

### **Working Group 3: Decent Work and Diversity Management: Complementary or Antagonistic Concepts?**

#### **? What is the relation between decent work and diversity management in business practice?**

- **Definition.** Diversity management is a management strategy, which acknowledges diversity, respects differences and aims at achieving equality of opportunities. If diversity management is taken seriously, this underlying commitment is reflected at all levels of hierarchy, towards costumers and clients, within PR strategies but also within the supply chain taking into account the global dimension.
- **Diversity management is part of a CSR strategy.** It includes issues such as work-life balance (religion) and labour conditions (non-discrimination), which have to be considered from both, the CSR and the decent work perspective.
- **Diversity and CSR do not talk to each other.** In many cases, diversity- and CSR managers exist in a company but neither do they talk to each other, nor follow a common agenda. Diversity management is often limited to gender, age and nationality issues. Even EU projects dealing with decent work, CSR and diversity are often not linked to each other.
- **Difficulty to strike the balance as employer.** For employers it is sometimes difficult to find the "right" position. There are fears that conflicts might arise by a diverse workforce or that clients might react negatively on staff members belonging to visible minorities. Moreover, it is a challenge to find the appropriate proportionality between the different groups concerned and the majority groups within the staff.

#### **? Which tools have proven to be helpful?**

- **Experience exchange.** Exchange of experience and collections of good practice ("do's and don't's") have been very useful for company practice.
- **UK model.** A specific tool has been developed to tackle participation in programs of diversity management.
- **Vienna model.** The "Diversity Check" created in Vienna has been implemented in order to analyse the level of diversity within the administration of the city of Vienna. Based on the information provided by the check tailor-made strategies can be developed and implemented.
- **Way forward.** Diversity needs to become a business case; it needs clear guidelines on diversity standards and the readiness to adapt them to the specific context.

### **Working Group 3: Decent Work and Diversity Management: Complementary or Antagonistic Concepts?**

#### **? Examples of diversity management**

- **UK.** There are many networks of employees belonging to different groups (e.g. people adhering to different ethnic groups, women, parents, homosexuals). The challenge is to bring them all together.
- **Austria.** Example: The Vienna Hospital Confederation has been implementing diversity management strategies targeting all employees. Currently existing small diversity projects shall be amplified. Moreover, new staff from different groups and communities (e.g. also Turkish speaking persons) shall be recruited.

#### **? Common problems**

- **Lack of communication.** Every group/community is only focused on itself.
- **Balance between diversity and stigmatisation.** Existing differences have to be taken into account but should at the same time not lead to stigmatisation.
- **Discriminatory privileging:** Promotion of specific groups in order to enhance their starting positions can exclude others and thus cause discrimination. Also, multiple discriminations (when a person is subjected to discrimination on more than one ground) have to be taken into account when designing diversity initiatives.
- **Remaining barriers.** Companies must widen their perspectives to recognise and overcome barriers.