Keynote speech and panel discussion ‘Together for diverse Europe’

The session will take us back to the basics – diversity and inclusion as key values of EU. This year’s Forum will focus on how unconscious biases, stereotypes and prejudice can allow us to develop diversity and inclusion policies, and overcome the challenges in changing societies, politics and economics, with new business models, technological advances and new ways of working and communicating. We will also look at opportunities and challenges on promoting diversity across various cultures of European countries.

We live in a world where on one hand, we are more connected than ever before, we have the possibility to access information and knowledge, yet on the other hand, we can witness strong polarization in values. This all has an effect on the diversity narrative. The situation on the international level, as well as in the sphere governed by the EU Member States, and the environment that people experience at workplaces and communities is becoming less predictable. The rise of populism, derision of human rights and the far-right politics becoming an acceptable part of policy-making has led us to the situation where we are facing many vital questions and concerns about which pathway to choose.

In the light of these developments, decision-makers, business, political and civil society leaders and scholars have a role of utmost importance in framing the public debate, in acting as a role model or even a moral compass. Therefore, we ask in the opening panel of the Forum, “What is the role of leaders in these turbulent times?”, “How can leadership advance the respect for diversity and inclusion of all people, both at state and workplace level?” and „Shall we adapt the usually “soft language” in the times of strong and appealing words of diversity opponents? “.