Run.for Diversity

Diversity and sport in the workplace

REPORT 2 : SEMISTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

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I. RESEARCH GOALS AND METHODOLOGY

Research question and objectives.

➜ RESEARCH QUESTION

➢ **Does the implementation of policies to promote diversity and sustainability through physical activity, exercise and sports favor their inclusion in the work environment?**

➜ OBJECTIVES

➢ **Main objective:**

- Understand the situation regarding diversity and sustainability in the workplace through physical activity, exercise and sport for inclusion.

➢ **Secondary objectives:**

- Analyze measures to support diversity and improve sustainability that promote inclusion in the workplace.

- Assess politics for the promotion of PA, exercise and sports in the work environment.

- Review measures to support diversity and sustainability through PA, exercise and sport that promote inclusion in the workplace.

Methodology

➔ <u>SEMISTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS</u>

<u>**10 online interviews conducted through a semistructured script in 6 different countries:**</u>

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<u>David de la Fuente</u>
Head of People at SENER Aerospatial and Defence (Spain)

<u>Sašo Rink</u>
Director at The Public Housing Fund of the City of Ljubljana (Slovenia)

<u>Camino San Millán</u>
Head of Diversity & Inclusion at Acciona (Spain)

<u>Malcolm Sammut</u>
Police Inspector Special Intervention Unit at Ministry for Home Affairs, Security, Reforms and Equality (Malta)

<u>Alec Felice</u>
Sport Development Officer at Institute for Physical Education and Sport of the University of Malta (Malta)

<u>Thomas Bordenave</u>
HR marketing and communication manager at Teréga Company (France)

<u>Ioanna Chatzilia and Sofia Dritsa</u>
Administrative-Finance Director and HR Manager at Sportscamp Group (Greece)

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Engagement-Performance Management, D&I Supervisor Human Resources at AB Vassilopoulos (Greece)

II.   SAMPLE OBSERVATIONS AND KEY LEARNINGS

Our sample at a glance

COUNTRY	PUBLIC/ PRIVATE ORGANISATION	SIZE/ #STAFF	SECTOR/ INDUSTRY
LATVIA	PUBLIC	600-700	Energy/ Electricity sector
SPAIN	PRIVATE	95 (12,000 worldwide in 27 countries)	Insurance
SPAIN	PRIVATE	1,000-1,050 across 3 cities	Aerospace
SLOVENIA	PUBLIC	60	Public Housing fund
SPAIN	PRIVATE	22,000 all over Spain (50,000 worldwide in 40 countries)	Infrastructure and renewable energy
MALTA	PUBLIC	2,400 (26 in his unit)	Police Force
MALTA	PUBLIC	3,000 (84 in his unit)	Education/ University
FRANCE	PRIVATE	650	Energy/ Gas sector
GREECE	PRIVATE	30 (full time / all year long) 150 at peak season (spring-summer)	Sports training & leisure camps for kids and athletes
GREECE	PRIVATE	13,500	Retail/ Supermarkets

Sample Observations (1)

➢ **Country differences:**

- Due to the **unequal representation of the countries under study and the small sample size**, it is difficult to draw some firm conclusions based on this criteria.

- However, it is true that, for some of the discussed topics, the country may have had an impact on respondents' experiences, especially on the relevance (or lack of) of certain dimensions of diversity & inclusion (e.g. Gender equality, Sexual orientation, Race & Ethnicity, Generation gap & Disability), which could be linked in some way to **how advanced a country might be in terms of social rights and social advances, and whether they see themselves as conservative vs. liberal.**

➢ **Public vs. Private Sector:**

- **Public entities, compared to private organizations, are more likely to be constrained and limited by what the State or higher public institutions** (e.g. Ministries or Trade unions) **impose upon them in terms of legislation and regulations.**

- Yet this can also have positive repercussions in this brings a series of policies which give workers advantages and work in favour of diversity

and inclusion (and which may not have been put in place otherwise), for instance specific maternity or retirement plans.

- In addition, **for some of the interviewees working in the public sector** it was clear that some issues such as **race or ethnicity had no relevance whatsoever because their institution only hires country nationals** (e.g. Police or public housing).

Sample Observations (2)

> **Business Sector:**

- This criteria can have a huge impact on some of the dimensions of inclusion. This was especially the case for people working in **industries which are traditionally very masculine** and/or led by men, such as the energy sector, the police forces or the insurance sector. **In those cases, there was often a real desire to tackle gender inequality** (or simply the lack of representation of women in those industries).

- In addition, **sectors which demand a very high level of technical knowledge and experience** (e.g. engineering or aerospace) **also signify that it is more likely to find generation gap issues,** since older workers and younger ones have to interact more to share their knowledge and abilities. Therefore, in those cases solutions and measures are to be found.

- **Some sectors (e.g. the public housing sector, Sportscamp) are also naturally more "socially-oriented"** and therefore sensitive to diversity and inclusion.

> **Company size & Scope**

- **Generally speaking, the bigger the company and especially the more global they were, the more protocolised, structured and integrated certain policies were.** For instance, for several big companies, sustainability is a backbone of their business strategy and a strong company value that drives everything they do, both internally and externally.

  "The Employee network was created, where certain groups are represented and where everyone feels free to speak out and be heard in order to raise their voice on the issue they are most interested in, or which they feel most identified with (Spain)"
  "We have a full strategy implemented which covers most of the dimensions of diversity" (Greece)

- This does not mean that the **smaller companies** (or the more national ones) do not put measures in place or do not take action in favour of

inclusion, it is just that in some cases **those actions tend to be more informal or less "official".**

"Everybody knows it, everybody does it, but it's not written anywhere (Greece)"
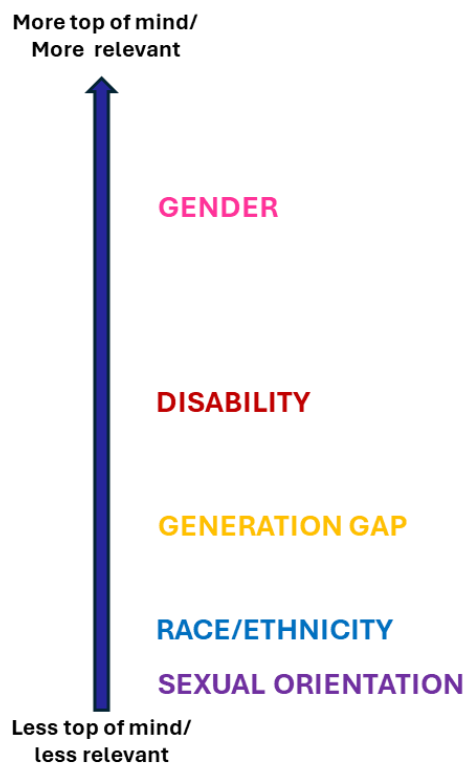
Headlines

- ➢ **Diversity-support measures are numerous yet in general the most relevant ones are those related to the gender and disability dimensions.**

    - ➢ For the former, women-friendly measures are often focused on equal opportunities (especially in male-dominated industries, and at all levels of the corporate ladder), equal salary, work-life balance and social rights.

    - ➢ For the latter measures mostly focus on adapting the work environment to their specific needs and raising awareness among the rest of workers (and sometimes even outside the organisation).

- ➢ **Measures to support sustainability are well under way and now well engrained in companies' future plans and strategies**. They are the result of long-term awareness-raising actions based on both small daily initiatives as well as more punctual events. In some industries many changes are taking place at structural level and in the way they operate, with the objective **to constantly lower their carbon footprint.**

- ➢ **Measures to encourage physical activity, sport and exercise abound.** They are now part of much bigger schemes and strategies **to foster Well-being and wellness as a macro concept in the workplace.**

- ➢ **Inclusion is achieved through them, even though it is not the primary intention or goal** for setting them up.

III. ANALYSIS CATEGORIES

a) Diversity support measures that promote inclusion in the workplace.

**Diversity support measures that promote inclusion in the workplace –
OVERVIEW**

➢ **Despite the previously-mentioned criteria which can have an impact on the importance of certain dimensions of diversity and inclusion, some areas are clearly more relevant than others across countries:**

**More top of mind/
More relevant**

GENDER

DISABILITY

GENERATION GAP

RACE/ETHNICITY

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

**Less top of mind/
less relevant**

- **Gender** is **the most recurrent area** and for which many policies are implemented.
- **Disability** is an area which resonates with some interviewees and industries but to a lesser extent.
- **Generation gap** is not highly top of mind and not too big a deal for most.
- **Race/Ethnicity** & **Sexual Orientation** tend to sit at the bottom of the list, mostly because **they are claimed not to be issues in the organisations** (or if it is an issue then each case is treated on an individual basis). In any case these two are not priorities for policy-making.

Zoom on specific diversity support measures: GENERAL

> **An important topic and burning issue is many countries across Europe nowadays for several reasons and at different levels:**

❖ **At GENERAL LEVEL:**

An increasing determination to break down stereotypes and promote gender equality and equity for all.

- For instance, in Malta, police **uniforms are unisex** now, and all officers have the **same job title** (across genders).
- In the aerospace industry in Spain some pilot programs are implemented in the HR recruitment process to push **non-discrimination further** (e.g. blind recruitment at first).
- The **salary gap is also addressed** in many organisations and the biggest companies monitor the progress on a frequent basis.
- In **big organisations**: frequent **review of all processes** (attraction, selection, and promotion) to ensure there are no barriers and equal opportunities.
- **Regular training sessions** to raise awareness on gender bias, to eliminate common gender stereotypes, to learn to talk "inclusively".

"We have the Circle network which tries to break down gender bias and stereotypes. We create an inclusive culture where both males and females come together to promote awareness and learn from each other and drive change" (Spain)

"Before there was a differentiation between men who were called PCs (Police Constable) and women who were WPCs (Women Police Constable) but now everyone is called PC regardless of gender" (Malta)

"We have the 'same salary' policy, i.e. no differences at all, all working side by side, the same hours during the day, in all kinds of positions, for example in the kitchen" (Spain)

"Positive discrimination measures: what we just started doing is to do the early phases of the selection without gender identification. We are testing it to see how it works, […] it's a bit trial and error to check what works and what doesn't" (Spain)

❖ **At SOCIAL LEVEL:**

An increasing demand for a better work/life balance, motherhood rights, etc. so measures have been implemented.

The **most significant examples** are seen **in the public sector** companies:

- In Latvia, the Collective Bargain Agreement (as part of Trade Unions) gives **social guarantees** (to all genders) and it especially **encourages women to have kids** as it helps cover their **maternity expenses** (birth giving, hospital expenses) and also guarantees a place/ job to return to after maternity leave **(job safety).**

- In Malta, some women-friendly measure were put in place 3 years ago for female police officers, such as **longer maternity leave** and no **longer losing their jobs/their level** when becoming mothers.

"We have a wide policy for work-life balance and more and more men are joining this policy too, which is a good sign that these things are working and they are shared. It is no longer an issue that used to be related to women, now it's more shared especially among younger generations" (Spain)

"Their place is kept for them and they know that their job is waiting for them when they return after 1 year or so" (Latvia)

"Now they no longer have to re-apply for their position within the police like they used to before" (Malta)

❖ **At INDUSTRY LEVEL:**

- **In many sectors the proportion of women hardly reaches 25%-30% of the total workforce** (traditionally seen as "jobs for men" or are less appealing for women). This is why, in many instances, the **implemented measures do not only serve the company's interest**, but they are **also aimed at its specific industry** as a whole.
- **A number of measures are deployed at different levels of the process/ of the organisation in order to:**
  - **Attract female talent to certain industries** (especially STEM degrees & careers, insurance sector).
  - Also **to increase the number of women at certain levels** of an organisation (especially at Director/Board level where inequality is still strong).
- **During the education/orientation/training stage** (more external initiative): going directly to the source i.e. visiting schools to give information and talks

about specific jobs or setting challenges among young people (and especially females) to get them involved and interested in that industry.

"In Spain we're part of the EWI (Empower Women in Insurance) association which seeks to promote the presence of women in management roles in our sector, this is a professional network that came together to achieve a common goal to reach 40% of female managers by 2025 (currently 30%), so we're helping the insurance sector to promote this" (Spain)

"With ELLES BOUGENT POUR L'INDUSTRIE we organise events to encourage women to enter the industrial and energy transition professions, and with ELLES BOUGENT POUR LE NUMÉRIQUE we ask our female digital colleagues to talk about their experiences so as to raise awareness of digital careers among young women" (France)"

"We have great relationships with Unis and teachers told us that there is no interest among women in the area of engineering, even though most females who are in the schools tend to stand out, but the ratio is very low[…] so we go and explain what an engineer does, what projects we develop so as to arouse their interest. This way we try to encourage their interest in STEM" (Spain)

"With the ELLES BOUGENT POUR L'ORIENTATION association we introduce women to the industrial and digital sectors by going to schools & high schools with leading industry females" (France)

❖ **At INDUSTRY LEVEL (cont'd):**

- **From HR and recruitment, policies are put in place to address the issues linked to certain female positions, levels or profiles.**

  - Female working on "field" or technical profiles are often difficult to find.
  - Career progression can be unequal so measures are taken to try and rectify this.

- Inversely, especially in the public sector (e.g. **for more admin or office-based jobs, or when working in education or leisure)**, gender equality is not an issue at all, with a **high representation** of women (even sometimes over-representation) in the workplace.

"The operation and maintenance of wind and photovoltaic plants, in some regions there are no women and thanks to this measure, women are entering these professions, which are very good, very well paid, with a high level of employability (Spain)"

"We have countries where women tell us that thanks to these programs they have been able to work as engineers because what they find when they are looking for a job is that they are told that an engineer is a man, not a woman,

and they have no space. Now they can enter the company in a more agile way, and occupy positions that are traditionally occupied by men, and that had never been considered before (Spain)"

"The challenge today is that when we want to recruit field workers on our different locations, we struggle to find female candidates, so it's an important battle horse for us (France)"

"Where we see that they are not progressing at the same level as men and that is where we develop these programs and we have three acceleration programs in place: one for women with experience in technical positions, for junior managers and for senior managers who are ready to move onto more Executive roles (Spain)"

"This is another way of saying to the women who are applying for our vacancies that we care about their careers, that we don't leave them alone in this particular world and that we give them the keys to help them navigate better (Spain)"
"We're 12 bosses and only 2 of us are males! And all the rest of staff are females, so we're not masculine at all. (Slovenia)"

"We're an open minded company with over 50% of staff being women., so it's not an issue for us (Greece)"

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Diversity support measures – GENDER
KEY LEARNINGS

➢ A relevant topic everywhere, so it seems that **a lot of women-friendly actions and measures are being implemented or at least initiated across Europe**, both at macro and micro level.

➢ **The most challenging ones** (and therefore the hardest to put in place and for which expected results are more long-term) **are those related to certain "male-dominated" sectors** as mentalities cannot be changed overnight.

➢ **Sport and physical activity do not emerge as being proactively utilized to this end** (it is now a given that both genders can participate together in Sports races or challenges).

➤ **A topic that generally concerns a small percentage of the organisations' workforce (<5%)**

- When exploring the topic, it is **mostly the physical disability aspect that is usually experienced** (only 2/10 mentioned policies to include workers with mental/intellectual disabilities).

  - In that sense the vast majority explain that their **offices are either designed or adapted for disabled people** (workers or clients/collaborators) to work comfortably in them (e.g. ergonomic chairs, mouse, tables, etc.).

- Interestingly, **some actions are undertaken at various levels**, both:

  - **For the disabled workers**: for instance, by adapting the workspace or their workstations.
  - **And also, for the rest of (non-disabled) colleagues**: to raise awareness of disabilities and so as "to put them in their shoes", or to help communication between both parts (e.g. sign language training).

"Our headquarters are in an old building but it is adapted for wheelchair access so that if a contractor comes in a wheelchair he can access. And we're building a new office and it will also be made in a way that disabled workers will be able to work here" (Latvia).

"We don't discriminate for tenders for new employees, we're very open minded. Me and my colleague Barbara are severely disabled and we have no problem" (Slovenia).

"Our policy is not so much focused on disabled workers, but rather on making other colleagues more sensitive to this group, because the people we have are fully integrated. But we thought it was necessary to visualise this group, because it's very small for the size of our company. The idea is to carry out different awareness-raising programs: for example, they have come to give talks, we are working with THE RANDSTAD FOUNDATION on a new action that we will be launching shortly" (Spain).

"We raise awareness through our disability awareness days, when many associations intervene. For e.g. we did blindfolded rifle shooting" (France).

- In big, especially global organisations, **the measures can be even more officialised and integrated in the company's strategy and lines of action:**

  - From **access/recruitment** (opportunity for recent university graduates).
  - From **digital access to physical access.**
  - Down to **employee compulsory trainings** (to break down barriers, to develop empathy).
  - Or to **accompany people in the recognition of disability** and the procedures that go with them (anonymous and free).
  - Or to **get suppliers involved** (encouraging purchases from suppliers who employ people with disabilities).
  - And even programs for the **inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities (in collaboration with NGOs).**

"We revise all processes…attraction and selection for instance, so we reserve positions for them or it is stated that anyone with disabilities can apply to any position in the company. (Spain)"

"In our program to accompany people in the recognition of disability, we help them with the management, with training and with full support because in the end you need some administrative support, a more legal support and a more medical support. (Spain)"

"We're about to collaborate with an NGO in Greece that helps with the employment of people with mental disabilities. We ran an exercise internally to find positions which could fit with these people and we found 3 that could work. (Greece)"

"EQUAL PEOPLE" is designed to give a first job opportunity to young university graduates, because if they don't have it, it delays their access to the labour market and in the end we see young people with disabilities who are super prepared, because they do training after training to occupy their time, because they don't have the opportunity, and we try to get there from the beginning.(Spain)".

"Then we have "MORE DIVERSE MORE CAPABLE" which is focused on intellectual disabilities, because what we have seen here is that so much digitalization and automation is destroying many jobs for many people, but above all the jobs held by people with intellectual disabilities, and so we have to open up new spaces, but with technology behind them, to also see the opportunities that technology offers so that they can have a job opportunity.(Spain)"

- A minority also highlighted the importance to **raise awareness of people with both visible and non-visible disabilities**, in order to create a more inclusive workplace for both colleagues and clients.
- Those who do not have workers with disabilities in the **company find ways and formulas to collaborate:**
    - **Through foundations**, in order to comply with the objectives set by law.
    - Or they organise **opportunities for the people in the organisation to be in contact** with them (e.g. through sport events).
- **An interesting case: The Police**
    - For understandable reasons you cannot have a disability to enter the police in Malta.
    - That said, officers who got injured on duty (and therefore became disabled) are automatically reintegrated and everything is done to adapt the job to their new condition (e.g. transferred to do office work) and keep them working in the Police.

"We have an incentive for people to declare their disability and we provide help to ensure that the person is comfortable, and all is negotiated through collective agreements" (France)

"We do not have people with disabilities at the moment but we collaborate with FUNDACION A LA PAR which promotes and works for people for the integration of people with disabilities in the workplace" (Spain)

"We organize a wheelchair basketball event to raise awareness and to get our (university) athletes to try the sport so it's a way to put everybody at the same level" (Malta)

"We do not have disabled colleagues, but we hosted some Special Olympics on our premises twice a year with people with physical disabilities, and we've also welcomed many groups with disabilities in the past" (Greece)

"We have about 20 disabled workers who were injured on duty. We help them in any way we can and some friendly measures are applied, even if it's not official or written anywhere" (Malta).
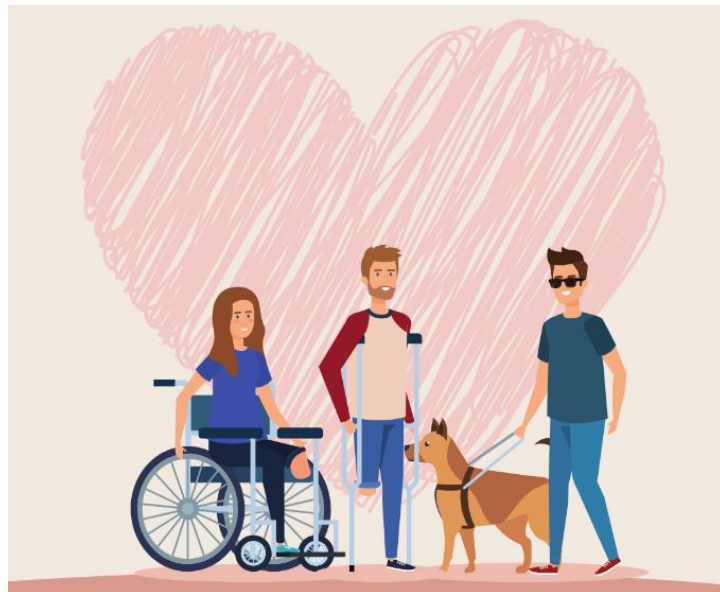
Diversity support measures - DISABILITY
<u>KEY LEARNINGS</u>

➢ **Less proactivity on this dimension, mostly due to the generally lower proportion of disabled workers** in the workplace (or the "non-visibility" of these…)

➢ That said, **it is generally easier to take action regarding physical disability as it is more visible and recognised**, whereas mental disability can be more silent, more taboo and harder to detect.

➢ However, **tolerance is claimed to be high and awareness-raising measures** across the whole of the organisations as well as external collaborations (e.g. with associations or foundations and other NGO's) **are plentiful.**

➢ In that respect, **sport and physical activity often emerge as a means to get everyone closer together** (especially society's views on people with disabilities).

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➢ **Overall, there seems to be a rather broad range of ages across the different organisations, therefore generation gap can be an issue, but not the biggest one.**

- **On the one hand, there is a big focus on trying to attract and retaining young talent** (especially in bigger companies and in certain industries like STEM or the Police), which was seen as a **big challenge** for some, due to the characteristics of the **"new generations"**:

- Living in the digital era means young people are used to **obtaining everything more instantly and effortlessly**, which does not always work like this in many professions.

- **Working is no longer vocational**, "just a job", so there is high job rotation among young people (no longer life-long career).

- **On the other hand, some industries highlight the crucial value of older workers whose experience is invaluable** in their field, and therefore needs to be passed onto younger workers in the organisation.

> *"Younger ones have lack of* respect, empathy and they don't work hard (it's a Europe-wide problem, not just here in Malta). If we talk about *the number of applications in our [special forces] unit, before 100 now 20 because they don't want the hard work, they don't want to get dirty, they don't want to go on the ground, they want to get sat at a computer" (Malta)*

> *"We are seeing more and more young people's lack of interest in effort and that, of course, when you talk to them about engineering, they tell you that it is very complicated, etc." (Spain)*

> *"This is not a concern in the sense that in professional careers here a lot of experience is required and therefore experienced workers tend to be older. We have what we call Technical Leaders and they tend to be very active in the transmission of knowledge through this programme. So there is a lot of flow, through this recognition of experience" (Spain)*

- Therefore, in order to solve potential issues between generations, some measures can be taken in different ways:

    - **Either separately, to address the specific needs of each group** (e.g. open house days or talks to university students to make them discover a company/an industry, or digital training for older workers who need it).

- **Or/and together, to help closing the gap** and bring them closer together (e.g. Shadow days where trainees or students follow some of the workers mentoring them).

- Interestingly, one interviewee explained that they see this topic as **an opportunity (rather than a problem) for both sides**, but the interaction has to be fostered (it does not occur naturally).

- It is also worth highlighting that **those measure can be more or less official and part of a protocol, versus more informal or punctual**, depending on the nature or the extent of the problem.

"Another of our programs is that we have made a remuneration system adapted to each person and life stage. Because we saw that the needs of people with more seniority had nothing to do with the people who were joining. So, the people who were joining had other concerns, and perhaps people in their 50s were worried about their pension plan, whereas younger people were worried about how to pay for their gym or their food. So, also to adapt to this generation gap, we created a remuneration system that allows everyone to choose how they want to receive part of their salary, so that it suits their needs" (Spain)

"We have a very strong culture as a company. So we saw that one of the ways of transferring that culture to the younger people was for them to live together and interact more with senior people who had been with the company for years and had that culture, so that both could help each other. The more senior people could transfer their experience, their culture, or try to explain how they saw the company. And the younger people trying to involve them in their vision of what they wanted the company to be in the future and so on" (Spain)
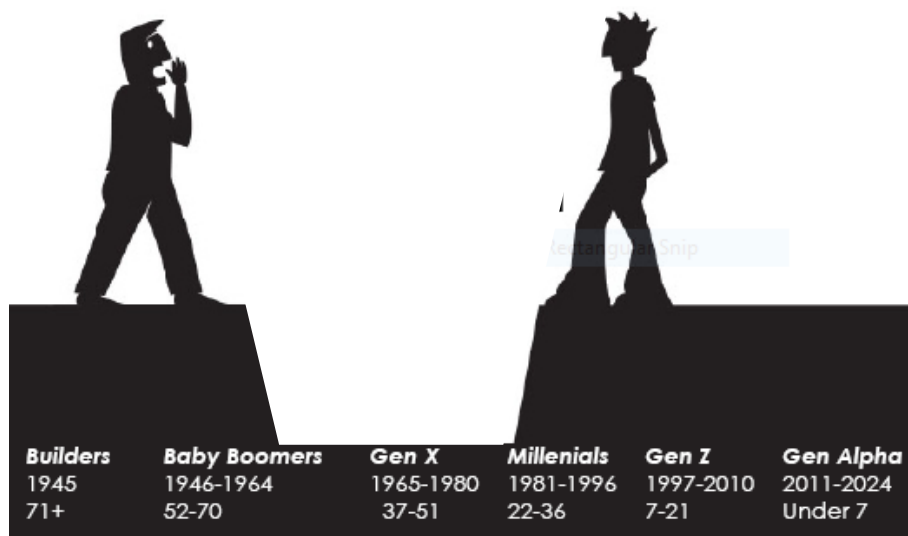
"We are aware of the generation gap, we talk about it with employees. For instance, we concluded a coaching course and a separate course for smaller units, and they were talking about those issues" (Slovenia)

"We're well digitalised, everyone uses digital tools in our company now, because we did a lot of training for this during Covid and it is true that lockdown helped" (France)

Diversity support measures - GENERATION GAP
<u>KEY LEARNINGS</u>

➢ *Generation gap happens to be* **an issue that only concerns specific industries,** *sectors or professions.*

➢ *In many cases the problem is not so much about what is happening inside an organisation, but it has more to do with* **how to attract and include new young workers from the outside.**

➢ **Sport and physical activity are not proactively used to tackle this issue,** *at least in a conscious way, as there is a "passive lack of discrimination" (therefore no active need for inclusion or integration).*

Builders	Baby Boomers	Gen X	Millenials	Gen Z	Gen Alpha
1945	1946-1964	1965-1980	1981-1996	1997-2010	2011-2024
71+	52-70	37-51	22-36	7-21	Under 7

➢ **This is generally no seen as an issue: the vast majority claims not to have ever had problems related to staff's sexual orientation or identity.**

- This may **have to do with culture and attitude to this cause**, which often helped to justify the lack of relevance of this issue, and the high level of tolerance.

  - Some **considering themselves as LGTBI+ friendly** (either their country and/or city and/ or company).
  - And **others considering it as not an issue** just because it never happened, and/or because they feel their country is more conservative (so the topic not is easy to discuss openly & education needs to be slow and step by step).

- In any case, **the topic was never a top priority across the whole sample** (as gender equality or disability could be).

"I've not seen anyone express themselves about their orientation but there is no discrimination either. Personal life stays at home" (Latvia)

"We don't have any particular problems, but I can't say to what extent we are or aren't affected by the phenomenon. We don't communicate on it and we don't make it an element of diversity, so we haven't really got to grips with the subject" (France)

"Never had that issue because everyone is so open minded here…We have the LGBT friendly certificate because the city is LGBT friendly. When tenants apply for a flat we do not discriminate between same sex couples" (Slovenia)

"We have employees who are openly gay or lesbian…There have never been any problems. They talk openly and they are perfectly integrated and feel perfectly comfortable. Talking about homosexuality is something that is perfectly understood and perfectly respected and nobody has ever felt bad. Never" (Spain)

"It's not an issue at all. Now there are even trans-gender people applying for Malta Police. We don't have problems with that kind of things because Malta is a very liberal country and very much in favour of gay rights. It's one of the top inclusive countries in Europe for these minorities" (Malta).

- **The minority of cases where the topic is addressed turn out to be multi-national organisations where initiatives may be coming from other offices (worldwide)** and therefore structures and protocols are set up globally across the organisation.

  - As a kind of **"best practise" that can be applied in the company** (in their specific country): learning from other markets that had to deal with it and knowing what to do if anything happened.

- As a **desire to be part of certain networks to raise awareness and avoid possible problems** (Prevention vs. Cure).

"We are now addressing these issues: all the issues we have had have been resolved through the employee relations teams. They are always developed in a somewhat confidential way and it is not something that has generated discomfort. In some countries, such as Brazil, we do have reserved positions for transgender people, because there they do have many problems with work inclusion and as we don't have a defined strategy, we respect the differences" (Spain)

"It's not easy to discuss LGBT+ topic in Greece. Two years ago we threw the topic during Pride month. We had the newsletter for the first time explaining what was Pride month and why people celebrate it and that our company supports the LGBT community…it was the 1st time we did such a statement. We try to go slowly with this topic…and each year we do a bit more, till everyone is ready to discuss" (Greece)

"We are also part of the REDI network (the Asociación de Redes Empresariales por la Diversidad e Inclusión LGTBI), the first ecosystem of companies and professionals in Spain that works to promote safe and respectful work environments for all people regardless of their identity, sexual characteristics, gender expression or sexual orientation). And apart from making a financial contribution, we also have the opportunity to participate in the talks, debates when they come to talk to us and, basically, to be part of this ecosystem" (Spain)

"We have a network called Pride. It exists to promote and support an open and inclusive workplace culture that recognises, respects and celebrates diversity. It builds on the unique backgrounds, experiences and networks of LGTBI employees and allies. To build an inclusive workplace and to give everyone the confidence to feel and be themselves in the workplace" (Spain).

Diversity support measures - SEXUAL ORIENTATION
KEY LEARNINGS

➢ The fact that this has been a burning issue in recent years and that many advances and **milestones have been reached for this specific minority group means that mentalities have changed in many countries where this is no longer taboo and LGTBI+ people are more and more accepted and included** in society and, consequently, in the workplace.

➢ In countries with more conservative mindsets the topic is not relevant (or not yet) for the workplace setting.

➢ That said, **for everyone the topic is not seen as needing measures to promote inclusion depending of sexual orientation because it is not an issue.**

➢ Therefore, logically **sport and physical activity are not so relevant here**.

Zoom on specific diversity support measures: **RACE / ETHNICITY**

➢ **Very similar to sexual orientation in the sense that most claim not to have any racism issues or problems with certain ethnic groups in the workplace:**

- Firstly, this **can be explained by the absence of such minorities in certain countries, or companies/ sectors:**

    - **In the public sector,** for instance, the local legislation goes in favour of country nationals (this is a key requirement) and therefore presence of foreigners is scarce or even inexistent.

    - Some **countries also have a tradition of either very little immigration or their immigrant population dates back from a few generations** and, therefore, are well integrated in terms of speaking the language, etc. (e.g. Russians in Latvia).

"We have clients coming from all over the world. And last summer we had people from India and Pakistan who came to work with us, and they will come back this year" (Greece)
"We are not too diverse, we have coloured people but no problem. But we can't have foreign workers because of the company's nature i.e. we're a public entity" (Slovenia)
"We have a discrimination complaints channel and nothing has ever come up there. Specific minorities as such we don't have (e.g. people of colour), but we have people from different countries: 26 different nationalities and we have never had any kind of problem in that sense" (Spain)
"They are very well integrated because to enter the police you have to qualify for and know the Maltese language so it's not a problem at all" (Malta)
"It's not an issue in our company and also in general in the country because historically there is not much immigration here" (Latvia)
"We have foreign workers but no racism problems! We have people in the staff of different nationalities or races, even. We have Asians, but we don't have any problems with racism because they are perfectly integrated" (Spain)

- Secondly, rather than talking about specific ethnic minorities, **the topic was understood more as having to work on the inclusion of different nationalities**, and then in that case this was never an issue: all claim perfect integration of such groups.

- Again, there seemed to be **more official actions and policies undertaken in bigger, multi-national organisations** (but also a much smaller proportion compared to gender or disability):

  - **Actions revolve around helping them with employment opportunities, support and training** to learn the country's language, adaptation to their new work position (e.g. how to be an architect in Spain compared to being one in Ukraine), etc.

  - Also some **actively collaborate with NGO's to source people** from other ethnic backgrounds, for instance using a framework that helps them find the best suited job for them, not just "any job" (e.g. in retail or distribution centres).

  - **Participation in "diversity Job Fairs",** where both companies and foreign workers are given the opportunity to discuss.

"We have no discriminations on the recruitment policies. The other day one candidate asked us if she could work with her Islamic veil, and after consulting it with legal services we got back to her and said yes. We're a caring company with a human dimensions" (France)

"We have the Mix network dedicated to promoting awareness and educating people on issues related to ethnic diversity. It is about exploring and trying to overcome the employment challenges of ethnic minorities. Logically in Spain we don't have representatives in this network, because we don't have that problem with ethnicity like they do in the UK for instance" (Spain)

"We have many internal communications and trainings related to non-discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity. It is very country-specific because for ethnicity we can only ask questions in certain regions (e.g. in Spain you cannot ask employees) but the communications on ethnic discrimination and trainings are very global for all employees" (Spain)

"We do have programs for migrants, to promote labour inclusion for migrant groups, especially with women" (Spain)

Diversity support measures - RACE / ETHNICITY
KEY LEARNINGS

➢ Inclusion seems to prevail across the board and **this specific dimension is not too big a deal.**

➢ In the minority of cases **where measures have to be taken, it is often primarily and mostly because of the language barrier** and therefore support and training are provided.

➢ Consequently, here again **sport and physical activity are irrelevant.**

We are all different and that's BEAUTIFUL
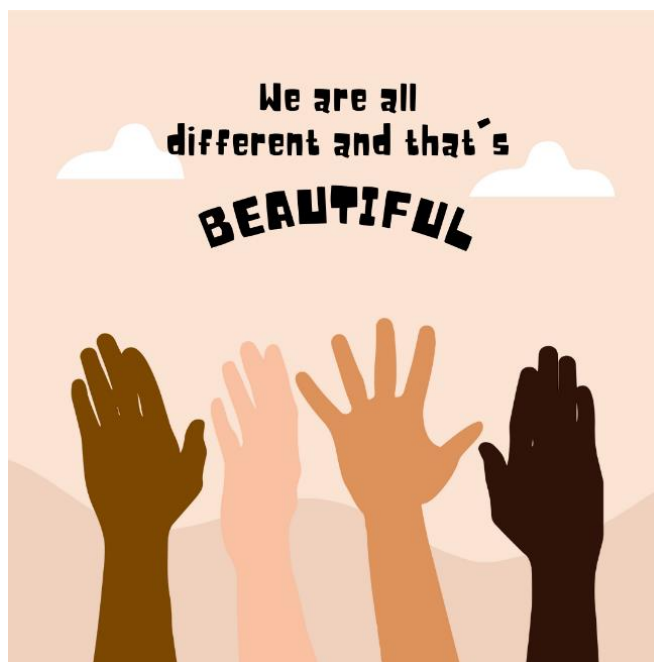
b) Measures to promote sustainability in the workplace.

Measures to promote sustainability in the workplace – OVERVIEW

➢ Awareness of the topic is high across Europe: **it is no longer seen as a "nice to have" but a must and obligation.**

➢ **Sustainability manifests itself everywhere nowadays**: at home, at work or in the public and private sphere.

➢ Once again, it emerged that **in bigger-sized organisations, the topic is treated in a more formal way**: it is often part of their mission or strategic plan (CSR) and most of the big companies have a dedicated "sustainability department" now.

➢ Consequently, everyone was able to articulate **a variety of measures fostered and implemented by their organisations**, both:

1. In the office and "on field" or in their industry.

2. For the "small" things and for the "bigger" things.

3. In everyday actions and for special, more punctual events.

4. Inside and outside the workplace

"We have the sustainability part in our strategy and we emphasize on it daily. It's part of our work plan" (Slovenia)
"We have an exclusive sustainability department, with a sustainability director. It is very important because one of the engineering areas we develop is linked to sustainability" (Spain)
"Our company was a pioneer in sustainability because it brought it into the business when nobody was talking about sustainability yet" (Spain)
"Since 2017, we have been working towards a positive environmental balance, which we call BE POSITIVE. (Avoiding-Reducing-Compensating)" (France)

> In all companies the **everyday actions and gestures in favour of sustainability are now a hygiene factor** and most have already moved onto a more serious stage of implementation which reflects the **organisation's (and its workers') commitment to the cause.**

- **The simple, more basic measures are plentiful and include:**
    - Recycling waste
    - Moving from paper to digitalisation of every document
    - Avoiding the use of plastic
    - Using solar panels and producing their own energy
    - Using self-sufficient buildings (don't use energy)
    - Organic food served at the company canteen
    - Designing working spaces both in sync with the environment and people's well-being (e.g. encouraging staff to walk, take the stairs and to move)
    - Greener company fleet (e.g. cars running on BIO GNV, a natural gas vehicle, derived from biomethane)
    - Lowering the office temperature (e.g. to 19ºC, and providing staff with sleeveless jackets lo layer up)

"All docs come digitally now. Before I used to take lots of folders with paper docs to visit substations (lots of folders for every single incidents). Now I mostly take my laptop where all docs are digitalised so we save a lot of trees" (Latvia)

"Within the organisation the rubbish is separated and we only use tap water, no plastic bottles" (Slovenia)

"A series of measures were put in place to measure the impact of the carbon footprint of our employees' journeys, a car-sharing service has been set up to enable them to come to the offices, an electric bicycle service has been set up at the Bilbao headquarters and made available to employees, and we have changed all the company parks to install solar panels at all the HQ" (Spain)

"Purchasing certain equipment is part of the Green Public Procurement policy that we must abide by. For instance, we iuse eco-friendly vehicles (low emissions), uniforms have to be eco-friendly, buildings must be efficient and economically sustainable (e.g. lighting that is used, more insulated windows to consume less heat)" (Malta)

"90% of our employees were made aware of the Climate Fresk. It gives an understanding of climate mechanisms (showing some cause-and-effect maps) to understand the different climate phenomena and the impact of human activity on the warming of water and air, the melting of glaciers and ice floes and all that this can lead to. 20ish employees were trained to run these 3h workshops over a period of 1.5 years. So, they trained almost 600 employees and now everyone in the company is aware of this climate logic" (France)

"Some of the buildings are self-sufficient, they don't consume energy and it is also a very green environment, it has all the well-being certifications you can imagine" (Spain)

"Our equipment is using a lot of high sulfuric gas as good for its electrical properties but also harmful for the Ozone layer. So to reduce the consumption of this gas, we control there are no leaks but also in our new projects and new substations we are building with a new eco-gas (developed 5 years ago, also more expensive but we chose the green way) , so now all new projects use this new eco gas or oil which are more eco-friendly" (Latvia)

"In the construction department we take care of the re-used parts and for our CO2 footprint to be as low as possible. We also choose to build with wood" (Slovenia)

"We adapt large ships to less polluting fuels. We also do engineering related to the decarbonisation in Europe of eco-transformations of coal companies to clean energies, we invest in solar energy parks..." (Spain)

➢ In addition, in many of our sample's industries **a broad range of measures** have been undertaken **to produce and work more sustainably** (especially in the STEM and Energy sectors):

- Switching to more **eco-friendly materials** in order to reduce carbon footprint, for e.g.
  - Wood
  - Eco-gas
  - Biodegradable chemicals
- Decarbonisation
- **Recycling** waste and materials

➢ In the bigger-sized organisations **a lot of actions and external collaborations are taking place** too, often **to engage people further** (not just in the workplace but in their lives too):

- Frequent training sessions, talks and **communication on the topic**.
- **Partnerships and voluntary activities.**
- Some organisations do **subsidise personal initiatives** in favour of the environment (e.g. home improvements).
- All this with the objective to raise constant awareness and get employees and even clients involved in the cause too:
  - **Employees taking part in fundraising campaigns** to support the sustainability initiatives they are most identified with.
  - **Clients deciding how their money may be used towards the cause** so as to make them feel involved (and feel good about how their money is used).
- Creation of a **special sport training program for guest clients** (athletes & kids) including an element of environmental protection.

"We encourage our employees, we subsidize part of the initiatives that they carry out at a personal level that have to do with sustainability. So, those who want to put solar panels on their house, buy 100% electric cars, electric bicycles, the company helps them" (Spain)

"We have an agreement where we encourage employees (with a small financial incentive) to carry out thermal renovation or install photovoltaic panels to renovate or improve the energy efficiency of their homes" (France)

"An example of these activities is a tree planting activity in Toledo, which we did in April with the Red Cross. Another activity we did in September was the collection of waste and microplastics on a beach in Valencia, with the help of a Spanish start-up called Gravity Wave, which is dedicated to protecting the seas and oceans, and the FDI Foundation" (Spain)

"Last December we had this solidarity waste collection day (in the town and the forest paths near the town) with 60 volunteers including our CEO" (France)

"We collaborate with different foundations, for example the Alapar Foundation and with NGOs such as the Red Cross, Save the Children... We also collaborate with startups like Gravity Wave, the Spanish startup dedicated to cleaning and protecting our seas and oceans" (Spain)

"One of our star initiatives is called "Premiums for Good". We invite our customers to invest their insurance premium in investments with an additional social objective, environmental or social investments with an additional impact objective other than traditional funds. It does not involve any investment risk for the client, nor does it involve any extra cost, but simply that they can join and make a difference together with us" (Spain)

"We have a communication channel on sustainability that launches messages and proposes challenges to all employees once a week" (Spain)

"We work hard to reduce the environmental impact of our activities: whenever we can emit methane into the atmosphere, we try to reduce the impact (recompression trucks and different technologies used)" (France)

"With our special sports program we want to promote environmental responsibility (within our CSR policy regarding the environment) and raise awareness of how the environment affects our lives. That includes planting trees/flowers, recycling paper-glass and plastic, having tours of the forest, showing them trees so they are in contact with nature" (Greece)
"Last September all departments had the opportunity to organise by themselves a volunteering event (agreed by all), like cleaning the beaches or planting trees, etc." (Greece)

IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES IS NOT ALWAYS EASY AND A NUMBER OF BARRIERS CAN EMERGE ALONG THE PROCESS:

- **The most recurrent one is the financial barrier,** as implementing eco-friendly policies often involves a complete change of infrastructures or systems or processes and therefore the initial investment can be considerable (and benefits or Return on Investment tend to take time to manifest).

- And **another barrier is having to change people's mentalities and habits**:

  - Because doing things differently always triggers barriers, at least in the first place.
  - As everyone has to understand the needs for such actions, therefore training, constant reminders and education is key.

IN MOST CASES THE ADVANTAGES OF THESE POLICIES ARE INSTANTLY NOTICEABLE AND CAN OFTEN BE MEASURED EASILY WITH SPECIFIC MARKERS:

- For many of these actions it is now **easy to measure the level of emissions** and therefore many company produce regular environmental reports on the **exact reduction** (emissions , carbon footprint, etc.) obtained by their actions.

- In the big organisations it is considered that **such initiatives are differentiating** in their clients' eyes, **they added** (even if they may be less competitive at first, but not in the long run).

- In the case of digitalisation it's all about **convenience and ease of use**, hence making work easier.

- In public entities (e.g. Malta) the state measures for instance the **savings made on energy spend** (certain targets are set and they check if the policies are reaching those targets).

- **Sustainability and related policies in the workplace across Europe are here to stay**.

- It is no longer used as "an extra" or "nice to have" (or even as *greenwashing*), but **it is increasingly part of their philosophy, deep values and it drives strategies and innovation**.

- The idea of **joining forces to raise and maintain awareness high**, so that everyone can do their bit, both at work and outside (at home or in the world) is very strong.

- So in that sense **sustainability is an indirect way of bringing people closer together** → it works in favour of inclusion even though this is not its intended primary goal.

- And interestingly, some of the **sustainability-supporting measures are very closely linked or include sport and physical activity** → both blend in very well together.

c) Policies to promote physical activity, exercise and sports in the work environment.

Policies to promote physical activity, exercise and sports in the work environment – OVERVIEW

➢ Generally speaking, **sport is approached in a much broader and holistic sense nowadays**: in the vast majority of companies, it is now addressed **as part of general health and well-being**, where both physical and mental aspects are deemed important→ *Mens sana in corpore sano*.

➢ In the same way as we saw for sustainability, **all are implementing measures to encourage employees not to be sedentary** and to take care of themselves.

➢ In that sense **the concept of sport has been democratised for everyone** as people are now invited or **challenged to "get moving" daily in one way or another**, which is **accessible to everyone.**

➢ Once again, **the bigger the organisations, the easier it is to have policies in place,** or an in-house sport complex and the more likely to set up initiatives and collaborate with external sport-related entities and events.

Physical activity, exercise and sports in the work environment
VERBATIMS

"Our management is part of the Union and as part of the CBA they put a lot of effort on physical activity and sport and employees' health. It's better to invest in preserving health than curing later" (Latvia)

"We started collaborating with external partner, an APP for mobile phones called "the Coach" including training programs (a benefit for all employees). We ran a huge internal communication campaign and 50% of people activated the platform (vs. 20% normally, so we decided to renew our collaboration this year. It has +300 training programs that are highly customisable" (Greece)

"One Colleague has a main role in the MESA (Malta Employees Sport association) and he o organises a lot of activities weekly (fitness sessions, dance classes, box fitness, etc.) for the employees of the University" (Malta)

"We do not have very well-established measures in this area of physical activity and exercise, BUT we have a vision of well-being and we do have a well-defined well-being policy" (Spain)

"We propose challenges to the people during the year, like to walk for three months, I don't know how many km. A ranking was made and prizes were awarded to those who walked the most and, well, there was a healthy competition between people that encouraged people to go for a walk" (Spain)

"The police force organises different activities for which everyone can apply and they are given time from their work to practise and do these activities (anything of their interest)"(Malta).

"In the company we have a sports complex, with possibility for teams' sport (basket, volley), a gym and a sauna & pool for relaxation. Management encourages us to use it outside of working hours, it's popular, always busy. It's free of charge, we can also go at week ends to the gym" (Latvia)

"Last year we designed our main strategy divided into 4 pillars: Health (physical and mental); Balance, Fun and Community. For the health pillar, we have many actions – volunteering, wellness, etc. We have a full agenda of activities for employees" (Greece)

Policies to promote physical activity, exercise and sports in the work environment.

➢ **Examples of policies, initiatives and events abound**: from frequent to more occasional, in a broad range of activities, either in-house or external, or locally/domestically or internationally.

DAILY ACTIONS, MORE FREQUENT, MORE ONSITE

- **Specific initiatives to get people moving:**

  - **Free access to all sports areas and facilities** which are at their disposal (internal, e.g. company's sport complex VS. external, e.g. paying for their gym membership).

  - **"No lift for a week"** to make people use the stairs.

  - **Challenges to walk** / to do a certain number of steps or having to walk 10 minutes to reach the kitchen.

  - **Motivating messages** on the stairs to get people moving.

- **Specific daily/weekly activities and classes** organised for employees, e.g. yoga classes, Nordic walk, athletics/running (also workshops, talks on mindfulness and mental health-related topics).

- **Specific sports programs all year long** (choice of sport based on people's preferences via staff surveys): football, basketball, padel, cycling, athletics, rugby, etc.

MORE OCCASIONAL, MORE EXTERNAL

- **Participation in runs/races:**

  - Corporate (often inter-company) or charity (e.g. Breast cancer).

  - National or international races.

  - Can be individual or group races.

- **Specific events or competitions or gatherings** based on the sports which are practised all year long:

  - E.g. European Company Sport Games.

  - Basketball or padel or football league across the different regional branches.

  - The police OCR (Obstacle Course Races).

  - EKIDEN races (relay/team marathon split between 6 people, male or female, no age limit or time constraint).

- **Team-building days** (often away from the office) where physical activity is always on the agenda (e.g. walks, collective games & sports, etc).

- **Voluntary initiatives** (often linked to sustainability or solidarity work) with charities that incite people to move as well.

Physical activity, exercise and sports in the work environment – MORE VERBATIMS

"Employees are free to use our facilities, like the swimming pool, or basketball field when they are not in use by clients" (Greece)

"We have the "Capital Forme" program which has 3 goals: employee well being on 3 dimensions (physical, mental and social) launched in 2018. The iniciative started with the Performance Department of Elan Béarnais (Pau's basketball club)" (France)

"There are weekly sessions at the track for the whole Uni staff. During their breaktime they come to run with a coach and it's quite popular" (Malta)

"Lots of sporting events for the whole company: we all go to some place where we do "sport and care", and we're encouraged to participate in events every year such as marathons, or cycle in Riga. We have tournaments with other energetic companies (volleyball, basketball, duathlon) and in our labour union too" (Latvia)

"We participated in the corporate races, the latest edition of which is sponsored by Quirón Prevención, where sport and companies come together in a celebration of health, teamwork and companionship, thus promoting physical activity and employee wellbeing" (Spain)

"Twice a year we have 1 or 2 away days for team building, and we make sure we have walks or sports activities during these events" (Slovenia)

"The steps challenge is participating in a challenge for a period of time, adding up steps, in which we also collaborate with other companies and what it's all about is that the company wins and that's what motivates us a bit. In the end, you add up the steps of all the employees and you compete with other companies" (Spain)

"Constant movement is encouraged and we are constantly motivated to move, from the very conception of the work spaces, for e.g. to get water or go to the canteens you already have to walk, to move around in spaces too" (Spain)

Run .for Diversity

Physical activity, exercise and sports in the work environment
KEY LEARNINGS

- **Physical activity and sport are now part of a much broader scheme which, in many cases, was boosted during the Covid period:** there is an increasing demand from employees to take care of both the physical and mental aspects of life (work and personal).

- And in that sense, most companies have taken fast action to implement **initiatives that address the need for "overall well-being"** and all the different aspects this may encapsulate.

- **All measures are well received** (level of success measured through participation rates) **and there is no single measure that works better than another**: all are tailor-made to suit employees' interests, needs and demands.

- **High involvement in sport is achieved** thanks to a series of measures (the more initiatives they take on, the more satisfied) that make a high percentage of a company to be linked to sport and to physical activity in general.

d) Diversity support policies through physical activity, exercise and sports, which promote inclusion in the workplace

Diversity-support policies which promote inclusion in the workplace through P.A., exercise and sports – OVERVIEW

➢ With all the aforementioned initiatives in mind, we could observe that **the vast majority of them are not intended or specifically designed to promote inclusion**, i.e. **inclusion is not a goal *per se*.**

➢ In fact, it is taken for granted that **these policies are often unconsciously working towards inclusion** (because they are open to everyone), **but it is not the main, primary objective** for their implementation.

➢ That said it is true that some **dimensions of diversity are more obviously favoured** and put to the fore, especially those of **gender and disability** (e.g. mixed gender races, wheelchair basketball, etc.).

➢ Inversely, for other dimensions such a **generation gap, a "natural selection" is made** somehow (as not everyone can practise certain sports or activities with age).

"It's almost everything I said before …Everything we do has this main idea in the bottom of it all" (Greece)

➤ So with all the previous considerations in mind, the majority feels that all (or most of) the previously outlined physical activities or sport-related measures indeed work towards inclusion most of the time, even if this is achieved more indirectly.

Physical activity, sport or exercise are a means to reach other objectives linked to employees' health and well-being (some are individual, and others are more collective, so they are linked to inclusion)

And the measures that work in favour of inclusion in the most efficient way are those which take the following factors into consideration:

1. They make the **"sport" concept more appealing and less restricted** or exclusive to certain people	2. They clearly **target the minorities** (without stigmatising them) and/or they explicitly **state the obvious when the event or initiative is set up**

Let us see how….

1. MAKING THE SPORT CONCEPT MORE INCLUSIVE

In the same way as organisations have shifted towards a more holistic concept of health (body & mind), many have also evolved **towards a broader definition of the sport concept**.

- **Talking about PHYSICAL ACTIVITY rather than just sport helps to push back the frontier for the many who do not consider themselves "sporty"** → It means that they are moving anyway and that the activity they do is equally valid and valued.
- In addition this broader vision also heavily **contributes to including the non-neglectable part of the corporate world that is made up by older,** more senior workers.

"We also do physical activity in the sense that organizing a waste collection activity on the beach all day means that you are constantly on the move" (Spain)
"Within this context of off-site team gatherings, we promote physical activity because we organize gymkhana activities, human table football combined with worm races, etc. and you go from one activity to another, hence this is promoting physical activity…and you end up being very tired" (Spain)
"The Ekiden Race makes a marathon accessible to everyone, because not everyone can run 42K, but many more can run 5 or 10k, and there is no time constraint, people are running together as a team, they support each other and inevitably ties and bonds are created" (France)"

2. STATING THE OBVIOUS & THE RULES FROM THE START

The usual and implied **"Everyone is welcome" or "Open to all" messages may not always be enough to attract everyone** and work on inclusion.

- The **initiatives which work best for inclusion** of diversity are those which clearly make the rules **clear on who they are aimed at, e.g. males and females, everyone including wheelchairs, all generations**, etc.
- It's about calling things by their name, be it "Diversity run" or "Women's race".

"When we do the health challenge initiatives there is not a male component… or a gender component, it is for all employees, it is not linked to a diversity dimension, it is in general for all employees" (Spain)

"When we do the health challenge initiatives there is not a male component… or a gender component, it is for all employees, it is not linked to a diversity dimension, it is in general for all employees" (Spain)

"In all our countries there are many charity races, this is the most usual thing, and the most common thing is the sponsorship of charity races related mainly to the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour market, or the women's race, and this kind of things" (Spain)

"The Diversity Run is inclusive, as it can be inter-generational or with a male/female logic" (France)

WHAT ELSE CAN BE DONE TO PROMOTE INCLUSION THROUGH SPORT, EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

- **Team building activities** by definition are excellent initiatives that fit well with sport and physical activity (and include them most of the time), the result always ending in closer bonds between participants.
- The idea that **everyone should be made to participate** (the mandatory aspect, but in a positive way, not in a forceful way) is helping a lot to reach inclusion:
  - The Steps challenges in and outside the office (Team effort over a period of time, everybody can walk and therefore can do it).
- **Sports/activities must be accessible to everyone** (adaptable or modifiable, with different levels of difficulty), for instance:
  - The Ekiden races : It's a marathon but no time restriction, no age limit, one can choose 5k or more, for male and female, it's a team effort, etc.
- **Races/running events (especially charity ones)** are also, by definition, more open and accessible as they imply fewer restrictions or less pressure, so everyone can share in for a good cause (the aim is to take part, not to win).

"Team building seems to be more inclusive because even if you are not good at a specific sport in a physical activity like boxing, cycling, golf, tennis or paddle tennis, even if you are not very good, but if it is an activity where everyone can participate and you do physical exercise, I think everyone is included and no one is left out" (Spain)

"Events should be scheduled for all the staff so as to create the right culture. Some people will never go because it is not compulsory so they will never be included" (Malta)

"I think a specific physical activity where everyone participates is more inclusive, otherwise only a few may go. This is why team building activities work so well" (Spain)

"Running races is easier because everyone is prepared and can even walk at a fast pace without the need to run" (Spain)

"The way we try to enhance inclusiveness through physical activities is for e.g. for the Athens marathon, we ask our people (from all parts of Greece – reps from every location and all departments) to meet up 45 min before to gather together to take pics and get balloons, etc. Because if they were not there they wouldn't have the chance to meet each other. We ask the marathon organisers to put all our staff in the same starting block to start running together" (Greece)

e) Diversity & inclusion conceptualisation

> All **definitions of diversity** tended to revolve around the idea that it is about **taking people the way they are and based on their skills and capabilities**, regardless of gender, age, religion, colour, nationality, disabilities, sexual orientation, etc.

> Some also understand diversity as **an asset for any organisation, and not an issue or an obstacle**: diversity should be seen as enriching element, as bringing different people with different backgrounds together can only lead to better results. Inversely, a lack of diversity would be very limiting for an organisation to evolve and grow.

> **Inclusion in the workplace** is the idea that **all employees should be given the same chances and opportunities, no matter what their background** may be.

> Inclusion means that **everyone should be treated equally and not discriminated against** because of any of their differences (so in an ideal world, there should not be a need to promote inclusion).

Diversity definition – VERBATIMS

"It's the ability to work, participate in every activity in your company not based on your gender or age but only on your professional quality. If you're good at what you do it doesn't matter what colour you are, where you come from or which language you speak" (Latvia)

"It involves people who have been brought up in different ways and with different backgrounds and it should be something beautiful because it's about bringing the best of these people's experiences and you put it together to create something special" (Malta)

"What we understand by diversity is as a source of talent that also allows us to differentiate ourselves and gives us a competitive advantage as a company" (Spain)

"Hopefully in x years we won't be discussing about it anymore… Diversity should be accepted as a way of living, it's every people I know, it's every one of us, everyone is different" (Greece)

"Diversity is the generic term that enables us to talk about non-discrimination, mixed gender, inclusion of disabled people" (France)

"It's the concept of organizational culture which accepts different mindsets of employees who are different (gender or sexual orientation), which takes the different disabilities of every person into account (even if it's not certified). It's the culture that understands that society and people are diverse by definition" (Slovenia)

"For me it is the way to integrate all the people within a company without looking beyond being people, without worrying about anything else, but simply as people" (Spain)

"Diversity is now a way of life, having people from different cultures working together in a place" (Malta)

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Inclusion definition – VERBATIMS

"Inclusion means that all people, regardless of their age, gender, race, ethnicity or orientation, are included so that they have a voice, so that they can be counted on in any activity and above all, and most importantly within the company, so that they have the same rights as everyone else to progress and develop professionally. It is for everyone to be included, to have the same rights, that everyone is equal within the company, that there are no differences" (Spain)

"Inclusion is to give the same possibilities to everyone or same opportunities to everyone that it is possible to participate" (Latvia)

"Inclusion is that there is no need for measures to be put in place so that we have to promote it. That is the best inclusion. That we don't have to worry about them" (Spain)

"It's something that includes us all, that brings people together, in order to accept their idea, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, etc…it's the idea to make a living and a viable environment in a working place to feel equal and have opportunities to flourish, and to be free to live…It's not to be accepted, it's to be approved" (Greece)

"It's the logic of including people with disabilities, but also people who might be excluded from employment with more complicated personal situations that are a little outside our standard reference points" (France)

"Inclusion is part of the people management strategy in which we place value on the company's diversity and in which we generate opportunities so that all people can participate and contribute and feel that they belong and feel committed" (Spain)

"All people should be able to perform all their tasks or to live without finding any barriers because of anything that they have that may be seen as different" (Malta)

"Inclusion is a feeling we should definitely have in the work environment and in our life... It's not only physical safety, for me it's being safe, especially psychological safety…because if I feel safe to discuss, to talk freely…Usually we feel it at home but it'd be nice to have everywhere else, the freedom to speak, to express yourself and be yourself" (Greece)

"Inclusion is diversity in action" (Slovenia)

Diversity and inclusion - How related?

➢ All find it **hard to disassociate diversity from inclusion**: both are unanimously deemed to be **inseparable and interrelated.**

⬇

➢ Diversity has no value if all its dimensions are taken in isolation (and not included!).

AND

➢ Inclusion would not exist nor would it have any reason to be without diversity.

"The link between diversity and inclusion is the wealth of profiles, learning from each other's differences, not feeding on similarities but on differences, and removing the bias of prejudice" (France)

"Every puzzle is different but only when you put together the whole puzzle you get the full picture. If all the puzzle pieces were the same that would not work" (Latvia)

"There is not one without the other, they cannot be separated, one leads to the other, one concept cannot be contemplated without the other concept, they go together" (Spain)

"Whenever there is not equal treatment because of some kind of diversity, we need inclusion measures. So they go together until this is no longer an issue that we have to deal with" (Spain)

"It's everyone having a say, being able to have a sense of belonging to a particular group or country so they can work together" (Malta)

"If you understand diversity you will be inclusive" (Slovenia)

"Diversity without inclusion cannot be turned into results. We have diversity because we are the way we are, but if we are not inclusive, we cannot put that diversity to action within the company, we cannot give it value, we cannot transform it into results or progress" (Spain)

"In order to accept diversity you have to create an inclusive environment" (Greece)

IV. MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Main conclusions

> **Usage and presence of physical activity, exercise and sport has become a norm** in the work environment nowadays: their implementation indeed **contributes to the inclusion of diversity, to a smaller or bigger extent depending on the initiatives** and the way they are organised.

> It is worth highlighting that most of the time, companies are not consciously setting up these initiatives with "inclusion" as an end objective in mind, i.e. in the majority of cases inclusion is implied, even though it is not voiced out or actively searched for: **it is often an end benefit of implementing such policies.**

> The **exceptions to the rule are those events which are specifically organised with a clear focus on some dimensions of diversity or for specific minorities** (e.g. Women, Disabilities), otherwise the majority do encourage inclusion at a much more general level ("Everyone", without pointing out at any specific minority).

Recommendations

> Some important learnings made in order to favour inclusion in the workplace through physical activity, sport and exercise, based on what is currently done across all organisations are:

> 1. **Opening up and broadening the sports concept to make it more friendly & "democratic" to non/less sporty people, by talking more about "(physical) activity"** and including many types of daily activities (with modifications or adaptable) so that all workers can feel they can do it too (and feel good about sharing in as this should not be seen as a punishment or something imposed in a negative way) → **This is inclusion.**

>   - For instance, daily actions like "steps challenges" or "30 minutes' activity per day", or more sporadic events like "races for all" ("you can run, walk or ride your bike"; or Ekiden races).
>   - In addition, this spirit fits perfectly with the strong current holistic health & wellness trend.

> 2. **Having all staff to participate in specific initiatives** (i.e. Making it compulsory but without forcing: this is why team building works so well as they have to go) is also a way to include them all, to make them participate as a team to eventually create stronger bonds with co-workers → **This is inclusion.**

3. **Connecting sport and physical activities with sustainability initiatives is also a way to motivate people to be together**, often in the open-air (e.g. big clean up of beaches) but also in the work space (e.g. doing more steps, not using the lifts, etc.), and all working towards the same goal, which is to protect the environment and the planet → **This is inclusion.**

IN SUMMARY

MOVING FROM
- SPORT (or "BEING SPORTY")
- A more exclusive, restricted vision of sport (that only certain people or sporty types can do)

TO:
- ACTIVITY (or "BEING ACTIVE)
- A more holistic vision where everyone can find something in it for them: You may not be sporty but you can be ACTIVE

MOVING FROM
- UNCLEAR TARGET for activities
- E.g. "for everyone" or no specification

TO:
- CRYSTAL CLEAR, PRECISE TARGET
- "Diversity run" ; Women's challenge", "No barriers walk" (for wheelchairs too)

Recommendations

➢ Besides, in order to successfully work towards more inclusion, **it is the combination of all these different actions** which, added up together, make the policies and measures effective (i.e. both the daily little actions + the bigger more occasional, sporadic events = more inclusion).

➢ Equally, **consistency in applying** all the above is what makes it work in the long term (exactly in the same way as many sustainability policies become effective in the long run as people's mindsets cannot be changed overnight, and constant reminders are needed to get them onboard).

➢ Next, if **inclusion is the intended main objective of using sport or physical activity, then it should be stated clearly from the outset, in an unequivocal way**→ "For Everyone/ No Barriers", "Diversity race/ competition/run" i.e. welcoming all ages , all genders, all levels, with wheelchairs or not, etc.

➢ Also, all these initiatives need to be backed up by **regular internal communication campaigns** so that they are always top-of-mind for everyone.

➢ And, last but not least, the continuous success of these policies also lies in **systematically asking workers for their feedback**, in order to **create action plans based on the surveys' results**, so that the activities (both regular and sporadic) can be **tailor-made to what workers like and want and** gain full potential for success.