

# DIVERSITY GUIDE FOR SME'S

A practical guide to promoting diversity and inclusion in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)



## INTRODUCTION

Diversity is not a 'nice-to-have' – it is a crucial factor for innovation, employer attractiveness, and sustainable growth. Companies that actively promote diversity gain clear advantages in recruiting and retaining skilled employees.

This guide helps SMEs establish effective diversity management by combining strategic considerations with concrete actions – enriched by international perspectives.

## 1 WHY DIVERSITY MATTERS

- Diversity brings new perspectives and expands the talent pool
- A diverse work environment fosters creativity, problem-solving and innovation
- Companies with a clear diversity strategy are seen as modern and attractive employers

### Reflection Questions:

- What does diversity mean for our organization?
- What concrete benefits do we expect from it?
- Who is responsible for this topic within our organization?

## 2 ASSESSING THE STATUS QUO

- Inventory: Which groups are represented in the company – and which are missing?
- Analysis of teams, leadership, and applicant structure.
- Identification of existing initiatives or unconscious barriers.



**Tip:** Internal surveys or workshops can quickly reveal valuable insights.

## 3 UNDERSTAND AND TARGET YOUR AUDIENCE

- Develop inclusive job postings and communication materials.
- Employer branding with a clear diversity message.
- Use international recruiting platforms and partner networks.



**Tip:** Diversity starts with the first impression - not just at the interview.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



2023-1-DE02-KA210-VET-000166687

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

## 4 TAKING PRACTICAL FIRST STEPS

- Introduction of language courses and intercultural training.
- Mentoring programs for new employees.
- Appointment of internal diversity and inclusion officers.
- Fair and anonymized recruitment procedures.



**Tip:** It's better to start small than not at all - 2-3 visible actions can have a big impact.

## 5 MAKING INTEGRATION A JOINT EFFORT

- Cooperation with municipalities for housing and family integration.
- Establishment of an open company culture with clear values.
- Regular training for managers and teams.

## 6 STRATEGICALLY ANCHORING DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

- Develop a diversity strategy with clear objectives.
- Appoint a diversity officer or team.
- Regular evaluation and adjustment of measures.
- Integrate diversity into corporate strategy and leadership guidelines.

## 7 ATTRACTING INTERNATIONAL TALENT

- Simplify recognition of foreign qualifications.
- Use expedited visa procedures.
- Cooperate with international recruitment agencies.
- Tailor employer branding to attract international professionals.

## 8 LEVERAGING INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

- Build partnerships with international organizations.
- Participate in global talent networks.
- Promote intercultural competence through exchange programs.

## 9 INCORPORATING REGIONAL SUPPORT

- Cooperate with economic development agencies and chambers of commerce.
- Use regional funding for integration and qualification.
- Collaborate with educational institutions for language and skills training.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



2023-1-DE02-KA210-VET-000166687

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

## 10 CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND ADAPTATION

### Questions for Further Development:

- What works – and what doesn't?
- What external impulses can support us?
- Is there a small internal group shaping the next steps?



**Tip:** Diversity is not a project with an end date - it's a long-term process.

## CONCLUSION

The path to more diversity begins with small but targeted steps. Companies that commit to diversity and live it credibly enhance their capacity for innovation, attractiveness, and competitiveness – today and in the future.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



2023-1-DE02-KA210-VET-000166687

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.