



Ethnic Diversity & Inclusion Best Practice Booklet

*Created in the framework of the project
Business Uniting Talents 2030*



“ In order to move towards structural change within companies, we should look at their values and norms and how they are open for a more diverse and inclusive approach. Small success stories should be empowered and anchored in business processes. ”

Paul Verschueren,
Director Research & Economic Affairs, Federgon

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1. Introduction

The capacity to include ethnic diversity in the labour market will define the future of our economy and society. With decreasing birth rates and increasing numbers of third-country nationals the EU and its Member States are called to action. Are we ready to embrace this challenge?

According to **2020 report of the National Bank of Belgium on “The economic impact of immigration in Belgium”**, 30% of the whole Belgian population was first and second generation immigrant in 2016.

Nonetheless, this incredible multiculturalism is not reflected in the labour market, where the employment rate of people with non-EU background is almost 20 percentage points lower than Belgian citizens. Within the European Union, Belgium ranks last in the professional integration of people with foreign origins compared to all the other Member States.

From increasing business revenue, to thriving innovation and enlarging consumers’ pool, **the benefits that ethnic diversity brings into the working environment are well-documented**. Hiring people with non-EU background does not only allow to consider different perspectives in the management of business process, but also encourages employees to experience multiculturalism and gain a first-hand understanding of its importance.

As companies struggle to integrate people with non-EU background into their workforce, CSR Europe decided to act and launched **Business Uniting Talents (BUT) 2030** with the support of the King Baudouin Foundation and the Prince Philippe Fund. The project has the ambition to contribute to the development of an **equal labour market by 2030**, supporting companies in designing, implementing, and monitoring **inclusive business practices that take into account ethnic diversity**.

As Europe becomes increasingly diverse, the talent pool is consequently changing. BUT2030 supports companies at the front line of this transformation facilitating the creation of collaborative spaces, where members are encouraged to share best practices, brainstorm solutions, and innovate their sector.



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Today, this Booklet represents an important step forward towards **corporate ethnic diversity and inclusion**. The document collects relevant **examples of initiatives implemented by different companies to foster E D&I in their business strategy and management**.

The booklet shows the benefits of E D&I practices and will hopefully inspire many more companies to embark on this necessary and meaningful journey towards multiculturalism.

2. Business Uniting Talents 2030

In 2020, CSR Europe - with the support of the King Baudouin Foundation and the Prince Philippe Fund - developed and launched the project **Business Uniting Talents 2030** to address the lack of diversity in the Belgian workforce by fostering corporate Ethnic Diversity & Inclusion (E D&I).

Thanks to the collaboration with AGC, AXA, Engie, Atelier Jean Regniers, Janssen, L'Oreal, Solvey, Telenet, and Port of Antwerp, BUT2030 achieved remarkable results in the first twelve months of its implementation, including the development of a **Business Model for Ethnic Diversity & Inclusion** and an **Ethnic D&I Management Assessment**.

The Business Model for Ethnic Diversity & Inclusion

The model illustrates the distinctive features of an ethnic diverse and inclusive business based on three pillars: Strategic Commitment, Management Processes, and Measurement & Monitoring.

Each pillar is then structured according to three actionable steps to implement E D&I.

The Ethnic Diversity & Inclusion Assessment

This tool allows to benchmark companies against the Business Model for Ethnic Diversity & Inclusion. This innovative methodology allows businesses to evaluate their commitment on D&I, identify a

company's strengths and weaknesses, and plan corrective measures to take their inclusion efforts to the next level. BUT2030 companies participated to the assessment and received both a personal and collective report.

The validity of the approach to D&I developed by BUT2030 was then tested via **Stakeholder Dialogues**, carried out both in Dutch and French. The rounds of feedback took place during a two-days event with experts from all over the country working in different contexts, who shared opinions and gave informed feedback on the work developed by the BUT2030 task-force.

The outcomes of these fruitful discussions created a basis for the **launch of new pilot activities in Belgium** within each participating company. In its first year, BUT2030 demonstrated the relevance and necessity to inspire companies in their pursuit of impactful ED&I strategies.

In the future, CSR Europe wants expand BUT2030 beyond the Belgian borders to inspire change and foster the creation of a new multicultural way of working in Europe.

Interested businesses are encouraged to participate in this transformation and contribute in the scale-up of these efforts.

Business Uniting Talents 2030 Task Force



3. Booklet Structure

The best practices included in this booklet are presented according to the BUT2030's Ethnic Diversity & Inclusion Management Assessment:

- **Strategic Commitment**
- **Management Processes**
 - ◆ Go Outside
 - ◆ Bring the outside in
 - ◆ Inclusion in business processes (work with the inside)
- **Measurement and Monitoring**

The explanation starts by providing a general overview of the leading company, together with a personal quote of the interviewee. Afterwards, the project characteristics are clearly explained, including communication strategies and organisational details. Finally, a tips&tricks box is added to facilitate the initiation of similar activities in other working contexts.

The booklets contains 15 best practices in total, 13 of which coming from large multinational corporations - AXA, Janssen, Engie, Solvay, BPost SA, MIVB/STIB, L'Oréal, Telene - and 2 from Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) - **Fruitbedrijf Van Hellemont**, and **Goddeeris Industrial Piping**.

Due to the differences in these working environments, the projects implemented by SMEs are indicated at the beginning of the example.

This document has been developed after conducting **in-depth interviews** with the participating companies.



Figure 1: BUT2030's Business Model for Ethnic Diversity & Inclusion (D&I)



4. Ethnic Diversity & Inclusion Assessment

BUT2030 ED&I Assessment recognises three main areas of focus with related *priority actions*.

First of all, it identifies the necessity to gain **strategic commitment** from the executive department of the business. This means that apart from *high-level engagement*, the company must establish a well-structured *strategy* and promote the *buy-in* of all employees across the organisation. Indeed, in order to efficiently link D&I to core business' activities, top management and CEOs as well as leaders and HR sections must recognise the value that this integration can bring to their company. Allocate sufficient resources and encourage employees to engage with the topic are key to ensure business commitment on ethnic D&I.

Secondly, **management processes must be able to reflect the above-mentioned strategic priorities**. In order to do so, companies should act in three directions. By **going outside**, the company is encouraged to create *partnerships with external organisations*, engage with ethnic diverse groups and facilitate *employees' participation* in volunteering opportunities in order to improve the business understanding of ethnic diversity at the local and regional level. Afterwards, establishing policies to institutionalise fair *entrance schemes* can allow the company to **bring the outside in**. Finally, business should **work with the inside**, by *providing trainings and support* to the workforce, ensuring an equal *working environment* and promoting a truly inclusive *corporate culture*.

Thirdly, **incorporating D&I practices in the business strategy and management process requires the establishment of tools to control the efforts**, progress and achievements. **Measuring and monitoring techniques** are therefore key to ensure the effective engagement of companies to D&I practices. *Workforce assessments* and *data collection* are examples of how these relevant aspects can be translated into the company's reality.



5. Diversity & Inclusion Best Practices

5.1 Strategic Commitment

High-Level Commitment

AXA's Diversity & Inclusion Council

AXA is one of the largest global insurers, with more than 150.000 employees working in over 50 countries worldwide. Their purpose is to act for humanity by protecting what matters and translates into **four core business values: courage, integrity, one AXA and customer first.**

The company is committed to create a working environment where **all employees are treated with respect and dignity and all differences are valued.** This is the reason why AXA promotes the inclusion of **different layers of diversity**, such as gender, age, sexual orientation and identity, disability and ethnicity.

“Diversity and Inclusion is officially and internationally a strategic topic. It has been for years and it became more and more important, with concrete actions and targets “

Luc Vandemoortele, Diversity & Inclusion Officer, AXA Belgium

In Belgium, AXA advocates for the recognition of **diversity as an asset to its workforce.** It is perceived as an opportunity to attract talents, increase motivation and improve management processes by gaining the relevant knowledge to serve the needs of national and international customers. Diversity is anchored in the business strategy and corporate culture since 2014, and many D&I practices have been developed and established within the company.

BEST PRACTICE

AXA's **Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Council** was institutionalised in 2015 with the aim of gathering a small group of people to define the main strategic priorities in the business agenda. In Belgium, the group is formed by a few main positions: the D&I officer, the CSR manager, one D&I executive sponsor, an HR representative and two directors of the core business. The executive sponsor, appointed through personal motivation, reports regularly on the outcomes of the Council to the management committee level.

AXA D&I Council meets twice a year to **review KPIs and monitor the progress of projects implemented** to foster diversity-related matters. Once challenges have been identified, the Council plans improvement actions and promotes effective solutions. Considering AXA's complex structure, this goal does not allow the inclusion of representatives of every business level. Therefore, a network of ambassadors has been recently created to support and advice the Council, made up by employees who are proud to be part of the company and eager to raise workers' awareness on themes linked with D&I.

Discussed topics and urgent matters are transparently and directly communicated from the D&I Council to the CEO. Aside from the official meetings organised

two times per year, **informal talks** are welcomed when appropriate and relevant to the achievement of the business strategic goals.

TIPS & TRICKS

In order to set up a successful Council able to **spread awareness of D&I topics**, start by understanding its main aim. Perhaps, if the size of company allows, the Council could both fulfil a decisional and representational role, bringing together employees from all business departments to set up a strong D&I strategy. A **mix of hierarchical banding** can facilitate and encourage the participation of workers with a wide variety of views and perspectives, able to enrich the conversation and give a more complete overview of the multiple priorities that exist within the workplace.

Whatever the aim of your D&I Council will be, the **participants should be driven by motivation** instead of obligation. Setting up a complex structure of rules around the functioning of this organism could disrupt its efficiency and deter people from taking action. **Simplicity and passion** should therefore be the key words at the basis of the Council's creation, in order to ensure its positive impact on the business processes.

Strategy

Janssen Diversity & Inclusion Governance & Strategic Commitment

Janssen, in Belgium, is a unique and leading innovation hub within the international pharmaceutical sector, and is part of **Johnson & Johnson (J&J)**, a global leader in healthcare. Janssen in Belgium currently employs over **5,100 people with diverse backgrounds, including over 70 nationalities**, and expertise in research, development, clinical studies, manufacturing, logistics and patient access to innovative medicines and vaccines.

Johnson & Johnson's comprehensive set of **Health for Humanity 2025 Goals** focus on corporate citizenship and sustainability efforts to advance the United

Nations Sustainable Development Goals including SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 10 (Reducing Inequality).

Through the implementation of specific activities, Janssen is building on a diverse, equitable, and inclusive work environment in which all employees feel welcome. These initiatives also translate Our global **Johnson & Johnson Credo** at the local level. Janssen is convinced that **different perspectives, cultures, knowledge, and experiences lead to new and surprising insights and innovative solutions** for patients and that together they can create a better, healthier world.

BEST PRACTICE

Janssen and J&J have a long tradition of working around Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI). Based on **Our Credo** and the **global DEI strategy**, Janssen strives to be a diverse and inclusive company where everybody can be themselves: 'You Belong'. Over the last decade, the scope of DEI has substantially broadened from gender to many other items such as age, LGBTQ+, intrinsic behaviour, mental health, and ethnic diversity. Janssen has carefully worked out its governance and strategic approach around DEI in Belgium.

DEI at Janssen is built on **3 key pillars**. Firstly, Janssen aims to advance its culture of innovation and inclusion by creating a **working environment in which people feel they belong**, by promoting unconscious bias and conscious inclusion trainings amongst others, which have been followed by many thousands of employees. At the same time, **it wants to build a diverse workforce for the future** by reflecting the society we live in. Janssen continues to strengthen its efforts to create an **inclusive culture beyond gender**. Within the framework of the **'New Millennials' project**, Janssen strives to attract more local talent with non-Western migration background. Thirdly, it wants to **enhance business performance**

and reputation. This strategy is applied across every Janssen/J&J area of operations and is encouraging strong collaboration between regional sites. There is a very close collaboration with the Netherlands by joining forces as a Benelux Team.

Janssen's D&I strategy touches every business level. It all starts with voluntary, grassroots groups of employees that have a common background or share a common goal and passion, and rally around this. In this way, Janssen/J&J Belgium has **five Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)**: Alliance for Diverse Abilities (mental & physical restrictions), African Ancestry Leadership Council, Open & Out (LGBTQ+), Generation Now (<35 years) and Women Leadership & Inclusion. There are also 2 Employee Networks: Experienced Professionals Network (+50 years) and the New Millennials Sounding Board Group (local talent with migration background). Also, more than **100 D&I Champions across all business units** have volunteered to take up a 'DEI Champion' role in their departments. Driven by their enthusiasm and passion for DEI, these Champions are role models inside the company, transmit knowledge, experience, and information to their colleagues, and consequently, spread the value of inclusion within the organisation.

Janssen also has a **D&I Dedicated Central Project Group**, a central D&I Team, formed by employees who play a core role in the deployment of the strategy, such as the **D&I Project Lead for Belgium** as well as **Leads in HR, Talent Acquisition and Communication**. The Group leads bi-monthly meetings where all ERG Leads, Network Leads and Champions working on D&I in Belgium are updated on all relevant strategic and operational initiatives. The sponsors of this Project Group are **senior leaders**, willing to promote and foster a country-wide understanding of themes related to D&I. At this Senior Management level, the Board of Directors is updated and consulted twice a year on all D&I initiatives, with a specific focus on ethnic diversity in 2021.

This DEI strategy is embedded into Janssen's and J&J's daily life via Our Credo. The importance given to the topic makes it an integral part of the business processes. The local Belgian objectives are approved by the Board of Directors and proposed by the D&I Dedicated Central Project Group to the People Leaders via specific information sessions. All people leaders are required to have clearly defined D&I goals, which can vary based on the department and the local context. These goals can be global, local and/or functional, and can range from initiatives to strengthen the D&I mindset of a team, attract diverse talent by strengthening the hiring strategy via diverse slates and diverse interview panels. Here, more than 300 Janssen hiring managers have already attended the 'Inclusive Vacancy Writing Workshop' to ensure their vacancies are as inclusive as possible. The achievement of these goals is monitored regularly and documented in an online system.

From a communication perspective, **the Janssen/J&J D&I strategy and its initiatives are communicated regularly to all employees**, who are also encouraged to participate in information sessions, webinars, activities, and events on the topic. Recent communications have intensively dealt with the topic of ethnic diversity. Moreover, departments are encouraged to set up D&I Lunch & Learn sessions. Starting from the department's willingness to discuss a diversity-related issue, the D&I Dedicated Central Project Group can help facilitate the exchange. In the first semester of 2021, five Lunch & Learn sessions were organised, bringing together around 200 employees.

To date, Janssen is drafting a DEI position paper to highlight the essential elements of its DEI strategy.

The paper is not only a reporting document, but also a call for action to encourage more businesses and stakeholders to join forces and create a labour market that reflects the diversity of society.

TIPS & TRICKS

A tip to start your D&I strategy, is to **set a few clear and feasible D&I objectives and a methodology**.

Establishing goals is not just beneficial for the company's performance, but also motivates employees. It encourages them to develop **problem-solving skills** as well as creativity and a spirit of initiative, which can create a lot of grassroots initiatives from people that are passionate and enthusiastic about D&I.

The combination of this **grassroots passion** together with the identification of central D&I themes and priorities of action can therefore represent a great first step in the path towards building an efficient DEI strategy.

"There has to be some sort of 'invisible social contract' between large organizations and society to tackle the big challenges of today and tomorrow, such as stimulating Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Together we can make a real difference."

Kris Sterkens, CEO, Janssen Pharmaceutica NV

Buy-in at all the levels

Engie Power2Act

The ENGIE Group is one of the biggest multinational utility and energy companies of Europe, headquartered in Paris, France. The Group has 160,000 employees working in more than 70 countries worldwide. From a global perspective, the company's "raison d'être" is to develop a strategy based on **energy transition, openness, equal opportunities policies, solidarity and endeavour for a more inclusive society in general.**

Diversity and Inclusion is embedded in ENGIE's Group Policy regarding **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**, which was latest updated in July 2020.

The Group is committed to the **French-drafted Charter for Diversity** ("Charte de la Diversité"). Through this framework and the reference to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations (2015), ENGIE guarantees **non-discrimination in all aspects of the organization.**

Besides, the Group has implemented a series of non-financial KPIs covering most of the CSR issues. The progress on these KPIs is yearly reported to the Board of Directors and published in the Integrated Annual Report of the Group.

BEST PRACTICE

In Belgium, ENGIE's employees have the possibility to regularly **contribute to partnerships** that the company (and the company's Foundation) is initiating for improving better inclusion of all types of audiences. They are selected according to eligibility criteria, measured through extra-financial KPIs for their societal impact and thus enable to show the progression of the various CSR programs.

To date, in Belgium for instance, the company is running an initiative which helps foster Ethnic Diversity (among other things): **Power2Act**. This a yearly program is dedicated to the employees who are active in civil society, for example by collaborating with NGOs, foundations or other civil organizations. By welcoming their suggestions in the establishment of projects around the themes of diversity and inclusion, disability and environment, the company recognizes their efforts to improve civil society as a whole and promotes similar engagement across all company levels. After evaluating the various proposals, ENGIE selects and supports these projects financially and logistically in order to scale up and enlarge their impacts.

Power2Act is part of ENGIE's CSR programs and **ENGIE**

Foundation's initiatives. It is closely linked to the societal axes of the Group's activities, enhancing its local presence and co-operation with community stakeholders. Every year, these activities are gauged, and their results and outcomes are communicated internally and externally, using personalized story telling techniques for example.

TIPS & TRICKS

Use your internal workforce as a display of diversity and engage them in initiatives outside your company as a way to stand up for differences within your working environment.

Always involve top management in CSR initiatives, develop internal measuring tools, never stop communicating about your initiatives and include internal stakeholders.

"More and more people with different origins develop projects in Belgium through the Power2Act Program. It means that engagement and commitment are growing within ENGIE."

Jacques Spelkens, Senior CSR Advisor at ENGIE Benelux

5.2 Management Processes

Go Outside: Partnerships with Organisations

Solvay partnership with community organisations

Solvay is a science company whose technologies bring benefits to many aspects of daily life. With more than 23,000 employees in 64 countries, **Solvay bonds people, ideas and elements to reinvent progress.**

The Group seeks to create sustainable shared value for all, notably through its **Solvay One Planet** roadmap crafted around three pillars: protecting the climate, preserving resources and fostering a better life. The Group's innovative solutions contribute to **safer, cleaner, and more sustainable products** found in homes, food and consumer goods, planes, cars, batteries, smart devices, health care applications, water and air purification systems.

Within the Group's **Solvay One Dignity program**, the company has accelerated its D&I ambitions by defining **nine concrete targets** tackling the various elements of diversity, equity and inclusion. Those objectives are helping Solvay to create an environment wherein employees are both permitted and encouraged to bring their whole selves to work.

A well-defined **D&I governance** ensures the participation and collaboration of employees from different backgrounds and job families, encouraging them to play an active role as task force members, Employee Resource Group (ERG) participants, allies, and/or responsible corporate citizens.

BEST PRACTICE

In order to facilitate the achievement of Solvay's nine D&I objectives, a **well-defined governance structure** guides the initiatives and projects promoted by Solvay. An appointed task force led by the Head of D&I, a specific forum guided by the CEO as well as sponsors, champions and allies uphold the strategy in their day-to-day work and promote initiatives to help reach its goals. In this context, **building partnerships with community organizations is key.**

Be.Face is one of Solvay's long-term partners and is involved in various programs promoted by the company. To date, the company's participation in Business Uniting Talents 2030 encouraged the establishment of two new collaborative activities. On one hand, Solvay and Be.Face are distributing toolkits in high schools to a high number of students with non-EU backgrounds to trigger their interest in scientific subjects. The toolkits contain video testimonials from Solvay employees as well as explanations of scientific experiments to be replicated in the classrooms.

On the other hand, they are organizing job search mentoring activities for jobseekers with non-EU backgrounds. These activities are divided into three workshops that support CV and interview preparation. Moreover, the progress of participants is followed closely to better guide their career aspirations. The support of Be.Face in the planning and implementation of these activities is fundamental for Solvay to reach the right contacts and get access to a diverse pool of talents.

Apart from Be.Face, **Solvay has partnerships with other community organisations such as Youth Start, Diversicom and Catalyst.** Every employee is strongly encouraged to take part in the multiple activities regularly organized with these partners. Indeed, as part of their employment contract, workers based in Brussels are encouraged to dedicate a few days to societal action. During one of the yearly **Citizen Day events**, existing opportunities were presented to promote connection and participation. Solvay wants to go one

step further in connecting employees with local partners by encouraging the creation of “**Employee Resource or D&I Catalyst Groups**”, in which employees can bring their whole selves to work by participating in DEI activities close to their interests.

A strong social media campaign, regular meetings and weekly newsletters allow the company to communicate about initiatives, strategies and opportunities continuously and transparently. **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are being set up to measure the achievement of the overall business goals** and the specific projects, as well as to monitor the successful engagement of employees in the implemented programs. **Retrospective sessions** are run to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the partnerships and plan corrective actions.

TIPS & TRICKS

Start with your company’s existing partners: the success of partnerships is based on trust, which requires time.

The agreement must represent a **win-win solution** for both the company and the external organization. That means it must recognise mutual benefit and therefore generate a strong motivation to collaborate. A flexible and open-minded approach is fundamental to install the basis for a positive and efficient cooperation. Discussions should leave room for suggestions from both parties, and lead to the establishment of a common strategy.

Community organizations are often working simultaneously with multiple businesses. **Time-management** is therefore a must. Companies willing to create partnerships and organize shared projects must act promptly and contact organizations ahead of time.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) should be set before the implementation of activities to ensure an objective measurement of progress. Finally, regular retrospective exercises should be run in collaboration among all parties to examine the positive and negative outcomes of the partnership.

“When you have consistency between the objectives you communicate, the partnerships you create and the concrete actions that come out of these partnerships, this is what ‘makes sense’ to employees and [...] [demonstrates that you] can go from commitment to concrete action in a clear and tangible way. “

Nathalie van Ypersele,
Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer,
Solvay



Go Outside: Employees' Ownership

BPost SA Steerco Committee

BPost SA, is the national leading postal operator with over 26,000 employees in Belgium. Its main activities are the collection, sorting, transport, and delivery of letters and parcels. In 2010 a new international approach transformed their identity from De Post/La Poste to Bpost and to Bpost Group, expanded their areas of operation in Europe, North America, and Asia.

Bpost group strongly emphasises the connection between people and society. Its extensive network of more than 2,300 service points in Belgium guarantees closeness with every customer across the nation.

This proximity builds trust and understanding of the local context, which enables the company to develop innovative solutions. While efficiently serving its customers, **Bpost group recognises the well-being of its workforce as a business priority.**

With 112 different nationalities, 75% of operational employees having a migration background in certain Belgian operational sites, **Bpost group implemented a comprehensive diversity policy** intending to further intercultural and social cohesion on the work floor.

BEST PRACTICE

Bpost SA commitment towards ethnic D&I started approximately three years ago along with a partnership for support with **Unia, Allyens, and Actiris**. The first step in the strategy for creating a more inclusive work environment entailed an analysis of the situation, followed by focus groups and stakeholder meetings to inform people managers and employees on the topic of diversity and inclusion.

The project took its intervention one step further. After appointing ambassadors to spread knowledge within the company, it implemented an effective communication campaign by illustrating faces of workers with diverse backgrounds on dedicated posters. The aim was to create a picture of their inclusive working culture, observe employees' reaction and encourage interaction. A spin-off project with UGhent will help Bpost SA to measure the effectiveness of the initiatives and therefore evaluate the impact of this value transition on the workforce.

Today, diversity has become a structural part of the company management in the form of a dedicated board, called **Steerco**: an exemplary picture of employee ownership.

The committee consists of business directors, HR directors and representatives of diversity groups: gen-

der, ethnic, and LGBTQ+. During their thrice-monthly meetings, the committee establishes and monitors the progress of Bpost SA D&I projects. These meetings hold a well-prepared agenda sent in advance to the rest of the members. The decisions are adopted based on consensus and afterwards shared across the company.

Internally, the bi-monthly company magazine contains insights on D&I to inform the workforce. Moreover, other channels of communication dedicated to specific business units are often used to efficiently spread relevant messages. Externally, the company capitalises on its social media pages and publishes articles on different papers to tell success stories and set an example. To date, Steerco is a key component in the company's decision-making process. As a point of fact, it approves and sponsors the main streams of the business activities.

Investing in an inclusive workspace, where employees' voices are considered and valued, is a demonstration of Bpost group' willingness to invest in the well-being of its workers. By promoting employee ownership, the company improves their working conditions and makes sure that people's priorities are at the centre of business strategies.



Bring the Outside In: Entrance Schemes

Bpost's Boost! Program

BEST PRACTICE

The **Boost! Program** was created within the Bpost HR department in September 2020 to strengthen and expand their training plan for job seekers and guide them into quality jobs, both within the company and in sectors that struggle to find skilled workers. **Boost! is a method to educate and recruit future employees** who come from different social and ethnic background and lack specific competencies to enter the labour market. It reaches this goal by providing services tailored to three different actors: job seekers, current workforce, and external interested companies.

In the first pillar, Bpost launched two initiatives: **individual vocational training** at the national level and **dual-learning** in Flanders, the Brussels Capital Region and Wallonia. Both actions are supported by Bpost employees who, appointed as mentors, follow each participant in their career path. The mentors are not seen as coaches but rather as a point of contact who provide guidance and feedback to new trainees.

The individual vocational training focuses on **coaching skills** (e.g. language coaching, general job coaching) and training on the job for a maximum of 8 weeks. If the participants succeed in their educational path, they are offered the job as mailmen or truck drivers. In the case of a negative evaluation, additional training is granted.

The dual learning initiative focuses specifically on **adults without a secondary degree, driving license and job**, and allows them to obtain these key elements, together with a professional certificate "poly-valent postal employee" for which the candidates have to do an internship at Bpost. The project debuted with a communication campaign where interested people could send their application via an online form.

Afterwards, **candidates were screened by Bpost and external partners** such as employment services, such as the Flemish Service for Employment and Vocational

"Bpost is a mirror of the society, so diversity and inclusion is important. We look at investing in diversity and inclusion as investing in the well-being of people."

Bernard Vanneste, Senior Project Manager, bpost

TIPS & TRICKS

Starting small is the way to go. It is necessary to establish practices and ensure their effectiveness.

Everyone should be aware of these strategies to secure a strong buy-in across the business. Progress needs time to imprint itself, therefore **measuring improvement at the local level** helps to encourage other departments.

Finally, many are the success factors which should be considered when drafting and monitoring a diversity and inclusion plan, such as sponsorship, communication, ambassadors, and expertise, but also the construction of a good network internally and externally.

Training (VDAB), schools, and social services like the Public Center for Social Welfare (OCMW), to meet the recruitment requirements, which include language knowledge. This competence can also be acquired through dedicated courses, prolonging the duration of the overall program. Once selected, the students follow an academic path which efficiently combines a practical and theoretical part. The balance between the two differs between Belgian regions but both have a duration of one year. After the successful completion of the courses, a sustainable job position is offered to start a full-time career at Bpost.

The overall evaluation of the program and its capacity to **effectively integrate diverse individuals in the company** will be run in the next months. However, some data is already available. Indeed, the first year of the program counted around 450 participants across the Belgian territory, half of which successfully completed their educational training. This demonstrates the **strong need of upskilling the national population** and facilitate their access to the labour market.

Boost! creates paths to obtain sustainable and structured jobs by investing in the ones who are left behind and give them a new chance to improve their life and working condition. **The program builds a diverse workforce**, where employees with different social and cultural backgrounds can grow together from an educational to a professional career.

TIPS & TRICKS

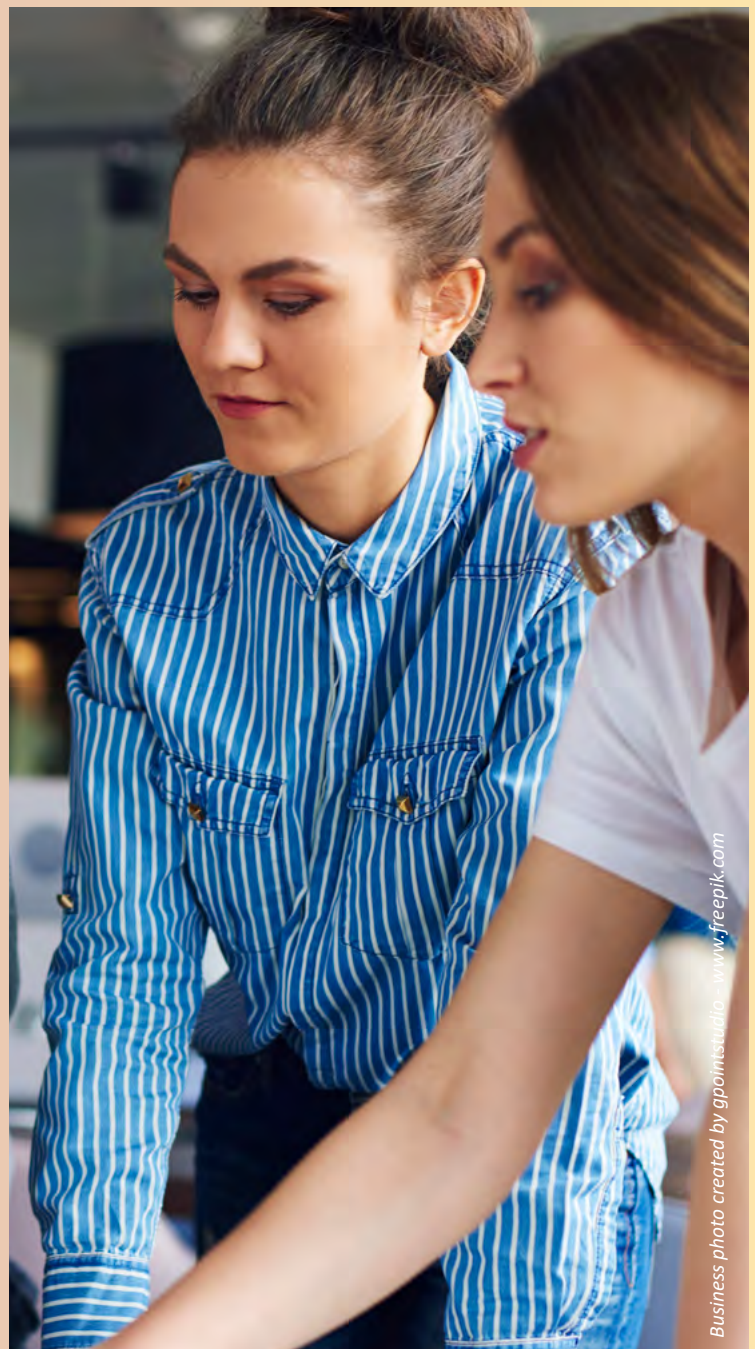
The key elements in a successful program are good **internal and external communication** as well as collaboration with external parties. In this way the company can enhance the chance of reaching the 'right people' and obtaining their loyalty.

At the same time, the business must check its own **entry requirements** and make sure that relevant trainings are established according to the interest of candidates and the strategic goals of the company. Part of the communication is focused on creating a **"community vibe" for the trainees**, by reaching out to them in informal and fun ways, such as via Whatsapp. The main goal is to make them feel at home at Bpost during their training.

"Investing in programs like this, is investing in future employment.

The interns are often more loyal [...] find jobs more easily, due to the training, and that is durable."

Judith Witters, Program Delivery Officer, bpost



Inclusion in business processes (work with the inside): Training and Support

STIB-MIVB Language Plan

STIB-MIVB is the public transport company operating in the Brussels Capital Region and its 11 suburban towns. Its activities include metro, tram and bus transportation across this territory.

The company is governed by an Executive Committee consisting of five Senior Vice Presidents and the General Management, responsible for its five main departments: operations, transport systems, sales, marketing & network, finance & services and human resources. As STIB-MIVB is partly a governmental organisation, the Board of Directors

counts 19 members appointed by the Brussels Capital government.

STIB-MIVB received the '**Belgian Diversity Award**' multiple times by the association United Color of Belgium. With about 10 000 employees, STIB-MIVB requires a structured diversity strategy, implemented by an appointed Diversity and Inclusion officer. Amongst other objectives, this strategy aims at reaching a better representation of people with migration origins within all levels of the organisation.

BEST PRACTICE

STIB-MIVB is operating in the officially bilingual Capital Region of Brussels in Belgium, therefore, its employees need to speak both French and Dutch. In 2018, its Executive Committee launched a 5-years language plan to face the skill shortage of its workforce. Indeed, only 15% of the drivers and conductors owned an official language certificate issued by the Belgian governmental body Selor (Art.10), compared to 45% in 2008. On a monthly basis, the Executive Committee checks the number of employees with Selor graduates with a KPI of reaching 35% by 2026.

STIB-MIVB groups its 10,000 employees in four main categories depending on the nature of their job activity, ranging from safety critical functions to more executive profiles. Based on this differentiation and considering the employees' divergent needs on language education, multiple strategies are promoted. **The largest and most diverse group is composed by individuals who are in touch with travellers:** bus, tram and metro drivers as well as technicians. About 80% of the budget of the language plan goes to this target group as these employees are most in need of specific training. From their recruitment onwards, they follow a **two-weeks course based on their**

level of proficiency of Dutch/French or sometimes English. This course is functional and focuses on the acquisition of work-related terms needed to perform in their job. Besides classroom language trainings, STIB-MIVB offers an electronic learning environment, both aiming to reach the language level A2. Employees reaching this level of proficiency – through passing a test – receive a monthly additional supplement.

After this first initial course, STIB-MIVB offers an **e-Learning platform** where they are encouraged to keep on training by granting a monthly pay rise after reaching a higher language level and passing the official Selor test (B1).

STIB-MIVB considers job functionality and personal growth through this training as vital. Language learning opportunities are communicated externally as it is becoming part of the company's employer branding. For instance, during job fairs the possibility for language training is actively shared amongst potential applicants. At the same time, internal employees are encouraged to participate via personal mailings and through intranet. Besides, 1-hour weekly lunch talks are organized to bring people together

to practice. Since the start of the **Language Plan** in 2018, the company registered a significant growth of employees achieving the Selor certificate (Art. 10). 2 578 employees (26% of all STIB) benefitted from classroom language courses between the 2nd of January 2019 and today.

A remaining challenge is attracting Dutch speakers amongst the business' workforce. Therefore, they actively encourage executives to reach out in the mother tongue of their employees as a part of the language livelihood framework.



TIPS & TRICKS

For a company willing to start with language trainings for its employees, STIB-MIVB advises to adopt a **project-based approach**, as language touches upon many aspects of business operations and it should be anchored across the company. Therefore, appointing a senior project manager able to oversee a similar plan is a first step towards the institutionalisation of efficient solutions.

Another major element to succeed with language trainings is to promote a **functional education method**, to quickly teach the key vocabulary to perform the job both in the classroom and e-Learning trainings.

For smaller companies, it is recommended to scope the Belgian market as many other organisations (like VDAB, Actiris or Huis van Het Nederlands) offer language trainings. Having a clear idea on the existing possibilities on language courses can help smaller companies to offer similar trainings to their workforce.

A last recommendation is to **keep close touch with the experience of the workforce** and adapt plans to make them better fit the need of employees.

“The most important affinity of development of your employees is to get the right person in the right position as quickly as possible.”

Peter Mortier, Learning Partner, STIB-MIVB

Inclusion in business processes (work with the inside): Training and Support

L'Oréal Diversity & Inclusion Onboarding Training

L'Oréal is the world's largest cosmetics company with more than 86,000 employees, active worldwide in more than 150 countries. Nature to its beauty operational business, **diversity is a core need** and only through reflecting the real society the company is able to serve it with better products. In Belgium, L'Oréal currently counts 355 employees.

The company's approach to Ethics is based on four essential principles: **Integrity, Respect, Courage, and Transparency.**

The Group L'Oréal has a team of **8 employees working on Diversity and Inclusion coordination** and in each of its operating countries a national D&I Coordinator is assigned.

On a monthly basis, seminars, best practices and knowledge sharing bring together D&I coordinators. Each D&I Coordinator has five key priorities with assisting KPIs, one of these KPIs is mandatory D&I training for all employees, as changing a company culture requires everyone.

BEST PRACTICE

For more than 15 years, Diversity and Inclusion training is a major part of the onboarding process at L'Oréal Belgium. During three hours, **all new employees are educated with interactive workshops on unconscious bias**, respecting other cultures and other aspects of D&I. Organized two times a year, the workshop creates a safe space for employees and managers to share their story and discover vulnerabilities. This strengthens solidarity within the teams and ultimately brings higher productivity. In Belgium, these trainings are given by an external consultant and during the pandemic, they were temporarily organized online.

The training is structured in **four main topics**. The first pillar **"Why"** focuses on inclusion as a business case. **"What"** starts from the Diversity Tree, explaining the definitions of inclusion, unconscious bias and a better understanding of these topics with concrete examples to demystify prejudices and social barriers. The third part of the training focuses on **"How"** with exercises on uncovering stereotypes and auto-discrimination. **"What can you do"** is the last part of the workshop, aiming to foster practical actions employees can undertake to counteract towards their own bias. Here, participants are facilitated in drafting personal action plans on diversity and inclusion which is followed-up by teams of two.

Besides the D&I onboarding training, L'Oréal offers different **non-mandatory E-learning**s, such as a

training on microaggressions, racism, LGBTIQ, webinar series on inclusive leadership and virtual peer to peer learning sessions for D&I leads.

Inclusion for L'Oréal is a major focus in the **onboarding process**. From the beginning, it creates an atmosphere of openness and room for discussions on more sensitive topics. It paves the way for employee engagement and initiatives on D&I in all aspects of the business and gives a strong signal on the importance of being included within L'Oréal.

TIPS & TRICKS

The content of a workshop means everything and makes it a winner. D&I training should be a must have: through making it **mandatory** all layers in the company are brought along in the journey.

Keep adapting the workshop according to feedbacks and up to date examples so that the right message is spread and maintained.

"The workshop creates a certain vulnerability within people. This helps teams to work more productive."

Stephanie Cols, HR Manager Belgium, L'Oréal

Inclusion in business processes (work with the inside): Inclusive working environment

Vanhellemont Diversity Plans (SME)

The fruit growing company Vanhellemont was founded in 1969 by André Vanhellemont and Jeannine Nijs. At the moment, the company has several activities: fruit growing, a sorting centre and two shops with farm products. Today, the company is still run by the family Vanhellemont and their sons Mario and Gert.

After taking the decision to involve more people with migration backgrounds, the company established a **Diversity Plan with the support of the Flemish and European community** (Resoc and Eduplus). Their commitment was firstly recognised in 2012, when they received the **Diversity price of Jobkanaal**.

Today, Fruit Vanhellemont is an ethnically diverse company as **80 to 90 % of their employees have foreign origins**. Being a Small to Medium Enterprise, Vanhellemont counts around 12 full time employees and 60 to 70 seasonal workers.

“Everyone has its little specialities regardless of where you come from.”

Mario Vanhellemont, Manager, Fruit Vanhellemont

BEST PRACTICE

In 2005, Fruit company Vanhellemont drafted the first diversity plans together with Resoc and Eduplus. These plans laid out several structured activities for a period of two years, including **multicultural workshops open for all employees and executives** and run by an external expert. Due to the peculiarity of the working sector which is based on strong collaboration between workers, knowledge of Dutch has been recognised as a fundamental skill to facilitate efficient teamwork. This is why language classes were organized for a total of 140 hours 2 times per week.

To date, the lessons are not running anymore, but different cards are displayed in the canteen to facilitate the workers in the communication of key Dutch words.

Another initiative of these diversity plans led to the publication of a **reception brochure to introduce newcomers to the company**. The positive impact of these trainings was clearly visible across the company, as the group of employees better communicated with each other, had less disputes, more respect and understanding. The current Fruit Vanhellemont recruitment strategy is founded on an **open doors approach**, able to welcome all people capable of embracing the company's principles of multicultural respect and inclusion.

TIPS & TRICKS

Intense guidance at the onboarding and during the working time is essential. Everyone needs to be along in the diversity and inclusion story. There was a great will from all employees to participate and learn from each other. However, **continuous guidance is needed** to make sure diverse teams can collaborate.



Goddeeris Inclusive Culture (SME)

Goddeeris is an SME based in West-Flanders, Belgium and started as a family business. Their core activity is industrial Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (hvac), industrial piping, and more recently, sprinklers.

The company grew over the years and has today a workforce of about 15 office employees and about 90 workers on site. Today Goddeeris has about **16 different nationalities amongst its workforce**, from Eastern European to Southern European nationalities and abroad.

During the last six years, Goddeeris went through a process of growth and re-branding to publicise its products internationally. As part of this process, they

changed their **working language into English** and established a new slogan: 'we are industrious'.

The outcome of the rebranding exercise allowed to **open the doors for multiculturalism**, move away from a traditional Flemish SME model and gain a more international character.

"There was much grumbling about introducing multiculturalism in existing traditional Flemish teams. The stance of our company was to get used to it and communicate openly and clearly. Thanks to this no one left."

*Miriam Vandenbulcke, Marketing Manager,
Goddeeris*

BEST PRACTICE

Six years ago, Goddeeris' business was transformed from a small family run SME to an international piping company. As a consequence, the company enlarged its recruitment scope and started to attract a growing multicultural workforce.

Today, its workforce counts over **16 nationalities and 60 % of employees with migration background**. This revolution brought about the necessity to walk the extra mile and institutionalise projects able to foster inclusiveness within the company. Actions which were initiated included personal assistance with finding housing or getting financial loans. Language issues and cultural differences represented relevant initial challenges in the creation of a multicultural working environment. Indeed, **open and clear communication** was found to be key requirement to achieve positive and effective results within the working teams.

To overcome these difficulties, Goddeeris organized **Dutch language classes**, encouraging the participation of all employees and established weekly team meetings to discuss and solve potential problems. By implementing this exercise, the company noticed that difficulties linked with language differences become less relevant with younger people as they can communicate more easily with each other.

Another initiative promoted to **enhance a corporate culture** included the invitation of family members to the yearly staff party. Bringing together partners and children from different cultures allowed to show and demonstrate cultural equity. Moreover, the **"Day of the employee"** is a yearly event within Goddeeris, during which workers receive personal awards for who they are, such as the best chef, the best footballer, the funniest,... Every Thursday after work the company organizes an happy hour in its bar, this is also a good opportunity to bring together people working at the office and on site.

Multiculturalism opens people's minds and thoughts. In the beginning there was some resistance towards the multicultural workforce by older Flemish employees, as people seem to be averse to change. Goddeeris communicated clearly that the future would be multicultural and if people did not like it, they had to leave. However, no one left. **Goddeeris decided to focus on the humans, and everyone is welcome as such.**

TIPS & TRICKS

Communication is key, and is built via the establishment of dedicated moments during which teams can freely express their thoughts and ventilate their frustrations.

People tend to be resistant to changes. Therefore, shifts in the approach to the working environment should be carefully managed and plan ahead, giving **enough time to adapt and remain realistic.**

Humans of L'Oréal

L'Oréal is the world's largest cosmetics company with more than 86,000 employees, active worldwide in more than 150 countries. Nature to its beauty operational business, **diversity is a core need** and only through reflecting the real society the company is able to serve it with better products. In Belgium, L'Oréal currently counts 355 employees.

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BEST PRACTICE

At the start of the pandemic in May 2020, **L'Oréal's Diversity and Inclusion Committee** opened an Instagram page showing the true person behind employees at L'Oréal. Inspired by Humans of New York, the company named it 'Humans of L'Oréal'. Creating closeness in times of distance focusing on 'Everyone deserves to be heard and everyone has a story to tell'.

Starting with seven testimonials from D&I Committee members, the notice spread word to mouth on a voluntarily basis. The visuals are communicated within the offices of L'Oréal on screens with QR links to the Instagram page. One year after the birth of this Instagram page, it counts about 18 testimonials. Several diversity related characteristics came upon discussion such as gender, ethnicity, skin colour. The page is limited for L'Oréal employees only.

The company's strategy is based on a **learn and grow mindset**, which is possible through constructive feedbacks. Showing vulnerability and embracing feedback are key at L'Oréal to create an environment which allows each individual to develop and reach his/her full potential.

"The growth mindset is part of the culture at L'Oréal and is based on feedback. Daring to be yourself and be recognized as yourself gives more motivation to work"

Stephanie Cols, HR Manager Belgium, L'Oréal

TIPS & TRICKS

Sharing personal stories should come from employee initiatives and their ownership. Besides, the company should be ready for it. There is no fit for all.



Inclusion in business processes (work with the inside): Inclusive Corporate Culture

Telenet Code of Conduct

Over the past 25 years, Telenet promoted customer-based innovation in the Belgian telecom market. The company ambition is to make life and work easier and happier by offering the best connectivity, entertainment experience and business solutions.

In order to ensure equal access to digital tools, Telenet provides financial and material support to charities and community initiatives and invests in digitalization projects across the nation.

Diversity and Inclusion is a core part of Telenet work, embedded in their **Code of Conduct** and promoted in every business level to ensure employee engagement.

“A company is like society, [...] it is [about] bringing people together around a common mission and common set of principles.”

Ineke Rampart, Corporate Affairs Director, Telenet

BEST PRACTICE

Telenet's work is driven by five main values, which clearly state who the company is and what it is standing for. From guiding innovation to diversity, passion, honesty and closeness to local communities, the company fulfils its main purpose to **reach a better quality of life for everyone**. These values are translated into a series of principles, included into a **shared Code of Conduct**.

While the Legal Compliance team monitors its set-up and implementation, the Code must gain the approval of senior leadership and Works Council. Its implementation follows a **top-down approach** according to which every leader has the duty to spread awareness over the principles and procedures as well as the importance of the policies included in the document. Employee engagement is encouraged via extensive communications and training.

The adoption of codes and principles is promoted by using **gamification** in training programs, for example by granting awards and recognitions for the departments that firstly reach the 97% of completion of mandatory trainings. Trainings and webinars are at the core of the Code's communication strategy, which is developed through Telenet internal communications platforms.

People leaders play an important role in the adoption of the Code of Conduct by regularly addressing the importance of policies during staff and department meetings.

The Code of Conduct includes a **whistle-blower procedure** that allows employees to report infringements on the Code of Conduct. Clear reporting procedures are key to build a secure working environment that is built on trust and respect.

The Telenet Code of Conduct was amended three years ago, to reflect the expansion of the company due to mergers and acquisitions. The code is reassessed annually to control its validity against new national and international laws as well as global priorities. These reviews can lead to the development of additional policies or separate statements which do not modify but rather complement the Code. For instance, the Telenet Code of Conduct already included rules on diversity and inclusion, stating the importance to respect the uniqueness of employees in terms of gender, sexual orientation and ethnicity. However, due to the attention gained by **Black Lives Matter movement**, Telenet is currently in the process of implementing a dedicated anti-discrimination

policy that will strengthen the workforce's sense of belonging and promote an inclusive culture within the business.

If internally the Code is key to clarify the company's expectation over workers' behaviours, externally it allows to attract the right candidates which can reflect business values.

Telenet's principles do not only involve employees, but also influence and guide the relations with external suppliers and consultants, which are required to sign the **Supplier Code of Conduct**. This code includes regulations related to specific issues such as material sourcing and child labour, that ensure an ethical collaboration between the parties.

Finally, a broader range of stakeholders and actors are informed over Telenet principles via the publication of sustainability reporting on a regular base.

TIPS & TRICKS

The first thing to do when structuring a Code of Conduct is to gain a **clear vision of the company's values** and make sure that those principles are supported by the senior leadership, the social partners and the broader organisation. This alignment is fundamental to gain the **buy-in from every business unit** and therefore the engagement of all employees.

Using existing templates can facilitate the drafting of the Code, which afterwards can be customised to demonstrate how the company brings the principles to life and embeds them into their core processes. Providing examples help workers to better understand what is expected from them and how they can translate the values in their day-to-day work.

Finally, clarifying a way to report infringements is key to reinforce **employee's empowerment** and consider their perspective over the established regulations.



Inclusion in business processes (work with the inside): Other Departments

Janssen Diverse Supplier Program

Janssen in Belgium is a unique and leading innovation hub within the international pharmaceutical sector, and is part of **Johnson & Johnson (J&J)**, a global leader in healthcare. Janssen in Belgium currently employs over **5,100 people with diverse backgrounds, including over 70 nationalities**, and expertise in research, development, clinical studies, manufacturing, logistics and patient access to innovative medicines and vaccines.

Johnson & Johnson's comprehensive set of **Health for Humanity 2025 Goals** focus on corporate citizenship and sustainability efforts to advance the United

Nations Sustainable Development Goals including SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 10 (Reducing Inequality).

Through the implementation of specific activities, Janssen is building on a diverse, equitable, and inclusive work environment in which all employees feel welcome. These initiatives also translate Our global **Johnson & Johnson Credo** at the local level. Janssen is convinced that **different perspectives, cultures, knowledge, and experiences lead to new and surprising insights and innovative solutions** for patients and that together they can create a better, healthier world.

BEST PRACTICE

This year, Johnson & Johnson launched the latest comprehensive set of Corporate Social Responsibility goals. The **Health for Humanity 2025 Goals** represent an ambitious next step in the company's purpose to blend heart, science, and ingenuity to profoundly change the trajectory of health for humanity. The set of 21 Goals focus on citizenship and sustainability, reflecting a commitment to advance a healthier world where people and communities can thrive, so the next generation is healthier than the last. One of these goals is a commitment to achieve 4.5 billion US\$ of Global Impact spend through the supply base around the world which includes advancing spend through the Supplier Diversity Program in Belgium.

Janssen's/Johnson & Johnson's **Global Supplier Diversity and Inclusion program** in Belgium was launched in 2019. Today the business promotes the use of suppliers owned by women and members of the LGBT+ community. It also works with **Social Enterprises**, namely companies that drive positive societal impact in the local communities, including providing employment opportunities for people with learning difficulties and autism. Working collaboratively with the procurement function, all Janssen associates are encouraged to include diverse suppliers in all Request for Proposals (RFPs).

Across the Global Procurement function, Category Management and Sourcing teams continuously work to identify and build a pool of diverse suppliers. **The team also partners with NGOs and accreditation bodies across the globe** to discover new suppliers, certify these suppliers and build market capacity.

For Belgium, there is however a particular challenge to growing spend. Currently no independent NGO organisation exists to both discover, grow, and then certify diverse suppliers and the company's ability to deliver impact in communities is not maximised. The concept of Supplier Diversity and Inclusion is poorly understood by many businesses. In other parts of Europe such as the Netherlands and the UK, NGO infrastructure is more developed, and this presents an opportunity.

NGO infrastructure in Belgium will support diverse suppliers and connect them to companies like Janssen/Johnson & Johnson. This could be achieved by working with leading Global and European NGOs such as WEConnect International as well as partnering with other corporations to develop this strategy.

The outcomes of the Global Supplier Diversity and Inclusion Program at Johnson & Johnson are

communicated internally and externally, with the engagement of senior levels inside the company in Belgium. The program is a regular point of discussion and progress is reported four times a year at a Senior Leader Steering Committee. Supplier diversity is not simply a procurement initiative, but an embedded Enterprise priority across every business unit.

The benefits that this program brought to Janssen/J&J are multiple. **A diverse supply base aligns to a diverse customer base** and as a result better meets the needs of the business' customers, whilst at the same time strengthening local communities. It permits access to a larger talent pool and facilitates the business goal to promote diversity and inclusion not just with employees but through important supplier partners.



People photo created by lookstudio - www.freepik.com

TIPS & TRICKS

Supplier Diversity and Inclusion is a demonstration of a company's values and alignment of the program, such as the alignment to Our Credo at Johnson & Johnson, will drive engagement.

A fundamental element to replicate in any program is to **gain the commitment of senior leaders**; their willingness to advocate for equality and non-discrimination will drive awareness in the workforce.

Goals and objectives must be clear and shared with the employees, backed up with effective story telling so teams see the impact that their spend can have to support the communities in which we live and work through wealth and job creation.

A program that is more than a CSR initiative and a real business imperative will demonstrate how diverse suppliers provide superior goods and services bringing value to customers.

"We make a strategic and positive impact for all of our stakeholders through our long-term approach to sustainable procurement including economic, social and environmental sustainability.

This means that we work closely with our global supplier community to amplify and expand the reach of our activities beyond today—for our collective future."

Len DeCandia, *Chief Procurement Officer,*
Johnson & Johnson

5.3 Measurement and Monitoring

Workforce Assessment

AXA's Ethnic Measurement Strategy

AXA is one of the largest global insurers, with more than 150 thousand employees working in over 50 countries worldwide. Their purpose to act for humanity by protecting what matters is translated in **four core business values: courage, integrity, one AXA and customer first.**

The company is committed to create a working environment where **all employees are treated with respect and dignity and all differences are valued.** This is the reason why AXA promotes the inclusion of **different layers of diversity**, such as gender, age, sexual orientation and identity, disability and ethnicity.

In Belgium, AXA advocates for the recognition of diversity as an asset to its workforce. It is perceived as an opportunity to attract talents, increase motivation and improve management processes by gaining the relevant knowledge to serve the needs of national and international customers.

Being anchored in the business strategy and corporate culture since 2014, many are the D&I practices that have been developed and established within the company.

BEST PRACTICE

In order to imagine a way forward, business need to know their starting point. This statement is applicable to a wide variety of strategic issues, including ethnic diversity and inclusion. However, European regulation on data privacy hamper companies' possibility to measure their workforce's multiculturality. Anonymous surveys could be run to understand the internal diversity of the employees, but it would not guarantee a reliable snapshot of the situation.

AXA Belgium begun to advocate about the necessity to gain a clearer overview of its workforce a time ago, and recently found a solution to this pressing issue. Together with Crossroads Bank for Enterprises, **AXA developed a method to obtain employees data whilst respecting GDPR regulations.** Indeed, this collaboration allows them to receive once every year an anonymous view of their workforce diversity, in terms of gender, age category, starting day of employment, salary category and origin.

Regarding origin, the employee is considered Belgian only is him/herself, the father or the mother (in this

order) do not report any other nationality. This means that if the individual was born in Belgium but both parents are of foreign origins, the employee's ethnic background will match the origin of the father.

AXA appointed a specific Team that works closely with the partner, composed by representatives from the communication department, data analysts, a GDPR compliance expert, the IT security officer and the D&I officer. The data obtained by Crossroad Bank for Enterprises is standardised and therefore it is responsibility of the company to analyse it and draw appropriate conclusions.

After running the first test, AXA noticed that **lower hierarchical bandings recorded higher ethnic diversity**, whilst management levels did not represent the company's multiculturality. Starting from this outcome, new strategic plans were drawn and improvements were made to ensure a more ethnic diverse leadership succession. This innovative best practice that allows a more efficient measurement of the business ethnic diversity, has been communicated internally to all staff

and externally through partnership networks such as the task force group within Business Uniting Talents 2030, the Diversity Managers Association Belgium and Women in Finance, to encourage the participation of more companies and the wider adoption of the created service.

TIPS & TRICKS

The measurement techniques that could be established to investigate the level of ethnic diversity within a company depend on the size of the business. **Smaller enterprises are facilitated in the collection of this data** and the institutionalisation of new approaches able to bring innovation in diversity-related topics. Bigger organisations can struggle to gain a clear view of their workforce. In this case, partnerships and best practices can inspire effective change.

Despite the challenges which a company can encounter whilst moving the first steps in the measurement of ethnic diversity, starting is key. Every organisation should measure, and this should be done regularly. Only in this way it would be possible to compare results and put in place actions to improve management processes.

Measure, compare and act. The methodologies will increase their efficiency if a clear communication campaign will raise awareness over the importance of these processes and promote buy-in from every business level.

*“Start measuring regularly.
It is just the start of a new beginning.”*

**Luc Vandemoortele, Diversity & Inclusion Officer,
AXA Belgium**



Business photo created by wlostock - www.freepik.com

Specific Data Collection

Telenet Employee Engagement Survey

Over the past 25 years, Telenet promoted customer-based innovation in the Belgian telecom market. The company ambition is to make life and work easier and happier by offering the best connectivity, entertainment experience and business solutions. In order to ensure equal access to digital tools, Telenet provides financial and material support to charities

and community initiatives and invests in digitalization projects across the nation.

Diversity and Inclusion is a core part of Telenet work, embedded in their Code of Conduct and promoted in every business level to ensure employee engagement.

BEST PRACTICE

Telenet's ambition to build an inclusive working environment, where people can thrive and grow, encouraged the management to establish regular surveys able to give a reliable picture on the level of engagement of the workforce.

Two are the tools used by the company to support these measurements. On the one side, **Telenet runs Zoom Engagement Surveys once every two years.** This detailed questionnaire is part of a broader employee engagement assessment conducted by Liberty Group, Telenet's major shareholder and creates an overall benchmark on the trends and performances of all telecommunications companies across the Liberty Global Group. Within Telenet, the survey is coordinated by the People Engagement Team and the responsibility to ensure employees participation is cascaded towards people leaders, who oversee the roll-out of the survey within their departments. As part of the Zoom survey, employees are asked to share opinions about well-being, workload and personal connection with the strategic vision of the business. The wide range of topics assessed also include diversity-related issues, such as anti-discrimination and equality.

On the other side, the company organises **Pulse measurements every quarter of the year.** This short questionnaire is composed by three main queries regarding the employee's feeling of belonging, level of well-being and willingness to promote the company internally/externally (ambassadorship).

The results of both the Zoom and Pulse surveys are reviewed and analysed by the senior leadership who can decide to initiate specific action plans according to the outcomes. The action plans are developed by the People Engagement Team for issues related to the feeling of belonging, and by the Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Team for concerns linked to the perception of wellbeing. **All departments across the Telenet organization are actively involved** in addressing the issues and implementing the corrective action plans.

Corrected actions can take the shape of broad answers to cross-cutting problems. For instance, COVID-19 impacted the level of well-being of the overall workforce, leading to the implementation of specific trainings sessions and programs to give additional support for every worker. Alternatively, initiatives can be taken at the level of specific teams or departments which registered low scores in the assessment.

It is the role of people leaders to inform their teams about the results of the surveys, to discuss the issues and to draw a joint action plan toward collective improvement. The efficiency of these actions is demonstrated through the possible comparison between the performance in different years. Indeed, as the company is conducting regular monitoring surveys it is possible for the management level to tackle the outcomes of **corrective programs** using the rich historical data.

The results of the surveys conducted are transparently communicated to the workforce, usually through a **Call to All** which highlights both the positive and the negative outcomes and presents objectives and action plans to foster improvement.

Both measurements help Telenet to promote the employees' engagement and to increase the belonging to the company. **Strong people engagement also positively contributes to the employer branding.**

“Do something with the data you are collecting. Just doing surveys for doing surveys is not going to help. Because people will say ‘what is the point of filling in all those surveys if nothing is changing.”

Ineke Rampart, Coporate Affairs Director, Telenet

TIPS & TRICKS

For companies willing to engage their workforce through internal surveys, **small initial steps can lead to quick and relevant results.** Beginning to ask a few key questions regularly via the establishment of a Pulse Survey can represent a great way to obtain a screenshot of the business starting point. Available tools on the market can support these efforts, facilitating the collection of relevant data and speeding up the methodology developed. Whatever will be the final shape of the questionnaire, **transparency in the result communication is fundamental.** Employees should be aware of the strengths, downfalls and areas for improvement of the company, as well as the corrective action plans which originated from the feedback outcomes.

The institutionalisation of surveys and gathering of information must be communicated internally and externally as part of the annual sustainability reporting in order to raise awareness on the people engagement within the company and the actions taken to strengthen the feeling of belonging.



6. Conclusions

This Best Practice Booklet showcased 15 examples of projects that large, medium and small enterprises across Belgium designed, developed and implemented in order to foster a diverse and inclusive workspace.

The ultimate goal of this publication is to inspire more businesses to apply similar initiatives in their working environment, and to encourage networking and collaboration on this topic. As the examples demonstrated, **CEOs' commitment** is fundamental to promote effective strategies and ensure the buy-in of all business departments. Moreover, strong **partnerships with community organisations** can allow to obtain an informed picture of the context and a better understanding of how the business can support the improvement of the local socio-economic scenario.

A focus on the establishment of inclusive business processes is key to ensure the recruitment, training and retention of diverse talents, which should be supported by a **robust corporate culture based on the principles of solidarity and equity**.

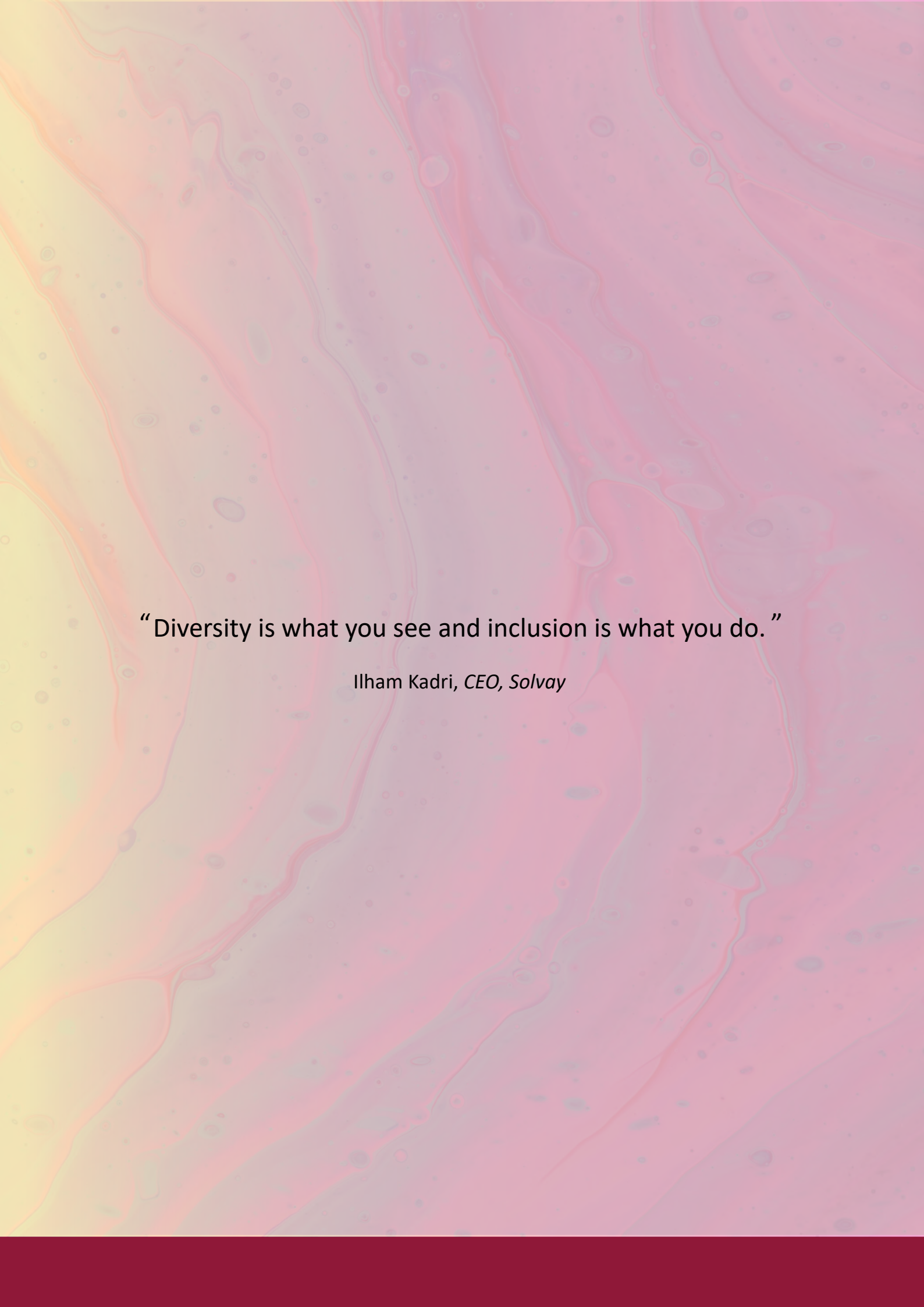
Finally, in order to upscale and reinforce the outcomes of this approach internally and externally, an effective **communication strategy** should update employees and citizens on the company's D&I initiatives.

Business Uniting Talents 2030 is a chance for everyone to participate in the discussion and make a change in society. It provides a space for dialogue, and facilitates enterprises in embarking the path towards ethnic D&I, transforming their way of working and challenging their business processes. **Only by questioning the system, it will be possible to improve it and construct a more equal European labour market.**

At CSR Europe we believe in the power and the necessity of this transformation. We want to be protagonists of this change and take action, today, to improve our working environment.

Is your business ready to join forces for Diversity & Inclusion in the workplace?





“Diversity is what you see and inclusion is what you do.”

Ilham Kadri, *CEO, Solvay*



Thanks to the support of:



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ABOUT CSR EUROPE

CSR Europe is the leading European business network for Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility.

With our corporate members, National Partner Organisations (NPOs), and Associated Partners, we unite, inspire & support over 10,000 enterprises at local, European and global level.

We support businesses & industry sectors in their transformation and collaboration towards practical solutions and sustainable growth. We are for systemic change. Following the SDGs, we want to co-build with the European leaders and stakeholders an overarching strategy for a Sustainable Europe 2030.