



# **PROGEDi**

# **Baseline Assessment Report**

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**Perspectives on the added value & benefits of Diversity & Inclusion in the workplace, current DE&I practices, and organisational needs of SMEs & Non-Profit organisations in Greece**

**JULY 2023**



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



The project “Promoting Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace” (PROGEDI) is implemented by the [International Rescue Committee Hellas](#) (IRC Hellas), the [Cell of Alternative Youth Activities](#) (KEAN), and the [Generation 2.0 for Rights, Equality and Diversity](#) (Generation 2.0 RED), since January 2023. It is co-funded by the European Union.

The Baseline Assessment Report is one of the core deliverables of PROGEDI and it was **produced by Generation 2.0 RED**, with the support of Consortium Partners, IRC Hellas and KEAN.

**DISCLAIMER:**

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## Contents

1.	Introduction to PROGEDi .....	4
2.	Aim of the Survey and Research Methodology.....	4
3.	Online Questionnaire Survey .....	6
3.1.	Profile of Respondents .....	6
3.2.	Organizations' Profile .....	7
3.3.	Dissemination of the Survey .....	9
3.4.	Findings on Diversity & Inclusion .....	10
3.5.	Differences and Similarities among Non-Profit, For-Profit and Public sector .....	25
3.6.	Conclusions .....	30
4.	Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) .....	33
4.1.	Profile of Participants.....	33
4.2.	Diversity & Inclusion Findings .....	34
4.3.	Conclusions .....	40
5.	Recommendations .....	41



## 1. Introduction to PROGEDi

The IRC Hellas, KEAN and Generation 2.0 RED are implementing the 16-month project [PROGEDi](#), “Promoting Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace.”

The main objectives of the project are:

▶ To foster a sustainable culture of inclusion in Greece by raising awareness and strengthening the capacity in multi-dimensional diversity in Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and selected public sector agencies and creating dialogue platforms between civil society, academia, underrepresented communities and businesses.

▶ To strengthen national and transnational cooperation on diversity management and inclusion practices by sharing best practices, resources and tools in Greece and Europe.

The project is co-funded by the European Union and will last from January 2023 until April 2024.

## 2. Aim of the Survey and Research Methodology

The Baseline Assessment Report aims to assess the perspectives of employees and Business Management members at Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and other organizations on the added value and the benefits of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), to understand existing Diversity Management practices better, explore priorities and plans for further Diversity Management measures and assess Human Resources (HR) departments’ needs on the topic, at a managerial and organizational level. The assessment survey targeted SMEs and non-profit organizations in Greece and a limited number of public sector agencies.

- **Online Questionnaire Survey**

An online anonymous questionnaire was administered, using Google Forms, in Greek and English, including questions on the demographic profile of individuals and the type of organization they work for. The online questionnaire was completed by 70 people, employed in the private and public sector, regardless of their job position. A targeted mailing of the questionnaire was made to the company networks of the project partner organizations, namely Generation 2.0 RED, IRC Hellas, and KEAN’s company network, as well as to the partner networks of these three organizations. In addition, an announcement was published regarding the survey launch via the communication



channels of all three (3) organizations, and a press release<sup>1</sup> was published. The duration of the survey was approximately one (1) month and took place between May and June 2023. The questionnaire comprised of open-ended and closed-ended questions to collect both qualitative and quantitative results.

- **Focus Group Discussions**

Four (4) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) took place in May 2023<sup>2</sup>, with ten (10) participants in total. The invitation for participating in the FGDs was sent to the Generation's 2.0 RED "[Diversity in the Workplace](#)" network as well as to several employees in various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and companies from the individual networks of the Generation's 2.0 RED staff. Additionally, the invitation was publicly announced via the "Diversity in the Workplace" LinkedIn channel. A crucial factor in shaping the different groups was not to include more than one employed person per organization in a group, to ensure freedom of expression. Moreover, an effort was made to have members from both the non-profit and for-profit sectors in the same groups, to understand different perspectives and create an interesting dialogue, whereas employees in the public sector were present in all sessions.

An online questionnaire was distributed following each FGD concerning the participants and their organization's profile. Furthermore, a GDPR Consent Form was used and signed by the participants prior to the FGDs, while they also received a document explaining the procedure to be followed in this type of discussion. At the beginning of each session, an introduction of the people was encouraged, using only their first names, a summary of the rules to be applied in the discussion as well as a short presentation of the PROGEDI project prior to the discussion. The participants were employed people in the private or public sector, regardless of their position.

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<sup>1</sup> The relevant Press Release is available [here](#).

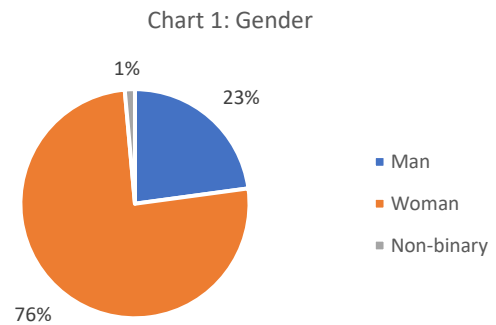
<sup>2</sup> The FGD sessions took place the following dates: 10/05, 11/05, 16/05 and 17/05/2023.



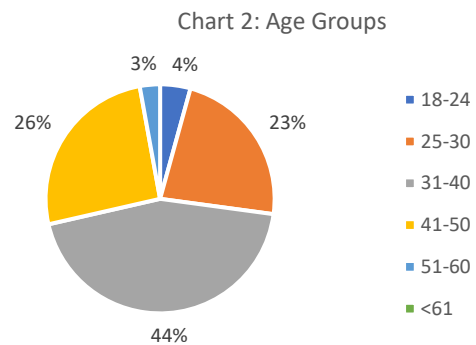
### 3. Online Questionnaire Survey

#### 3.1. Profile of respondents

Individuals who completed the anonymous survey are in their vast majority women (76%), while men make up 23% of the sample. 1% are non-binary, and only 1.4% do not identify with the gender assigned at birth (Chart 1).

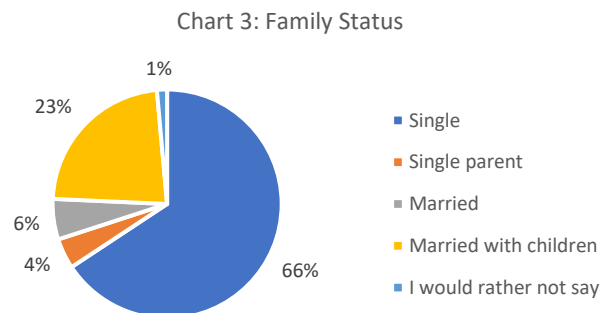


Regarding age, almost half of the people belong in the 31-40 age group (44%), whereas 26% are 41-50 years old, and 23% are 25-30 years old (Chart 2).



As for the country of origin, 96% are coming from Greece, 3% from Albania and 1% from Ukraine and Russia, while all individuals have Greek citizenship.

Regarding their family status, 66% of the respondents are single (Chart 3).





In terms of sexual orientation, 84% answered that they are straight, whereas 9% are bisexual/pansexual, and 6% are gay/lesbian (Chart 4).

8.6% reported having some form of disability and/or chronic disease, whereas 4.3% belong to a group of people with a mental illness.

### 3.2. Organizations' Profile

The majority of the organizations in which the survey respondents work, are for-profit organizations (54%), followed by non-profit organizations (39%). 7% of participants work in the public sector (Chart 5).

The majority of organizations employing people are Greek (69%), while 27% are multinational, and 4% are public entities.

Almost ¼ of participants (23%) work at an organisation in the Humanitarian sector, whereas the second largest sector of activity is Service Provision (20%), followed by Human Health and Social Work activities (13%) and Education (9%), while the Food service and Tourism (7%) and Retail (7%) follow. The rest 23% works in various sectors such as Transport, Communications/Advertising, Agriculture, etc.

Chart 4: Sexual Orientation

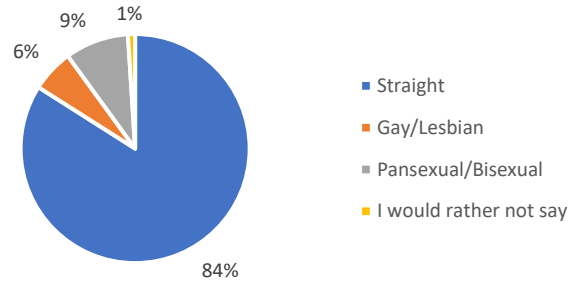


Chart 5: Type of Organization

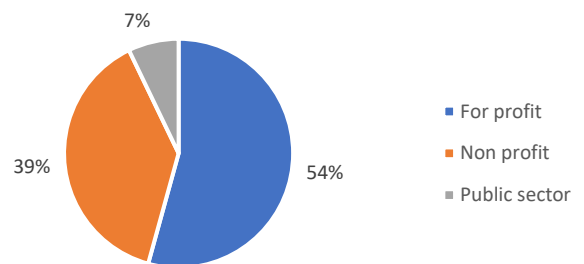
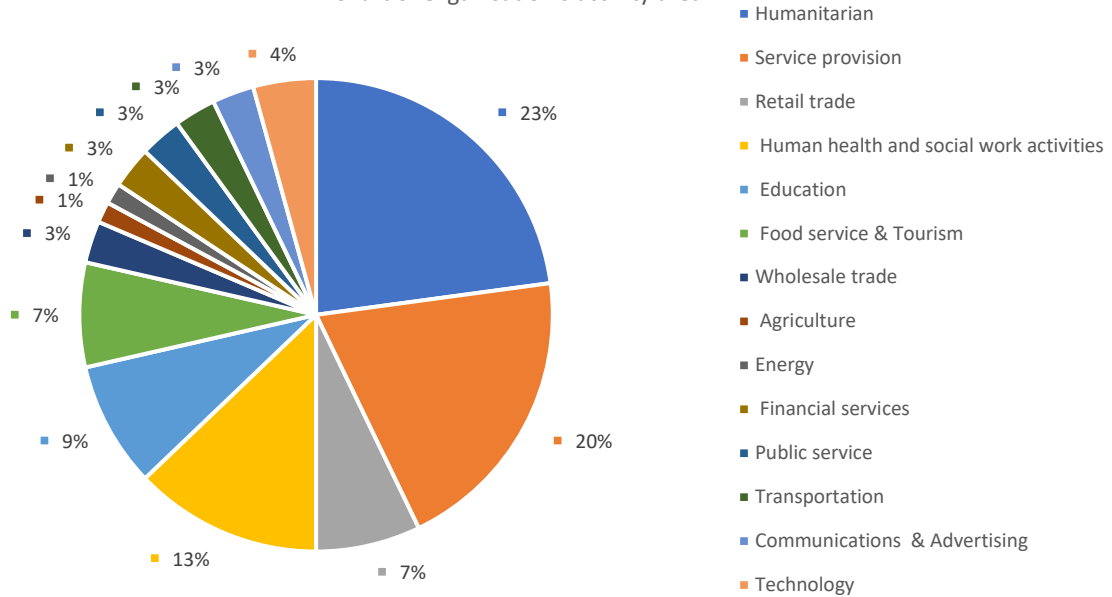
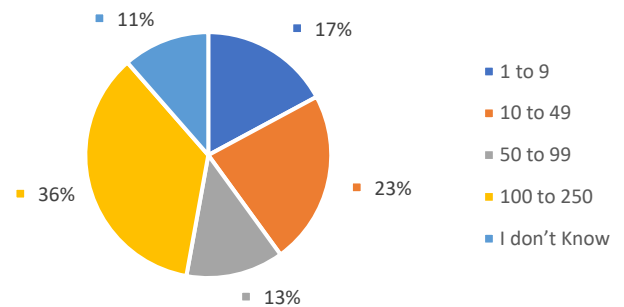


Chart 6: Organisation's activity area



Regarding the organization size, the majority of participants work at organizations with 100-250 employees (36%), followed by organizations with 10-49 employees (23%), small organizations with 1-9 employees (17%), and organizations with 50-99 employees (13%). 11% of the sample did not know the approximate number of employees in their organization.

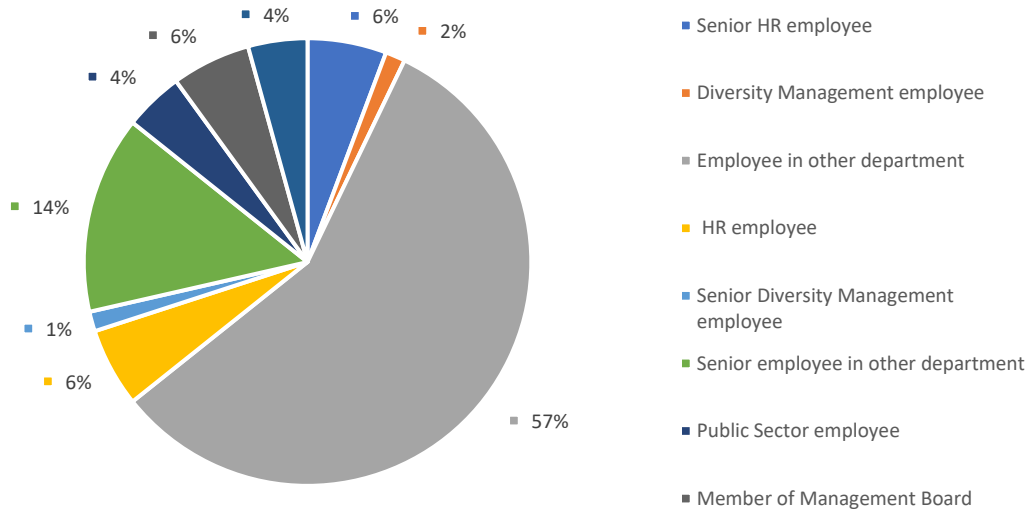
Chart 7: Number of employees at organisation



In terms of participants' nature of work, the majority are "employees in other department" (57%), where "other department" (for the specific survey) means any other department in an organization that is not involved in HR and/or Diversity Management. The second biggest represented group is "senior employee in other department" (14%), followed by, with 6% representation for each group, HR employees, Members of Management Board and Senior HR employees.



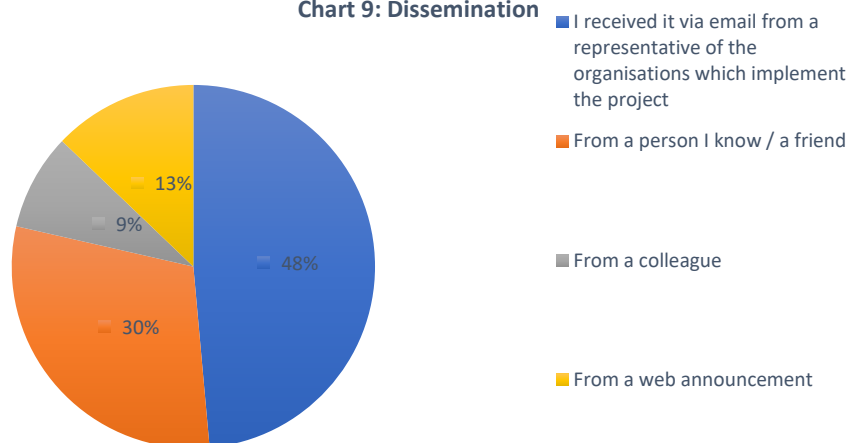
Chart 8: Nature of work



### 3.3. Dissemination of the Survey

Most participants received the survey from Generation 2.0 RED, IRC Hellas and KEAN networks, whereas 38.6% heard about the survey from a colleague/friend, and 17.7% found it online.

Chart 9: Dissemination

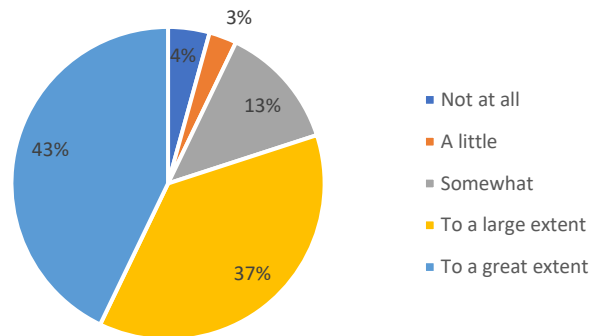


### 3.4. Findings on Diversity & Inclusion

#### Familiarity with the concept of Diversity

Regarding the concept of Diversity, 43% feel very familiar with this concept, while 37% feel quite familiar. 56 people out of 70 were able to provide a definition. In some cases, it has been observed some confusion with the concept of inclusion, and “uniqueness” was suggested as a more precise terms by some individuals.

Chart 10: Diversity



#### Respondents quoted on Diversity:

***"The concept of diversity refers to gender identities, nationalities, religions and other minority characteristics matters in a particular social/cultural reality."***

(Senior HR employee at a non-profit organization)

***"What makes us special."***

(Senior HR employee at a non-profit organization)

***"Non-ordinary."***

(HR employee at a for-profit organization)

***"Diversity has to do with variety, contrasts, and different characteristics among people, cultures, ethnicities, groups, and ideologies."***

(Senior HR employee at a non-profit organization)

***"Diversity lies in the uniqueness of a person but also in any characteristic - social or not- attributed by the whole to the person and which does not line up with the characteristics of the majority in the context."***

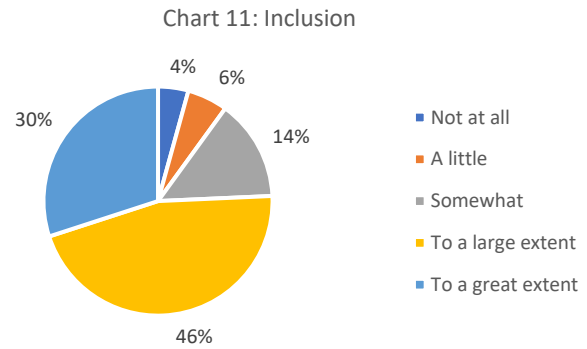
(Employee in other department at a for-profit organization)

***"[I understand it] As something (person, ideology, behaviour, style, etc.) that conservative norms, fear, and the society's lack of empathy labeled it "different" because it was out of the norm at the time."***

(Employee in other department at a for-profit organization)

## Familiarity with the concept of Inclusion

46% of the participants feel quite familiar with the concept inclusion, while 30% feel very familiar. 14% of the participants feel somewhat familiar, while 53 people out of 70 were able to provide a definition.



### Respondents quoted on Inclusion:

***"Equal treatment of all people free from discrimination."***  
*(Employee in other department at a for-profit organization).*

***"Substantial participation of people with different identities in processes and decisions in a social action space".***  
*(Member of Management Board at a non-profit organization)*

***"Including diversity in many different contexts."***  
*(Employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

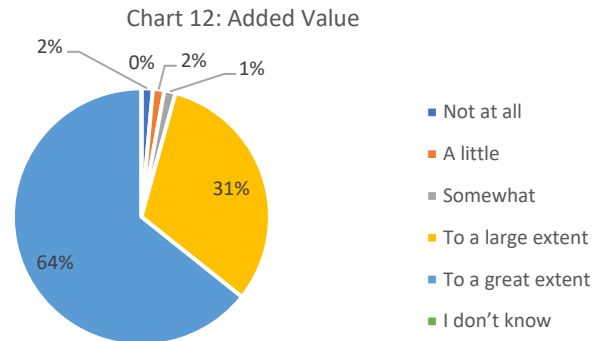
***"The smooth coexistence without discrimination."***  
*(Employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

***"Inclusion means providing fertile ground and individualised conditions through which all persons regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, skin color, age, religion, impairment and physicality can contribute, be heard, and exist in their full and equal capacities."***  
*(Senior Diversity Management employee at a non-profit organization)*

## Added Value and Benefits of Diversity in the Work Environment

64% believe that a diverse environment (consisting of people with diverse social identities) can provide to a great extent added value to an organization, while 31% believe a diverse environment adds to a large extent added value.

Only 4% responded that it adds little or no value at all.



### Respondents quoted on added value of diversity in the work environment:

***"Innovation. Diversity of people with different thoughts, perceptions, and opinions can create a climate of innovation and creativity that can lead to improved processes and products."***

*(Senior HR employee at a for-profit organization)*

***"Different opinions, easy and creative brainstorming, variety of solutions to problems and distinct viewpoint; reduction of racist attitudes."***

*(Employee in other department at a for-profit organization)*

***"Exchange of good practices at an organisational level, and methods of reaching out to people of different religious beliefs."***

*(Public sector employee)*

***"A diverse environment fosters teamwork and promotes equality."***

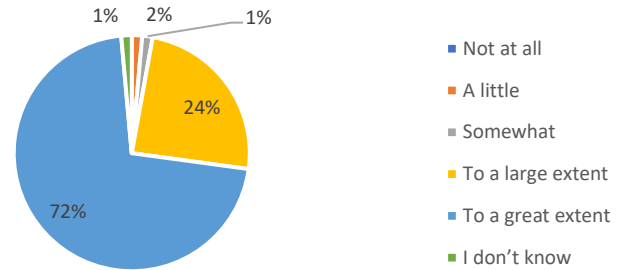
*(Member of Management Board at a non-profit organization)*

***"Pluralism brings different ideas. People of different social backgrounds working in a team can, also, make the whole team be able to cope with very different needs and show a greater range of sensitivity."***

*(Employee at other department in a non-profit organization)*

72% believe that D&I provide benefits at an organization to a great extent, while 24% believe they can have benefits to a large extent.

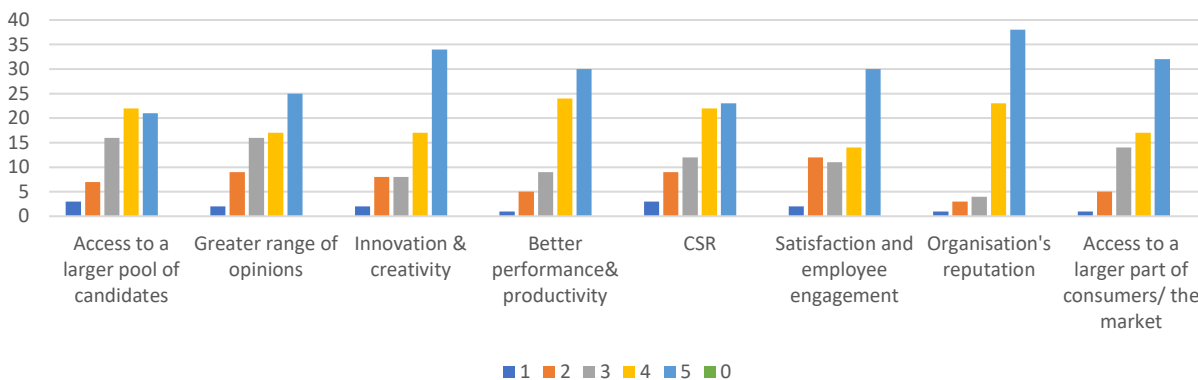
Chart 13: Benefits from diversity & inclusion



Individuals who responded “somewhat” to “to a great extent”, they also rated the importance they believe their organizations attach to some benefits that are considered, based on pre-existing literature, to be deriving from inclusion. The most important benefits of inclusive environments for the organizations, were rated, in order of importance, as follows:

- the organization’s reputation, innovation, and creativity,
- access to a larger part of the market/consumers,
- employee satisfaction and engagement, along with the improved performance and productivity.
- The achievement of goals in the context of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the access to a larger pool of candidates received the lowest rate.

Chart 14: Inclusion Benefits

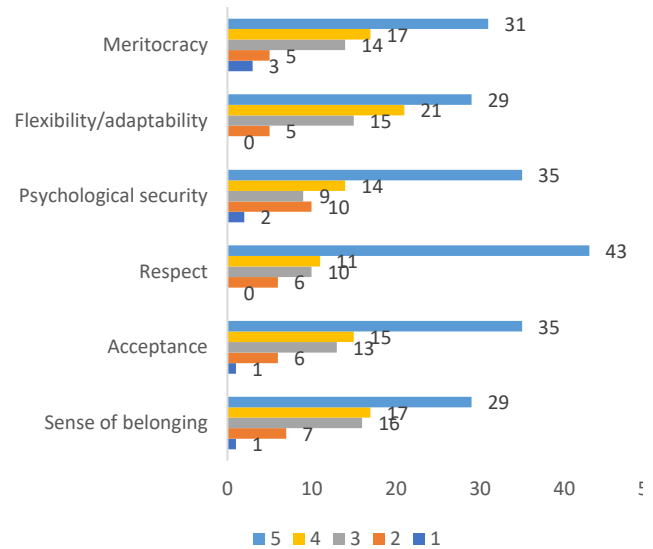




From those benefits, almost half of the participants (44.9%) have seen at least one in their current work environment, while 13% have observed none.

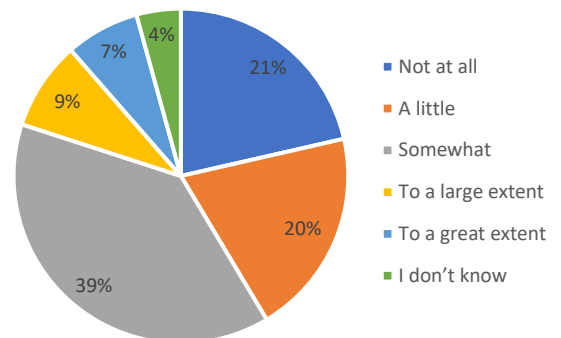
In terms of importance attributed to various work values, which are found to be related to inclusion, participants believe that for their organizations the greatest importance is placed, primarily, to **respect** (61% rate as very important), **acceptance** as well as **psychological security** of the employee (50% rate them as very important), meritocracy (44% rate it as very important), whereas the sense of belonging and flexibility/adaptability is rated by 41% as very important to their organization's workplace.

Chart 15: Importance of values for organisations



On the other hand, 39% believe that the existence of homogeneous characteristics in groups can somewhat improve collaboration and prevent conflict, whereas 41% believe it can help only a little or not at all.

Chart 16: Homogeneous characteristics in groups



**Respondents quoted on how it is believed that homogeneous characteristics in groups can help improve collaboration and prevent conflicts:**

**"Similar views and coping ways are likely to lead to smooth problem management."**

*(Employee in other department at a non-profit organization).*

**"If there is a common background, there is correspondingly greater understanding."**

*(Senior employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

**"Avoiding misunderstandings-Better communication."**

*(HR employee at a non-profit organization)*

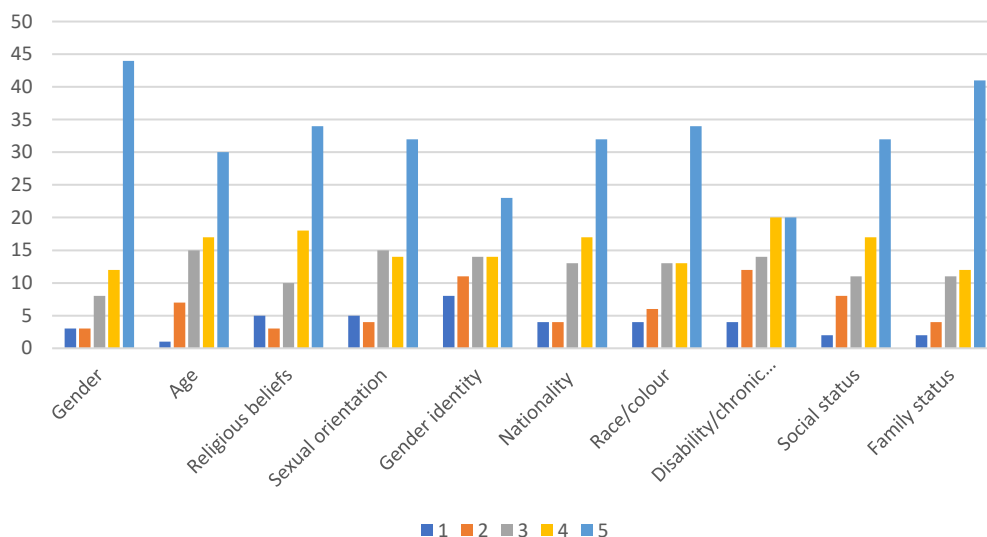
***"Common language: Having a common language can help communication and understanding between people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In this example, a common language can help smooth cooperation and avoid conflicts in different areas such as entrepreneurship, diplomacy and in international organizations. Common faith and cultural elements: Having shared beliefs and cultural elements can help create a climate of trust and cooperation. In this example, common faith and cultural elements can help avoid conflict and help strengthen relations among individuals and groups."***

(Senior HR employee at a non-profit organization)

## Work Environment and Social Identities

In terms of receptiveness to diversity at an organizational level on a scale from 1 to 5 (5 being the highest rate), almost more than half of participants consider their organization to be very receptive primarily in terms of gender and family status. Gender identity and age follow equally with social status, origin, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. The lowest perceived receptiveness is physical disability/chronic disease/mental illness, with less than 1/3 of participants rating their organization as very receptive regarding those aspects of diversity.

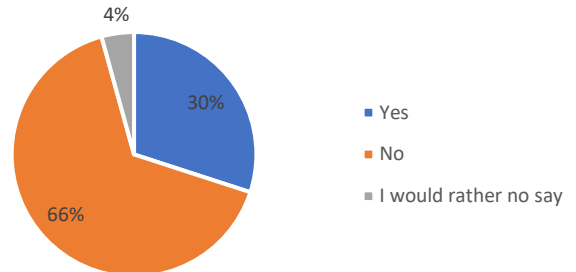
Chart 17: Organisation's receptiveness concerning social identities





As to how individuals themselves experience the perception of their diversity within their work environment, 66% have never received a comment related to social identity in their current workplace, while 30% of individuals have received a comment, and 4% preferred not to answer.

Chart 18: Comment on social identity/ies



### Respondents quoted on the comments received and corresponding reaction(s), if existed:

**"I have received comments as a young woman and later as a mother."**

*(Employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

**"It concerns incidents of everyday sexism, often arising in the form of "harmless" comments and behaviours, that are not aggressive or formally abusive in nature, and are more reflective of dominant social attitudes towards gender identities/ stereotypes. Reactions vary depending on the situation and mostly involve verbal reframing or avoiding further expansion."**

*(Employee in other department in a non-profit organization)*

**"Because of my sexual orientation, I received a comment from a colleague about the company party, to be modest. I did not react."**

*(HR employee at a non-profit organization)*

**"It was about my origin and it had to do with expression of surprise that even though I am not from Greece, I can write well texts. The comment, despite the fact that it had a positive intention, was offensive."**

*(Employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

**"I have received sexual hints/suggestions as well as mobbing.**

**Incidents have been reported to managers".**

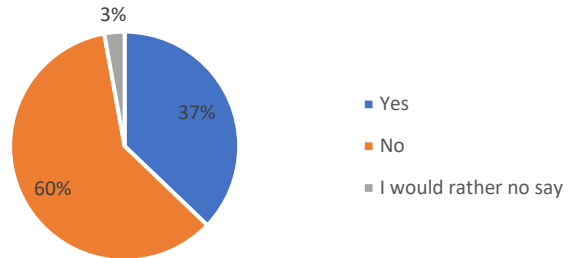
*(Senior employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*





As to how their colleagues' sense of diversity is perceived in the workplace and specifically whether they have witnessed incidents of discrimination towards colleagues, 60% have never witnessed it in their current workplace, while 37% have witnessed such an incident.

Chart 19: Witness of discrimination incident



**Indicative such incidents based on the responses were:**

***"It relates to a disparaging characterization related to a colleague's appearance/way of dressing, in their absence. The reaction focused on the right to freedom of expression."***

*(Employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

***"Not making a job offer to a new mother."***

*(Employee in other department in a non-profit organization)*

***"Rejecting a candidate because of their sexual orientation. The employer mentioned that she is annoyed with how gays talk."***

*(Employee in other department in a for-profit organization)*

***"Gender discrimination has taken place. The colleague who made the attack received a response from the whole team that this behaviour was not acceptable."***

*(Employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

***"Discrimination based on illness, specifically against a colleague with cancer, as well as a comment about instrumentalization of cancer."***

*(Employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

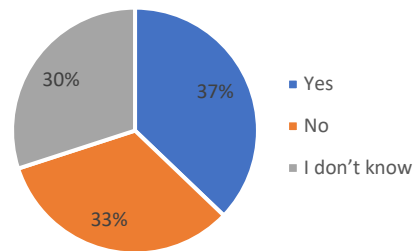
***"Characterizations on appearance; the Management's support was delivered to the individual, and all staff was informed again of the company rules."***

*(HR employee at a for-profit organization)*

## Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) in the Workplace

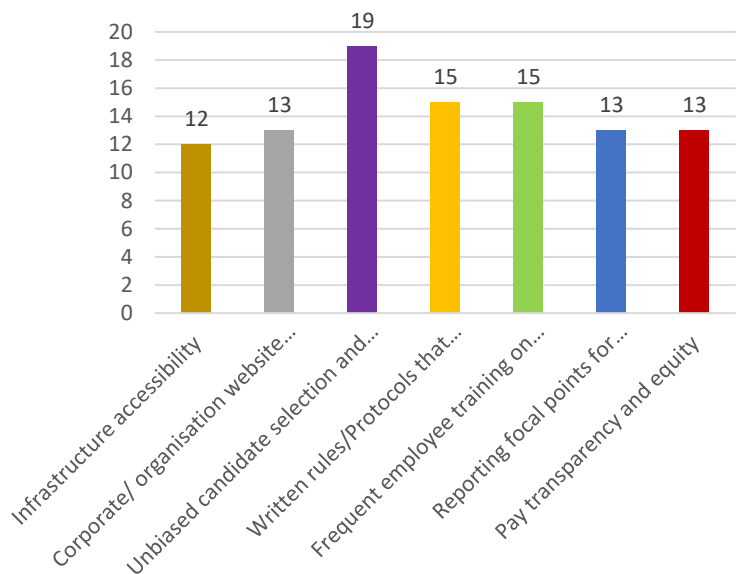
For the 33% of the organisations where participants are employed, no Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) practice/policy is implemented, whereas 30% of them do not know if such a practice/policy is implemented. Only 37% stated that a relevant practice is implemented in their organisation.

Chart 20: D&I Policies/Practices in organizations



Of those who responded positively to the existence of a practice, the most common are the Unbiased candidate selection and hiring practices (73%), followed by frequent employee training on D&I topics (57.7%) and written rules/protocols that prohibit discrimination and promote equality (57.7%).

Chart 21: DE&I practices & policies implemented



Corporate/organisation website accessibility and Infrastructure accessibility come next, equally with the Reporting focal points for discrimination incidents and Pay transparency and equity. The use of neutral language in terms of gender, origin, etc. was also mentioned by 46% of the 26 respondents.



For over half of the organizations which have in place DE&I practice(s), these also apply to their partners/suppliers (54%).

54% of those working in organizations with DE&I practices consider those practices to be effectively implemented to a large extent, and 23% think they are effectively implemented to a great extent (Chart 21).

As to whether DE&I actions are announced to all staff, 40% of the participants say that this does happen, while 20% mention this happens sometimes, and 12% of participants don't know if such thing happens.

Regarding training on DE&I matters, 40% of participants have received training in their current organization, while 60% still need to.

For most of the organizations (61%), **the training was not conducted by a person responsible for DE&I issues in the organization.**

Of those who responded that they have received training, most of them feel that they were adequately informed on DE&I matters to put them into practice (46% responded that they were Informed properly "to a large extent", and 25%, "to a

Chart 22: Effective implementation of D&I practices

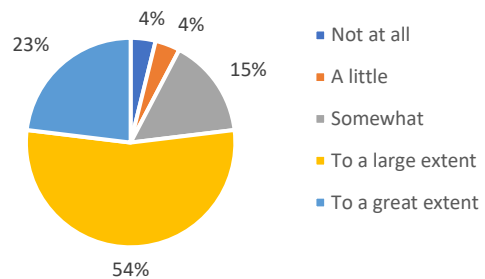


Chart 23: Announcement of DE&I actions to all employees

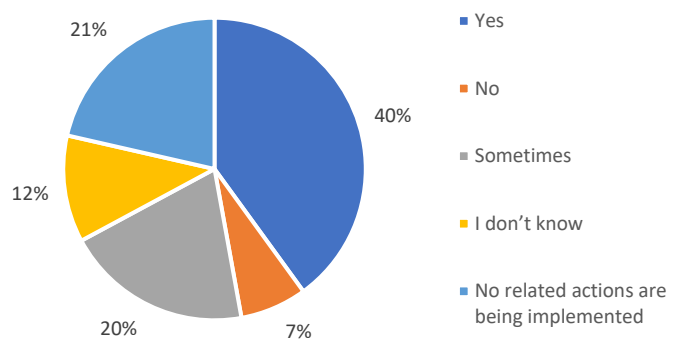
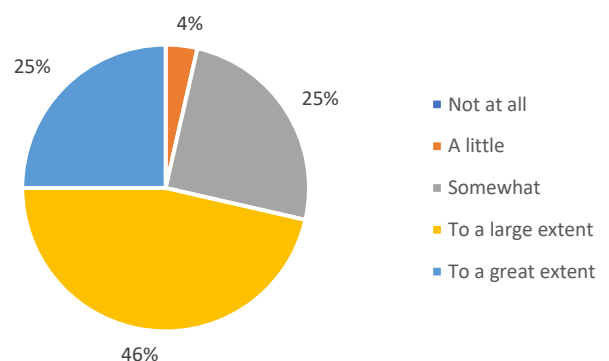


Chart 24: Properly informed on DE&I matters to apply to work

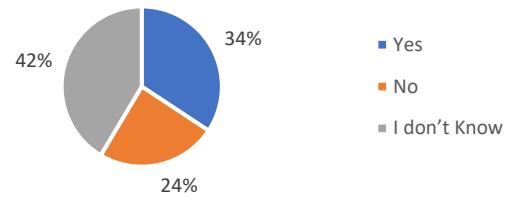




great extent"), whereas 25% that they were informed "somewhat properly" (Chart 23).

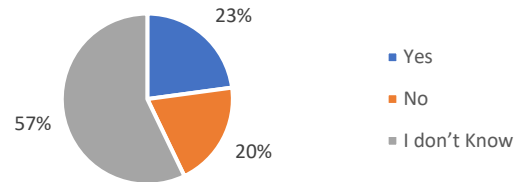
Regarding the knowledge needed to design and implement DE&I practices, 42% of participants do not know if such knowledge exists in their organisation, whereas 24% answered that it does exist. 34% of participants stated that this knowledge does exist.

Chart 25: Existing knowledge on DE&I in the organization



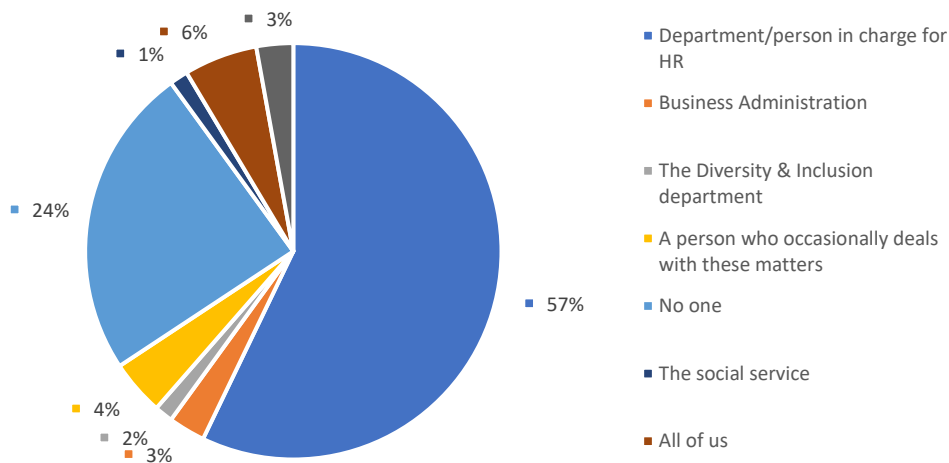
With regards to the existence of adequate financial resources to design DE&I practices in the organisation, 23% of all participants stated that those exist, whereas 20% answered negatively, and the majority (57%) of the participants stated that they do not know.

Chart 26 Adequate financial resources



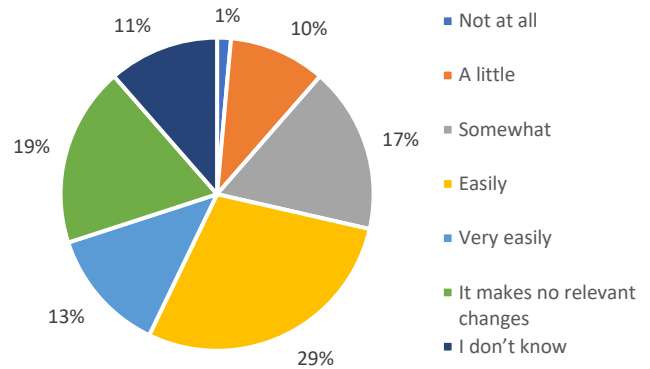
At the organisations of 57% of participants, the HR department/manager is responsible for DE&I matters, whereas for the 1/4 of the organisations, there is no person/department with such responsibilities.

Chart 27: Person/department with DE&I responsibilities



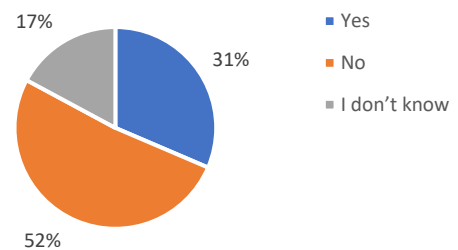
42% believe that the organisation where they are employed adapts “easily” to “very easily” to changes concerning DE&I, whereas 19% stated that they do not make relevant changes, and 11% of participants are not aware of that.

Chart 28: Adaptability to changes regarding DE&I



31% believe that at their organisation there are attitudes/practices that possibly exclude certain individuals/groups, whereas 52% do not believe so, and 17% do not know.

Chart 29: Excluding practices/attitudes in the organization



**22 individuals mentioned indicatively certain behaviours/practices that could exclude individuals/groups:**

***"There are individuals who are not invited to company events because of their scope of work."***

*(Senior employee in other department at a for-profit organization).*

***"It mainly concerns the exclusion of people with disabilities. I do not know if there has been such discrimination at recruitment (e.g. if there have been candidates with this profile and they have been rejected), but I am not aware of any colleagues with disabilities".***

*(Employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

***"Appearance is a particularly important element for the company I work for and as a result, people who do not meet the requested requirements have been excluded."***

*(Employee in other department at a for-profit organization)*

***"They avoid hiring women who are at the 'age of marriage'."***

*(Employee in other department at a for-profit organization)*



**"No remote work opportunity is provided for e.g. people with mobility difficulties."**  
*(Senior employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

**"No preference is shown to recruiting/collaborating with people of certain nationalities".**  
*(Employee in other department in a for-profit organization)*

The possibility of coping with the aforementioned attitudes/behaviours according to the respondents is indicatively the following:

**"Using "equal opportunity to all candidates" in job advertisements, adjusting role/job descriptions to make clear that the physical ability is not a requirement for employment at the organization (or at least to what extent it could be a requirement)."**  
*(Employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

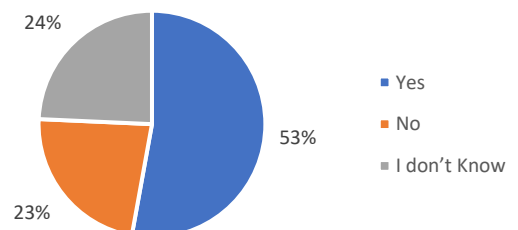
**"Educational programmes."**  
*(Public sector employee)*

**"I would suggest that management and HR intervene and set boundaries with colleagues who have offensive or racist behaviour."**  
*(Employee in other department at a for-profit organization)*

**"Complaint if there are internal procedures, reference to online platforms such as Glassdoor."**  
*(HR employee at a non-profit organization)*

At the organizations where half of the respondents (53%) work, efforts are made to identify/address incidents of discrimination or extreme behaviour, whereas at the organisations of 23% of respondents, no efforts takes places, and 24% does not have such information.

Chart 30: Efforts to identify/address discrimination/extreme behaviour



Indicatively, efforts followed to identify incidents of discrimination/extreme behaviour are:

**"Ongoing communication with HR and feedback to managers."**  
*(Employee in other department at a for-profit organisation).*



**"Implementation of a Code of conduct, existence of committee that handles relevant complaints."**

*(Senior employee in other department in a non-profit organization)*

**"Filling in a form for any issue that arises and, by extension, to identify discrimination or extreme behavior."**

*(Employee in other department at a for-profit organization)*

**"Contact line and platform, to report such incidents with full protection of the person who makes the complaint."**

*(Employee in other department at a for-profit organization)*

**"Discrete discussions with staff. Encouraging employees to speak up."**

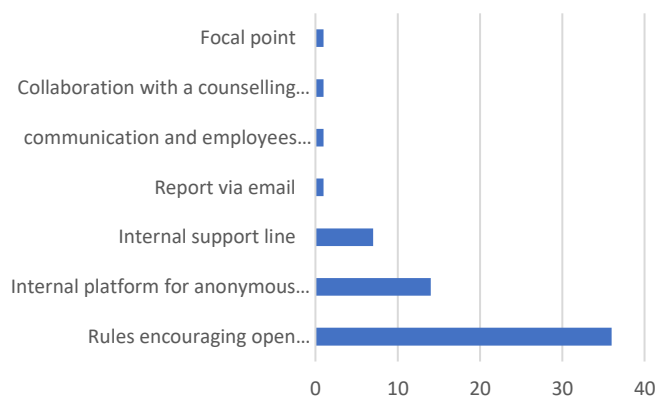
*(HR employee at a for-profit organization)*

**"Protection and whistleblowing policies are in place for discrimination incidents."**

*(Employee in other department at a non-profit organization)*

Regarding the procedures/tools used to deal with incidents of discrimination/and extreme behaviour, 37 out of 70 respondents mentioned the Rules encouraging employees to communicate openly (97.3%), while 37.8% mentioned internal platforms for anonymous incident reporting, and 18.9% mentioned an internal support line.

Chart 31: Tools & procedures used to deal with discrimination & extreme behaviours

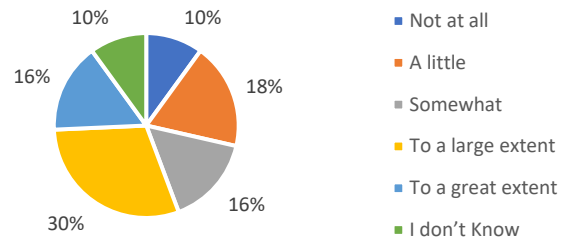


## Future Plans

Almost half of the participants (46%) believe DE&I issues are high “to a large extent” and “to great extent” on their organization’s agenda, while 28% believe this is “not at all” to “a little” true for their organization (Chart 31).

In parallel, 83% do not know whether their organization has set new DE&I priorities/objectives for 2023-2024, whereas only 17% are aware of that.

Chart 32: DE&I management issues are high on organisation’s agenda



### Indicatively, the most common priorities mentioned are:

***"Developing an equality, diversity, and inclusion plan.***

***3 pillars: 1. Competent managers & role models, 2. Inclusive environment, 3. Equal opportunities."***

*(Member of Management Board at a non-profit organisation)*

***"Training programme."***

*(Public sector Employee) & (Member of Management Board at a non-profit organisation)*

***"We continue to be a role model in terms of gender equality and we focus on the equal development of people of all ages and career stages, raising awareness and learning more about the pride & disability pillars. We further strengthen diversity in terms of people's ethnicity, different cultures, and different social backgrounds."***

*(HR employee in a for-profit organisation)*

***"Inclusion of people with migrant background in decision making."***

*(Member of Management Board at a non-profit organisation)*

***"Training for the employees of the organisation on diversity and inclusion – Signing the (Diversity) Charter."***

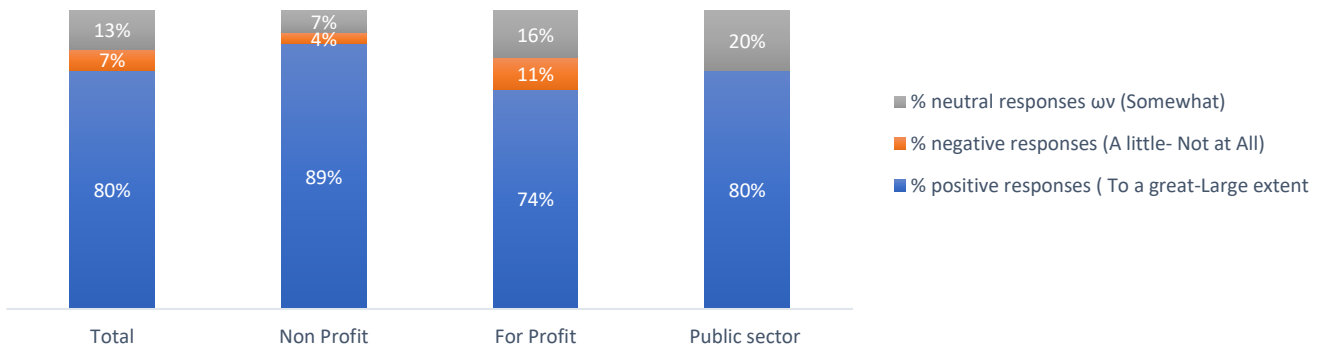
*(Public sector Employee)*



### 3.5. Differences and Similarities among Non-Profit, For-Profit and Public sector

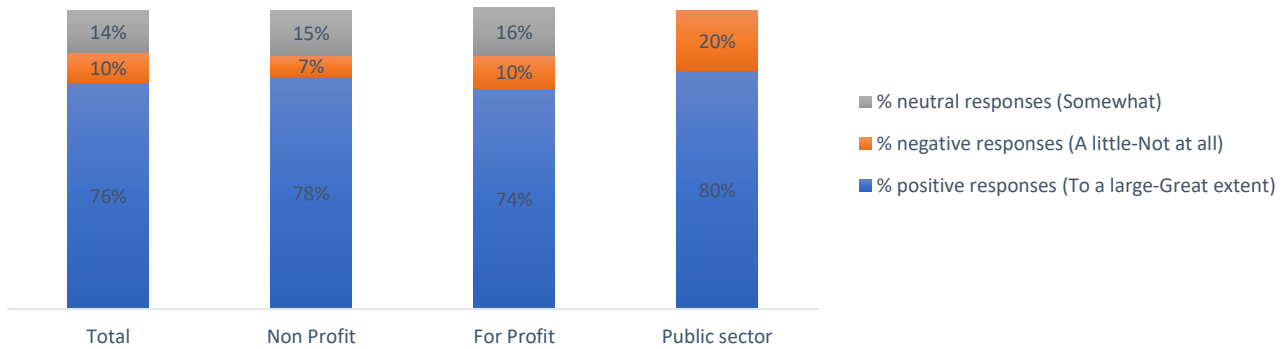
The highest level of familiarity with the **concept of ‘Diversity’ in the workplace** is observed in the Non-Profit sector (27 people in total -89% replied that they feel familiar “to a great” and “to a large extent”), the For-Profit sector follows (38 people in total -74% replied they feel familiar from “to a great” and “to a large extent”), whereas in the Public sector (5 people in total), 4 people feel familiar “to a great extent” and “to a large extent”. In the majority of responses, respondents feel familiar “To a large” and “To a great extent”.

Chart 33: To what extent do you feel familiar with the concept of diversity at work?



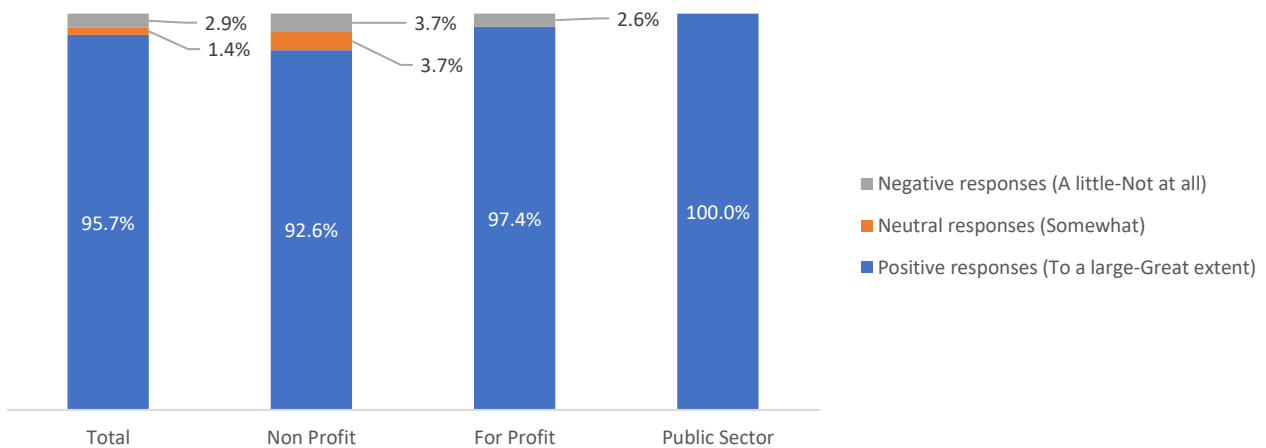
A similar trend is observed in the analysis of the familiarity with the concept of ‘Inclusion’: The employees at the Non-Profit sector seem to be slightly more familiar with the concept of ‘inclusion’, since 78% answered “to a great extent” and “a large extent”, whereas in the For-Profit sector, 74% claims to be familiar “to a great” and “to a large extent”. In the Public sector, most individuals feel familiar “to a great extent”, however a meaningful comparison cannot be produced with the other sectors due to the small number of participants. In general, a significant familiarity is displayed with both concepts.

Chart 34: To what extent do you feel familiar with the concept of inclusion at work?



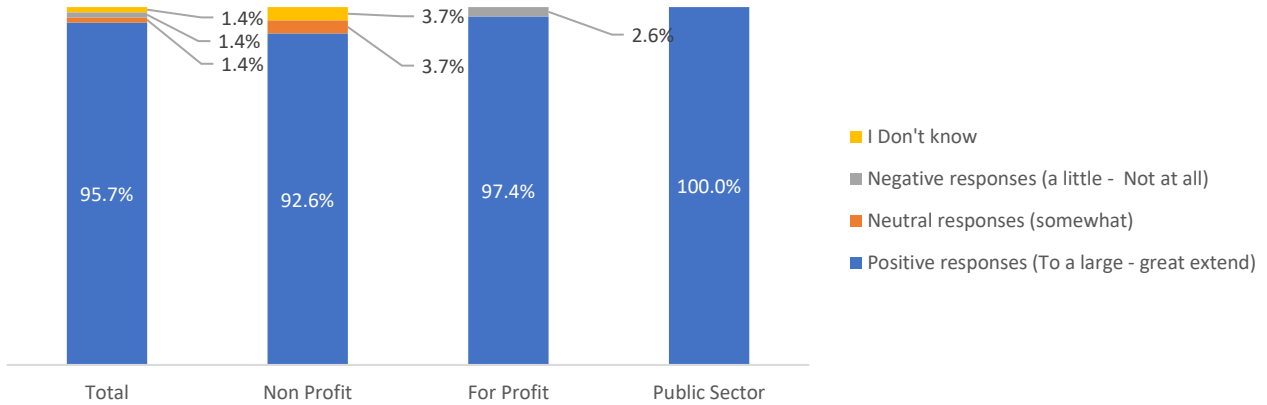
As observed in all sectors, most participants think that a **diverse work environment can bring added value to an organization.**

Chart 35: Do you think a diverse environment can provide added value to an organisation?



Same results observed throughout all sectors when it comes to recognising that diversity and inclusion bring benefits in the workplace. The vast majority agrees that D&I can bring benefits to “a great” and “large extent”.

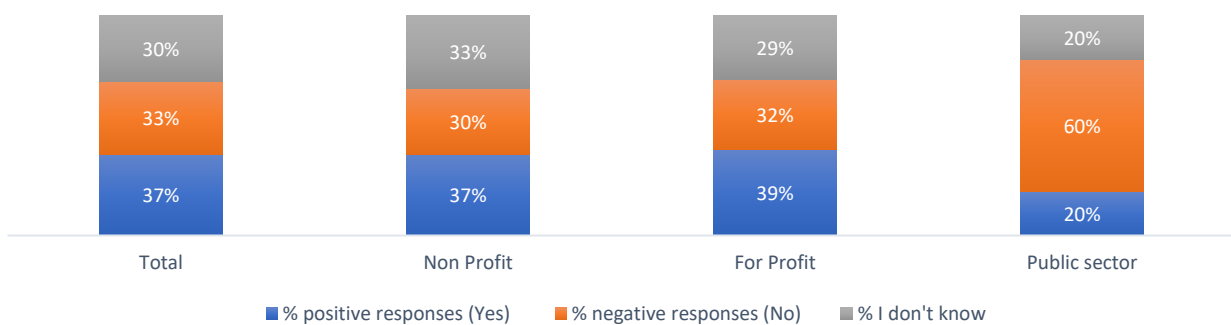
Chart 36: Do you think that diversity & inclusion can bring benefits to a work environment?



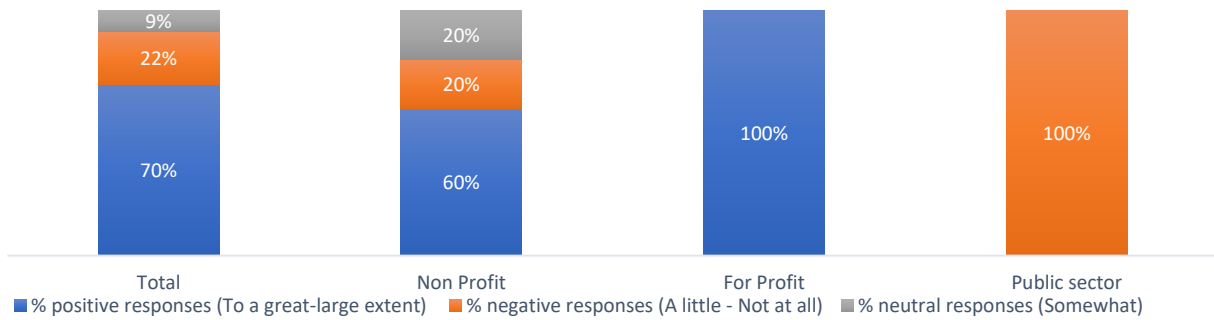
### Diversity Management Practices

**DE&I Management**, according to responses, is applied almost similarly to the For-Profit (39%) and the Non-Profit (37%) sectors, whereas, in the Public sector, 1 person mentioned that DE&I practices are applied, and 3 people were not aware if such thing is applicable. In general, almost 1/3 of the organizations, where the participants are employed, has active DE&I practices.

Chart 37: Is DE&I Management applied in your organisation?



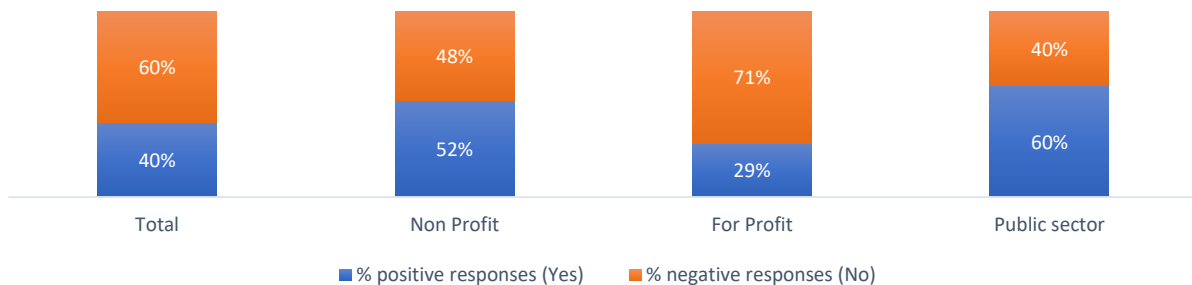
**Chart 38: Do you think that DE&I practices/policies are being effectively implemented; (total of 23 responses)**



## DE&I Trainings

The higher rate of participation in DE&I trainings is observed in the Non-Profit sector (52%) in comparison to the other sectors' rates. Notably, in the For-Profit sector only 29% of respondents answered that they have participated in DE&I trainings.

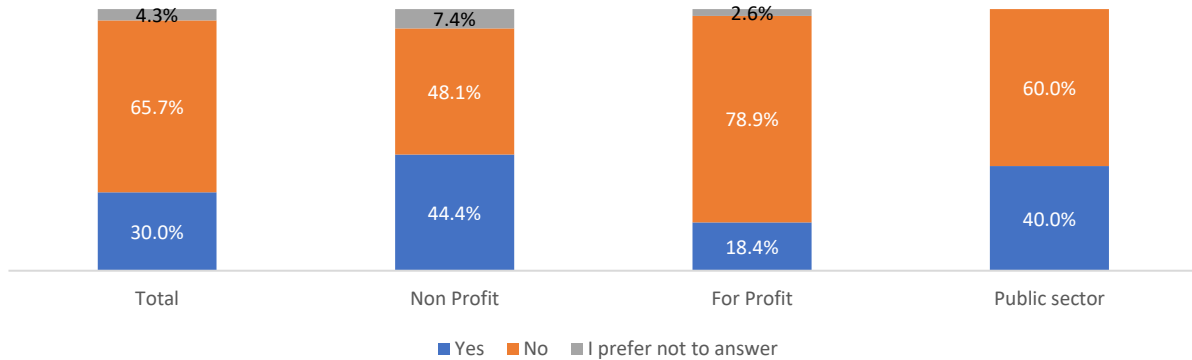
**Chart 39: Have you ever received any Diversity & Inclusion training at your current work?**



## Social identities and discrimination

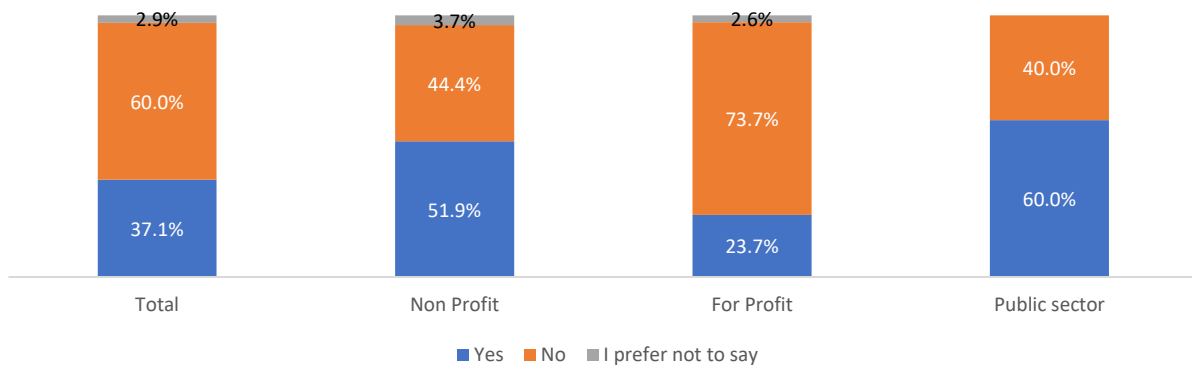
Approximately half of the participants employed in the Non-Profit sector said they have received a **comment regarding one of their social identities in their current work environment** (44%). In the For-Profit sector, 18% said they have received a relevant comment, and, in the Public sector, 2 out of 5 individuals have received a relevant comment. In total, 30% of the survey respondents said they have received a comment related to one of their social identities at their current workplace.

Chart 40: Have you ever received a comment related to your social identity?



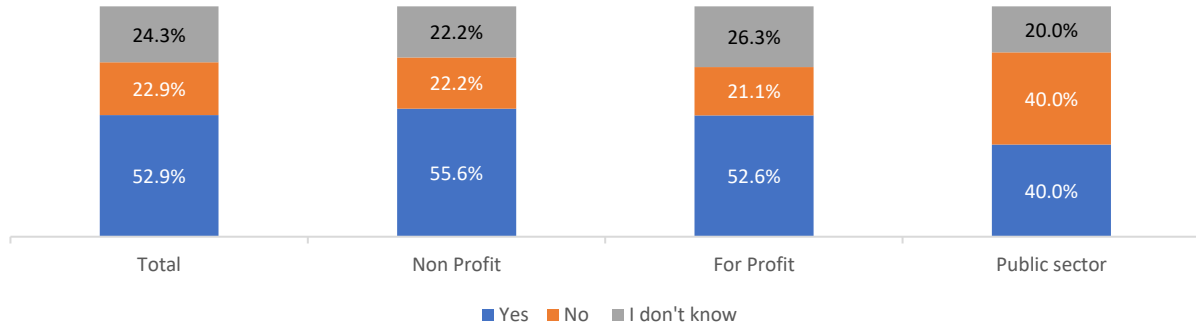
Similar results are found in the analysis regarding the question about **witnessing a discrimination incident against a colleague**. In the Non-Profit sector, slightly more than half of the individuals (51,9%) have witnessed a discrimination incident against colleagues, whereas, in the For-Profit sector, almost ¼ of individuals said they have witnessed such an incident. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that 3 out of the 5 respondents from the Public sector preferred not to respond. In total, regardless of the sectors, more than 1/3 of respondents have witnessed a discrimination incident against a colleague.

Chart 41: Have you ever witnessed a discrimination incident against your colleagues?



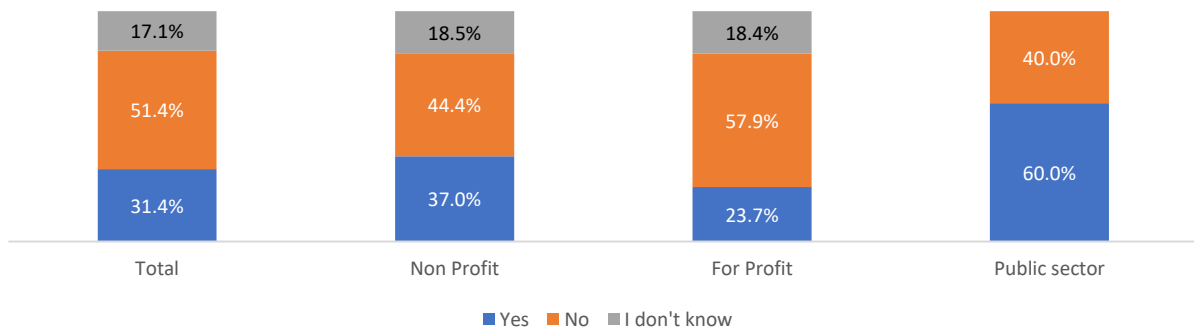
To the question on whether efforts are being made towards **identifying and/dealing with discrimination incidents and extreme behaviours in the work environment**, in total, more than half of the respondents answered that such efforts are being undertaken in their organizations, with no notable differences in the answers between different sector employees.

Chart 42: Are efforts being made to identify/deal with discrimination incidents or extreme behaviours?



Employees were asked whether they have encountered behaviours or practices in their organization, that could exclude certain individuals or groups of individuals: 3 out of 5 respondents-employees of the Public sector believe that behaviours/practices excluding people do exist, whereas 37% of respondents from the Non-Profit sector said this happens in their organization as well.

Chart 42: Do you believe that your organisation follows behaviours/practices that could exclude people/groups of people?



### 3.6. Conclusions

- Familiarity with the concept of diversity is greater in comparison to that of inclusion according to respondents. However, the two terms seem to be confused by a significant number of respondents and thus reveal a slight knowledge gap for diversity.
- Individuals working in the Non-Profit sector claim to be more familiar with diversity (mainly) and inclusion in comparison to employees in the For-Profit sector. This could be attributed to the nature and scope of their work (contact with people from different social groups, who are very often in a vulnerable situation) as well as to the composition of these organizations, which, because of the service provision to people/groups of certain social profiles, they have included in their personnel “cultural mediators” and professionals who belong in various social groups. Additionally, this could be attributed to the perception that Non-Profit organizations are open toward all, with organizational practices that encourage freedom of expression among their employees.

Thus, as a consequence, employees in this sector often are able to freely express who they are, in many cases, experiencing themselves in that way an inclusive workplace and feel familiar with inclusion.

- At the same time, employees in the Non-Profit sector display the largest percentage of negative and neutral responses compared to For-Profit employees concerning familiarity with DE&I. This perhaps can be attributed to a more practical perception of what do those terms mean in essence and, consequently, maybe they end up doubting whether they do possess this familiarity in reality.
- The vast majority of the respondents, regardless of the sector they work in (Non-Profit, For-Profit and Public sector), think that a diverse environment can bring added value to a great extent to an organization, with the most common added values mentioned by participants being innovation (different ideas), creativity and variety in solutions. The most neutral and negative (compared to the other two sectors and not statistically high) responses (“Somewhat” and “A little-Not at all”) are found in the Non- Profit sector, which could be indicative of the skepticism that can go hand in hand with personal experience.
- Most respondents believe that diversity and inclusion can have, also, benefits for a workplace to a large extent with the most predominant for the participants’ organizations (as perceived by them), the organization’s reputation, innovation & creativity and access to a larger part of the market/consumers. Next in rating, they value as equally significant the employees’ satisfaction and engagement with the improved performance and productivity. It is worth mentioning that almost half of the individuals recognize those benefits-priorities in their current work environment. From those results, we could assume that employees perceive more employee-centered benefits as less important for their organizations.
- In the Non-Profit sector, we can observe, however, the highest percentages of neutral (“Somewhat”) and “I don’t know” responses regarding the benefits generated by diversity and inclusion, which could be indicating some skepticism, stemming perhaps from the experience in a diverse workplace. It is worth noting that innovation and creativity are considered by employees themselves as an added value and, additionally, from the point of their organization as a benefit highly appreciated.
- In terms of work values, participants believe that for their organizations the greatest importance is placed, primarily, to respect (for over half of the participants) and acceptance and psychological security (for half of the participants).
- The organizations, through the perspective of their employees, appear to be more receptive primarily towards gender and family status, while religious and other beliefs, as well as race/colour, follow. Next come the sexual orientation, nationality/origin and social status. The lowest receptiveness is thought by the participants to exist towards the social identities of age, gender identity and physical disability/chronic disease/ mental illness. The results of the highest receptiveness reflect in a way the orientation towards which the Greek State has recently launched initiatives on diversity and inclusion as well the predominant policies existing in the private sector.
- Homogeneity in a group of people is not seen by a significant number of individuals as contributing to the prevention of conflict and improvement of collaboration.
- Most respondents claim that they have not received any comment related to any of their social identities in their current workplace. As for the individuals who mentioned they have received such a comment, those concerned mostly the gender aspect (sexist comments, sexual harassment against women). This is of great interest, as, according to the responses, the gender is one of the social identities that has the greatest



receptiveness at the respondents' organisations. Thus, we can notice a contradiction which could indicate that in some cases the perception of the employees for their organisation may not correspond to their experiences or those of their colleagues.

- The greatest percentage of individuals who have received a comment in terms of one of their social identity is met in the Non-Profit sector, a figure, which could be contradictory with the relatively high figure of DE&I training provision in the sector and the fact that organizations in the Non-Profit sector are hypothetically encouraging more freedom of diversity expression and as well as they seem to attract frequently individuals who are open to diversity. However, this figure could be attributed, also, to a greater awareness of employees of this sector regarding microaggressions (which are not easily received as “aggressive” towards a person’s social identity/ies).
- In terms of witnessing discrimination incidents against a colleague, most of the respondents have not witnessed such an incident. In cases where that has been witnessed, those are based on social identities of family status, look-related status, health and sexual orientation of individuals, as it was mentioned. However, in the Non-Profit sector we meet again the highest percentage of individuals (a little more than 50%) who have witnessed a discrimination incident against a colleague, which could appear contradictory because of the values that those organizations seem to embrace, and the high percentage of trained individuals on DE&I. On the other hand, that could, also, be attributed to a greater awareness of what discrimination is and its wide range in terms of social identities, and thus be easier for specific people to track down such incidents.
- Approximately 1/3 of organizations implement a DE&I practice/policy, whereas for 1/3 of participants who report that they do not know if such a thing exists this could be indicative of not efficient information dissemination or actually of non-existence of such practices.
- **DE&I practices and policies seem to be applied mostly in the For-Profit sector, at a slightly higher degree than in the Non-Profit.** It must be noted that in the Non-Profit sector a higher percentage of individuals do not know if such a policy/practice is implemented, compared to the employees of the For-profit sector. This could be perhaps translated based on the practical familiarity of the Non-Profit sector with the concept of diversity and inclusion, which could result in some cases in complacency in terms of the need to adopt certain DE&I policies and practices in an organisation.
- **Applied DE&I practices mostly concern: Unbiased recruitment practices and Frequent Employee Training on DE&I** and as well as Written rules/Protocols that prohibit discrimination and promote equality.
- It seems that requiring the same DE&I practices/policies from partners/suppliers is usual for more than half of the organisations and this could be indicative of the importance placed on those policies.
- The practices applied are considered by the majority as effective, with the absolute effectiveness observed by all employees in the For-Profit sector.
- **The DE&I trainings are not so usual, with most of the people not having received a training in their current work environment.** Exceptionally, in the Non-Profit sector more than half of the individuals have received a DE&I, a fact which is possibly attributed to the scope of work and organisation’s diverse composition.
- When trainings take place, it seems that to a great extent, the participants get properly informed on the relevant topics, and they are, also, conducted, mostly, by an external provider.



- It appears that the existence of financial resources and the knowledge to design DE&I practices in organizations is not known to most participants, which could seem reasonable if the individuals do not hold managerial positions or a role in the Human Resources department.
- Human Resources department seems to be responsible for DE&I matters in half of the organizations.
- In terms of organizations' adaptability to DE&I matters, almost half of them seem to adapt "easily" and "very easily", according to respondents.
- Almost 1/3 of individuals think that their organization does not follow practices or encourages behaviours that exclude individuals or groups of individuals. The usually excluded dominant groups excluded, when this is reported to happen, are people with disability, whereas people of different nationalities and women were mentioned too.
- It appears that in the Non-Profit sector individuals recognize more often than in the For-Profit sector practices in their organization which exclude people/groups of people. This could be attributed to a greater awareness of employees, but based on that greater awareness, we could, also, conclude that it seems there are still steps to be taken towards an inclusive environment.
- In half of the organizations, efforts take place to identify and/or deal with discrimination incidents or extreme behaviors, with some of them focusing on: Internal platforms for reporting, communication with the HR department and protection policies. There are no specific differences observed among sectors. To deal with discrimination incidents/extreme behaviours, the most common way are: Rules that encourage employees to communicate openly, as well as Internal platforms for anonymous incident reporting and Internal support lines.
- For almost half of the organizations, as it appears from their employees' perspective, the DE&I matters are "to a large" and "to a great extent" high in their agenda. We could notice that as contradictory to the responses concerning training implementation on DE&I and policies currently implemented.
- Despite the fact that DE&I matters are reported to be high on the agenda of organizations, most individuals are not aware if there are new goals on this topic for 2023-2024, which could be indicative of poor dissemination of information throughout the organization or that there are no specific goals on the topic.
- The most common organizational future plan mentioned by employees is personnel DE&I training provision.

## 4. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

### 4.1. Profile of Participants

Four (4) FGDs were conducted during May. Most of the participants were women and the most populated age groups were 25-30 and 31-40, whereas all participants were Greek citizens and of Greek origin. Specifically, seven (7) women and three (3) men participated, while three (3) people belonged to the 25-30 age group, three (3) people to the 31-40 group, two (2) to the 41-50 group, and two (2) to the 51-60 group. Most of the people worked in another position than in HR or Diversity Management department and Business Administration and did not hold a managerial position.



## 4.2. Diversity & Inclusion Findings

All participants stated they were **familiar with the concept of Diversity** and over half of them were able to provide a term, however some individuals confused it with the concept of Inclusion. According to the responses, emphasis was placed mainly on the characteristics of a person that make them "different" from the rest, which could range from gender, race, sexual orientation, and physical abilities to any other characteristic associated and attributed to a person. However, 5 of the participants presented "Diversity" as an element that makes a person "stand out" and not be "the same" as others, whereas one person also mentioned the difficulties that may be caused by those characteristics.

***"Diversity concerns class, gender, race, physical abilities."***

*(Employed man at a non-profit organization)*

***"Natural and acquired characteristics."***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organisation)*

***"Younger people (Millennials and Z) are more adaptable to diversity..."***

***In my generation, Generation X, I see a lot of resistance."***

*(Employed woman at a for-profit organisation)*

In addition, all individuals reported **familiarity with the concept of Inclusion** and were able to give more precise definitions than that of Diversity. Based on the responses, "inclusion" is mainly associated with respect, acceptance, tackling discrimination, and organized actions and activities aimed at removing exclusion. The fact that most people focused on tackling discrimination and correcting problems is of particular interest. One person emphasized on the responsibility of the Management.

***"[inclusion] is the culture that needs to be cultivated by a leader and there needs to be a strategy and training. Because they have to recruit a Muslim person, they have to think about prayers, Ramadan and they have to adapt to that."***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***"Inclusion goes hand in hand with Diversity, but it is the practical element of Diversity."***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***"Inclusion is related to equality, but it is not the same.***

***No equal opportunities but more is the key. Corrective actions must be taken."***

*(Employed woman in the Public sector)*

***"There is a familiarity to a certain extent, but I have unconscious biases that I don't perceive. Sometimes I think: "No, this is not right. I have to 'open' it'."***

*(Employed woman at a for-profit organization).*

***"To include different people in a context."***

*(Employed man at a non-profit organization)*

***"Be all in the same space without being discriminated."***

*(Employed man at a non-profit organization)*

***"Not to be excluded from the labour market based on characteristics."***

*(Employed man at a for-profit organization)*

***"I don't know if subconsciously (because of the society) I am acting indeed inclusively."***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

Finally, according to the responses of the individuals who participated in the groups, their familiarity with the concepts of "diversity" and "inclusion" seem to originate mainly from their professional experience and their personal interest. Except for one person, none of the others mentioned the organization where they work as the person responsible for awareness-raising and training on diversity and inclusion issues. Emphasis is placed on the fact that individuals who worked at non-profit organizations highlighted their familiarity with diversity, mainly regarding ethnicity and religion because of the nature of their work. Regarding **benefits**, all individuals replied that there are clear benefits for an organization stemming from diversity, with one person adding that there could be also problems. Some individuals mentioned the personal benefits of participating in a diverse environment, emphasizing that they progress as individuals through this interaction. Indicatevely, FGD participants quoted:

***"The benefits are pluralism and therefore better results and innovation."***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*



***"Only good things come out of synthesis. It can only go forward. A nice culture and nice sense are created for the employees, and profitability for the company."***

*(Employed woman at a for-profit organization)*

***"Too many solutions, pluralism, happier, more productive, more satisfied.***

***Different clientele approach."***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***"Different perspectives, problem-solving. But there can be problems because of differences e.g., delays."***

*(Employed man at a non-profit organization)*

***"We all win because there is a wealth, familiarity with wealth."***

*(Woman employed at the Public sector)*

## Work environment

Almost all individuals perceive their organization principally as **open to Diversity**, however, they mentioned some characteristics based on which individuals are excluded at their work. Those concerned social status (due to the requirement of no prior criminal record), legal status (the Greek citizenship required in the Public sector); elements such as the Greek language and non-accessibility of facilities. Moreover, it was mentioned that in the Humanitarian sector, where most of the Non-Profit Organizations operate, women outnumber men, and white people of Greek origin are the majority, even though there are job opportunities open to everyone regardless of origin. Furthermore, it was mentioned that an organization can be more receptive to a particular social group and less to others.

***"Not all diversities have the same receptivity e.g., they are more open to LGBTQI people but not to HIV positive people because we have fixed distorted perceptions."***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*





***"Not all diversities have the same receptivity e.g., they are more open to LGBTQI people but not to HIV positive people because we have fixed distorted perceptions."***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***"There are subconscious prejudices e.g., towards women.***

***E.g., the girl at the reception is asked to be replaced by a woman again when she is absent."***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***"For example, for people with disabilities, you need an adapted intervention plan."***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***"No equal opportunities but more is the key. Corrective action needs to be taken."***

*(Woman employed in the Public sector)*

In terms of **values**, as those presented by the FGD Facilitator, to assess their importance in their workplaces and which are found to be indicators of an inclusive workplace, according to literature (sense of belonging, acceptance, respect, adaptability, meritocracy, emotional security), almost all individuals mentioned "respect", "acceptance" and "adaptability", whereas the person employed in the Public sector mentioned the dominant value is "meritocracy". The "emotional security" was mentioned by an individual, that it is dependent on external factors e.g., the existence of grants (for Non-Profit organizations), whereas another individual mentioned that it is influenced by remote work (possibly because you do not feel intensely part of a team), like the "sense of belonging", which, added by another participant, can be also objective due to personal life.

## Diversity Management in Organizations

Half of the participants replied that their organization does not apply any Diversity management practice, whereas the individuals who said that practices exist, they mentioned indicatively:

***"There is the Code of Conduct on the principle of equality."***

*(Employed man at a non-profit organization)*

***"Trainings. Transparency in terms of salaries exists."***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***“Concerning recruitment, there is a structured questionnaire, and it follows a series of questions for everyone. Like the job announcements are, also, inclusive.”***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***“There is transparency in salaries (they depend on position and years of work experience).”***

*(Employed woman at a for-profit organization)*

***“There is a platform and document for reporting abuse/mobbing/exploitation/racism.***

***I don't know if they are used.”***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***“The last two years we have done salary equalisation in terms of the age factor too.***

***It's position-based now.”***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

Regarding organizations' accountability mechanisms, especially for tackling discrimination and extreme behaviours, half of the individuals mentioned that there is no such mechanism at their workplace. For those organizations having such mechanisms, FGD participants quoted:

***“There is a harassment and violence policy at the website and the premises (email-telephone).***

***What is expected is reconciliation.”***

*(Employed woman at a for-profit organization)*

***“There is a gender-based violence focal point.”***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***“We have the supervision where people from the Management participate too and things can be said.”***

*(Employed man at a non-profit organization)*

***“We do not have tools. I suppose there has been no such incident but I have heard of underground sexist behaviour (it was the hierarchy's fault for not addressing it).”***

*(Employed man at a non-profit organization)*



Key tools mentioned are reporting forms and platforms, support lines, and people responsible for managing conflicts and/or incidents of discrimination. However, through the narratives, it is understood that despite the existence of those mechanisms, individuals need to become more familiar with them.

To the question regarding the **adaptability of the organization to changes** concerning Diversity and Inclusion, opinions were diverse but with a common characteristic: most individuals could not provide a specific example of adaptability toward a change in that direction. Furthermore, four individuals mentioned explicitly that they have not seen any change.

***“Yes, but I have not seen any. Because it is a startup and that means things are fast (in changes), so HR moves quickly.”***

*(Employed woman at a for-profit organization)*

***“There is flexibility, but maybe there is no good dissemination of information.”***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***“I have no specific example. I want to see my environment as flexible.”***

*(Employed woman at a non-profit organization)*

***“It is a huge organization and that means there is usually a lack of flexibility.***

***However, they try to be part of the modern era and adapt.”***

*(Woman employed in the Public sector)*

***“There is inactiveness due to the old age of Management.”***

*(Employed man at a non-profit organization)*

Almost all participants reported either a lack of practices and of policies implementation or great difficulty. The difficulty in implementation was linked to the (big) size of the organizations, which can lead to reduced flexibility, bureaucracy, poor dissemination of information, and to age. Two respondents answered that their organizations easily adapt to diversity (without any difficulty or any lack) because they act in the Humanitarian sector.

## Exploring Priorities and Future Plans

Finally, in terms of exploring priorities and future plans, 7 out of 10 individuals reported that they were not aware whether their organizations had any plans or objectives regarding diversity management issues, although 4 of them said that those matters exist on their corporate agenda, and actually high for some of them. At the same time, 3 out

of 10 people reported either that there are no similar plans or that they are low on the priority list. Interestingly, one individual responded that although they are not high on their company's goals, this may change as they were acquired by a foreign company.







### 4.3. Conclusions

- Greater familiarity, based on the definitions provided, seemed to exist with the "Inclusion" term versus "Diversity", with "Diversity" sometimes being confused with "Inclusion".
- Diversity is perceived as the characteristics of an individual (physical/acquired); as their difference from person to person; as our differences in terms of social identities.
- Familiarity with diversity in many cases arises because of the nature/field of work and of personal interest.
- Inclusion is perceived as the practical part of diversity, everyone's participation in the community, and as bringing out the strengths of each individual.
- Some people recognize the role of unconscious biases in their behaviour towards diversity.
- Almost all individuals want to perceive their organization as receptive to diversity, without being able to identify any specific practice, with some individuals recognizing that there are groups of people, due to specific organizational requirements, to whom their organization is not "open".
- Organizations defined as open to diversity may not have specific practices but informally carry out some "inclusive" actions and processes.
- There is unquestionable agreement that inclusive environments have many benefits for the organizations and the individuals involved.
- The values/benefits of inclusion prevalent in individuals' work environments are mainly respect, acceptance, flexibility/adaptability, and meritocracy, while the sense of belonging seemed to be attributed to personal factors.
- Half of the organizations whose employees participated do not have diversity management practices in place.
- Organizations with specific management practices focus on gender, age, disability, and family status.
- Diversity management practices may come from abroad (acquisition of an organization or branch of a multinational organization).
- In an organization's effort to build an inclusive environment, the need for support from society/community is highlighted.
- It is perceived that existing diversity management practices concern Equality, Codes of Conduct, salary transparency and position-based pay, staff training, communication in English, benefits for parents or single parents, facilities accessibility, availability of prayer spaces, existence of people/platform for reporting incidents, and structured job interviews as well as non-discriminatory job advertisements.
- Half of the organizations do not possess tools for dealing with/identifying incidents of discrimination.
- Individuals in organizations with tools dealing with/identifying incidents of discrimination are not aware of whether those are used and how they are being used, whereas reported incidents of discrimination were resolved in a conciliatory manner by an organization.



- The size of the organization, as well as the age of the people in the management team, seem to influence its flexibility/inclination to introduce changes.
- Whether Diversity Management is high on the agenda of an organization is not known to 1/3 of the individuals, and those individuals who are aware that the topic is indeed a priority are, however, not aware of the objectives/actions set for the coming years.

## 5. Recommendations

-  **DE&I trainings are recommended for all employees, regardless of job position or level, across all sectors (Non-Profit, For-Profit, Public).**
-  **Emphasis can be placed on the comprehension of the concepts of diversity and the social identities.**
-  **Creation of job positions focusing on designing and implementing DE&I policies and practices or DE&I training provision to HR staff.**
-  **DE&I policies design and implementation and clear communication of existing DE&I practices and goals to organisations' staff across all levels and departments.**
-  **Integration of DE&I elements in employees' career development plans.**
-  **Incentives and support from the State towards organisations to design and implement DE&I policies/practices.**
-  **Transparency in job advertisements regarding the salary range, modality (in-person and/or remote) and the stages of the recruiting process as well as explicit declaration of recruitment free of discrimination.**
-  **Establishment of Discrimination incidents reporting that reassures confidentiality and procedure transparency.**
-  **Broader development of policies that concern more social identities to include more social groups considering the concept of intersectionality.**