Ethnicity, Culture (and Social Class):
“Origins” and Business
Time to come out of the closet!

30th October 2013
L’Oréal Headquarters, Clichy, France
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Welcome by Stéphanie Oueda, International Diversity Manager, L’Oréal

Stephanie Oueda welcomed participants on behalf of L’Oreal and discussed some of L’Oreal’s diversity management practices. During her speech, she stressed that L’Oréal values differences and focuses on 3 pillars: gender, disability and origins in order to get the most talented individuals possible. L’Oreal has been working with ENAR since 2009 and finds ENAR’s platform the most suitable for discussing all issues related to origins, nationality, social aspects, language, etc. She strongly recommended reading the ENAR’s “Hidden Talents, Wasted Talents” publication.

Bruch Roch, Chair of AFMD

Bruch Roch, Chair of AFMD introduced the AFMD and its 100 members, businesses and public institutions. According to Roch, having diversity managers working in cooperation and ministries and various entities is not enough. He insisted on the fact that there was a need for management to empower itself and learn to optimize the diversity of its teams. This change can only occur when managers are more involved. This is not just an HR issue. The AFMD has worked on various issues, disseminating free material with guidelines on how to monitor diversity and religious beliefs in the workplace, SMEs, etc. All publications can be found on the AFMD website.

Along with his company, Adecco Group, Roch has been involved with ENAR for the past 5 years. At times, it has been difficult to tackle origins in France because in France it is taboo. French law does not allow measuring anything dealing with origins, nationality, etc., therefore making it difficult or virtually impossible to track discrimination in the labour market. Our partnership serves to empower managers so that they feel more comfortable with the topic of diversity and origins. In sum, how do you deal with feelings, differences, individualism in a company?

Sarah Isal, Chair of ENAR

Sarah Isal, Chair of ENAR, expressed excitement at seeing so many new faces. After thanking L’Oreal for hosting the conference, she introduced ENAR and explained that inclusion and access to employment are a key focus of ENAR’s work. She pointed out that there is a need to work with employers—the reason behind the launch of the Equal@Work initiative.
**FISHBOWL**

Fishbowling about race: *Facing reality: the true issues about race at the workplace: legislation, tools and psychology*

This fishbowl debate addressed the following questions and enabled a platform to enhance frank discussions around the topic of the conference:

- Do businesses have an issue with race and culture?
- Do legislations have any impact on the inclusion of ethnic and cultural diversity at the workplace?
- Is litigation the only way to have HR managers take racism seriously?
- Do we need specific tools to deal with ethnic/cultural diversity, racism and related discrimination?
- Isn’t it simply about prejudice? Common sense as the basis for action?

**Jozef De Witte, Chair of Equinet**, the European Network of Equality Bodies, presented the work of equality bodies and their mandates. Not only does Equality Bodies deal with protected grounds recognised by Europe, but it also goes beyond these grounds, depending on laws of that country. The majority of complaints are based on race. Of recent especially, there has been a shift from discrimination based on race to discrimination based on religion and language. Equality Bodies fulfils the following missions: starting litigation, developing training (e.g. e-learning), raising awareness within the general public about their rights, and making recommendations to decision-makers.

Regarding companies, one possibility is that positive duties could be imposed in particular for public procurement or as a minimum diversity plans. For example, in Northern Ireland, every company has to report on how many Catholics and Protestants they hire, because they know that segregation is not leading to social peace.

**Niels-Erik Hansen, Lawyer, DHRC, Denmark and Board Member of ENAR**

Niels-Erik is in charge of discrimination cases on the basis of ethnicity and religion. He emphasized the importance to strive to prevent hidden talents and focus on skills of people. People should not be punished in one way or the other if they are complaining against discrimination at the workplace (protection of whistle-blowers).

**Joana Vassilopoulou, lecturer in organisational behaviour and Human Resource Management, School of Business, Management and Economics, University of Sussex**

In her opinion, businesses have a problem with race because it is mainly about sharing power and resources. For example, some companies prefer to recruit expats from abroad instead of tapping into ethnic minorities locally. It goes deeper than just prejudice. Much symbolic violence can be found in
mainstream debates and ethnic minorities do not necessarily know the proper language to use in order to defend their rights. She used the term “Integracism” to show it is important to connect diversity and integration. According to her, integration is ethnocentric, because claimed by the mainstream population.

**Bruce Roch, Diversity Manager, Adecco Group**

Bruce began with mentioning 3 theories: that diversity is not an addition of ethnic minority, that diversity management does not prevent a company from discriminating, and that some people are more equal than others.

Adecco Group’s has an internal equality body that handles about 30 to 50 anti-discrimination cases per year. How does one break down stereotypes and biases? Adecco does it with in-person training, social agreement against discrimination (with social partners), assessments using fake CVs, etc. Through their research, they found that the longer your contract and the higher your rank, the more discrimination you will face. He also mentioned the percentages of self-censorship by people when they were asked to self-identify themselves. Between 50% and 80% preferred not to identify their “difference,” albeit disability, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, etc.
MARKET PLACE

Christophe Sokal, UCM- Entrepreneurs et Société

Christophe presented the Belgian/Brussels Project dedicated to supporting Small and Medium Size Entreprises (SME’s) to recruit young people from ethnic minorities. The project is funded by the Brussels employment agencies and managed by the UCM, one of the leading organization representing SME’s in Belgium. What makes the Project unique is that NGO’s are involved in identifying potential candidates. The UCM supports both the candidates and the recruiters in order to create a positive match.

More information [here](#)

Shannon Pföhrman, ENAR

Shannon presented the Equal@Work platform. She presented the different activities already organised and the programme for 2014.

Oilid Mountassar, Diversity Conflict Transformer

Oilid presented the Diversity Conflict Transformer (DCT), one of the tools from the Holistic Diversity Management (HDM) Certificate. The DCT (see brochure) enables management to create a space for negotiations in order to prevent and/or manage conflicts. Its step-by-step process and flexibility makes for a powerful tool.
**LAUNCH OF WORKING GROUP ON ETHNIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY WITH THE FOUNDATION AGAINST EXCLUSION**

Elena Mascova, Director of Studies, AFMD

“Coming out of the closet”—we need to call things what they really are. Elena presented a conclusion of surveys on perception of discrimination and equality in the working place which were carried out together with the French trade unions. Though companies say they are working on ethnicity policies, there are very few examples. The name of the conference says it all. One survey question was, “Do you think that one day you could be discriminated against in your workplace?” About 40% responded “yes” in the private sector. Regarding the cause of discrimination, ethnic origin ranked only 13th and skin colour ranked 17th. Do these findings mean that there is no such discrimination? The answer was “no.” Managers were asked what their biggest issue to manage was, and their response was astounding. According to Management, managing ethnic minorities ranked 1st (they weren’t asked about religion; it is possible that people automatically combined religion with ethnic origin). Different profiles were tested; being black and having foreign accents were labelled as disadvantages. The survey only demonstrated what is perceived—not necessarily what is actually the case.

Data collection methods, data protection, gathering personal information, analysing and creating pertinent conclusions proved to be amongst the most important issues. Although there are many structural barriers and discrimination, companies need to better address this issue and analyse in practice what firms do. Many companies do not know how to move forward and resolve the matter. The AFMD aims to help French companies do so by inviting them to work on this issue within the newly formed working group.
LAUNCH OF THE ENAR HOLISTIC DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE

Olid Mountassar, b-client

Oilid presented the ENAR Holistic Diversity Management Certificate which was officially launched on that day. The Certificate aims to provide businesses and institutions with an innovative, powerful tool that helps them move from diversity to inclusion in their diversity policies.

Diversity management has been an important focus for businesses in the past years. Recently, certifications have been developed with a technical approach to issues such as recruitment processes and career management, without a real reflexion on the meaning of these transformations on the way the businesses perceive the world.

This is the reason why the ENAR Foundation and its partners have designed a European certification in diversity management that articulates a holistic outlook and a multi-integrated approach that fit within a global vision specific of the place of businesses in society.

Beyond the certification process itself, we offer the possibility to assess the benefits of a diversity policy through a thorough audit and concrete proposals of training for all hierarchical levels. The ENAR Foundation approach is therefore qualitative and progressive. We set impact indicators for the enterprise’s diversity policy that will be measured and adapted according to the development of the business.

Our approach is original in the fact that it articulates, from the onset, the increasing maturity of managers with the progressive implementation of new diversity processes. **ENAR Foundation offers to be the business partner for a renewed diversity management approach.**

Useful documents

- Please see Oilid’s presentation [here](#)
- Presentation of the [ENAR Holistic Diversity Management Certificate](#)
INTERNATIONAL WITNESSES

Audrey Campbell, Ernst & Young.

Audrey challenged us to think without focusing on diversity as a problem or a potential conflict to resolve, but to think focusing on policy and cultural changes instead. We shouldn’t make it “us” and “them,” or fixing a problem, but “advancing.”

We should ask ourselves how to perceive this change and how to focus on a cultural change. We should move away from a patronising approach and think about who “we” are. The way we manage topics significantly affects the way people see themselves fitting into various areas of society. We need to change the tone. How we perceive people influences how we rate talent.

Minjon Tholen, Cook Ross

Minjon encouraged us to realise that tolerance is not inclusion, but still an “us vs. them” concept, and that we should go beyond this behaviour. There needs to be a shift around our idea of differences; “diversity” means you are invited to the party but “inclusion” means you are invited to dance and contribute to the choreography.

Coming from an “American” point of view, she insisted that it is really important to tackle the issue of subconscious bias and how it is manifested in subtle ways. It can lead to disengagement at work, and studies have shown that disengaged employees cost money. For this reason, allies from the mainstream population are necessary to empower minorities. She also mentioned that Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) managers are high level leaders in companies in the US, and that it should be the case in Europe if we wish to make significant change. In addition, in the US, companies’ missions and visions mention Diversity and Inclusion.

Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea, Head of Equality Unit, European Commission

Aurel presented an EU policy approach and gave the EU policy perspective. Promoting diversity is more than just fighting discrimination. He argued that we should have a more holistic approach to the issue as it is also a question of economics, human rights, and societal perspective. The EC is promoting diversity and fighting against discrimination, because it is a response to our societal needs. In addition to the business case, there should be a narrative connected to corporate social responsibility.
## Final Agenda

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<tr>
<td>10:30-11:00</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00-11:30</td>
<td>Words of welcome and Keynote speech</td>
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<td>11:30-12:00</td>
<td>Setting the scene</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00-13:00</td>
<td>Fishbowling about ethnicity and culture: <em>Facing reality: the true issues about ethnicity and culture at the workplace: legislation, tools and psychology</em></td>
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<td>13:00-14:00</td>
<td>Walking lunch</td>
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<td>14:00-15:15</td>
<td>Market Place – Presentation of successful comprehensive approaches by Businesses</td>
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<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>15:45-16:00</td>
<td>Launch of the Working Group on ethnic and cultural diversity</td>
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<td>Launch of the ENAR Holistic Diversity Management Certificate™</td>
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<td>16:30-17:30</td>
<td>The international witnesses: Perspectives</td>
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<td>17:00-17:30</td>
<td>Conclusions by M. Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea, Director D-Equality, European Commission representative and Q&amp;A</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:00-19:30</td>
<td>ENAR Foundation awards ceremony for a racism-free Europe and Cocktail</td>
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SOME INPUT AND COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

Minjon Tholen wrote a contribution to our reflections entitled “Let’s Talk about Difference: Addressing Racial and Ethnic Diversity & Inclusion in Europe.”

Jamila Alatkif sent us a short introduction around the topic, “The challenge of the Ethnic diversity management in France.”

Witness Interviews

Our 2 international witnesses were interviewed during the conference. Please find below the link to their interviews.

http://www.youtube.com/user/enarfoundation

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