to the welfare and pension system.

− Directive 2000/43/EC of the Council of the European Union prohibits direct and indirect discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin in the area of employment but also in the areas of social protection and social security, social benefits, education and access to and supply of goods and services. Directive 2000/43/EC also requires each State to institute an independent high authority with a monitoring function and a function of helping victims of discrimination.

− Directive 2000/78/EC of the Council of the European Union prohibits, direct and indirect discrimination based on religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation in the areas of access to employment (including recruitment and promotion), access to vocational training, employment and working conditions (including dismissal and remuneration), membership of and involvement in a workers’ or employer’s organisation.

− Directive 2004/113/EC implements the principle of equal treatment between women and men in the access to and supply of goods and services (but not in the other areas covered by Directive 2000/43/EC).

− In 2006, several earlier legislative acts were repealed and replaced by Directive 2006/54/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation. This directive defines the concepts of direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment. In addition, it encourages employers to take preventive measures to combat
sexual harassment, imposes stronger sanctions in the event of discrimination and plans on establishing, in Member States, organisations concerned with promoting equality of treatment between men and women.

- **Directive 2010/41/EU** concerns the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in a self-employed occupation (including agriculture).

- More recently, **Directive 2014/95/EU**, adopted by the EU Council in September 2014 and that entered into force on 6 December 2014, requires companies with more than 500 employees (approximately 6,000 companies across the EU) to publish information relating to their diversity policy.

- Finally, the **proposal for a directive presented by the European Commission in 2008** aims to prohibit direct and indirect discrimination and harassment based on religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in the areas of access to and the provision of goods and services (including housing and transport), education, social protection and social benefits. Although discrimination based on race, ethnic origin and gender are prohibited in areas outside employment (Directives 2000/43/EC and 2004/113/EC), discrimination based on age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and disability remains prohibited only in the context of employment, occupation and vocational training (Directive 2000/78/EC). This proposed directive is therefore a first attempt to form an integrated, horizontal approach to non-discrimination. Indeed, the idea is to prohibit all forms of discrimination in all the fields of competence of the EU. The draft Directive, which requires a unanimous vote, was adopted by the European Parliament on 2 April 2009 but the Council of the EU did not.

The institutions and authorities of the Member States and the Union are assisted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in implementing EU legislation on combating discrimination.

In addition to primary and secondary law as well as case law upholding non-discrimination in the field of employment and labour, the EU also promotes diversity in companies through an ambitious project: the European Platform of Diversity Charters.

### 5. What is the European Platform of Diversity Charters?

The EU has recognised the Diversity Charters’ contribution to combating discrimination and to promoting equal opportunities in the workplace. The European Commission therefore decided in 2010 to finance a European platform of Diversity Charters as part of a larger project entitled: "Support for voluntary initiatives promoting diversity management at the workplace". The purpose of this platform is threefold.

Firstly, it aims to **make exchanges of experience and good practice easier between the various existing Charters** (14 at present) so that the emergence of a true "European Diversity Charter Community" is encouraged. This platform must enable established charts' already strong commitment and expertise to be promoted and stimulated. This platform functions through the representatives of the various Charters meeting each other, through the development of an information platform both internal (for members of the platform) and external (for people interested in the question of diversity in the workplace), through an effective communication strategy (website,
newsletter, blog, social media, etc.) and by publishing common tools (Guide for SMEs on implementing a diversity policy in the workplace).

The second part of the European project relates to the **promotion of the "business case" for diversity**, i.e., upgrading the relevance of implementing diversity policies in the workplace. Indeed, integrating diversity into the overall strategy of an organisation requires certain awareness by the company directors, for whom diversity is not necessarily a priority or a spontaneous concern. A High Level Annual Event is the flagship activity of the diversity "business case". In 2014, the High Level Event brought together 200 actors of European diversity in Paris.

Finally, the aim of the European Platform of Diversity Charters is to **encourage the emergence of new Charters throughout Europe**, with the establishment of a Diversity Charter in each of the 28 Member States of the EU as its final objective. For this purpose, the European project intends to provide support - particularly by means of a training session, for organisations able and willing to launch, host, and manage a Diversity Charter in their own country. This guide forms part of this goal.
PRACTICAL INFORMATION ABOUT ORGANISING A DIVERSITY CHARTER

In this next part of our guide, you will find the practical information needed to successfully launch and manage a Diversity Charter.

1. Long-term funding model

A crucial factor in the success of the Diversity Charter project is that thought should be given to its financial equilibrium right from the start and then at regular intervals throughout its life. The various existing Diversity Charters provide the funds for their own operations from several different sources depending on the strategy and the national context. In this section, we will review the various potential sources of funding. You are free to base your Diversity Charter project on proven systems or turn to new sources of funding.

- Private Funds
  - Signature Fees

One of the most obvious funding sources is collecting fees at the time the company signs the Diversity Charter. These fees correspond to participation in the administrative costs and the running costs of the Charter. They avoid Charters being signed for purely communication purposes and help to ensure that the commitment is a genuine one. A scale of rates tailored to the target must be devised. Most Diversity Charters take the size of the company into account when proposing a fee. They may be paid only at the time of signing or may be renewed periodically in return for additional services.

Not all the charters have chosen to charge for signing the Diversity Charter. Some feel that the simpler the commitment, the less the company will hesitate to sign up. It is important that the cost of collecting the fees does not exceed the amounts collected.

- Sponsorship

You can also ask large firms to fund your Diversity Charter. Funding may be direct or indirect. The latter means providing an employee’s skills available as patronage, providing materials or hosting the Charter team free-of-charge on the company's premises. In return for this sponsorship, the company can benefit from high visibility through media coverage, its logo being displayed on the communication media or by taking part in an event. It can also participate in the any governing bodies of the Charter. The company can sponsor the Charter or an event or a particular programme established by the Charter. The firm can sponsor the Charter for one or more years. Some Charters have chosen to seek a contribution from their founding members to create their Diversity Charter. These members have thus been able to participate in thematic workshops designed to prepare the text of the Charter, its strategy and its model over the long-term.

- Donations

The Diversity Charter can be regarded as a general interest programme. As such, it can collect private donations which are tax deductible. Currently, this method is rarely used by organisers of Diversity Charters.
Training Programmes

Diversity Charters are resource centres recognised by companies. Their expertise comes from their experience on this subject as well as from the tools and studies they frequently set up to assist their signatories in deploying an effective diversity policy. They can benefit from this expertise to devise advanced training programmes to give a company the more customised training it requests. The structure supporting the Charter can then provide these programmes as a service.

Publications and Events

Diversity Charters can create and provide their signatories with publications promoting diversity such as booklets of good practices, implementation guides or advertising leaflets. These publications may be offered for sale in the form of communication kits and tools for raising awareness among employees.

Events are also recognised as ways of raising awareness. A Diversity Charter can organise symposia, round tables and talks and invite its signatory companies to sponsor them or to buy seats at them for their employees.

Public Funds

European Social Fund

The European Social Fund (ESF) is the main European mechanism for supporting employment: it is used to help people find better quality jobs and to provide fairer career opportunities to all citizens of the EU. To do this, it invests in the human capital of Europe – workers, young people and all job seekers.

An overall strategy is developed by the Member States at the European level. Each Member State divides the funding envelope allocated to it between projects at national and regional levels. Each country has management bodies at national and regional levels about which information and contacts can be found on the European Commission website. Each State and each region drafts an operational programme defining the strategic directions and the framework for the actions selected for the implementation of the overall strategy of the ESF over a period of several years. The current period runs from 2014 to 2020.

There are two ways to obtain ESF funding: responding to a call for tender issued by the management bodies of your country or submitting a project developed by your facility in line with the priorities described in the published operational programme. It is essential that projects funded by the ESF are co-funded. The ESF funds 50 to 85% of the total cost of projects. Co-funding can be obtained from public or private sources or from own funds. Projects may be deployed over several years but not exceeding the validity of the operational programme.

Once your project has been accepted, be aware that its implementation will require a strong cash position. In fact, funds are paid at the end of each year of implementation, if the report provided is correct. ESF projects also require very strict administrative and budgetary monitoring. You will need to show that the project has been implemented in accordance with the dossier submitted to your country’s body and that the assessed results meet expectations. You will also need to provide evidence of each euro spent.
The ESF is a good way to fund large innovative development projects. A project supported by a Diversity Charter contributes to workplace quality, sustainable growth and a more inclusive society, three examples of focuses of the Europe 2020 strategy.

- Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme

The Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme is a European instrument aiming to contribute to the further development of an area where **equality and the rights of persons**, as enshrined in EU primary and secondary law, are promoted, protected and effectively implemented.

The specific objectives of this programme (nine in total) include the promotion of non-discrimination, the fight against racism, xenophobia and homophobia, the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities as well as the promotion of gender equality, all of which in accordance with Union law and policies.

Available funds (EUR 439 million for the period 2014-2020) are used to finance several types of actions:

- Analytical activities (studies, data collection, development of common methodologies, indicators, surveys, preparation of guides...);
- Training activities (staff exchanges, workshops, development of training modules,...);
- Mutual learning, cooperation, exchange of good practices, awareness-raising, dissemination;
- Support for main actors (key European NGOs and networks, Member States' authorities implementing Union law...).

Funding instruments encompass action grants (funding for transnational, national or small-scale projects), operating grants (covering operating costs for EU-level NGOs and similar bodies), as well as service contract tenders for EU studies, conferences, campaigns, etc.

Public and private organisations and entities from all Member States are eligible for this programme but actions to be funded by it must meet certain requirements. For instance, projects must show strong EU added value, meaning that they must have a transnational impact, produce results whose benefits go beyond one single Member State. Other aspects must be featured in funded projects: contribute to the implementation of EU law and policies, improve public awareness and knowledge about the rights, values and principles deriving from EU law, develop mutual trust among Member States and improve cross-border cooperation, contribute to the elaboration and dissemination of best practices, create practical tools and solutions that address cross-border or Union-wide challenges, etc.

Based on the Annual Work Programme ([here](#)), calls for proposals are launched regularly. You can view open, closed or upcoming calls [here](#).

- Funding by Local Government

European funding is not the only public funding used to promote long-term and fairer employment. Local governments may launch tenders periodically or specialized bodies may seek to fund initiatives that could improve access to employment of people likely to
face discrimination. Several Diversity Charters are financed wholly or partly by government departments, such as employment.

- How much does a Diversity Charter cost?

The common rule for all the Charters is to limit as much as possible the costs linked to the project by making sensible management choices. Not all Charters operate with a budget that is distinct from that of their host structure, making it sometimes makes it difficult to estimate their annual cost. Costs vary from one year to the next depending on the projects undertaken. You can dedicate a position or a team to this project or entrust the project part-time to a project manager who will be able to use the support functions of your structure, particularly in terms of communication. Generally, even if not all the Charters have a person dedicated full-time to the project, it is necessary to appoint a person to be in charge of the Charter and each year devote time and resources to creating new tools, attracting signatories, communicating about your actions and participating in the European Platform.

For Charters where an estimate was feasible, the annual cost of the project ranged from EUR 80,000 to EUR 300,000 annually depending on the activity and the grants obtained.

2. Writing your text

- The Diversity Charters texts: similarities

Diversity Charters texts often take the form of **four to ten commitments** that signatory organizations have to meet. Those commitments and recommendations are not standardized on a European scale, meaning that their drafting remains the sole prerogative of each Charter.

However, from a global perspective, all Diversity Charters texts include commitments such as:

- Reflecting the diversity of society within the company;
- Fostering an inclusive work environment free of prejudice;
- Promoting mutual trust, equal treatment and non-discrimination;
- Acknowledging and valorizing people’s differences and particularities;
- Basing human resources management on individual skills and competences;
- Diversity as a means to enhance the company’s economic performance and competitiveness.

- The Diversity Charters texts: differences

Beyond this common core, some Diversity Charters texts have developed an original approach. Some Charters have taken one or several aspects of diversity management one step further than other Charters.

- Monitoring

Many Diversity Charters commit signatories to **monitor efforts and achievements regularly** (once a year). Monitoring achievements, progress and setbacks enables...
organizations to measure the impact of commitment and to update and **adapt the action plan accordingly**. It gives the policy **visibility** as well as **tangibility**. Without monitoring, a policy is just words with no substance, no real implication.

**Internal communication**

Most European Diversity Charters highlight the necessity to **communicate about the Charter’s goals, implementation and achievements to employees**, thus keeping them informed and involved. Employees should be made aware of their rights and obligations when it comes to equal treatment, non-discrimination and mutual respect. In fact, diversity in the workplace cannot be achieved without active involvement from all stakeholders. The way to involvement is through information and knowledge. The commitment that an organization makes by signing the Diversity Charter should be transversely shared throughout the company but also throughout its external stakeholders.

**External communication**

Some Diversity Charters address this specific challenge. The Diversity Charters of Spain and Luxembourg highlight the necessity to raise awareness not solely within the company but also among its external stakeholders, including **supplier companies, public administrations, unions or the public in general**. In fact, effective communication can be a means to encourage all of these partners to also work in favor of non-discrimination and the promotion of diversity and to enlarge the community. The Irish and Luxembourgian Diversity Charters encourage their signatories to reflect within company reports their commitment to non-discrimination and diversity including details of the measures and initiatives implemented, the results achieved, etc, so as to give visibility to their commitment.

External communication can also serve the signatory company in terms of **reputation** and **image**. The French and German Charters specifically mention the fact that being a signatory to a Diversity Charter can have a **positive impact on the way a company is viewed by employees, suppliers, subcontractors, customers, public partners, etc**. That is why it can be beneficial for signatory companies to communicate about and give visibility to their commitment, their activities supporting diversity and anti-discrimination, as well as results obtained from their diversity policies. Being signatory to a Diversity Charter will improve a company’s reputation and image.

**Training**

Beyond awareness and communication activities, some Diversity Charters emphasize on the necessity to **specifically train managers and employees involved in recruitment, training and career management** in the challenges of non-discrimination and diversity. For those Charters, internal communication does not suffice. The goal here is to foster real expertise (training) instead of mere awareness (internal communication).

The Polish Diversity Charter commits its signatories to introduce **cyclical educational schemes** focusing on combating discrimination and mobbing in order to build
awareness and enhance relevant knowledge through training sessions, workshops and activities for all employees, including the management team.

- Diversity policy

Most diversity Charters commit their signatories to develop a **comprehensive diversity policy**, meaning one that makes diversity management a transversal factor at the basis of all decision making in the company. Indeed, diversity should be reflected in every aspect of the company's operations, not just recruitment for instance.

For the establishment of their diversity policy, the Belgian Diversity Charter allows its signatories to resort to an **external diversity consultant provided by the Brussels Region**. In fact, diversity management can be a rather complex question and external expertise can be a solution.

For its part, the Polish Diversity Charter suggests the **appointment of a dedicated person or team to coordinate all efforts** meant to combat discrimination and mobbing in the workplace. Here again, this suggests the complexity of diversity management but also the fact that it should be made a priority.

Several other Diversity Charters (France, Belgium, Poland) specify that the development of the company’s diversity policy should be developed in the framework of a **dialogue with employees or their representatives**. As we mentioned earlier with regards to internal communication and information, it is a means to involve all stakeholders and to ensure their active participation in the implementation of the policy.

- Network and community

The Irish Diversity Charter commits its signatories to participate in the overall project “Diversity Charter Ireland” and other networks, including EU networks, to build awareness, promote the business case of diversity and share best practices. This aspect is quite unique among Diversity Charters texts and is a way to ensure network animation and mobilization among the diversity community. The Polish Diversity Charter also encourages signatories to work for the enlargement of the Diversity Charter national community. The text commits its signatories to promote and disseminate diversity management in Poland as a whole.

### 3. Target and strategy of your Diversity Charter

One of the first stages for launching your Diversity Charter is to decide on a suitable development strategy. In particular, this requires **defining your main target**. Initially, Diversity Charters target companies. The first signatories are in general **large groups** which have already taken steps in favour of diversity. Increasingly, targeting **SMEs** is a core issue for several Diversity Charters. Indeed, most large groups have dedicated resources to promoting diversity.

The European Union has more than 20 million SMEs. These account for 99% of European companies, two-thirds of employment and are a key driver in terms of economic growth, innovation, employment and social integration. Between 2002 and 2010, SMEs created 85% of employment in the European Union. Unlike large groups, SMEs lack the time, resources and expertise to anticipate changes in recruitment, to hire talent and effectively integrate various profiles even though the interest of these measures for the performance of the company has been widely demonstrated. Moreover, large companies pass a part of their diversity obligations to their suppliers and sub-contractors without
necessarily giving them the means to achieve these objectives. For all these reasons, SMEs have become a priority target for Diversity Charters in Europe.

- An adequate number of signatories

You may choose to concentrate on the number of signatories in order to achieve a critical mass that gives significance to your action and which makes the administration of large scale studies easier. More reliable statistics can be obtained from a broad sample. A large number of signatories also allows you to enhance your action and to raise awareness among a greater number of people and companies.

You can concentrate your efforts on a reduced number of signatories which are much more acquainted with the subject. In this case you will focus your action on innovation around topics of diversity. This will allow you to develop an innovative image. In this case, the signatories will probably be highly demanding and the challenge will be to organise them into a network. Such Charters show that one of the most appreciated added-value elements for companies is the potential to discuss with their counterparts in other companies that are as advanced as they are. The interest for the company in this case is to compare itself with other firms and to learn best practices.

These two examples of potential strategies can be combined. You can choose to communicate to a large scale to attract a large number of signatories while working with a small group of advanced signatories on innovative subjects and practices.

The main objective that you set yourself will determine the strategy that you adopt. An analysis of the national context of the management of diversity in your country and the types of existing measures may well guide your choice.

- Who are the signatories?

Who can become a signatory of your Diversity Charter? Again, the choice is yours. Be aware, however, that most Diversity Charters do not restrict the signing of their texts and accept all employers whether or not they are companies, regardless of their size, associations, public bodies, schools, trade unions, etc. A wide variety of signatories makes it possible for you to work with all the stakeholders in your territory and is a guarantee for the success and durability of your Charter.

- How to attract signatories.

When creating your Diversity Charter, all the stakeholders ought to be involved from the outset. Eliciting the stakeholders' opinion when drafting the text of your Charter or reflecting on your strategy, your priorities and means of action will ensure that relevant issues will be included.

Most existing Charters display the list of their signatories on their website. A company already having signed one or more Diversity Charters in Europe is likely to want to sign your Charter if it is located in your country. The signatories of the existing Charters represent a large pool of potential signatories for your Charter as soon as it is created. Take care however to not only target large international groups - as the Charter runs the risk of being seen as an international initiative rather than a national one. National companies are also favoured partners.
A company has several good reasons for signing a Diversity Charter:

- **Communicating**: A signature at an event makes a company's commitment more visible, especially if public authorities and journalists are present. Internal communications are also important and signing of the Charter gives an impetus to a "top-down" movement. The communication kit provided by the Charters is a good way to regularly recall the commitment of the firm by affixing its logo on the company's communication media. Finally, the company, by participating in and/or by sponsoring a programme or a Charter event will find an effective sounding board for its action through its media relations and the stakeholders' participation.

- **Meeting peers**: the network concept is more or less important depending on how the Charters have been constructed and the strategies adopted. Companies are generally appreciative of the possibility of meeting and discussing with other committed companies, or even wish to be benchmarked. These meetings may be held at large events or in small groups at the time of specialised workshops.

- **Obtaining tools**: The Charters develop tools for implementing a diversity policy and make them available to their signatories.

- **Demonstrating one’s commitment voluntarily**: the very essence of the Diversity Charter is the voluntary nature of the commitment. Signing the Charter is one means by which a company can make a commitment to greater diversity without being compelled to do so by a law which could impose quotas. In this way, a company can say that its action is not just prompted by the need to comply with the law and, consequently, that laws are not the only solution to discrimination problems in a country.

Communication is essential for attracting new signatories. However, some Charters have chosen to target signatories more individually by travelling to the places where they meet: conferences, prize award ceremonies to show them how Diversity Charter could be of interest to them. You may find this approach useful if you do not have a company contact base or if you wish to recruit favoured partners willing to fund your Charter. In this case, you should examine their motivations and objectives both in terms of human resources and at group level.

- **Good territorial coverage**

The European Platform of Diversity Charters gathers national Charters. Thanks to the Platform, your Charter will be known internationally and you will benefit from the experience gained by actors engaged in this diversity experiment as you are, and from tools designed jointly. In this way, you will give your signatories the opportunity to communicate with companies throughout Europe. It is also important to deploy your Charter all over your country. Regional coverage is mostly obtained through local partnerships. It is better when these partnerships are under formal agreements which place limits on the both parties' commitments. A system should then be designed for running your network of local partners from which you will derive the most benefit. These local partnerships are the most effective way of recruiting new signatories in all parts of the country, particularly SMEs.
4. **What does a Diversity Charter do on an everyday basis?**

How do you make your Charter an essential part of the diversity process in your country? We present a brief review of the actions that a Charter can develop to raise awareness, attract, accompany and move forward all the stakeholders of diversity in the workplace.

- Raising awareness, informing and communicating about the Diversity Charter
  - Literature

It may be useful and beneficial to distribute literature about the issues and benefits of diversity in the workplace or on the various ways of implementing a diversity policy. This literature may take the form of an **awareness manual**, a **practical guide** or a **collection of first-hand accounts and good practices**. In fact, a diversity policy is established similarly to any other project: in advance, you must determine needs, priorities, a comprehensive overall view and a method before going ahead. Publishing literature will support voluntary organisations in their ambition for change and in their project for an inclusive undertaking.

An awareness guide, particularly if it includes first-hand accounts from directors who have already committed and likely to inspire others, may provide answers to some questions, doubts or fears and convince directors so far hesitant or overcautious to commit their companies.

Similarly, a practical guide can be a methodological basis to guide the thinking of organisations wishing to promote diversity. A practical guide, similar to the Luxembourg Charter, provides some avenues that companies may transpose, adapt or develop, according to their specific context.

In general, it seems to be very important that dissemination of experience and good practices is encouraged. It is for this reason that two collections may be referred to here that were published by the Danish Charter listing examples and testimonials from companies which have benefited from well-managed diversity. Signatories of the Luxembourg Charter may obtain "good practice sheets" on its website. These sheets emphasise good practices so that other organisations are encouraged to do the same or to be guided by them.
As with any project nowadays, the operation of a **website** for the Diversity Charter is vital. This website will allow the stakeholders to search for providers within the network, download tools and studies and to keep informed of the latest news about the Charter and its partners. All existing Diversity Charters currently have one.
The regular publication of a **newsletter** is also an effective means of information. This allows organisations to be kept informed of good practices and to promote theirs, to be kept informed of legislation and events and the most recent studies and reports relating to the diversity issue.
**Visual identity**

A "Signatory of the Diversity Charter" logo can be affixed to communication media such as websites, business cards, email signatures, presentation leaflets, job offers, etc.). This makes the organisation's commitment visible to companies, customers, suppliers, public authorities, job applicants or when responding to public tenders and to major customers.

In Spain, commitment to the Diversity Charter and affixing its logo on the communication media of the signatory is only for a period of two years. After these two years, if the signatory organisation wants to renew its commitment, it must complete and submit to the Spanish Charter a questionnaire reporting the progress made and good practice carried out under its diversity policy. This allows the Spanish Diversity Charter to measure and to regularly update the impact of the commitment of each of its signatories.
It is also possible to promote the commitment of the signatory companies by having them appear in a compendium such as a directory of diversity and equality opportunities. This directory is distributed to the partners of the Charter, government departments and companies and allows the signatory organisations to be seen as being socially responsible enterprises.
- Organising events in the regions and in Europe to promote the sharing of good practice, meetings between peers and with private and institutional partners.

Running one's network of signatories is a key role of a Diversity Charter and can take many and varied forms. It can be carried out at European, national or regional levels.

- The opportunity to participate in the European Platform of Diversity Charters events allows Diversity Charters to discuss good practices and experience, get access to tools and reciprocal transnational support.

- The opportunity to organise events in the context of regional platforms of the Diversity Charter allows Diversity Charters to support signatory companies throughout the country.

The Danish Diversity Charter is a good illustration of the way in which a Charter could be organised. The Charter has local variants in the three largest municipalities of the country: Copenhagen, Aarhus and Odense. The Danish Charter is an umbrella organisation that brings together several local charters, each contributing its expertise, experience and its local initiatives.
The French Diversity Charter also has local branches, even if it is more centralised than the Danish Charter. Every year, the French Charter brings together its network on the occasion of the Tour de France of Diversity.

- The *Tour de France of Diversity* is an event which lasts several months (September to December) and is an opportunity to bring together all the national and local diversity actors (company directors, institutional representatives and politicians) around talks, forums, prizes, film showings, workshops, etc. It is an opportunity to convince companies, especially SMEs and very small enterprises, of the positive effects of diversity policies and also to equip them with effective tools and expertise.

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**French Diversity Charter**

- Besides the European and regional platforms, the organisation of and participation in **public events** (such as *talks, thematic workshops, seminars*, etc.) are essential. They allow Charters not only to gain or maintain a certain visibility but also to continue to broadcast their message to an increasingly wider public. There are many illustrations of this within the European Charters community. Nevertheless a few of them are worth highlighting.

  - Awarding **diversity prizes** is an initiative to be found among the activities of many of the Diversity Charters in Europe.

For example, in **Luxembourg**, on **12 May 2015**, the Diversity Charter will hold the "Diversity Awards Lëtzebuerg" for the first time. The objective of this award is to highlight and reward best practices in managing diversity. Actions promoting diversity will be divided into the following four categories:

  - Recruitment, Welcome and Integration;
  - Career Management;
  - Environment and Well-being in the workplace;
  - Communication, Values of the organisation.

- "**Diversity Day**" may also be part of running a Charter network. This is a day when initiatives to promote diversity are celebrated all over the country. The Diversity Day is a **German initiative**.

On **11 June 2013**, through its network of signatories, the German Diversity Charter held a "Diversity Day" for the first time. On this day, the signatory
enterprises and institutions who so wanted were invited to speak and demonstrate how a diverse workforce had helped to strengthen their market position.

"Diversity Day" is an opportunity to remind people of the importance of promoting distinctive characteristics of individuals in the workplace. In fact, tolerance, respect and appreciation of others enables an organisation to make the best possible use of its pool of talent and potentials. Diversity is therefore the key to innovation and economic performance. To ensure that diversity in the workplace will be promoted to a greater extent, information must be made available and as many stakeholders as possible need to be convinced. The business case for diversity uses "Diversity Day" to meet this objective. It includes a wide range of events, including discussions, round tables, and exhibitions.

The Diversity Day in Germany was immediately and spectacularly successful:

- More than 360 activities were carried out on 11 June 2013 all over Germany by some 240 German companies and institutions.
- 600 activities were organised by 330 organisations for the second edition on 3 June 2014.
- The third edition of the "Diversity Day" will be held on 9 June 2015.

Several other countries have also launched a "Diversity Day" following the German initiative: Austria, Spain, Luxembourg and Ireland.

In Spain, the Fundación Diversidad has transposed, with the support of the Spanish Secretariat of State for Social Services and Equality, the German initiative to its own network of signatories. Thus, since 2013, the European Diversity Day is celebrated on 11 June all over Spain.

11 June is also the date on which the Irish Charter celebrates the Diversity Day within its network.

In Luxembourg, the Diversity Charter will hold the first "Diversity Day" on 12 May 2015. As in Germany, this day will be an opportunity to promote diversity and, once again, to prove how diversity is a major asset for our companies and businesses. To prepare this day of celebration to be the best, Luxembourg has provided interested organisations with an "Action Kit" listing optional activities (talks, information meetings, workshops, stands, exhibitions in reception areas, innovative partnerships, the launch of new products or services...) in preparation for the Diversity Day.
The Estonian and Polish Charters are currently preparing a "Diversity Day" within their respective networks. To gather information about the approach to be taken, the Estonian and Polish Charters went to Berlin to meet the representatives of the German Diversity Charter as well as national companies which organised events during the German "Diversity Day".

- The Danish Charter, for its part, put in place a tool for promoting innovative diversity: the smartphone application "Multiple everyday". This application contains 50 tips for managing diversity in practical situations in the everyday workplace (team work, etc.). Indeed, diversity is present every day in the life of a company: diversity within a team of employees, a working group, diversity within the company's partners, its customers, its service providers, etc. To best manage diversity, it is necessary to open one's eyes to the potential that it opens up but also to certain entrenched ideas that are an obstacle to the integration of minorities. This innovative tool directs users who find themselves in situations that may seem trivial but which in reality hold a lot of meaning.

These suggestions for action are of course not exhaustive. Running the network of signatories remains the prerogative of each Charter and cannot be dictated by anything other than your own creativity.

- Supporting stakeholders in their diversity measures:

Organising workshops is an essential part of support for companies and other organisations in their diversity initiatives. In Denmark, for example, workshops are organised at the local level to allow the different actors to meet their peers. Organising workshops at the local level also allows you to adapt the accompaniment proposed by the Charter to the local employment area, with its own challenges and specificities.

It is important to customise the accompaniment which is offered to the signatory companies of the Diversity Charter. A "Diversity Charter Instruction Manual" type of interface is a good example: when signing the Charter, a login and a password are assigned by the General Secretariat of the Diversity Charter to the signatory company and allow access to an online tool in the signatory's own space on the website. This tool allows you, after a questionnaire is completed, to develop a
customised action plan, adapted to the specific context of the company, to its challenges and to what it expects of a diversity policy. The online tool of the French Charter has been used 2,500 times.

Another aspect of supporting stakeholders in their diversity initiatives is to evaluate the impact of the actions they have undertaken in this regard. In fact, what is not measured does not exist. Its whole density and tangibility derive from the measured impact of the policy. If its impact is not measured, any policy, however proactive it may be, will inevitably be invisible. Moreover, implementing a policy without any visibility on its effects boils down to "going forward blindly" and haphazardly. A policy is as effective as it is relevant in terms of the needs felt. The Charters can identify the most urgent subjects by means of questionnaires and, accordingly, to adapt the tools and support available.

Thus, on 10 December 2014, in partnership with Ceps-Instead, the Luxembourg Diversity Charter published a first edition of the "Diversity and Firms Barometer". The barometer makes an initial review of the actions and policies pursued by the signatories of the Charter and thus demonstrate clearly that there is a real advantage for firms to pursue proactive management of diversity.

In France, since 2010, an annual online study ("Bilan Diversité" or "Diversity Report") has been drawn up and has identified the initiatives taken by the companies which signed the Charter. This tool reports on the results of companies' diversity initiatives, measures their effectiveness and benchmarks them, i.e. compares each one's record against the general direction taken by all the signatories. From the Charter's point of view, this enables the signatory companies to make progress in implementing their diversity policy and to target priority areas for action. An annual reporting event is organised. The only obligation for signatories of the Diversity Charter is to reply to this questionnaire (around 30 multiple-choice questions) online: if a company fails to reply for two consecutive years it will be removed from the list of Charter signatories.

5. Communication: a crucial issue

The benefits of a diversity policy in terms of economic and social performance, although widely proven, are not yet known to all. Communication is a crucial aspect of the success of a Diversity Charter. Efficient communication attracts increasing numbers of signatories, convinces and equips increasing numbers of companies and advances the Diversity movement as a whole.
An **emblematic spokesperson** gives good visibility to your charter. Whether they are the head of a large company or member of the government, a sponsor gives more legitimacy to your Charter and will be an asset for your media relations.

- **Visual identity**
  A visual identity usually consists of a **logo**, **derived decorative elements** and a **graphic charter**. Everything the Diversity Charter produces becomes immediately recognisable.

  For guidance, the logos of the established Charters can be found on their websites and on the section of the European Commission website devoted to Charters and to the Exchange Platform. These sites have been listed in the appendix.

- **Communication media**

  Each Charter chooses the types of communication channels most appropriate for its context. An **advertising brochure** would seem vital. Distributed at events or sent to signatories and partners, it is a good way of presenting the new tool which is the Diversity Charter.

  A **guide for implementing a diversity policy** or a **booklet of good practices** are also useful communication channels for both firmly establishing your position as an expert and advising company directors to assist them with their initiative.

- **Internet: an ideal means of communication**

  The Internet is a fantastic means of communication. It enables you to **reach a large number of people easily at very little cost**. Your Diversity Charter document should be available online and an electronic version sent to each signatory. A **website** is very useful for gathering information and giving visibility to your signatories and their good practices. You can also list the tools and the actors in a position to assist companies with their diversity policy. It is a useful medium for announcing events on managing diversity.

  A regular **newsletter** listing the latest news on diversity is generally highly appreciated. It enables signatories and partners to keep abreast new laws and case law and forthcoming events. This medium is also a good way to highlight one of your signatories and an example of its good practices at very little cost.

**6. Organisation**

- **Who can create a Diversity Charter?**

To create a Diversity Charter, it is imperative to meet certain specific criteria:

- **EXPERTISE** - Having a recognised expertise in managing diversity and combating discrimination.
- **NETWORK** - Being able to mobilise companies.
- **STATE SUPPORT** - Being able to obtain the support of the public authorities, in the form of a formal letter for instance. State support ensures the sustainability of your project as well as reflects its nation-wide coverage.
Support from public authorities can take several forms, including that of a formal letter stating support to your Diversity Charter or that of public subsidy.

Government ministries that have, in the past, supported Diversity Charters across the EU and that may do the same in your country include:

- Labour;
- Social Affairs/policies;
- Family;
- Employment;
- Economy;
- Interior;
- Integration, immigration, asylum, reception and support of foreign persons;
- Equal Opportunity, equality between territories.

*Note that department denominations vary from one country to another.*

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These three criteria (**expertise, network** and **state support**) are necessary to ensure the success and legitimacy of your Diversity Charter.

A Diversity Charter can be created and managed by:

- An existing structure which has appropriate expertise in diversity
- A professional association, a foundation, a department of a government administrative authority...
- A local authority department able to implement the required promotional activities or in partnership with an organisation that has this skill.
- It is possible to create a new structure entirely dedicated to promoting the Diversity Charter. In this case, it is important to choose a simple and flexible formula to limit costs.

***
CONCLUSION

1. A single document per country

An organisation cannot be prevented from creating a different Diversity Charter if it so wishes. We aim at having a national Charter in each member country of the European Union. Consequently, we will offer our support to one actor only per country. Creating a Diversity Charter recognised by all the stakeholders and supported by the public authorities is a guarantee that your Charter will be the only national Charter. Good communications will establish you as your country’s only Diversity Charter. It is also important that your Charter's document is as inclusive as possible and it is not simply focused on one aspect of Diversity so that signatories may be aware of the various issues in support all groups at risk of discrimination.

2. A balance between private and public interests

The source of your funding will have a partial influence on your Charter's actions and strategies. Keeping a strict balance between private and public interests will be an advantage and will preserve your independence.

3. The importance of the voluntary and non-restrictive nature

The essence of a charter lies in the voluntary nature of the commitment. Becoming a signatory of the Diversity Charter must not result in severe constraints and implementation of the commitments must not be subject to control by a public authority of any kind whatsoever.

4. Choose a main objective

A Diversity Charter project is ambitious and the range of possible actions may appear to be extensive. It is better to start with a main objective and devote resources to achieving it. It is up to you to decide whether you wish to concentrate on promoting diversity for the largest number of people or provide close and individual support.
In conclusion, according to the experience of the 14 Charters which have been established in the past 10 years, there are several key factors for a successful Diversity Charter that we have developed throughout this guide. They are:

- **Communicating** generously by organising events, media relations, an emblematic spokesperson;
- **Broadcasting information** regarding the management of diversity and inclusion and combating discrimination;
- **Measuring** and presenting the benefits of greater diversity through high-level events;
- **Having** a strong, growing network;
- **Collecting** and disseminating good practice;
- **Maintaining** positive pressure between companies so that they challenge each other mutually;
- **Using the basis** of the original text to ensure overall consistency between the Diversity Charters across Europe.
## ANNEXES

**Useful links**:

### Official websites of Diversity Charters in Europe

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<th>Country</th>
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**List of signatories:**

This list features the names of large international corporate groups that have already signed one or several Diversity Charter(s) in Europe. As such, some of these companies (if situated or operating on your country) are likely to be willing to sign your Diversity Charter as well.

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If you have any questions, please contact us at:

diversitycharters@csreurope.org