

EMEA DIVERSITY NEWS 19

March 2008
Editorial

Dear Readers:

The first quarter of the year is almost over and it seems as if more projects than ever are initiated and launched in the area of Diversity. EU and local politicians are realising the need to act - in contrary to traditional ways of just reacting - and put Diversity issues high on their agendas. Major companies in different European countries are up-scaling their Diversity initiatives. An increasing number of organisations in France and Germany have joined the ‘Charta for Diversity’ and committed themselves to foster inclusion and mutual respect. Other European countries may follow with their own charters on Diversity.

The editorial team would like to take this dynamic environment as an opportunity to inform our readers in more in depth about the production process of EMEA DiversityNews. In order to this, you will find a featured interview with two members of the editorial team, Asli Weheliye and Felix Wittig.

In this month’s issue of EMEA DiversityNews, we explore various facets of diversity: The second Demographic Fitness Survey shows an increased awareness among companies on demographic change, Volvo Trucks has received an award for its Diversity program on gender issues and in the UK, the BBC is addressing a lack of diversity through mentoring programs. The latest report by the European Commission reveals that women in power are still faced with a glass ceiling and all over Europe people are encouraged to participate in the photo competition “Cultures on my Street” initiated by the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (EYID).

The editorial team of EMEA DiversityNews is curious about your thoughts and perspectives on Diversity and on our work. We look forward to receiving your comments and suggestions by email: newsdesk@european-diversity.com.

Enjoy reading EMEA DiversityNews 19!

The editorial team: Asli Weheliye, Felix Wittig and Michael Stuber

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AN INSIGHT INTO EMEA DIVERSITY NEWS

What is the idea behind EMEA DiversityNews and how is this newsletter actually being produced? For almost two years 'European Diversity Research & Consulting' has been regularly publishing this medium. An interview with the editorial core team, Asli Weheliye and Felix Wittig, provides insight into their work.

What is the idea behind publishing EMEA Diversity News?

Felix Wittig: Diversity with its various facets has become a key concept in the business world, in politics and in society. Still, there is a lack of information, and even for people working in the field of diversity it's not always easy to get the full picture of current developments in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. With this newsletter we want to provide short articles on news, surveys and best practices to raise awareness for Diversity and provide useful information for the work of our readers.

How do you select the content? Are there any specific criteria?

Asli Weheliye: In this newsletter we strive to cover a variety of dimensions of diversity, for example ethnicity, age or gender, and we also seek to publish articles from different countries. In doing so, we try to provide a balanced, multi-faceted perspective of Diversity. Yet, some dimensions and countries are easier to report on than others.

How do you gather all the information?

Asli Weheliye: Covering such a large and diverse region, and so many themes is not always easy. Over the years, we have created a knowledge management system, which includes several hundred organisations, news services and other sources. Each month, we scan the 200+ newsletters we receive and selected websites in order to find newsworthy information.

Are you cooperating with other organizations in terms of sharing any information?

Felix Wittig: Organisations, public and private, are very welcome to inform us about news and current developments. We regularly receive useful information from a variety of institutions, and we are happy to report on interesting projects. Everyone is invited to e-mail information to newsdesk@european-diversity.com. At the same time our team members regularly attend →

conferences where news can be found, and we receive a wealth of information from our comprehensive network in EMEA.

How do you work as a team?

Felix Wittig: Developing this newsletter happens in different steps. First we collect news through our knowledge management system. In a next step we evaluate the news and decide on the most interesting content for our readers. Finally, we do the actual writing and the lay-out of the newsletter. Since beginning of this year, we are also regularly reviewing books on Diversity and related topics.

What kind of challenges are you facing when producing the newsletter?

Asli Weheliye: Explicit information on Managing Diversity is not always easy to obtain. Especially the category "Organisational Strategy" is sometimes hard to fill with innovative corporate projects or implementation activities. As few companies are actively publicising their Diversity activities, our readers are more than welcome to send us that kind of information.

Who reads EMEA DiversityNews regularly?

Felix Wittig: There are now about 2,000 readers who receive our newsletter – all over Europe and beyond. This covers the private and public sectors, NGOs and selected universities. In addition, numerous experts from the Diversity arena and related fields regularly receive our publication ten times a year.

What's your vision for the future of EMEA Diversity News?

Felix Wittig: Expansion in several ways might best describe our vision for the newsletter: We want to include more information from countries that are not so often featured, e.g. from Eastern Europe or the Middle East. Also, we would like to upgrade the design and add new features. And of course, we want to reach out to more readers – everyone is encouraged to forward the newsletter and contribute to it as well!

DIVERSITY DIMENSIONS

Women in power still trapped by glass ceiling

Despite recent progress, women in Europe are still shut out of top positions in both politics and business, says a new European Commission report. Across the EU, 24% of parliamentarians are women – up from 16% a decade ago – with a similar proportion holding ministerial office. In the private sector, men still represent 9 out of 10 board members in top companies and two-thirds of company bosses. “Progress on getting more women decision makers has been too slow. If we believe in the values of democracy, we cannot leave half of the population outside the structures of power,” said Equal Opportunities Commissioner Vladimír Špidla. “Gender equality is also good for business. Our economies must reap the full potential of all our talents if we are to face up to global competition. This means smashing the glass ceiling once and for all!” The report, “Women and men in decision-making 2007 – analysis of the situation and trends”, shows that the proportion of women members of national parliaments has risen by around half, from 16% in 1997 to 24% in 2007. However, it is still well below the so-called critical mass of 30% deemed necessary for women to exert meaningful influence on politics. Of the 20 countries worldwide that have achieved the critical mass of 30%, eight are from within the EU - Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, Denmark, Spain, Belgium, Germany, and Austria. For further information you can download the report [here](#).

ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIES

IBM Scotland works with outsourcing partners to recruit more employees with disabilities

IBM indirectly recruits disabled people to administrative roles through a strong relationship with an outsourcing partner. The computer giant already outsources some production processes in Scotland to Haven Products, a small business where 82% of staff have disabilities. The service of Haven Products will be expanded and will soon include also administrative tasks. Linda Scott, integrated operations and location manager at IBM’s in Scotland, says: “The relationship with Haven Products was born out of a manufacturing base, but as the relationship has developed over the years we’ve moved from manufacturing to services.” She also stresses that the relationship with the business partner Haven both encouraged a diverse workforce and supported the local community. “If you have the right skills and are willing to learn then you can provide value,” she says. “If you’re disabled, it doesn’t mean you can’t do that. “And there are benefits in diversity of thought and different ways of looking at things.” She continues that IBM consistently “worked towards getting disabled people into the mainstream business”. Haven Products also works with companies such as Morgan Stanley and National Semiconductor and was awarded the Star Social Firm quality mark in December by Social Firms UK.

BBC starts mentoring programs to increase Diversity

The BBC will launch mentoring programs and other initiatives to fill more top positions with ethnic minority and staff with disabilities. The broadcaster plans to tackle their lack of diversity with several measures over the next three years. According to PersonnelToday these actions will address 90 employees who are covering jobs in radio and TV production, commissioning and scheduling, IT, interactive, marketing, broadcast news, rights and business affairs. Candidates will undertake a mentoring programme, spread over a year, including monthly coaching sessions with mentors, who will be matched to applicants. Steve Kelly director of BBC comments on the plans: “We are not going to see tangible benefits for two to three years, but I'm confident that we'll be in a stronger position as a result. In the past the BBC has spread its efforts too thinly and probably not stuck with initiatives for long enough.” He continues. “This is a long-term commitment and success will be measured in terms of career progression – whether people actually get jobs.”

Additionally the BBC has set targets for ensuring that diversity is reflected on and off air, supported by a number of initiatives aimed at promoting diversity in the workforce as well as in output and content. The current workforce targets are: 12.5% for black and minority ethnic staff overall (11% as at 31 Jan 2008) ; 4% for staff with disabilities - met in November 2007; the workforce targets are currently being reviewed by the BBC Diversity Board, which is chaired by the Director-General.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

EYID: Photo competition “Cultures on my Street”

As the European Union grows together, the European Commission challenges interested people to capture their vision of intercultural dialogue and share it with the world in the competition “Cultures on my street”. All European residents, regardless of age or origins, can participate. The idea behind the competition is that the borders within Europe are fading and people from an even greater mix of cultures and backgrounds are coming together, mingling their voices in an ever growing dialogue of their unique stories and experiences. Recognizing that cultural diversity and starting to consider it as a normality is one of the main goals of the project. Everyone has a story and everyone is invited to tell his or her stories in pictures. People who visit the official competition website have the chance to cast their vote for the photo they feel best captures the idea of intercultural dialogue. Additionally a jury made up of established artists, leaders on intercultural dialogue issues and representatives of the European Commission will also select three photographers, recognising the creativity and technical quality of the photos, as well as the photographers' ability to portray the theme of intercultural dialogue. The jury will review all submissions and select the winning entries by the end of June. For more information please check www.street-cultures.eu

BUSINESS CASE

New survey among European companies on demographic

European companies make progress in preparing for the ageing workforce and show an increased awareness for the shrinking workforce in their countries. These are the key results of the recently published second 'Demographic Fitness Survey' by the Adecco Institute. The 'Demographic Fitness Survey' was conducted among 2,506 companies in Germany, the UK, France, Italy and Spain and is to be the biggest survey among European companies on demographic change. The survey reveals that an increased number of companies have started to analyze their internal age structure and more large companies say they plan to hire more employees aged 50 and older in 2008 versus 2007. The increase in the number of companies analyzing age structures indicates an increased awareness of the issue: 40 percent of all European firms, up from one third a year ago, have conducted an analysis of the overall age structure of their organizations. Medium-sized firms have demonstrated the most significant improvement over the past year.

The survey also concludes that much remains to be done: on a scale of 100 to 400 points, measuring the preparedness of companies to cope with the demographic crunch, European companies averaged a "Demographic Fitness Index (DFX)" of 182 points. The DFX measures five factors that influence a firm's ability to successfully cope with an ageing workforce: career management, lifelong learning, knowledge management, health management, and diversity management. The indices are calculated based on the answers given by the firms interviewed. Germany and Spain lead the group of countries, with the highest DFX of 186 points each. For further information visit: www.adeccoinstitute.com

Volvo Trucks rewarded for diversity initiatives

The factory manager, Anders Olausson, at Volvo Trucks, received the 'Competence Award for Diversity Initiatives' by 'Manager', the Swedish management magazine for his work on increasing the proportion of women in Volvo's Tuve assembly plant in Gothenburg, Sweden. The Tuve factory assembles the company's heaviest and most complex trucks, and since its inception in 1982 has been strongly male-dominated. Anders Olausson has worked to increase the proportion of female employees. The aim is that one out of every three new recruits should be female; an aim that has increased the proportion of women by 70 per cent – from 237 to 407 – in two years. "We can see that our business results benefit through greater diversity, not least through better balance between the genders in all jobs," adds Anders Olausson. "We currently have 15 per cent female employees, of whom 8 women are in managerial positions. These are figures we aim to improve still further."

Apart from establishing clear-cut goals regarding new recruits, all the members of the executive management group at Tuve have undertaken the 'Partnership for Success' training course, an EU project which aims at boosting the number of women in leading positions. All managers at the level below the executive management group will also participate in the course in order to acquire greater awareness and practical experience of this issue.

MEDIA & BITS

Intercultural Cities conference in May

As part of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, the Intercultural Cities Conference will closely look at migration, diversity and urban life in the European Union. The conference will not only provide an opportunity for international city leaders and experts to look at how different cultures can live together but how this cultural diversity can turn to economic, social and cultural advantage and growth. New thinking is needed on how diverse communities can co-operate in productive harmony instead of leading parallel or antagonistic lives. The three day program, 1-3 May 2008, will take place in Liverpool. The conference will feature leading speakers from across Europe, the US, Canada and Australia, who will bring examples of how being intercultural works and can lead to social, cultural and economic advantages.

The conference aims to engage and inspire everyone interested in the intercultural city, particularly those responsible for planning and regeneration, local economy, community cohesion, education and cultural services. For further information, please visit <http://inter.culture.info/icc/programme>

New European Website on Integration

A new EU-wide platform, called Unisys, for networking on integration through exchange about policy and practice, will be launched this year. The project was initiated by the European Commission's Directorate General for Justice, Freedom and Security and will be developed in partnership with the Migration Policy Group, Social Change Online and Eurocities. The website will contain a broad range of information and documents relevant to immigrant integration such as official EU information, national legislations, policy papers and impact assessments from Member States, documents from civil society organisations and research centres, case studies of integration practices, information on funding opportunities for integration practitioners, country information sheets and an events calendar.

In February the project team was engaged in a process of consulting with stakeholders in order to find out how they can contribute relevant content to the website. Interested organisations are welcome to submit reports, policy papers and evaluations on diversity issues to the project team. Furthermore there is also the possibility to publish case studies of integration practices, which are

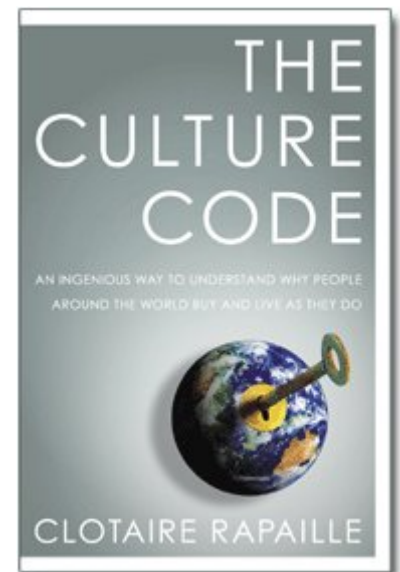
considered as a 'best practice' in the integration of immigrants, on the website. For further information please visit: www.migpolgroup.com

READING DIVERSITY

The Culture Code, by Clotaire Rapaille

Understanding other people – their behaviours, their decisions, their communication – can be regarded as one of the most critical elements on the way to unleash the power of Diversity. Over time, experts have developed a variety of models trying to explain some of the differences we observe or experience when dealing with others. Gender differences (born or bred) were examined and today account for some of the behavioural patterns. Cultural models (with different meanings of 'culture') try to describe characteristics or traits of groups of people, and how they compare with other groups on certain dimensions. Typically, these were chosen by someone (mostly Western males) and then applied to cultural contexts where they may or may not be relevant. In his book, The Culture Code, Clotaire Rapaille presents a quite different approach to understanding cultures and how they play out in everyday life. Concretely, he shows how to immerse in a foreign culture in order to explore what makes people tick – and how. His discoveries have been eye-opening – for marketers at first, for cultural experts later, and for many of us still today. Based on his research of thirty years, he describes the underlying meanings, interpretations, values and/or unconscious connotations that we apply to different things in life. In practical terms, he says that food, love or work carry different meanings for people in different cultures (or other contexts). However, few people have been aware of the vast implications the different 'codes' (as he calls the connotations) have. Actually, they explain many cross-cultural processes more accurately and more effectively than any of the Hofstede's or Hall's ever could.

With a number of powerful examples, Rapaille illustrates the concept of codes, their impact, and how we can eventually access and detect them. His analytic methodology highlights the importance of the meaning behind the words people say: In group interviews, he pays attention to the differences of ad-hoc statements and patterns that become evident during a longer discussion, or more emotional statements once a comfortable atmosphere has been established. These guiding principles have been used in auditing organisational cultures and in stakeholder interviewing for a long time. When Rapaille started his work more than thirty years ago, it was groundbreaking, and his personal stories present a wealth of lively cultural diversity: French himself, and an academic psychologist, he was called to work on corporate marketing projects. His pioneering approach led to conclusions and recommendations that sounded weird to his clients, and apparently it was not easy for him to get his innovative ideas of change through. Does that sound familiar to you with respect to your work as a Diversity practitioner? If it does, the book will offer more of this.



The learning from The Culture Code goes way beyond better understanding the American (US) culture. Actually, more than a dozen areas Rapaille talks about won't be immediately relevant for Diversity practitioners. But the entire concept of understanding 'codes' is very helpful in tackling 'Inclusion'. Clotaire's work confirms current, leading-edge approaches that focus on individual mind-sets and personal drivers rather than grouping people in categories – that might not be relevant for them. The Culture Code serves as an implicit education on paradigm shifts and empathy, thus bringing out the essence of effective inter-personal conduct. If we manage to transfer these insights onto other levels and in more areas, we will be much further ahead in our journey to leveraging individual potential and making the most of all the differences that make a difference. (ms)

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MISCELLANEOUS

European cities integrating migrants

How best to implement migration and housing policies at the local level will be one of the main questions of an upcoming conference on April 7 in Brussels. The conference 'European cities integrating migrants' aims to debate on policies of local governance for integration and access to housing and on personnel policies of local authorities and available services for migrants. It will be organised around four round tables which will address these issues. The event will bring together European policy makers, mayors of several European cities, experts, national and regional representatives, civil society and social partners. The idea for the conference was initiated by CLIP European Network - Cities Local Integration Policies for Migrants, which is managed by the European Foundation and was launched in 2006. It consists of a network of nearly 30 European cities and five research institutes who are working together to promote the exchange of experience and provide support to local authorities and cities in Europe as regards concrete measures of local integration policy.

Leading German evangelical social welfare association loses discrimination case

A German court ruling decided that the Diakonisches Werk, a leading evangelical social welfare organisation in Germany, cannot refuse job applicants on the basis of a non existing church membership if their religion is not a crucial content of their daily work. The court confirmed the verdict in favour of a Turkish German woman who was refused the post of an integration pilot because of her religion. Integration pilots are supposed to improve the dialogue between cultures; for that reason religion cannot be a criterion in the selection process, ruled the court. Furthermore the project "integration pilots" was funded by another organisation – an important fact for the

judges to consider the post of an integration pilot suitable for any person regardless of their religion. Yesim Fadia, the refused integration pilot, considered the actions of the Diakonisches Werk as hypocritical as they pretend to foster the dialogue between cultures but do not allow ethnic minorities to be a part of the process. She will receive a compensation payment of three monthly salaries from the social organisation.

IMPRINT

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