

Diversity management approach

Diversity management aims to maximize the potential of all employees. The diversity management approach to human resource management was developed in the late 1980s in the United States. It was a response “to the uncertain future of affirmative action”. (Van Gool, 2015). The term “affirmative action” is used to describe the anti-discrimination legislation of the United States in the late 1960s and 1970s. Affirmative action measures were used to tackle the problem of discrimination and correct the effects of past discrimination towards “target groups that [had] been previously excluded or underrepresented” (Selden, 1997).

In times of intensive migration flows and increasing social complexity, one of the biggest contemporary challenges to European Union countries lies in the integration of migrants and in the diversity management. The employment of migrants and the diversity management is perceived as a key part of the integration process in European Union policies. (Vukojičić Tomić, 2017).

In the case of immigrants and ethnic minorities, some of the most significant barriers they have to face in the workplace are: stereotypes and prejudices, individual or systemic discrimination, limited access to networks and relations that may support their access to a job, social exclusion, etc. That is why, when designing policies on managing ethnic diversity, organizations usually go through the following stages¹:

1. Being aware of the existence of such diversity. In this first stage, the emphasis is placed on adapting the minority to the organization, making practical adjustments (for instance, translating the Internal Code into the languages spoken by the minorities).
2. Making room for diversity in the organization. For this purpose, it is necessary to change the attitude and behaviour of the majority and change the internal rules and procedures.
3. Creating an environment of equal treatment and opportunities for minorities (active recruitment and promotion of minorities, turning from “accepting diversity” to “be aware of diversity” and reaching the mainstream on diversity management, including decision-making).

There are several other actions that might support early integration into the labour market and a good diversity management, such as the sharing of best or promising practices among European countries, an obligatory labour market integration year, individual guidance to labour market integration and employment guarantee schemes (Vukojičić Tomić, 2017).

Under the initiative and with funding from the European Commission, in 2010 the EU Platform of Diversity Charters was created². The Platform offers a place for existing European Diversity Charters (currently 21) to exchange and share experience and good practices more easily through Platform meetings, expert seminars and annual high-level forums. Diversity Charters encourage organizations (NGOs, public bodies, private companies...) to develop and implement diversity and

1 <http://www.mitramiss.gob.es/oberaxe/ficheros/documentos/GuideManagingDiversityWorkplace.pdf>

2 https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/tackling-discrimination/diversity-management/eu-platform-diversity-charters_en

inclusion policies. By signing a charter, the organization voluntarily commits to promote diversity and equal opportunities in the workplace.

Resources

- European Commission, *EU platform Diversity Charter*
- Ministry of Labour and Immigration (Spain), *Guide to manage diversity in the workplace*
- Selden, S. C. The promise of representative bureaucracy: Diversity and responsiveness in a government agency. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1997
- Van Gool, B. From plutocracy to diversity: The (de)construction of representative bureaucracy theory, 2015
- Vukojičić Tomić Tijana, The Challenges of Diversity Management to Migrant Integration in the European Union, 2017



<http://www.ssf.org.es>