European Commission

Diversity Management in Central and Eastern Europe

Lesson learned and potential for growth

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Forum Odpowiedzialnego Biznesu
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

European societies are increasingly diverse and this process will continue in the future. It is a challenge and an opportunity and businesses can increase their competitiveness through well-planned diversity and inclusion management.

The European Commission has recognised the Diversity Charters' contribution to combatting discrimination and to promoting equal opportunities in the workplace and since 2010 it has been supporting the then established European platform of Diversity Charters. There are Diversity Charters in 19 European countries so far, from which 6 of them in the Central and Eastern Europe (out of 11 CEE countries). The purpose of this publication is to encourage organisations with an expertise in diversity to set up a Diversity Charter as well as to convince businesses in CEE countries to commit to diversity and inclusion by joining their National Diversity Charters as signatories.

The first chapter is an overview of issues related to diversity and inclusion discussing six grounds of discrimination (gender, age, disability, LGBTI, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin) and why they are important for business and a sustainable society in these countries. Although, CEE countries have a lot in common in terms of past, especially when taking into account gender equality, there are also significant differences between them. Thus, we provide simple yet concrete facts and tips that could help emerging Diversity Charters to launch networks and to point out objectives that are the most relevant in their countries in diversity context.

In the second chapter, we discuss briefly what diversity management is, why it is much wider concept then a process and/or a system of human resources management and why it is beneficial for business and for the society.

In the following chapter (chapter 3), we present information on Diversity Charter as a formal instrument that can help to tackle these issues.

In chapter 4 we look more closely at key challenges in CEE region. We start from brief discussion on existing law and regulations regarding equal treatment and protection against discrimination and the role of civil society in tackling these issues, then we look at key findings emerging from the research and we indicate key challenges in CEE.

In the last chapter (chapter 5), we describe examples of good practices from CEE companies (from SMEs to multinational enterprises) that have recognised the value of diversity management. All practices are voluntary and are connected with company values. Diversity management is at early stage in CEE countries and thus indicators are hardly used to measure and monitor diversity policies and practices. Code of conduct and internal policies are the most common instruments which enterprises in CEE, mainly multinational, have in place.

INTRODUCTION

"Unity in diversity" was proclaimed as the official motto of the European Union on 4th May 2000. It was chosen in a contest involving students from all of the 15 European Union states at the time. The idea is very clear: all citizens of EU are "united in working together for peace and prosperity". Different cultures, traditions and languages are Europe's positive asset. This has come as a response to the times of hope and change arising after the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 and the symbolic collapse of the Eastern Bloc. It is not surprising that the same motto had been used two years earlier as the title of a Workshop held in 1998 in Graz "East meets West: Unity in Diversity". In the following years, slightly modified, the motto emerged as "*United in Diversity",* used since 2004.

The year of 2004 was a special one for Europe – it was the year of the so-called fifth enlargement – the largest single expansion of the European Union in terms of territory, number of states, and population. On 1st May 2004, eight countries of the former Eastern Bloc – Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia (plus Malta and Cyprus) joined the EU in one accession wave. In 2007, they were followed by Bulgaria and Romania. On 1 July 2013 Croatia also became a member of EU.

Back in January 2004, the French think tank Montaigne Institute issued a report "Les oubliés de l'égalité des chances" (By the Wayside of Equal Opportunity) and started drafting a document that emerged as the first European Diversity Charter. Businesses also became part of this initiative. The Charter was launched in October 2004 in Paris and was signed by 33 companies. In its nature, a Diversity Charter is a voluntary, written commitment signed by organisations (public or private) that commit themselves to introduce equal treatment policies and invest in diversity management, as well as actively prevent discrimination and mobbing in the workplace.

Since then, the French Diversity Charter has become an inspiration for more diversity networks to be set up in other EU countries.

In 2009 diversity charter organisations from France, Germany, Belgium, Spain and Italy joined forces to report on key drivers promoting diversity and expanding the network of the Diversity Charter in their respective countries as well as to indicate elements that could be a foundation for a common European approach. The outcome of their work was delivered to the European Commission and in 2010 the so-called EU Platform of Diversity Charters was launched. Since then, many EU member states have gained a common platform for sharing knowledge and good practices and access to support from the European Commission. Through the Diversity Charter Platform all stakeholders can work together on useful tools, databases, surveys or study visits. As a result, the network of European Diversity Charters has expanded significantly, reaching to 20 national Diversity Charters up to date (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands).

All Diversity Charters were developed mostly as private initiatives of companies collaborating with the public administration and social agents to create awareness regarding the benefits of diversity and the impact of diversity inclusion to the workplace and to the society. Although these are autonomous documents tailored to suit the country specific challenges, the idea and the inspiration has always come from the first Diversity Charter in France.

There is still possibility for progress in Central and Eastern Europe, as a majority of CEE countries do not have National Diversity Charters. The Polish Diversity Charter was the first to be established in the former Central and Eastern Europe. Then there came the

Estonian in 2012, the Czech Diversity Charters in 2014 and the Hungarian in 2016, as well as the Slovak, Croatian and Slovenian in 2017[1].

1. CEE COUNTRIES – KEY FACTS AND CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

The purpose of this chapter is to provide simple yet concrete facts and tips that could help emerging Diversity Charters to launch networks and to point out objectives that are the most relevant in their countries in the context of diversity, considering their socio economic situation.

A vast majority of CEE countries (8 of them, together with Malta and Cyprus) joined the EU in 2004, and three others (Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia) followed them in 2007 and 2013. Altogether, 11 countries represent almost one fifth of ca. 500 million EU citizens and one fourth of the EU territory. Most of them are small in terms of population and territory, the four largest being: Poland, Romania, Czech Republic and Hungary; the smallest are: Estonia, Latvia and Slovenia.

The Diversity Charter is present only in 4 of these countries up to now.

All CEE countries are ranked high or very high on the Human Development Index list. However, there are significant differences between the countries with the highest score (Slovenia) and the one with the lowest– Bulgaria.[i]

Since the fall of the Berlin wall, the countries of CEE underwent serious political and economic transformations. EU membership strengthened their path of development from centrally-planned economies to free market ones; the countries became attractive to foreign investments. The entrepreneurial mindset is prevalent in these countries. It is reflected in the structure of the SMEs sectors, which differs from the EU-28 average[ii] (72% compared to 67% of all businesses in EU-28). CEE countries have statistically more micro- and medium-sized businesses, with SMEs representing the majority in Latvia (79%), Estonia (78%), Bulgaria (76%) and Lithuania (76%). Romania has the lowest share of SME in total businesses.

SMEs as such have limited staff, but as a sector they employ the majority of the workforce. Therefore, they play an important role when it comes to change of mindset and equal treatment. Equally important are business cases when considering all the benefits resulting from diversity management such as increasing innovation and getting access to new groups of clients and markets. Although the majority of people in CEE countries work for SMEs, the share of value added, generated by SMEs, is smaller than their employment share. These differences are particularly marked in Hungary, Romania, and Poland[iii], which shows that there is a huge potential to grow and perform better. Diversity management in place could support SMEs results. Unfortunately, oftentimes small businesses do not encompass diversity management in the workplace due to lack of resources and expertise in that matter.

All the benefits resulting from diversity management are relevant at the same level to big companies as well as to SMEs. A significant advantage for the small businesses is that changes are implemented in a faster pace compared to corporations. Thus, it is crucial to show the business case of diversity for senior management at SME level – it encourages collaboration, employees' loyalty, increases innovation, gives access to the single EU market as well as a new range of products and groups of customers[2].

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[1] Because the Slovak, Croatian and Slovenian Charters were only established in 2017 they are not considered in this report.

[2] IMS-Entreprendre pour la Cité, Human Resources Diversity: lever for economic performance, 2011 [Available (in French), http://www.imsentreprendre.com/content/la-diversite-desressources-humaines-levier-de-performance-economique]

As diversity management is a relatively new idea in CEE countries and we see it present mainly in big, often multinational companies, their participation in promotion and dissemination of the concept of diversity management within SMEs cannot be overestimated. Big companies should share their experience not only with their sub-contractors and suppliers but also participate in the process of promoting the business case of diversity and disseminating best practices in the country where they operate, also by supporting external initiatives focused on the issue (e.g. NGOs, Diversity Charters, etc.).

In order to understand the challenges related to diversity that each country in CEE faces, it is important to analyse the current state of play in relation to the common EU-level discrimination grounds identified by EU directives:[iv]

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

While the directives cover the basic grounds that should be protected from discriminatory practices, the list presented above is not exhaustive.

1.1. Gender

Gender equality is one of Europe's fundamental values. There are two main comprehensive documents published by the European Commission and setting priority areas, actions and targets in this field: the "2010-2015 Strategy for Equality Between Women and Men" (September 2010) and the "2016-2019 Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality"(December 2015), which reflects not only key challenges but also findings from the public consultations.[v] This demonstrates strong public support for continuing work. Unfortunately, gender equality is still a "moving target" as Vera Jourova, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality described in the "Report on Equality Between Women and Men".[vi]

Gender equality has many aspects, the key are as follows: social, economic, legal and political. The Global Gender Gap Report (GGG Report) examined four areas of inequality between men and women in over 140 economies according to how well they are leveraging their female talent pool, based on economic, educational, health-based and political indicators.[vii3] This is why this report can be considered as a comprehensive evaluation of women's situation and the biggest source of information that enables countries to compare their results with each other.

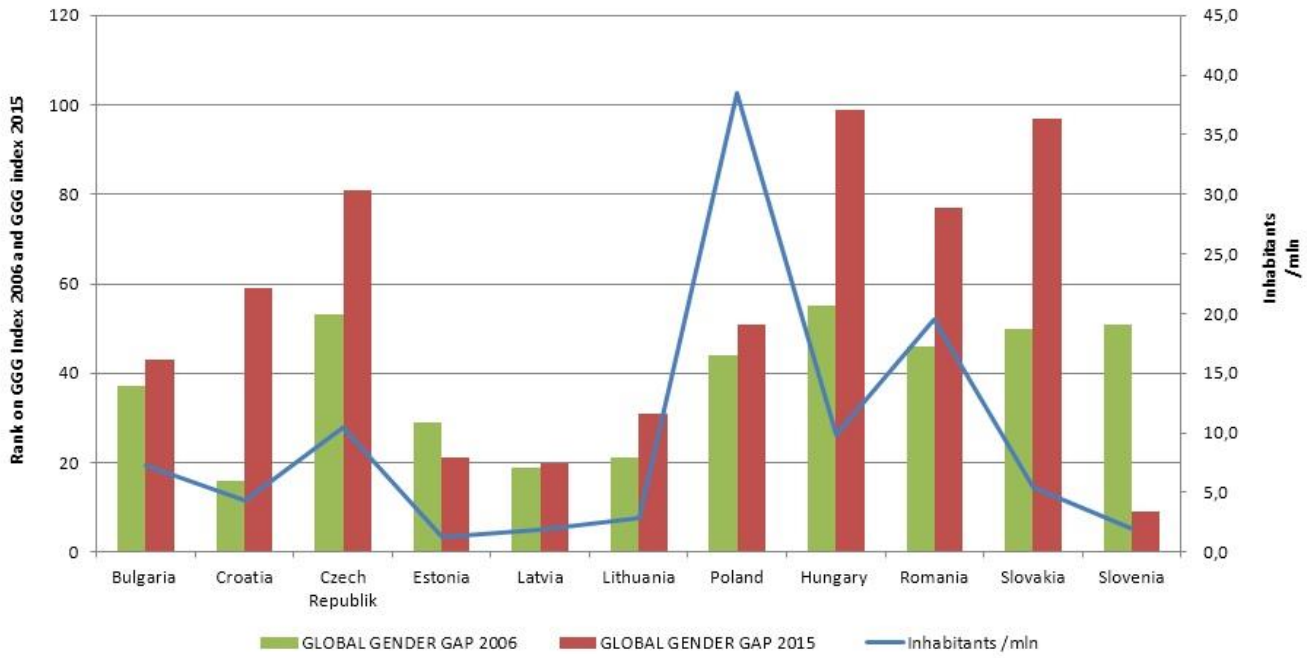
Overall, progress can be seen in health accomplishments as well as in educational attainment. All countries covered in the Report have closed more than 95% of the gap in these two areas. However, the gap between women and men on economic participation and political empowerment remains wide: only 59% of the economic outcomes gap and 23% of the political outcomes gap have been closed.[4]

The gender gap has widened between 2006 and 2015 in most of the CEE countries as all the countries are rank lowered (the higher position on GGG Index means the bigger disparity is) than they were 10 years earlier.

Figure 1: Global Gender Gap Report shows imparity between genders.

[3] https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2015/

[4] http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR2015/cover.pdf, page 7.



Sources: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR2015/cover.pdf

These findings are also confirmed by more detailed data regarding *economic participation and opportunity (*outcomes on salaries, participation levels and access to high-skilled employment) and *political empowerment (*women in parliament, in ministerial positions, years of female heads of state); the gap has widened through the years since 2006 in CEE countries. [viii]

Whereas the GGG Report examines gender gap in four domains (and 14 variables), the Gender Equality Index focuses on EU, consists of two more domains (Time and Violence) and in total comprises 26 variables. As such, the Gender Equality Index[ix] presents more detailed information. Without going into further analysis of the two documents, areas concerning economic participation, political representation, education and health are commonly included in other gender indices; however other domains (such as Time and Violence) expand the perspective and are more relevant in the EU context. The level of achievement measured by the Gender Equality Index produces a score that goes from 1 to 100 (where 100 stands for the full gender equality). In 2012, the EU-28 achieved an average score of 52.9 out of 100 points. With the exception of Slovenia (57.3 points), all other CEE countries scored below the EU-28 average, with Estonia reaching the highest score (49.8) and Romania the lowest (33.7).[x]

How does it look in details? There are common challenges and barriers towards gender equality in all European countries, starting with the under-representation of women in parliamentary and ministerial positions. However, there is a big variation between countries. In almost all CEE countries women participation in national single/lower houses of national parliaments are below the 28.5% of the EU-28 average (the lowest in Hungary - less than 10%). There are also huge differences in parity in governments – while in Slovenia there is virtual parity – 47% women - the governments in Hungary and Slovakia employ no women at all.[xi]

But the profound sources of inequities are linked with work. Namely: female employment is still 11.1pp lower than male employment (64.5% vs. 75.6%); women tend to work

less hours (and a part time job is less well remunerated than a full time job), have lower paying jobs (work segregation – employment in Education, Human Health etc.) and still do most of the unpaid work (2/3 of parental care and 3/4 of domestic work). It is combined with the EU average gender gap of 5 years in working life and a huge gap in women's access to economic decision-making. With women having accounted for only 27% of **board members** of large publicly listed companies in 2015 on average, the EU is still far from the desirable gender balance.

When taking CEE countries into consideration only 3 countries Latvia (30.4%), Hungary (22.2%) and Slovenia (21.5%) outperform or are close to the EU-28 average; the rest performs worse (from 8.1% in Estonia to 19.4% in Poland). These economic inequalities have far-reaching consequences and are reflected in pension gaps. However, when it comes to gender gap in pensions, all CEE countries are significantly below the EU-28 average (40.2%), from as low as 3.7% in Estonia and 8.3% in Slovakia to 35.3% in Romania.[xii]These data are striking, as most of the CEE countries that outperform Sweden or Finland scored much higher in most of the gender gap indices. As pension reflects past working achievements it might be an argument in favour of previously mentioned findings that women were particularly affected by growing social inequality and poverty during the process of transformation. If so, it might be expected that the pension gap will be widening in the future in CEE countries.

The gender inequality has no relation with the level and quality of women's education, which is equal to men's educational achievements. There is only a 1.3% gap in women's and men's participation in tertiary education[xiii] in the EU. However, there are significant differences between CEE countries, ranging from no gap at all in Czech Republic, to 13.4% in Estonia. What is more, participation rates in tertiary education show that men are less likely to participate in tertiary education than women in the majority of EU countries. However, there is still a strong gender-based pattern of segregation in education. Women are over-represented in the educational field of Education (77%), Health (73%) and Humanities (65%). Given these data, it is likely that they might work in less paid jobs in the future.

Gender equality is still a common challenge for all European countries. The perception of gender as a ground of discrimination is widespread and shows increasing tendency in Europe with the highest rates, fairly above the EU-28 average (which is 37%), in France, Sweden, the UK, Spain and Italy.[xiv] These data demonstrate a high level of awareness, which is a necessary factor for positive change in the future. However, there are significant differences in this respect among CEE countries – indicators in 3 of them (Hungary, Romania and Croatia) are above the EU-28 average - whereas in Bulgaria, Latvia and Poland indicators are lower than the EU-28 average and therefore gender equality is *not perceived* as a problem there.

These data confirm that the gender imparity in CEE is an issue and needs special attention in order to benefit from the potential of women. The "2016- 2019 Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality" identifies key actions to be implemented towards greater gender equality - in particular, participation in the labour market, pay and pensions, and equality in leadership positions. A lot may be done on the legislative level but the strategic engagement from business is a necessary factor. From increasing women's participation in the labour market, by addressing the challenges of work-life balance and removing obstacles to female employment, to monitoring the gender pay gap in the organisations and increasing the number of women in leadership positions. Supporting female presence in professional areas still highly dominated by men (such as STEM Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) is also very desirable action of business that might increase women's participation in certain sectors of industry. As it was mentioned above, gender inequality has many aspects, thus special awareness initiatives and mentoring programmes are needed as much as timelines and indicators.

CEE countries have a lot in common in terms of the past but they also share future challenges.

Businesses, NGOs, and governments need to join forces to disseminate good practices as well as to promote the subject of gender equality in the public dispute. However, businesses have a crucial role to play in fostering that tendency and raising awareness. Gender equality is vital for the sake of innovation and effectiveness of the business and for the sake of society as a whole.

1.1. Age

The European society is ageing. It is a common challenge faced by all EU countries and according to Eurostat the ageing process will continue in the decades to come. This fact combined with the low fertility rate (fertility rate at or below 1.3, which has rapidly spread in Europe during the 1990s) has become a genuine socioeconomic issue.

On 1 January 2014 young people (0 to 14 years old) made up 15.6 % in the EU-28, older persons (aged 65 or over) had a 18.5 % share, while persons of working age (15 to 64 years old) accounted for 65.8 % of the EU-28 population and as such, there were around four persons of working age for every person aged 65 or over.[xv5]

During the period from 2014 to 2080 the share of the population of working age is expected to decline, while the number of older persons will increase: those aged 65 years or over will account for 28.7 % of the EU-28's population by 2080, compared with 18.5 % in 2014. It is also interesting to look at the age dependency ratio, which divides the population in two parts - age population ratio (those who are not in the labour force, or also called dependent) and the production population (those who are part of the national workforce).

This dependency is used to measure the pressure on productive population - how many 'productive' people need to work to ensure income to the 'dependent' part of the population. In 2014 it was 51.8 % in the EU-28 total age dependency ratio. It is projected to rise from 51.8 % in 2014 to 77.9 % by 2080, indicating that there are currently two working persons for every dependent person.

The growth in the relative share of older people and low fertility will severely impact CEE countries.[6] The population of post-communist countries such as Latvia, Romania, Croatia and Lithuania is expected to decrease by over 15%. In other CEE countries a slightly lower decrease of population is expected, e.g. by around 11% in Poland (UN 2013). The societies such as those of Serbs, Poles or Slovaks, who are currently one of the youngest in Europe, will become one of the oldest by 2050.[7]

As European populations age, there will be a growing need for companies to manage the diverse range of generations they employ and the new demands of the workforce. The different generations, from baby boomers (the demographic group born approximately between the years 1946 and 1964) to millennials (the demographic group born between 1980 and 2000), work differently and have different needs and requirements. The youngest workers are more inclined to demand and expect flexible working arrangements

[5] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing
[6] http://www.euro.centre.org/data/1314615416_96050.pdf

[7] http://www.euro.centre.org/data/1314615416_96050.pdf

and diversity of working styles and communication, wanting to get to the top as soon as possible.[8]

Consequently, they need motivation that is completely different from those of the generations that came before them. How to engage all age groups (with 50 years gap/4 generations) and adapt the work processes as well as the new patterns of work is the issue that business must face, especially in CEE countries where age is perceived as a basis of discrimination more often than in the EU-28 average. In Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania respondents are particularly likely to say that discrimination against people aged over 55 is widespread (58%, 58%, 57%, 56% respectively) while in Poland this indicator is the lowest in CEE countries – 31%.[9]

Age management can create numerous opportunities for an organisation but requires actions aimed at delaying the exit from the labour market as well as attracting and attaining a young work force; matching the different needs of a variety of generations; extension of care programmes for those over 80 years old (therefore organisational support for those combining work with care of their parents will be needed).

1.2. Disability

In 2015[10] 12% of European citizens classified themselves as a minority and only 3% of them as being a part of a minority in terms of disability. In the perception of the respondents, discrimination on the basis of disability continues to be one of the most widespread forms of discrimination in the EU (50%). However, 70% of those who have disabilities themselves say that disability discrimination is widespread compared with 50% of overall respondents.

People with disabilities are one of the most excluded groups from our society even though 87% of all EU-28 respondents say they would be comfortable or indifferent in relation to a person with disabilities.

Overall, in CEE countries disability as grounds of discrimination is perceived below the EU-28 average, although this varies between countries. Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary have the highest data – 56%, 54 and 54% respectively while in Poland it is the lowest in all the EU-28 with 29%.[xvi]

Meanwhile, perceived discrimination in recruitment (46% in EU-28) tends to be the most common among respondents in Czech Republic, Slovenia and Lithuania (57%, 58%, 52% respectively), while it is relatively low in Croatia (32%) and Poland (34%).

If we compare the data on employed people with disabilities versus employed people without disabilities it is a ratio of 47.3% versus 67.3%.[xvii]

Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria are also countries where the gap between disabled people and the total population in employment (people with and without work limitations) reached beyond 40%. The smallest gap between employed people with and without work limitations can be seen in the job markets of the Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia), as well as in Slovenia and Croatia. The highest disproportion and consequently discrimination was observed in Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary.

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[8] https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/managing-tomorrows-people/future-of-work/assets/reshaping-the-workplace.pdf

[9] Source: Discrimination in the EU in 2015.

Overall, the job market in CEE is much more difficult for people with disabilities than the average EU-28 job market. This situation is reflected by a larger gap in terms of employed people with disabilities versus people without disability.[xviii] Additionally, health condition or disability is named in more than one third of the cases as a reason for leaving the job market, and is by far the most frequent cause of terminating a professional activity.

Attention to the needs of disabled people may result not only in higher satisfaction and loyalty of employees but also in access to new products and a new group of customers. As people with disabilities are still largely absent at the workplace in Central and Eastern Europe, businesses and NGOs (especially those focused on people with disabilities) should work together to create the best solutions to increase employment for disabled people and ensure equal treatment.

1.3. LGBTI

LGBTI stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Intersex.[11] The LGBTI group is likely to suffer discrimination - 58% of the respondents in EU-28 indicated sexual orientation and 56% gender identity as the main reasons for discrimination, both showing substantial increase since 2012 (+12% and +11% respectively).

On the other hand, a survey suggests that the majority of respondents in Europe express tolerant or supportive views with 71% agreeing that gay, lesbian and bisexual people should have the same rights as heterosexual people. What is more, three-quarters of respondents answer that they would be at ease working with a gay, lesbian or bisexual person. However, the figures for the EU as a whole conceal wide variations at the national level – from 96%-90% in Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark and Luxembourg (90%) to less than 50% in the following countries: Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Lithuania. The same and even bigger variations by country (from as high as 90% to as low as 34%) are in responses to the question regarding possibility of working with a transgender or transsexual person. What is meaningful, a *perceived* discrimination in recruitment on the grounds of gender identity[12] or sexual orientation tends to be the most common among respondents in Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark, Spain, while it is relatively low in Czech Republic, Latvia, Hungary and Poland. Again, as it was with gender inequality, the situation of LGBTI people is not perceived as a challenge in CEE countries.

There are interesting data on the readiness of LGBTI people to disclose personal information. We need to bear in mind that data regarding sexual orientation or gender identity is personal and sensitive and disclosure depends on the employee's preferences. Nevertheless, overall, there is support for providing sensitive personal information on an anonymous basis, and among other on their sexual orientation - 63% respondents in EU-28 declare their openness in this respect, the most likely 82%-78% are people from: Malta, Denmark, the United Kingdom and Sweden. By contrast, about 50% of respondents living in Hungary, Slovenia and Poland prefer not to share such information and this unwillingness to disclose sensitive information has been ongoing since 2006 not only in the three countries mentioned above but also in Czech Republic and Bulgaria.

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[11] Survey data explorer - LGBT Survey 2012, http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-and-maps/survey-data-explorer-lgbt-survey-2012.

[12] Respondents were asked the question, "*In (our country) when the company wants to hire someone and has the choice between two candidates with equal skill and qualifications, which of the following criteria, in your opinion, put candidate at a disadvantage (multiple answers possible e.g. candidate's age, ethnic origin, a disability, gender identity, expression of religion belief, sexual orientation, gender etc.?" – QC3* SPECIAL EUROBAROMETER 437, Discrimination in the EU in 2015.

Data from the EU LGBTI survey[13] can complement the above findings. Six countries from CEE**,** Lithuania, Latvia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Hungary, are where LBGTI respondents experienced discrimination most often. In all of these countries, the figures are higher than both EU-CEE and EU-28 average while the least likely to suffer discrimination are LGBTI people living in Czech Republic, Slovenia and Poland. Meanwhile, discrimination on grounds of being LGBTI at work is the most frequently reported in Lithuania, Latvia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Estonia, Poland and Romania (from 27% to 21%). The share is relatively high (compared to the 21% average for all EU-CEE states), although the reality might be even more complicated due to the fact that sexual orientation is one of so called secondary dimensions of diversity (contrary to primary dimensions of diversity such as sex, race, age, ethnic origin or disability that are visible). Taking that into account, concealment of sexual identity might be sometimes encouraged by the organisational policy/management attitude that sexual preferences are out of the question at workplace. The disclosure is an important issue when dealing with LGBTI inclusion and creating a supportive workplace. It will result not only in employees' well-being (living in line with personal sexual orientation and gender identification is one of the basic human rights), it also prevents penalties and can lead to better business performance.

1.4. Religion or belief

European society is becoming more diverse. In 2015 over 70% of the respondents declared having friends or acquaintances of a different religion or belief.[14] In this respect CEE countries are quite homogenous. Christianity is the most widespread religion, varying from close to 100% in Romania, around 90% in Poland and Croatia and above 80% in Lithuania, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary to below 40% in Estonia and 23% in Czech Republic where the majority of people declared to be non-religious.[xix] The second most widespread religion in the region is Islam, especially in the Balkan countries – from 13% in Bulgaria to 4% in Slovenia and 1% in Croatia.

Despite religious diversity, half of Europeans continue to admit that religion or beliefs are still core grounds for discrimination.[xx]

However, CEE countries are different from EU-28 as only 25% of the people in CEE share this opinion. Almost the same difference (33% in EU-28 as compared to 17% in CEE) perceives religious beliefs as a disadvantage in recruiting. This may be related to the religious composition of the CEE societies with one single dominant religion, which was mentioned above. Such assumptions are in line with findings from data regarding openness to work with people from a different religion. Generally, most Europeans are very open to such experiences - between 70% and 90% respectively for the following groups: atheists (87%), Jews (84%), Buddhists (81%), and Muslims (71%). The highest level of acceptance (at least 83% for each group) of people from different religious groups as co-workers can be seen in Sweden, France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Ireland, Denmark and Luxembourg. When it comes to CEE countries, people are quite open to work with colleagues of different religious group. Nevertheless, their openness differs from group to group (with more openness towards atheists and less openness towards Jews, Buddhists and, Muslims) and lower than the average for EU-28.

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[13] The EU LGBT survey was conducted online in the 28 European Union (EU) Member States (including Croatia) between April and July 2012. This survey has been the largest of its kind to date and has resulted in the most wide-ranging and comprehensive picture available of the lived experience of LGBTI persons residing in the EU. The data are not representative of all LGBTI persons living in the 28 countries covered by the survey but reflect the collective experiences of the very large number of individuals who completed the questionnaire.

[14] Eurobarometer, Discrimination in the EU in 2015, p.104.

Meanwhile, one in eight respondents (13%) in EU-28 admitted they would not feel comfortable working with a Muslim person and the lowest level of openness in this respect is in Czech Republic (27%) and Slovakia (37%). Overall, Muslims emerge as the religious minority affected by the highest exclusion rate.

According to the study "Discrimination against Religious Minorities in Numbers", hostility against members of religious minorities is far more frequent in Europe than elsewhere around the world.[15] The Social Hostilities Index (SHI) shows that harassment against Jews in Europe is three times more frequent than in the rest of the world (76% Europe vs 25% Rest of the World) and harassment against Muslims is twice as frequent (71% Europe vs. 34% Rest of the World).

1.5. Racial or ethnic origin

According to studies "peoples, minorities, indigenous peoples, tribal groups and nations – these groups are closely connected, overlapping or even synonymous. Each group could be defined in its own terms."[16] However defined, it is referring to a group numerically inferior to the rest of the population and differing from those of the rest of the population in terms of ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics. There are significant differences between European countries in terms of diversity based on ethnic/racial origin and religion. In CEE countries such minorities represent some share of the society, but are important groups to further development of diversity management.

Religious minorities and ethnic minorities together are the biggest minority group in EU-28[17] - 12% of European citizens classify themselves as a minority. Moreover unequal treatment on multiple grounds like ethnic origin and religion (e.g. some of the Roma in Bulgaria are protestants or Muslim) continues to be considered as the most widespread form of discrimination in the EU (64%), and discrimination on the basis of religion and belief, also reported as one of the biggest, which has increased from 39% in 2012 up to 50% in 2015. Moreover, respondents who say they belong to an ethnic minority (30%) are those most likely to say they have experienced discrimination.

Social diversity of such countries as: Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark, Spain, France, UK, Luxemburg, Ireland or Portugal is reflected in their high acceptance for the people from a different origin – for example 80% up to 90% of the respondents state that they feel comfortable working with a black or an Asian person. Conversely, respondents are least likely to feel comfortable working with a black person in Slovakia (48%), Czech Republic (53%) and Bulgaria (58%). The data is similar for openness to work with people from an Asian background - Slovakia (49%), Czech Republic (51%) and Hungary (66%). The data from the CEE countries depicts that the level of acceptance for all groups of minorities is lower than average for EU-28.

The size of the Roma population in Europe is between 10 and 12 million, and they form a group particularly threatened by social marginalisation and discrimination. The biggest Roma minorities in the EU are in the CEE countries (in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, and Slovenia). Respondents in Sweden, Spain, UK, Luxemburg, the Netherlands and Ireland are also most likely to say they would be at ease working with a Roma person (87% - 78%). Again, the lowest acceptance is seen in Czech Republic (29%), Slovakia (41%) and Bulgaria (43%) as well as in Italy (37%).

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[15] Pew Research Center, *Discrimination against Religious Minorities in Numbers,* February 2015, https://foref-europe.org/2015/03/03/europe-religious-discrimination-in-numbers/

[16] U. Barten, *What's In a Name? Peoples, Minorities, Indigenous Peoples, Tribal Groups and Nations* [in:] *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe,* Vol 14, No 1, 2015, 1-25, ECMI, p.2.

[17] Eurobarometer, Discrimination in the EU in 2015.

In 2016 FRA conducted the survey "Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey Roma – Selected Findings"[18] in 9 EU states. It is a successive survey; the previous one took place in 2011.[19] The findings summarised in the report are based on 7,947 individual interviews with Roma respondents in Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain (they represent about 80 % of Roma living in the EU).

The data collected confirms that unemployment is common among Roma people (one in three respondents), while the majority (80%) live below the poverty threshold. Unemployed Roma represent the largest group of Roma people in nearly all countries covered by the survey, except for Greece, Hungary, Portugal and Romania. Average unemployment among the Roma reaches 34%.

On the other hand, paid work[20] is declared by only 8% of the Roma in Croatia, 16% in Spain, 20% in Slovakia and 23% in Bulgaria. The data clearly shows the exclusion of this minority from the job market. On average only 25% of Roma people are employed (43% in Greece). Roma people generally remain outside of the job market. In some countries, such as Romania, 40% of Roma people declared domestic work. "According to EU-MIDIS II survey findings, 28 % of all Roma women surveyed indicate 'domestic work' as their main activity, compared with 6 % of all Roma men. This ratio is high for Roma women when compared with women of the general population, which could be explained in terms of expectations of traditional gender roles."[21]

The situation of Roma people in every country could look different, but they are still one of the most excluded groups of citizens.[xxi] One of the reasons could be a low level of awareness of support organisations, equality bodies, laws and campaigns addressing discrimination among Roma people. Therefore the indicator of reported or filed complaints about incidents of discrimination is low. [xxii] "On average, only 12 % of the respondents who felt discriminated against because of their Roma background at least once in the preceding 12 months reported the last incident to an authority or filed a complaint"[22]. Even if Roma people are discriminated against, they fail to report it.

The 2016 Report of the European Commission, assessing the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies and the Council recommendation on Effective Roma Integration Measures in the Member States highlight the need to closely monitor the impact of employment measures (such as activation or public works) on Roma and to promote innovative measures, incentives for employers and better outreach to the private sector.[23] The role of the labour inspection is crucial to fight discriminatory practices in (access to) the labour market and should be reinforced.

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[18] FRA, EU-MIDIS II 2016, Roma, "Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey Roma – Selected Findings", November 2016, http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2016-eu-minorities-survey-roma-selected-findings_en.pdf

[19] Survey "The Situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States – Survey Results at a Glance" covered 11 states: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Spain, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary and Italy, more: "The Situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States – Survey Results at a Glance", May 2012, http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/situation-roma-11-eu-member-states-survey-results-glance

[20] 'Paid work' refers to persons who declared their main activity as being 'employed' or 'self-employed' at the time of the survey.

[21] FRA, EU-MIDIS II 2016, Roma, ibidem, p. 17.

[22] FRA, EU-MIDIS II 2016, Roma, ibidem, p. 40.

[23] http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma-report-2016_en.pdf

It is reported in the last Eurobarometer "Discrimination in EU 2015"[24] that people with a diverse social circle are more at ease with the idea of working with different ethnic groups.

It could be ventured that the more homogeneous a society, the lower the perception of discrimination. The point is that the majority of society does not realise the challenges a minority may face. And reversely – the more diverse a society, the greater the openness and the bigger sensitivity toward their situation. This also refers to the workplace; thus special attention from employers is needed to be in line with the EU law in this respect, especially in those companies that are not very diverse yet. In the time of globalisation as well as the present migration flows, diversity management is one of the biggest opportunities for companies to devise new solutions and approaches that respond to the new reality.

[24] http://www.equineteurope.org/IMG/pdf/ebs_437_en.pdf, p. 23.

2. DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

European societies are increasingly diverse and this process will continue in the future. It is a challenge and an opportunity for Europe. Especially, in the current economic and demographic context of an ageing society, Europe can increase its competitiveness through well-planned integration.

To take full advantages of diversity management joint actions of public and private partnerships at national level are required. Activities by businesses supported by Equality Bodies, NGOs and trade unions can significantly speed up the process of integrating diversity at the workplace and in society.

2.1. Definition and benefits

There are many research studies in the European Union which speak about the benefits for businesses from diversity management. The presence of a diversified workforce is not enough and an effective diversity management in place is required to be truly beneficial. It can be defined as a long term process and there is no one-size-fits-all. Several aspects of establishing diversity management processes in place depend on the size, corporate culture and the context in which an organisation operates. An additional very important factor is the business case.

Prevention of discrimination and mobbing is a starting point for diversity management. The policies on equal treatment are a must for employers (e.g. particular activities connected with preventing potential discriminatory situations). The subsequent stages of introducing diversity management are voluntary and go beyond the EU and Member States legislation (Labour Code of Conduct, Equality Act etc.). They are connected with positive actions, anti-discriminatory and anti-mobbing education, as well as with the system of internal and external communication to promote diversity. There are two main areas upon which companies can focus their efforts for managing diversity:

- (1) processes on selected discrimination grounds e.g. gender, age, disability, beliefs, ethnic origin etc. and create activities accordingly;
- (2) not on selected discrimination grounds and explore a wide range of activities; however this should be done in consideration with the values of the company, the existing equality practices and anti-discrimination policies. Examples of such activities can be: internal and external communication focused on diversity at the workplace and in society (e.g. advertisement, making statements against discrimination, supporting NGO's campaigns, cooperating with an equality body, etc.); implementing and monitoring equal pay policy; policies supporting work-life balance; anti-discriminatory and anti-mobbing monitoring etc.).

In each case, commitment at the top of the organisation is required for the successful implementation of diversity management and inclusion. However, many initiatives for diversity campaigns or networks come from the employees; top management needs to show that they believe in and support diversity.

In diversity management, the goal is to create a work environment in which every employee feels valuable and respected, and is able to serve the company through the use of his or her unique abilities. Diversity management is based on the close links between the workforce, the company culture and the degree to which the company's mission has already been realised.

Why should diversity management be an integral part of the governance of the contemporary organisation?

- Practical reasons - it is a useful tool for businesses to tackle modern challenges such as: ageing society, globalisation, changing needs of employees and their work.
- Economic reasons – better opportunities to increase business competitiveness and innovation on the market and access to new groups of clients and markets.
- Ethical reasons – diversity management is an inseparable part of the idea of Corporate Social Responsibility aimed at sustainable growth of the company and society. CSR is the responsibility of enterprises for their impact on society.

2.2. Benefits for the organisations

- Necessity in the face of ageing society and social and cultural changes in the workplace - better coexistence and the co-working experience of a younger and older workforce, people of different ethnic backgrounds, religion or sexual orientation, different expectations regarding work patterns (e.g. flexicurity, job sharing), location (e.g. home, office, co-working).
- Access to a wider talent base and retention of talent, especially from the younger generations.
- Fostering innovation and loyalty of employees: organisations can use the potential of all employees, which contributes to the success of the organisation in terms of employees' loyalty, motivation, and reduced absenteeism.
- Access to new groups of customers through the better understanding of consumer preferences and needs.
- Better global management capacity.
- Being in line and above EU law - the EU can act on behalf of EU citizens to prevent them from being discriminated against on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation and gender.
- Improving a brand's reputation.
- Strengthening organisational culture and values.

It is clear that diversity management in the workplace is a much wider concept than a process and/or system of human resources management. On the mature level it refers to all areas and processes within the organisation and thus influences the business/organisation's surroundings, and society as a whole. That is why diversity management is not only a matter of a company's values and recruitment strategies but it also brings a full range of benefits both to the society and to the organisation.

Most of the companies (multinationals or SMEs) in CEE countries still do not take full advantages that diversity can offer. However, the good practices gathered from all CEE countries proved not only that there is an increasing number of companies showing interest in adopting diversity management, but also the importance of diversity management in the context of CSR and responsible management of human resources.

The idea of corporate social responsibility as a topic and management practice has been more present in CEE countries than diversity management. Therefore, it is considered that there is already a good foundation among businesses for diversity management to go forward.

Companies need to embrace diversity management not only due to ethical and legal reasons, but also in response to the demands of today's competitive markets. The good practices gathered from CEE countries show a variety of diversity management approaches and resulting benefits.

Being part of a Diversity Charter network as a signatory could make this process smoother and more effective.

3. DIVERSITY CHARTER IN EUROPE

3.1. What is the EU Platform of Diversity Charters? How can the Platform be of help?

The EU has recognised the Diversity Charters' contribution to combatting discrimination and 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". What is more, Diversity Charters are directly referenced in the "2016-2020 Strategic engagement for gender equality" by the European Commission in one out of five priority areas "Reducing the gender gap pay, earnings and pension gap, thus fighting poverty among women". It is recognised as one of the valuable actions towards reaching that goal.

The benefits of this platform are threefold:

First of all, it truly facilitates exchanges of experience and good practice in Europe, between the existing Charters (17 so far) so that the emergence of a true "European Diversity Charter Community" is encouraged. The strong commitment and expertise are promoted and stimulated, which offers the representatives of the various Charters the possibility to organise direct meetings, cooperate and exchange experiences and knowledge. Both internally (for the signatories of National charters) and externally (for all interested in the question of diversity in the workplace and in a society), through effective communication strategies (websites, newsletters, blog, social media, etc.) and by publishing common reports, analyses, surveys, etc. (e.g. "Guide for SMEs on implementing a diversity policy in the workplace" and "The business case for diversity in the workplace: sexual orientation and gender identity"[25]).

Secondly, this European project relates to the promotion of the "business case" for diversity, 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. An Annual Forum of Diversity Charters is the flagship activity of the diversity "business case" inspiring attendees by providing access to the valuable sources of information and to the international network of people. Each year, in 2016 for the seventh consecutive year, the Forum has brought together about 200 actors of European diversity.

Thirdly, the aim of the European Platform of Diversity Charters is to encourage the emergence of new Charters throughout Europe, with the final objective to establish National Diversity Charter in each of the 28 Member States of the EU. For this purpose,

[25] http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/report_companies_final_en.pdf

the European project intends to provide support - particularly by means of a training session and access to the financial grants for organisations willing to launch and manage a Diversity Charter in their countries.

3.2. Why is a national Diversity Charter needed in each EU member state?

The main goal of a Diversity Charter is to promote diversity management as a process that can be perceived as an example of aligned interests and objectives of businesses, government and society.

Thus, the Diversity Charter can be a powerful network which offers tools and know-how on how to enhance diversity management at the workplace.

Benefits for businesses that join a national Diversity Charter:

- Making a commitment which implies a revision of the existing policies/procedures as regards diversity within the organisation.
- Raising employee awareness on diversity which results in better conflict solving, improving employee satisfaction, engagement and retention, providing better client service and fostering innovation.
- Joining the group of the leading organisations in the field of diversity management, networking with organisations sharing common goals.
- Getting access to the valuable knowledge and experience of foreign organisations through the European network of Charters. Managing the workplace in the view of diversity – the indicators developed within the Diversity Charter allow monitoring of the diversity management at the operational level, auditing and monitoring of activities.
- Supporting employees' well-being, thus increasing their satisfaction and loyalty. Gaining possibilities to benefit from access to new groups of employees and clients and as a result benefit from higher innovation and better economic results.
- Building or strengthening the reputation of the organisation which is responsible, inclusive and committed to equal treatment.

Consequently, creating a Diversity Charter recognised by all the stakeholders and supported by the public authorities is a guarantee that this particular organisation will be the national Charter co-ordinator and a member of Diversity Charter Platform.

All Diversity Charters' signatories benefit from the common knowledge and the pool of good practices from all countries that are on board.

3.3. EU Platform of Diversity Charters Websites

Official websites of Diversity Charters in Europe	
Austria	https://www.wko.at/Content.Node/Charta-der-Vielfalt/Startseite---Charta-der-Vielfalt.html
Belgium	http://www.diversite.irisnet.be/-Pret-pour-plus-de-diversite-dans-.html
Czech Republic	http://www.diverzita.cz/diversity-charter-.html (English) http://www.diverzita.cz/
Croatia	www.raznolikost.hr
Denmark	http://www.mangfoldighedscharter.dk/ (English) http://www.mangfoldighedscharter.dk/
Estonia	http://www.erinevusrikastab.ee/en/ (English) http://www.erinevusrikastab.ee/
Finland	http://www.fibsry.fi/fi/english/home (English) http://www.fibsry.fi/fi/monimuotoisuusverkosto
France	http://www.diversity-charter.com/index.php (English) http://www.charte-diversite.com/
Germany	http://www.charta-der-vielfalt.de/en/diversity-charter.html (English) http://www.charta-der-vielfalt.de/startseite.html
Hungary	http://sokszinusegikarta.hu/sokszinusegi-karta/
Ireland	Website in progress
Italy	http://www.cartapariopportunita.it/contenuti/home.aspx
Luxembourg	http://www.chartediversite.lu/en (English) http://www.chartediversite.lu/
Poland	http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/karta.roznorodnosci
Portugal	www.cartadiversidade.pt
Slovakia	http://www.chartadiverzity.sk/
Spain	http://www.fundaciondiversidad.org/
Sweden	http://www.diversitycharter.se/
The Netherlands	http://diversiteitinbedrijf.nl/

4. KEY CHALLENGES IN CEE REGION

4.1. Laws and regulations

Equal treatment and protection against discrimination are fundamental human rights and are included in many international regulations, including The Universal Declaration of Human Rights; The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

CEE countries do not have legislations that *directly* mention diversity management. However, all of them have equal treatment acts, several of them mentioned in the National Constitutions (for example: Romanian (art. 4), Slovenian, Czech (Art. 3 of the Czech Charter of Fundamental Rights and Basic Freedoms), Polish (Journal of Law No 78, Item 483), Latvian (Article 91 of the Satversme), Lithuanian, Slovak (The principle of equality and the prohibition of discrimination are laid down in Article 12, Act No. 460/1992), Croatian and Slovenian).

In each CEE country there are regulations regarding, for instance, equal treatment and antidiscrimination law, gender, disabilities, minorities, even consumer protection act. Some of them (Croatia, Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia) are leading examples of implementing special programmes focused on fostering diversity.

However, when it comes to UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights, the implementation on national level in the CEE Region is still a challenge. "*Not all CEE countries have adopted national action plans on the UN Guiding Principles and quota regulations for more women in management positions*. *Most of the CEE countries (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary) have yet to adopt quota regulations for more women in management positions and they are not likely to adopt such laws in the near future. Some EU countries in the CEE (Romania, Bulgaria) do not have regulatory quotas yet, but a fair chance for their implementation in the future. Other countries (Poland, Slovenia and Croatia) have quota requirements in political institutions (quotas in businesses not being the primary scope*)."[26]

The Employment Equality Directive protects people at the workplace against discrimination on gender, disability, sexual orientation, ethnical origin, religion and belief, etc. The anti-discrimination act, very often resulting from the implementation of anti-discrimination EU directives, is usually the only piece of legislation that incorporates legal definitions of basic concepts such as direct and indirect discrimination, sexual harassment and others.

4.2. The role of civil society

The role of civil societies in anti-discrimination and equal treatment in CEE countries is well described in the report of the Polish Society of Antidiscrimination Law: "*For the last two decades Central and Eastern European countries have been going through dramatic social and political changes**. Emancipation movements of different social groups (LGBTI, disabled, ethnic and national minorities, women, and elderly people) became a visible factor which made the voice of those groups heard. The social pressure generated by newly established equality non-governmental organisations (NGOs) provoked political hostility and aggression. Policy makers have** been trying to single out particular social groups and to grant them more legal*

[26] Diversity in Central and Eastern Europe – The decisive next growth factor? Study presentation, Roland Berger Strategy Consultants and Erste Group, Vienna 2013.

protection. Those actions were met with a strong opposition from civil societies in most countries of the CEE region and resulted in establishing several informal coalitions of different equality NGOs that decided to enhance and unite their voice in the name of equal rights, non-discrimination and equal opportunities."[27]

The presence of anti-discrimination coalitions, forums and associations is common in most of the CEE countries (e.g. ACCEPT in Romania, The Coalition for Anti-discrimination Education in Poland, The Polish Coalition for Equal Opportunities, The Lithuanian Disability Forum, The National Equality and Diversity Forum in Lithuania).

Many of the organisations are focused on gender equality (like The Professional Women's Network, The Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Centre, The Polish Federation for Women and Family Planning or Centre MARTA in Latvia). The profound example of the women's movement is the Polish Congress of Women, which was established in June 2009.

CEE countries need more umbrella NGOs/Civil Society Organisations, watchdogs and especially organisations with a focus on LGBTI and religious minority groups.

Although civil society activities focused on diversity and inclusion vary from country to country, they have a lot in common. Most of them are focused on people with disabilities; gender equality; and more rarely minorities or LGBTI. The profound changes were enabled through social media that encouraged citizens to be more active in anti-discrimination activities. Nevertheless, more efforts are needed to achieve equality and ensure an impact.

4.3. Diversity management in CEE region in research28

A study by Roland Berger Strategy Consultants and Erste Group looks at how diversity in management boards affects a company's financial performance.[29]

The key conclusion is that CEE managers are aware of the diversity and inclusion (D&I) issue, but have not yet approached it systematically.

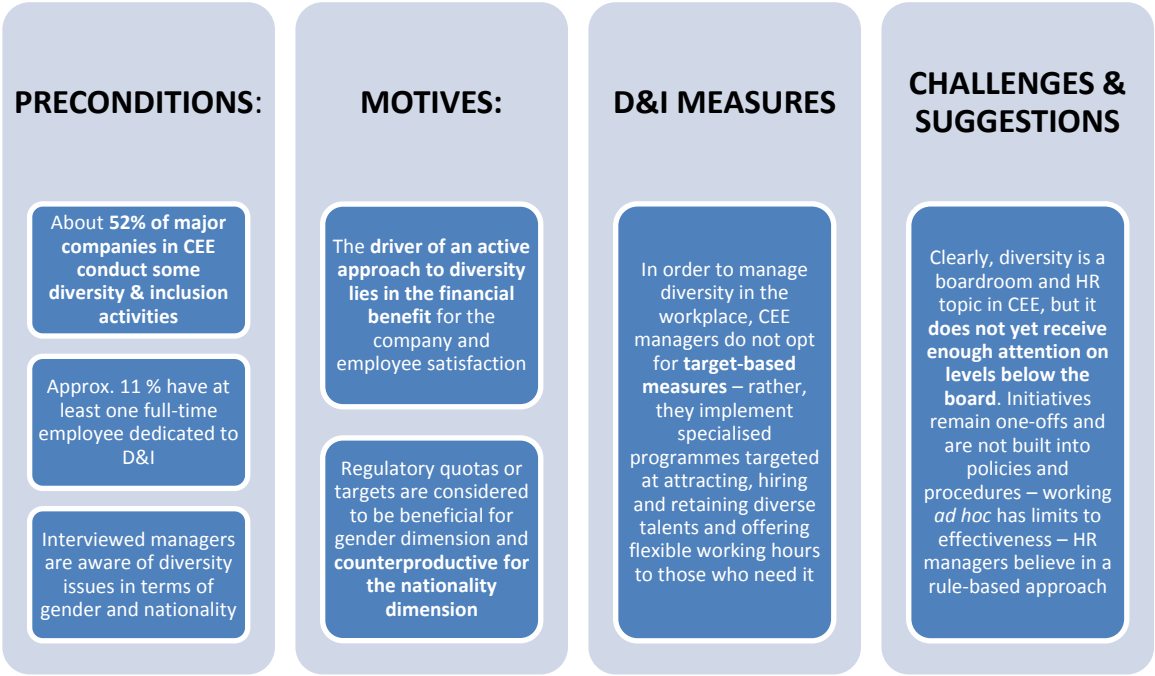
- Many CEE boardrooms are international and senior in age, but include female members only in a third of cases:
    - 85% of board members are aged 50 and above (on average).
    - 31% of surveyed companies have female board members –the majority of female board members are concentrated in the financial services sector (38%).
    - Foreign board members are present in more than half of the CEE companies.

Overview of key findings from above mentioned survey

[27]Report on the working meeting of equality coalitions and organisations, the Polish Society of Antidiscrimination Law (coordinator of Polish Coalition for Equal Opportunities) with support of The Anti-discrimination Education Association (EA) (coordinator of The Coalition for Anti-discrimination Education), Warsaw, 16 November 2013.

[28] Diversity in Central and Eastern Europe – The decisive next growth factor? Study presentation, Roland Berger Strategy Consultants and Erste Group, Vienna 2013.

[29] The study (2013) is based on a survey conducted among 500 companies from various industries and countries in CEE (68 companies, for which all key data was available, were examined in more detail).



1. Research "Diversity in Central and Eastern Europe – The decisive next growth factor?" shows that **diversity and inclusion could have a measurable positive impact. Combining different dimensions of diversity is key to achieving a financial impact – the most** value-adding combination is the inclusion of both female and international board members. **CEE businesses are open towards diversity management (and employees are the key drivers** behind D&I initiatives) but:
2. **Companies are mainly focused on gender issues** – nationality comes second, **whereas age** receives little attention[30], what seems quite a reckless attitude considering challenges connected with the ageing society.
3. Companies are not **fully aware of the potential of international** or **multicultural talents** and **potential financial benefits**.
4. Only few of the companies **have started measuring the financial effects.**

Source: Diversity in Central and Eastern Europe – The decisive next growth factor? Study presentation, Roland Berger Strategy Consultants and Erste Group, Vienna 2013.

A more detailed picture can be taken from the last *Overview of Diversity Management implementation and impact amongst Diversity Charter signatories in the European Union* as well as from the findings from Eurobarometer on Discrimination 2015. First of all, many Roland Berger's findings are not exceptional for CEE countries. Starting with the first and the most obvious - *combining different dimensions of diversity is key to achieving a financial impact* - which of course applies to any country/organisation and referring also to few others: the values for gender as the top priority (and for sexual orientation and gender identity as the lowest) in CEE is not anything unique or exceptional; on the contrary - these findings are in line with other diversity studies across Europe and even worldwide. Nevertheless, what was already mentioned in the

[30] Diversity in Central and Eastern Europe – The decisive next growth factor? Study presentation, Roland Berger Strategy Consultants and Erste Group, Vienna 2013.

previous chapter, gender equality is a real challenge in CEE countries. Not only companies but the society as a whole could benefit from changes with respect to gender as per the latest (2016) study *Gender Diversity in Senior Positions and Firm Performance: Evidence from Europe* reveals: "*Our findings suggest that increased female representation in senior positions could play an important role in boosting Europe's potential output. To the extent that higher involvement by women in senior positions improves firm profitability, it may also help support corporate investment and productivity, mitigating the slowdown in potential growth. To that end, levelling the playing field through policies to facilitate women's full-time attachment to the labour force (see Christiansen and others, 2016) could help build the pipeline of women for senior corporate positions, with important macroeconomic implications".*

Unfortunately, only 19% Diversity Charters signatories all over the Europe use indicators to monitor their diversity policies. Therefore, it seems to be the common EU challenge – again, nothing exceptional for CEE countries.[xxiii31] Providing that using indicators is an important part of the business case in diversity management, the above mentioned data suggests that diversity policies impact on overall business performance is still relatively low. The survey taken among signatories confirms these assumptions. Just one out of four companies (25%) questioned in 2014 said that diversity had such an impact on their performance. Therefore, the issue with the business case of diversity is a challenge not only in CEE countries

However, what is true and needs to be underlined is the present lack of awareness in CEE on the challenges related to gender, LGBTI or racial and ethnic origin. These are not perceived as challenges in CEE countries although many surveys confirmed that much remains to be done in this respect. As it was mentioned above, CEE societies are relatively homogenous in terms of religion, belief/ethnic origin; as well, the attitude towards gender equality seems to be quite traditional and influenced by religion. For this reason more attention is needed to ensure inclusiveness of people from different backgrounds and origin at the workplace as well as to empower women. When it comes to other grounds, people with disabilities should also receive more attention from employers and society, as they are currently hardly visible on the job market.

4.4. Key diversity challenges in CEE region

The CEE region, despite the common history, is a very diverse region. Each country has specific challenges and struggles within them, but when taking into account the key aspects and results of research (e.g. Eurobarometer, Discrimination in the EU in 2015) the main conclusions are similar:

1. What and how effectively could national law and governments do more for inclusion and diversity as a large part of the current anti-discrimination legislation within the context of EU law?
2. How do they build an open-minded and inclusive society? How can they support umbrella organisations?
3. How could businesses contribute to the creation of a non-discriminating and inclusive workplace and society?
4. Why does gender inequality still persist, and how can gender equality be mainstreamed? How do they ensure management positions for women? How do they change the gender gap in employment, pay and pensions?
5. What should countries, companies and people do in the workplace dealing with ageing society and major discrimination in this area?

[31] The European Commission addressed the need of further actions on measuring and presented good practice examples in publication "Assessing Diversity – Impact in Business".

6. How do they prepare a national strategy on employment of persons with disabilities and how to encourage businesses to employ people with disabilities?
7. How do they deal with low tolerance of LGBTI people?
8. How do they ensure better integration of the Roma population within society?
9. How do they provide minorities with equal rights in the workplace?
10. How do they set up and develop the Diversity Charter in each CEE country?

5. GOOD PRACTICES IN DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

In this chapter we have gathered a range of good practices from businesses of different types, from SMEs to multinational companies representing different sectors; therefore their approaches vary to a great extent. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. The purpose of presenting these practices is to be a learning point and a source of inspiration for other employers to embed diversity management as a process and not only as an activity.

Employers have started investing in diversity management and go beyond prevention of discrimination and mobbing, which is a starting point to diversity management and obligatory for employers. A number of them started this process because they have adopted corporate social responsibility or/and sustainable development strategy and a business case that showed that more diverse workforce had advantages such as: better access to talent and retention; fostering creativity and innovation; being able to respond better to a broad range of employees and customers or gaining a better reputation.

Unfortunately, specific data on the outputs of the best practices from CEE countries are not available for this publication as diversity management is in fact at an early stage.

Nevertheless, there are some tips on internal and external practises that are worth following. All of them are voluntary and are connected with positive actions, anti-discriminatory and anti-mobbing education, as well as with the system of internal and external communications. Surprisingly, the most popular are not those connected with internal networks that might be considered a first step in promoting diversity management but rather practises regarding more formal instruments such as a code of conduct or internal policies. Many of them are also accompanied by internal training and awareness raising actions. There are also examples of more market-oriented initiatives. All of them are connected with company values, very often regarding sustainable growth. The good practises represent countries such as Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland[xxiv], Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia and are divided into three categories:

- **Organisational culture, policies and procedures focused** on formal instruments such as codes of conduct, charters and company policies based on company values aiming at employee retention and work life balance.
- **Internal networks promoting inclusion and diversity culture within an organisation** focused on gender equality/ women and leadership.
- **Market-oriented initiatives –** a more inclusive society resulted in access to new groups of employees and clients.

Diversity management is a relatively new concept in CEE countries and there are many challenges that have been elaborated in the previous chapters. Nevertheless, it is becoming more and more popular and the below presented practices are the best conclusion. All of them proved that diversity management can be successfully implemented in any organisation, regardless of its size, industry or sector.

5.1. Organisational culture, policies and procedures

LATVIA: CEMEX LATVIA - Equal attitude policy of the company

CEMEX Latvia is an international company in the manufacturing sector with branches across the world. It has developed a diversity management policy to be executed on the local level.

Positive and non-discriminating attitude towards diversity is stipulated in the Code of Ethics established in the policy of its parent company. It states the principle of respect for diversity and equal attitude towards employees and customers, including the commitment "to promote respect for individual differences and opinions, thus avoiding any discrimination or improper relations". There are regular diversity audits (the company employs people of age, gender, sexual orientation and disability as well as different nationalities: Latvian, Russian, English, German, American, Mexican, Ukrainian, Kazakh) and also practical examples of actions in case of intolerant or scornful behaviour as well as regular trainings and employee pools (92% of polled employees admitted that, when they were employed or changed their position, they were provided with a sufficient internal introductory training), which include matters about the diversity of workers, discrimination, leadership, equal attitude matters and intercultural communication (63% of employees confirm that the company organises training on diversity and equality matters).

It means that the company has a responsible attitude towards the practical implementation of the values declared in its policy.

- **LATVIA: EY (Ernst & Young Baltic) - Equal attitude and diversity policy of the company**

EY previously Ernst & Young is a global audit company. The EY parent company and its Latvian branch have developed an equal attitude and diversity policy. The company also has a Code of Ethics with the principle of equal attitude. All of the employees polled indicate that when they get employed, they are provided internal training or introductory programmes. The personnel management policy of the company describes the attraction of employees from different community groups. Representatives of the company's management indicate: "*Diversity is our value, so our strategy also mentions the attraction of employees from different community groups. It is important for the company that its workforce is as diverse as possible.*" As the initiative of its international parent company, EY in Latvia also carries out a staff diversity audit, collecting information about the employees' profile: gender, age, nationality and about the profile of employees to be promoted within a certain period of time, so that they could aspire to executive positions in the company in the future.

The company always justifies why a particular employee is promoted and ensures that gender equality is guaranteed in the company (equal growth opportunities for representatives of both genders). Also, when recruiting a new employee, a report is provided, as to why this particular person rather than some other candidate deserves the position. Through the implementation of the diversity management approach, there is staff diversity in the team in terms of nationalities; the company is also open to disabled employees.

- **LATVIA: SWEDBANK – Company's diversity management policy**

Swedbank in Latvia defined its diversity management policy like its international parent company seated in Sweden but it was adapted to the Latvian environment. For example, if one of the goals of diversity management in Sweden is to attract employees with foreign origin, Latvia does not have such an objective yet, as the country does not have such a high number of immigrants, compared with Sweden.

Employee polls confirm that about 60% of employees believe that the company is purposefully thinking about attracting employees from different community groups, and 77% of those polled confirm that the company's management supports diversity. However, only 36% of employees confirm that there is training about diversity and equality matters in place, which means that practical overtaking of diversity-related knowledge and values is still at its comparatively early stage.

One of Swedbank's diversity management policies is to create and adapt its personnel policies in such a way that the employee's and customer's profile match. In this manner,

the company should be able "to put itself in its customers' shoes" and to understand the wishes of customers (to create an individual approach to customers from each community group).

LATVIA: ALDARIS – Equal attitude and personnel policy of the company

Aldaris is a large company in the food sector, which has a separate personnel selection policy. It was taken over from Carlsberg, an international company of the same group in Denmark. The employee selection policy prohibits any discriminating practises, and defines concrete steps to attain gender equality in the process of recruitment. The company has developed a Code of Ethics, which is translated into Latvian and Russian, and employees are regularly trained on the topic of diversity and equal attitude, although only 20% of polled employees answered that they were aware of such training, which can mean that diversity and equal attitude are not considered to be priority topics among employees. There is also a diversity audit. The management of the company perceives a diverse composition of its employees as an advantage, thus it opens not only for different nationalities but for people with disabilities as well.

LATVIA: FASTR BOOKS – Personnel policy of the company

Fastr Books is a small, young company in the area of computer programming and publishing. The company operates in three countries – Latvia, Estonia and Finland and employs people of different nationalities, age, gender and interests.

The company has not developed a code of ethics or a diversity management policy yet, but it carries out a staff diversity audit and employees are recruited according to the need of diversity to better match the profile of customers. For these purposes the company has decided to employ more women, because 90% of customers are women (but in fact the company employs 67% of men). Also, the company increased the average age of its employees in order to better match the age of its customers. Mother tongues of customers are also taken into account when recruiting, in order to match customers' needs. These strivings for diversity are visible for the employees – 88% of polled employees confirm that the company is purposefully thinking about recruiting people from diverse backgrounds.

Representatives of the company emphasise that policies with regard to diversity of employees and customers come up in response to market challenges, and initiatives in this area come from the management and from employees as well: "*Diversity management initiatives have emerged naturally. Our range of customers affects our decisions to implement these initiatives; we want to adapt to it*."

LATVIA: DRAUGIEM.LV – Equal attitude policy of the company

Draugiemis a small, Latvian-based company which has adopted fairness, innovation and integrity as its core values. It has not developed a separate diversity management policy yet. However, the majority of polled employees believe that the company's management supports diversity. First of all, this concerns the principle of equal opportunity. The company employs people of different nationalities, with different sexual orientation; it also has employed disabled people, as confirmed in diversity audits. A friendly, encouraging work environment for different employees is considered to be a prerequisite for successful team work in the company: *"The company and its employees take care to ensure that the work environment is appropriate for them and pleasant."*

The work environment in the company is adapted to the individual needs of employees, including in the area of health protection: "*The company has searched opportunities to cooperate with orthopaedic shops to construct special arm supports for employees. If employees need to improve the work environment, the company acts immediately to satisfy these needs*."

The company sees value added in the diversity of its team also in terms of attracting customers: "*although our employee profile is not identical to our customer profile, the*

company's representatives believe that it is quite identical to the customer profile in some aspects (for example, age)."

POLAND: EDF Polska – Banking on Diversity

EDF Polska is a subsidiary of multinational energy company with a strong belief that diversity is a source of innovation and growth, for the organisation and each employee.

EDF Group has a Code of Ethics that can be summarised by three core values: respect, responsibility and solidarity. Since 2013 EDF Polska established a post of an independent Employee Rights Advocate (ERA) that prevents discrimination and exclusion and can be approached whenever employees' rights have been violated. Works on implementation of anti-mobbing and anti-discrimination policies are in progress.

EDF Polska ensures equal access to jobs by structuring recruitment advertisements so as to ensure equal chances of all candidates, regardless of their gender or age – said Cezary Mączka, Human Resources Director, EDF Polska.

EDF Polska provides its employees with corporate mailboxes (also during maternity or paternity leave), off-site access to the mailbox and the employee's panel in the company's HR platform, which offers news and articles on work-life balance.

EDF's work-life-balance policy supports sports activities of people with disabilities and associations and initiatives aimed at integrating people with disabilities into society.

POLAND: Kompania Piwowarska – Ethical Organisation

Kompania Piwowarska – one of the largest Polish breweries, has introduced a Code of Ethics to ensure equal treatment of all employees. It also provides guidelines for fairness and integrity in the workplace and respecting the rights of others, and shows how to respond to unethical behaviours. The code also regulates such aspects as accepting material benefits and conflict of interests. Kampania Piwowarska has also established an in-house Ethics Commission, a body promoting ethical behaviours, supporting all employees (e.g. by attending an obligatory seminar focused on all Code of Ethics rules) in developing an ethical compass for facing potential ethical challenges and, whenever necessary, taking measures to prevent unethical behaviour in the workplace. *The Ethics Commission is composed of highly trusted individuals who guarantee objective and fair treatment* – summed up Katarzyna Radecka, Sustainable Development Officer, Kompania Piwowarska. Information about all policies and codes is available to all employees via the organisation's intranet and on its website: www.kp.pl to every employee of Kompania Piwowarska.

POLAND: KPMG – Respecting Employee Individuality

KPMG Poland is a subsidiary of an international advisory company. We respect our employees' individuality is one of the seven main values that define the organisational culture of KPMG in Poland and serve as reference to all employees of the organisation. In practice, this translates into preventing all kinds of discrimination on all spheres of the organisation's activity (training, work, employee benefits, career development and promotion). *Employees of KPMG belong to different generations, mostly X and Y – working together, exchanging information and learning from one another. In recruitment the organisation follows the principles of equality with respect to age, health, gender, family status and place of origin* – described Michał Ostalski, Head of Human Resources Department, KPMG in Poland. The company has introduced a solution for employees who wish to report behaviours and attitudes that violate accepted ethical norms (including the equal treatment policy) or simply need advice on how to handle difficult situations.

Some of the other initiatives of KPMG are: employee exchange under Global Opportunity and Tax Trek, including employees' spouses as well legal partners in the employee benefit programme, Young Mother Programme (Młoda Mama).

POLAND: Orange Polska – Comprehensive Approach

Orange Polska is a subsidiary of an international technology company. When making the first steps in managing diversity, an organisation should ask itself why it wants to deal with this topic. Is the potential of diversity a value that will help it grow as an organisation and as individuals? Orange Polska is convinced that the presence of people of various characteristics, views and experiences opens new possibilities, enhances the organisation's innovativeness and effectiveness, and highlights the diverse needs of its clients. When adopting a diversity management agenda, an organisation should analyse its activities, policies and procedures to review the present situation and determine relevant areas and consult employees to establish key issues in each area. It helps to develop an action plan and to combine it with the organisation's strategy. *At our company diversity management is an element of HR and CSR strategies. Each strategic DM activity is measured and assigned to an owner responsible for its delivery* – stressed Marcelina Pytlarczyk, Corporate Social Responsibility Officer, Orange Polska. Another important element is educating employees on equal treatment, preventing discrimination or subconscious stereotyping. An organisational culture that is open to diversity and makes everybody feel respected is key to the success of any organisation.

POLAND: Provident Polska – implement and monitor - improving the coexistence of diversity of employees

Provident Polska is a subsidiary of an international financial company. Provident Polska appointed a Human Resources employee responsible for implementing equal opportunities policies and monitoring their results. Diversity is perceived as an asset that results in higher creativity and innovativeness, thus one of the pillars of human resource development. The company has created a special post of HR Business Partners (10 individuals for 78 branches countrywide) that support local managers by ensuring that all relevant policies and procedures are respected in their region (regarding for example, recruitment procedures, difficult situations/conflicts). In 2012 Provident Polska conducted a series of workshops for senior and mid-level managers about fair treatment in employment, team conflict-resolution, recognising and preventing mobbing. The "Dbamy o mamy" (Mother Care) programme aims at maintaining good relations with employees on maternity and parental leave in order to prevent a sense of exclusion during such a long leave (by, for example, providing mothers with access to the organisation's communications/newsletters etc.); they also receive small gifts.
Provident Polska has an external service provider, which conducts an employees' survey (an opportunity to express opinions in order to make a better workplace, also in terms of diversity management policies) - said Beata Bardoni, Social Dialogue Manager, Provident Polska.

POLAND: Skanska – Business Built on Diversity

Skanska is a subsidiary of an international construction company. Skanska wants to build a working environment where every employee feels respected, appreciated and offered a chance to express their views and continuously develop their skills, regardless of their gender, nationality or age. In May 2015 Skanska signed the Polish Diversity Charter. Diversity and Inclusion is one of the priority areas supporting the execution of the organisation's strategy. *Skanska strives to reflect the diversity of the societies in which it operates. Thanks to diverse teams, Skanska is able to understand its clients better and flexibly respond to their needs* – said Katarzyna Olczak, Director of Human Resources, Skanska Commercial Development Europe. Diversity and Inclusion is an element of workshops for leaders, team sessions and the work of project groups. An important element supporting employee D&I education is regular communication reaching white- and blue-collar workers through a variety of channels: intranet, production employee quarterly, the company's newsletter and a fan page. Skanska makes every effort to make Diversity and Inclusion a part of the organisation's DNA and an inherent part of its day-to-day operations.

ESTONIA: ISS - Whistle-blower policy[32]

ISS is a big property maintenance company of Danish origin. It has adopted a whistle-blower policy to make it possible for all employees of ISS, business partners and other stakeholders to report any serious and sensitive concerns and to reassure that any person raising a serious concern in good faith will be protected from reprisals or retaliation. In line with the ISS Values and Code of Conduct, the business integrity of ISS is non-negotiable and committed to conduct its business in accordance with the law and high ethical standards. Employees that have a concern are encouraged to discuss such matters first with their supervisors, managers or other appropriate personnel such as local HR, local legal counsel or local CFO. Special reporting policy is meant for serious and sensitive concerns regarding: serious endangerment to environment, health and safety activities, which otherwise by law, treaty or agreement amount to serious improper conduct (e.g. discriminatory practises, use of child labour, human rights violation).

ESTONIA: Kaubamaja Group – Diversity[33]

Operators that form Tallinna Kaubamaja Group mostly pursue their business in the sphere of retail and wholesale trade. The Group companies contribute more than one tenth of retail trade in Estonia in general and employ more than 3,500 people. The companies that form Tallinna Kaubamaja Group attach high value to the implementation of the principles of socially responsible entrepreneurship in their regular operations. The brand joined the Diversity Enriches Agreement in 2012, which means that they have committed to equal treatment and opportunities and support diversity in the company. Recruitment of people of different ages, ethnic backgrounds or people with special needs will contribute to a more tolerant working environment and will bring more experiences and different views to the company.

5.2. Internal networks and initiatives promoting inclusion and diversity

HUNGARY: ViViD – Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) Young Employee Network in Hungary

Hewlett Packard Hungary is a subsidiary of a multinational technology company. ViViD is one of HPE's so-called Employee Resource Groups (ERG). It is an employee initiative created to organise programmes voluntarily for the younger generation within HPE, focusing on employees under 30 – financially supported by the company.

The goal of ViViD is to build a strong employee community of young people through programs, and to empower its members with meaningful learning and growth opportunities, while delivering business value through top talent recruitment, collaboration, development, and retention.

One of the most successful initiatives is the Jedi Programme. This is a mentoring programme, which lasts for 6 months and has been organised 3 times so far. It gives young employees the chance to meet leaders, and experienced colleagues from different business units within HPE, to learn from them, and learn with them.

The employee resource group also organises an event called ViViD café, which is an interactive presentation or workshop with professionals from different areas (e.g. IT, Psychology, etc.) offering insight to interesting and trending areas of the economy and

[32] ISS, *Whistleblower policy,* http://www.ee.issworld.com/en/responsibility/whistleblower

[33] Tallinna Kaubamaja Group, http://www.tkmgroup.ee/en/worlds/18/127?page=1

life sciences. ViViD is also an active member of career days, job fairs, where they can tell their stories – why they are committed to the HPE, and why they like their job.

- **Bosnia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia** and **Slovenia** - **SheXO Club by Deloitte: five years, eight countries, 1,000 women**

Deloitte Poland is a subsidiary of an international advisory company. The Deloitte SheXO Club was established in 2011 in Poland to build connections between leading women from the public and private sectors. It provides an environment for thought exchange, support and networking opportunities for female executives with now over 1,000 participants in eight countries across Central Europe: Bosnia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. It is the largest networking group of business women in Poland, which supports executive women to develop boardroom skills while facilitating personal and professional growth.

"*It is our intention that the Club creates space for regular exchange of thought, development of leadership traits and networking. Our meetings offer an opportunity to share experiences and work out solutions for supporting professional development of women in Central and Eastern Europe. There is still plenty to do in this regard*", says Iwona Georgijew, Partner, Deloitte, SheXO Club Founder and Leader.

Wide media coverage of the SheXO Club, prominent international events and publications has positioned it as an important player in the promotion of female empowerment.

Worthy to underline is SheXO's public engagement in the development of women, which distinguishes the Club on the market. The Club's research, publications, books and conferences on female leadership are promoted by government institutions and have increasingly impacted policy making. There are many SheXO's publications and reports focused on such profound questions such as: what is the new type of leadership needed, what leadership competencies do members of management and supervisory boards have? It enabled a discussion on the issue of leadership in an increasingly demanding business environment.

Due to SheXO club's activities in Central Europe, Deloitte was chosen as the only advisory firm to become one of the partners of the 2016 Global Summit of Women, which was held for the first time this year in Warsaw. In this manner it supported an event important to the issue of gender equity.

- **ROMANIA: Orange Romania – programme for girls**

Orange Romania is a subsidiary of an international technology company. In September 2014 Orange Romania signed a partnership contract with Capital Filles and the Romanian Ministry of Education, becoming one of the companies involved in the Capital Filles project: an association which targets high schools in problematic social neighbourhoods to help their students with their careers. The programme, built on the goodwill of enterprises and their employees' aims to help young girls from technical high-schools discover the corporate world in order for them to choose their formal education path in line with the labour market perspectives. Orange and Capital Filles help young girls to get a clear view on the possible paths of development in the corporate environment.

In February 2015 Orange Romania received the Gender Equality European International Standard (GEES) certification, with level two of performance (out of three); GEES is the first European standard for gender equality, set up by Arborus Fund under the patronage of the European Commission.

- **POLAND: ArcelorMittal Poland – Diversity Day - improving the coexistence of diversity of employees**

ArcelorMittal is the largest steel producer in Poland, a subsidiary of international company. As a signatory of Diversity Charter Poland, ArcelorMittal Poland supports and promotes workplace diversity. In 2015 the organisation's activities focused on gender, age and cultural diversity. *In May 2015 the organisation celebrated its first Diversity day, with 60 employees attending two workshops: "Women and Men in Business" focused on understanding and effective use of the differences between women and men in style of communication and perception aimed at higher team creativity and effectiveness* – said Agnieszka Woźniak, Head of Global Employee Development Programme, Training and Recruitment, ArcelorMittal Poland - *"Different Generations in the Workplace, Managing Age" informed participants about the differences and similarities between generations as well as age stereotypes we are the most likely to perpetuate".*

- **POLAND: EDF Polska – women's network**

EDF Polska is a subsidiary of multinational energy company with a strong belief that diversity is a source for innovation and growth, for the organisation and each employee. EDF has successfully promoted tolerance and individuality for each employee for eight years. Each year EDF companies around the world celebrate Diversity Day with campaigns and workshops promoting diversity among its employees. *In 2016 EDF designed a special e-learning programme for the managers to provide them with practical tips and show them the benefits of managing diversity* – said Cezary Mączka, Human Resources Director, EDF Polska. For two years the company has had a women's network - Interp'elles Polska - supporting the professional and personal growth of women employed by EDF Group. The women's network delivered the first edition of the "Reach Higher" programme, organised two large conferences and about 30 soft skills training sessions for women. EDF also successfully conducted a charity campaign for the professional activation of women, published "Career Building Inspiration Guide" and "Parenting Guidelines" and created special parking spaces for pregnant women in multiple EDF locations.

5.3. Market-oriented initiatives – toward a more inclusive society - access to new groups of employees and clients

- **CZECH REPUBLIC: Siemens is looking for new employees, invites mothers of young children**

Siemens is the largest engineering company in Europe. The Siemens Shared Services Centres provide customers with services in accounting, finance, controlling, procurement, logistics and human resources in 28 languages. It employs over a thousand people; up to eighty percent of Siemens' Shared Services Centres employees are women. Siemens employment strategy is based on targeting mothers of young children. The company perceive this group as a chance to gain loyal, devoted employees.

It is possible due to the organisation's solutions such as: flexi-time work, part-time jobs and last not least - the corporate kindergarten and work from home in order to combine parenthood and career. "*Before I started a family, I enjoyed travelling as part of my job. My expectations changed when I became mother. Siemens Shared Services gave me the opportunity to bring together my professional and parental duties*. *For whomever wants to build a career while being a mother – it is the best place* - confirms Vanessa Hellwing, Chief of Operations at the shared service centre's Siemens in Ostrava.

- **SLOVENIA: Dobrovita Ltd. - Diversity**

Dobrovita Ltd. is a social enterprise founded by SENT - Slovenian Association for Mental Health in 1996 with an aim of providing assistance to disabled persons for rehabilitation and employment. It was the first company in Slovenia to provide the services of work rehabilitation and employment for people with mental health problems, who have no or limited ability, to find employment in the open labour market. The vision and mission of

the company is to create new jobs, to develop programmes of work rehabilitation for the disadvantaged, to enable people with various disabilities (people with long term mental health problems, people with disabilities, the long-term unemployed, people with low educational level, etc.) to gain long-term employment.

As Dobrovita Ltd. operates on the open market, the integration of people involved in the social and work environment is more natural and realistic. Dobrovita design workplaces and work processes according to the needs of different employees' disabilities. It is crucial to connect best suitable working conditions to each individual's needs to get the best work results and also best job satisfaction. For its achievement in 2014 the company received the first prize of the European Association CEFEC for best social enterprise.

Dobrovita Ltd. recognises diversity management as a means to address and support multiple lifestyles and personal characteristics within the company. Management activities include educating employees and the public, and also providing support for the acceptance of and respect for various racial, cultural, societal, geographic, economic and political backgrounds.

For Dobrovita Ltd. people are a source of competitive advantage and it aims at building acceptance and respect for people from various backgrounds. Dobrovita Ltd. provides an employee supportive network: mentorship programmes for people with disabilities, which provides employees with opportunities to take advantage of mentor experiences and to better deal with their disability. Special educational programmes for mentors are also in place focused on enhancing mentors' awareness, knowledge and skills for addressing inclusion, especially disability and workplace design for people with disabilities, supervision from mentors.
The company also encourages employees to bond around common themes (sporting events, social activities).

CROATIA: AB Dizajn – employment and inclusion of people with disability

AB Dizajn is a small production enterprise with the following product portfolio: accreditation stripes, bags, aprons, etc. The snail house is a bag filled with materials usually used for medical purposes; the snail house is made of the best materials and created by the most diligent hands. This is because five out of nine employees of AB Dizajn, are people with disabilities. AB Dizajn stresses the importance of employing persons with disabilities, equally for employers as well as employees and suggests some recommendations for employers: by engaging persons with disabilities, employers emphasise that disability is a part of regular life. Employees with disabilities are more motivated and express more ambition. By employing workers with disabilities, employers send a message that disabled people are also equal members of society. Employing persons with disabilities that work with customers also helps to raise awareness of the general public and helps dissolve prejudice. It is necessary to develop a support system for employers to retrieve means from support funds and to create better regulatory frameworks.

CROATIA: Diversity in DM-drogerie market

DM-drogerie market is the largest drugstore chain in Europe with 155 stores and 1,300 employees in Croatia. DM has developed its operation in Croatia with an emphasis on corporate social responsibility and employee welfare. Cooperation with the Centre for Inclusive Work Activities and Rehabilitation Centre is a part of DM's ongoing efforts to provide employment to people with disabilities and to enable them to take their rightful place in society. Supported employment in DM refers to paid work of people with mental disabilities in a regular work environment, with ongoing monitoring and support, which allows them more to be active and equal participants in society. DM's market currently employs 55 members of the Centre who act as full members of the community. Jobs are assigned to the Centre's members according to their individual abilities and in line with DM's work operations, with an aim of developing their independence and inclusion in the

labour market. Members of the Centre participate in DM's internal activities, which ensure more integral inclusion in the work environment.

- **HUNGARY: Magyar Telekom –Through the support of non-typical employment**

Magyar Telekom helps families to find a healthy balance between their work and private life as parents/grandparents who are recognised, important for employees well-being resulted in a higher satisfaction and loyalty. It is strategically important for the company to make teleworking part of the company's culture, which is supported by various practices within daily operations, such as big space office design to help teleworking as well as the Future Work initiative. Since 2012, as a response to the monthly announced "Work from home" campaign, there has been a continuous increase in the number of employees who choose to work remotely on specific days.

In 2015 there were 646 Telekom employees who signed remote work contracts and worked 40,551 days from home. Colleagues without that type of contract (1,726 persons) worked 13,791 days from home as well. In 2015 as many as 2,372 employees of Magyar Telekom worked remotely, for a total of 54,342 days.

- **POLAND: Orange Polska – Dedicated Clients 70+/senior service**

Orange Polska is a subsidiary of an international technology company. Senior Clients (70+) customer service reaches a group that constitutes ca. 15 % of the clients of Orange Polska. Orange Polska's experience shows that older clients find it difficult to handle IVR (Interactive Voice Response) service. To address this issue, Orange Polska simplified customer service call centre procedures for senior clients. Since Senior Clients are marked in the client database, after connecting, they are quickly identified and their call is forwarded directly to dedicated Senior Service consultants.

Senior Clients Consultants are selected for their soft skills such as patience or empathy as well as maturity. These consultants do their best to make the conversation friendly and ensure that the client does not feel intimidated or embarrassed. The dedicated senior client service results in satisfied clients. Orange Polska's greatest reward is the positive feedback that the company hears from their clients. "Nobody could explain things as clearly as you", "Finally, I understand it all". The group of senior clients who receive customer service from Dedicated Senior Clients Consultants are far more likely to recommend Orange (NPS higher by ~12pp. than among other clients). *This practice is an excellent example illustrating that embracing diversity in the workplace translates into better recognition of diverse needs and client groups* – summed up Marcelina Pytlarczyk, Corporate Social Responsibility Officer, Orange Polska.

All above presented practises proved that diversity management can be successfully implemented in any organisation, regardless of its size, industry or sector, in any country. This chapter also shows how beneficial it is for business and organisations that coordinate the implementation of national charters being part of the EU Diversity Charters Platform, getting access to a European network supported by the European Commission to share common goals, valuable knowledge and experience from other national organisations.

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ANNEXES

[i] **Table 1 Human rights/position on Human Development Index 2015**

	Human rights/position on Human Development Index 2015
Bulgaria	59
Croatia	47
Czech Republic	28
Estonia	30
Latvia	46
Lithuania	37
Poland	36
Hungary	44
Romania	52
Slovakia	35
Slovenia	25

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_Human_Development_Index#High_human_development

[ii] The definition of SME used in this article is the one provided in EU Recommendation 2003/61. According to this definition, the main factors determining whether an enterprise can be categorised as SME are the number of employees and either turnover or balance sheet total as set out in the table below

Table 2 Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises

Category	**Employees**	**Turnover**	**Balance sheet total**
		OR	
Medium-sized	< 250	≤ € 50 m	≤ € 43 m
Small	< 50	≤ € 10 m	≤ € 10 m
Micro	< 10	≤ € 2 m	≤ € 2 m

Source: Commission Recommendation of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (2003/361/EC), Official Journal of the European Union, L 124/36, 20 May 2003.

[iii] **Table 3 Number of persons employed by enterprise size class, non-financial business economy, 2012**

	Total	**SME**	**Micro**	**Small**	**Medium-sized**	**Large**
	(thousand)	**(% of total)**				
Bulgaria	1872.997	76	30	24	22	24

Czech Republic	3521.52	70	32	18	19	30
Estonia	393.545	78	30	25	24	22
Croatia	1002.905	68	30	19	19	32
Latvia	573.58	79	30	25	24	21
Lithuania	835.63	76	26	26	25	24
Hungary	2430.681	-	36	19	-	-
Poland	8326.839	69	36	14	19	31
Romania	3837.868	66	22	22	21	34
Slovenia	574.479	72	34	19	20	28
Slovakia	1417.228	70	39	15	16	30
EU-28	**133767.3**	**67**	**29**	**21**	**17**	**33**
EU-CEE	**24787.27**	**72**	**31**	**20**	**21**	**28**

Source: Eurostat, http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/d/df/Business_economy_-_size_class_analysis.xls

[iv] http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/files/public-consultation-gender-web_en.pdf

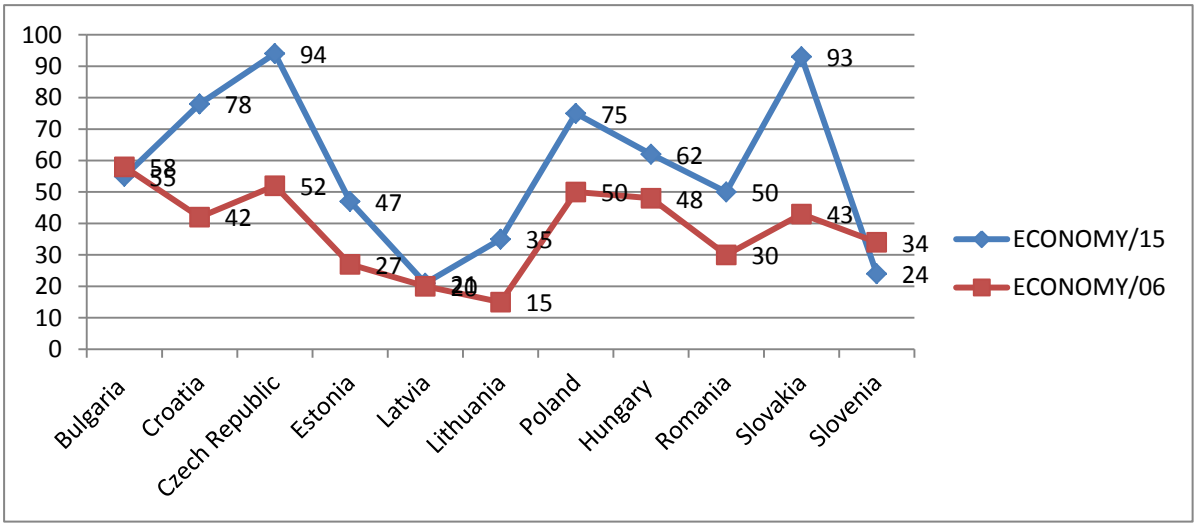
[v] http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/annual_reports/2016_annual_report_2015_web_en.pdf

[vi] http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/annual_reports/2016_annual_report_2015_web_en.pdf

[vii] 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. Furthermore, the EU has also issued a number of directives. More information on Directives applying the principle of equal treatment is in the publication *Practical guide to launch and implement a Diversity Charter. p 10*

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/emerging_charter_guide_en.pdf

[viii] **Figure 1 - rank in GGG Economic Participation and Opportunity in CEE**



Source: The Global Gender Gap report 2015 and 2006

[ix] http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/mh0415169enn.pdf

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[xi] "Report on equality between women and men 2015" http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/annual_reports/2016_annual_report_2015_web_en.pdf, page 24, 57

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[xiii] http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/mh0415169enn.pdf, page 43

[xiv] *Source: Discrimination in the EU in 2015* - Over one in three respondents (37%) from EU-28 says that discrimination on the basis of gender is widespread in their country(+6 percentage points then was the case in 2012, France and Sweden 53%, UK – 48% as well as in Spain and Italy-41%.)

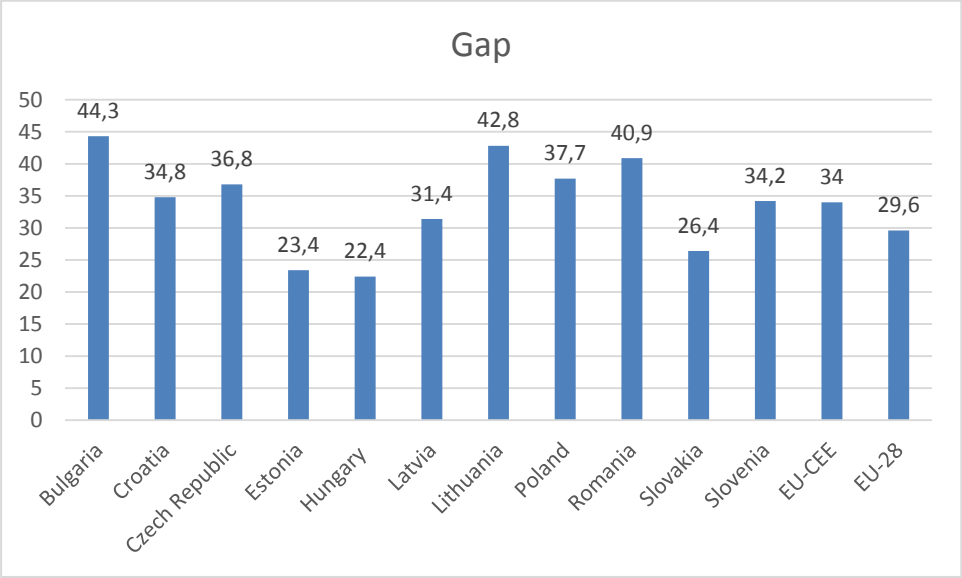
[xv] http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/annual_reports/2016_annual_report_2015_web_en.pdf

[xvi] **Table 4 Perceptions of discrimination on the basis of disability in society in CEE, 2015 (in %)**

	Could you please tell me whether, in your opinion, discrimination on the basis of disability is very widespread, fairly widespread, fairly rare or very rare in your country?			In your country when a company wants to hire someone and has the choice between two candidates with equal skills and qualifications, in your opinion, does disability put one candidate at a disadvantage?
Country	Total (very plus fairly) Widespread	Total (very plus fairly)Rare	Non-existent	Choosing disability from multiple answers possible
Bulgaria	54	34	5	49
Croatia	47	44	5	32
Czech Republic	38	57	3	57
Estonia	43	34	12	52
Hungary	54	37	6	45
Latvia	43	36	12	49
Lithuania	44	44	9	52
Poland	29	49	17	34
Romania	56	31	6	38
Slovakia	39	53	4	39
Slovenia	42	50	5	58
EU-CEE	44	43	8	46
EU-28	50	42	5	46

Source: Discrimination in the EU in 2015

[xvii] **Figure 2 Gap between employment people without disability and with disability**



Source: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Disability_statistics_-_labour_market_access#Less_than_1_person_out_of_2_with_basic_activity_difficulties_is_employed

[xviii] **Ibidem**

[xix] **Table 6: Religious Composition by Country, 2010 (in %)**

Country, 2010	Estimated share of Christians	Est. share of Muslims	Est. share of unaffiliated	Est. share of Hindu, Buddhist or Folk Religions or other Religions or Jewish
Bulgaria	82.1%	13.7%	4.2%	< 0.1%
Croatia	93.4%	1.4%	5.1%	< 0.1%
Czech Republic	23.3%	< 0.1%	76.4%	< 0.1%
Estonia	39.9%	0.2%	59.6%	< 0.1%
Hungary	81.0%	< 0.1%	18.6%	< 0.1%
Latvia	55.8%	0.1%	43.8%	< 0.1%

Lithuania	89.8%	< 0.1%	10.0%	< 0.1%
Poland	94.3%	< 0.1%	5.6%	< 0.1%
Romania	> 99.0%	0.3%	0.1%	< 0.1%
Slovakia	85.3%	0.2%	14.3%	< 0.1%
Slovenia	78.4%	3.6%	18.0%	< 0.1%

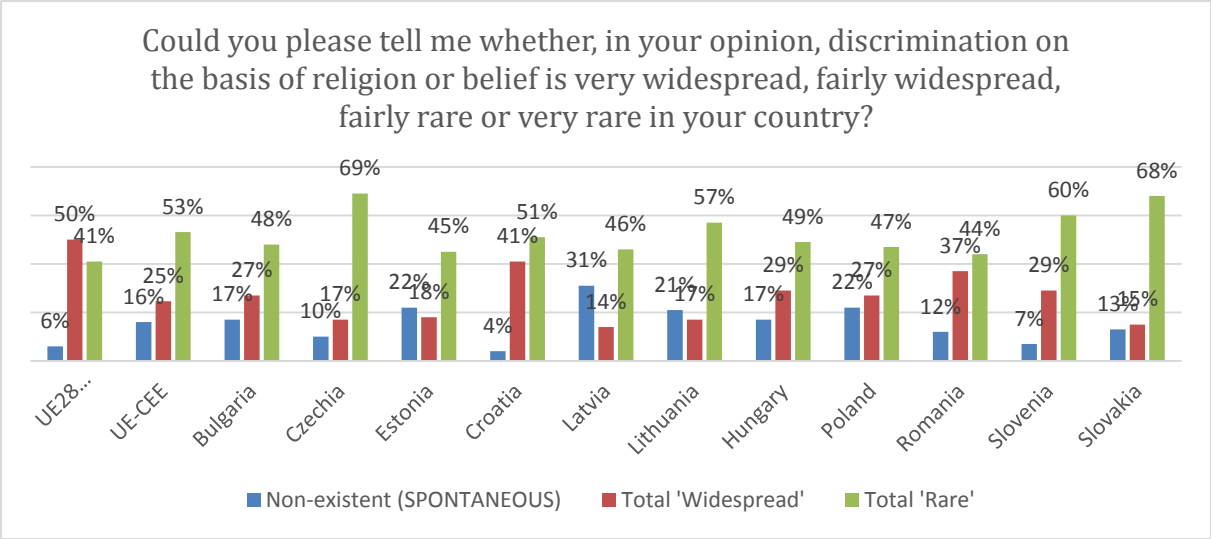
Source: The PEW Research Centre, http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/table-religious-composition-by-country-in-percentages/

[xx] **Table 7 Perceptions of discrimination on the basis of religion or belief in CEE, 2015 (in %)**

	Could you please tell me whether, in your opinion, discrimination on the basis of religion or belief is very widespread, fairly widespread, fairly rare or very rare in your country?			In your country when a company wants to hire someone and has the choice between two candidates with equal skills and qualifications, in your opinion, does the expression of a religious belief (e.g. wearing a visible religious symbol) put one candidate at a disadvantage?
Country	Total (very plus fairly) widespread	Total (fairly plus very) rare	Non-existent	Choosing religious belief from multiple answers possible
		48	17	22
		51	4	20
Czech Republic	17	69	10	24
Estonia	18	45	22	21
Hungary	29	49	17	8
Latvia	14	6	31	10
Lithuania	17	57	21	13
Poland	27	47	22	13
Romania	37	44	12	14
Slovakia	15	68	13	12
Slovenia	29	60	7	27
EU-CEE	25	49	16	17
EU-28	50	41	6	33

Source: Discrimination in the EU in 2015

Figure 4 Perceptions of discrimination on the basis of religion or belief in CEE, 2015 (in %)

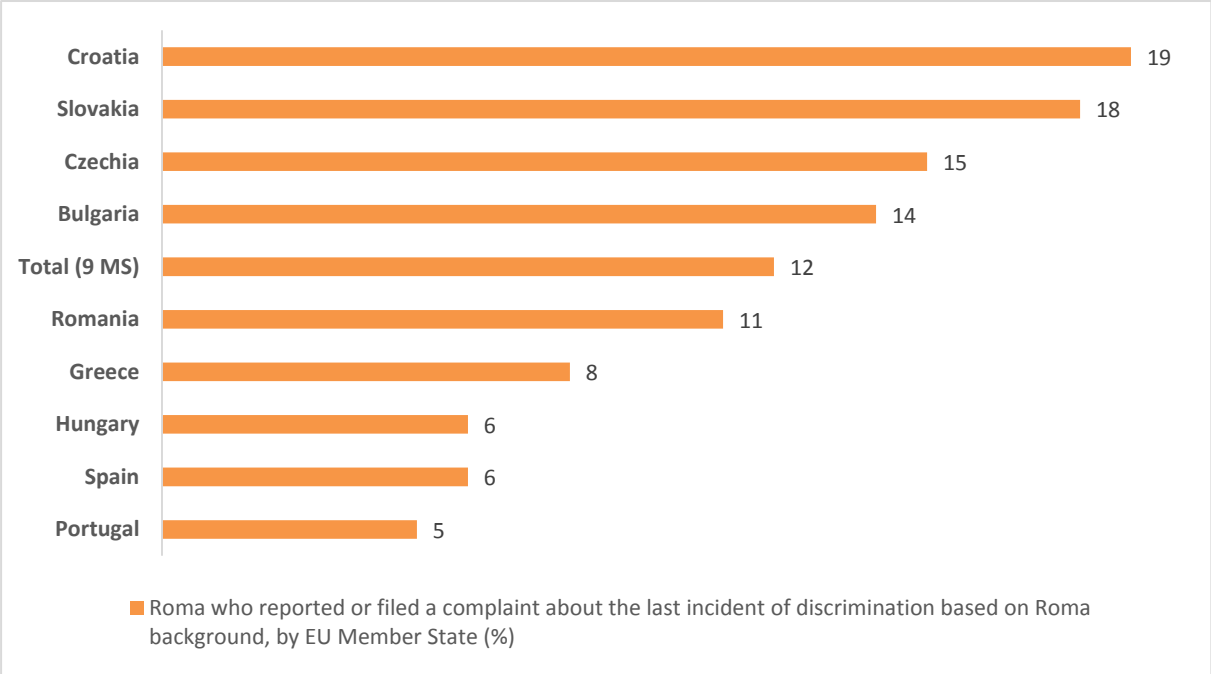


[xxi] **Table 8 How would you describe your current job situation? (%)**

	Employed	Unemployed	Not working due to illness or disability	Domestic work	Retired	Other inactive (education, military services, other)
Bulgaria	23	55	1	3	14	4
Czech Republic	29	32	4	9	17	8
Greece	43	26	3	25	2	2
Spain	16	57	4	12	6	5
Croatia	8	62	4	17	2	7
Hungary	36	23	6	7	14	13
Portugal	34	17	1	24	12	13
Romania	28	5	3	40	12	12
Slovakia	20	48	4	8	12	8
Total (9 MS)	25	34	4	17	12	8

Source: FRA, EU-MIDIS II 2016, Roma.

[xxii] Figure 6 Roma who reported or filed a complaint about the last incident of discrimination based on Roma background, by EU Member State (%)



Source: Source: FRA, EU-MIDIS II 2016, Roma.

[xxiii][xxiii][xxiii] **https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2016/wp1650.pdf**

[xxiv] All practices from Poland are from: M. Andrejczuk, E. Leśnowolska, Diversity unites us! A guide to the polish Diversity Charter, Responsible Business Forum, Warsaw 2016).

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