

High-Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity

Report to the Bureau on

**Diversities other than gender in the
European Parliament's Secretariat**

State of play and Roadmap 2019-2020

presented by

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to, and adopted by the

High-Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity,

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INTRODUCTION

Since the appointment of a Vice-President dealing with issues of equal opportunities in the Secretariat in 1998, the European Parliament has firmly committed itself to achieving equality, diversity and inclusion in its administration. In 2004, the Bureau set up a High-Level Group on Gender Equality (hereafter 'HLG'), whose mandate was extended to include diversity in 2006. The HLG, chaired by a Vice-President, sets the main priorities, which the EP Secretariat implements under the responsibility of DG Personnel.

Equally, the scope of the European Parliament's equality and diversity policies has significantly evolved since the adoption of the HLG's Statement of Principles in 2006. Since the entry into force in January 2011 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the EU, the EU institutions have the duty and the obligation to uphold, protect, and promote the rights of persons with disabilities as enshrined in the Convention. These commitments outlined the HLG's mission, one that sought to pursue a proactive and inclusive approach to equality and reflected the European Parliament's desire, as an employer, that its administration be representative of the diversity inherent in European society. The Statement of Principles focused on three priorities:

1. Equality between women and men
2. Employment and integration of disabled people
3. Eliminating any obstacles to recruitment and any potential discrimination based on race, colour or ethnic origin.

Consecutive HLGs have expanded the scope of the Statement of Principles through their respective mandates in order to more efficiently address and resolve a variety of inequalities. The HLG's current mandate (2014-2019) states that its role is to promote:

“an open and inclusive working environment, namely by searching to eliminate, from recruitment stage to career progress, any potential discrimination based on any grounds, such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity”.

During the eighth parliamentary term, the HLG, chaired by Vice-President Dimitrios Papadimoulis, has striven to achieve comprehensive equality, diversity, and inclusion in the Secretariat of the European Parliament. At the beginning of the term, the Bureau's determination to champion gender equality was exemplified by its adoption of the action plan for the promotion of gender equality and diversity in the European Parliament's Secretariat for the period 2014-2019. Its three main objectives are¹:

- Line I: Promoting full equality of women and men in all aspects of working life
- Line II: Guaranteeing full equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities and favouring their full participation and inclusion
- Line III: Promoting an open and inclusive working environment

¹ Please consult the annex for full details of lines II and III of the action plan for the period 2014-2019.

Line I of the action plan was the subject of the Papadimoulis report to the Bureau on Gender Equality in the European Parliament Secretariat - State of play and the way forward 2017-2019. Subsequently, Vice-President Papadimoulis asked for a second report with a view to eliminating discrimination in the context of Lines II and III of the action plan.

Therefore, in concluding the HLG meeting with its stakeholders² on 11 July 2018, Mr. Papadimoulis invited DG PERS to present a report containing a list of measures with a view to eliminating discrimination based on any ground such as ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity³ in the Secretariat of the European Parliament. The list includes a number of measures to be implemented as part of the 2014-2019 action plan or at the beginning of the ninth parliamentary term respectively, together with a number of additional measures.

² Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup, Égalité LGBTI+ Staff Association and EP Disability Support Group.

³ For the purpose of this document, gender identity is deemed to encompass gender expression and, when applicable, sex characteristics.

STATE OF PLAY OF DIVERSITIES OTHER THAN GENDER IN THE SECRETARIAT

1. A diverse and inclusive workplace

An inclusive workplace is a working environment that considers individual and group differences to be an asset. An organisation that values diversity and inclusion accepts that individuals from different backgrounds think about problems in a variety of different ways and that it is in the organisation's best interests to harness this divergence of perspective to increase productivity and efficiency. Research shows that an organisation's level of diversity and inclusion is in direct correlation with its ability to successfully develop and overcome its challenges⁴. For this reason, many of the world's largest organisations are expressly rethinking their HR policies from the perspective that a diverse workforce operating in an inclusive working environment is conducive to an organisation's success⁵.

Apart from the organisational synergies it stands to gain from promoting the diversity of its staff, the European Parliament has the unequivocal responsibility to ensure that its policies are reflective of the interests of an inherently diverse EU citizenry. Diversity, inclusion, and non-discrimination are in fact fundamental values of the EU. This, however, can only be achieved if the Secretariat of the European Parliament commits itself to promoting diversity, inclusion, and non-discrimination in the workplace.

There is a difference between the concepts of diversity and inclusion. An inclusive workplace is one that integrates, welcomes and values staff members instead of isolating them by means of discrimination. Diversity, on the other hand, refers to the heterogeneity of staff members' characteristics including, but not limited to, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, religious beliefs, education, socioeconomic background and geographic location. These are two closely interdependent concepts. Indeed, in order for a diverse organisation to benefit from the wealth of perspectives at its disposal, it is important that its diversity be matched by its inclusion and non-discrimination, which this report aims to empower.

As an organisation's diversity demonstrably leads to greater efficiency, the ultimate objective is to ensure that the working environment is inclusive and free of any discrimination. As part of its obligations as an employer, the EP has a duty of care towards all of its staff, and in particular towards potentially vulnerable staff groups.

2. Data collection

The collection of data, on an anonymous basis and in conformity with legal and internal procedures, allows an organisation to analyse statistical information relating to its staff in the effort to implement measures that will prevent exclusion and discrimination. Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data regulates the extent to which staff members' personal data can be collected and processed by the European Parliament.

⁴ Hewlett, S. Marshall, M. Sherbin, L., 'How Diversity Can Drive Innovation', Harvard Business Review, (2013) [<https://hbr.org/2013/12/how-diversity-can-drive-innovation>]

⁵ Microsoft, 'Global Diversity and Inclusion', <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/diversity/>

Article 10(1) of the Regulation states that “Processing of personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person’s sex life or sexual orientation shall be prohibited”.

Anonymised staff surveys about diversity and perceived direct or indirect discrimination could be an option to seek out data and feedback from staff with their consent. Generally, emphasis should be on improving the inclusion of the working environment as a method of attracting and retaining diverse candidates and staff members.

3. An overview of subjects currently under discussion

HLG meetings facilitate dialogue between members of the Bureau, the administration and stakeholders.

The stakeholders’ first-hand experience and knowledge provides invaluable information and guidance when it comes to devising and implementing measures in the framework of the Staff Regulations in order to promote the diversity and inclusion of the Secretariat. The HLG meeting on 11 July 2018 was particularly encouraging because it gave a platform to three main stakeholders (Anti-Racism and Discrimination Intergroup, Égalité LGBTI+ Staff Association and the EP Disability Support Group) to voice their concerns and engage with the HLG in order to devise a series of crosscutting and specific proposals that address the issues they raised.

First, stakeholders proposed that EP informational and promotional material such as brochures, posters, photos on social media etc. should be more representative of the diversity inherent to European society. They highlighted the need to welcome and retain staff members from diverse backgrounds and with diverse abilities in order to counteract the EP workforce’s homogeneity.

Among other issues, the Disability Support Group’s representative particularly highlighted the need to ensure that the EP’s buildings are accessible as a means of valuing and retaining staff members, MEPs, external staff, and visitors with a disability or reduced mobility as a signal of its inclusiveness.

The representative of Égalité LGBTI+ Staff Association stressed the need to ensure that the EP provides a working environment where staff, whatever their sexual orientation or gender identity, is comfortable and confident and where the concept of fair and equal treatment applies to all employees.

Another issue concerned discriminatory behaviour, which can very often be intersectional in the sense that it discriminates on more than one ground such as racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability. It was suggested that crosscutting measures most efficiently mitigate the negative effects intersectional discrimination has on the inclusion of the working environment.

The lack of information, awareness-raising and unconscious bias training concerning different diversities in Parliament’s induction training for new staff was also emphasised. Stakeholders highlighted the importance that new staff members be made aware of the fact that the Secretariat consists of individuals with varying sexual orientations, gender identities, and persons with different disabilities and varying

abilities, hailing from a plethora of different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. In fact, lack of awareness provokes a sense of unease and even fear which, in turn, may lead to stress, and negatively affect the staff member's welfare and productivity in the workplace. These matters should therefore be addressed as psychosocial risks.

4. Focus on inclusion - eliminating all kinds of discrimination

The Action Plan adopts a two-pronged approach when tackling discrimination: it calls for the implementation of targeted measures designed to deal with specific kinds of discrimination as well as crosscutting measures to eliminate inter-sectional discrimination, i.e. any behaviour that discriminates on the grounds of more than one characteristic or trait. As discussed in the meeting on 11 July 2018, the successful elimination of any possible discrimination is essential if Parliament's secretariat is to become an inclusive working environment.

The following list of proposals, both targeted and crosscutting, is geared to eliminate discrimination based on:

- i. Disability
- ii. Sexual orientation and gender identity
- iii. Racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, and nationality

INCLUSION MEASURES - DETAILED ROADMAP 2019-2020
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First semester 2019

Cross-cutting inclusion measures

1. Enhance coordination to ensure that all EP internal and external communication as well as publishing include all genders, differently able people, different ethnicities, religious signs, sexual orientations and gender identities in order to convey images of an inclusive working environment.
2. Specifically address inclusive culture in all leadership-training courses.
3. Ensure that the electronic information package and induction courses for all newcomers contain all relevant information on the inclusive work environment in the EP, emphasising that a diverse work force is of great importance to the European Parliament, and that the respect for the dignity of all staff is a core value. Propose to the Bureau that a similar package should be made available for the new MEPs.
4. Authorise the display of posters from diversity stakeholders like Égalité and the Disability Support Group in designated areas in all EP buildings. This would send a powerful message of diversity and inclusion to staff and visitors alike.

Specific measures regarding disability

5. Designate a disability contact point within the Directorate for HR Support and Social Services (DG PERS). The contact point should coordinate any inter-service efforts to increase the inclusion and integration of people with disabilities as well offering support, advice and information to staff on disability issues. It is essential that the contact point may be confidentially approached by means of a specific functional mailbox, and equipped to respond to cases of intersectional discrimination.
6. The contact point will liaise with the EP Disability Support Group and the Disability Intergroup via its secretariat in the EDF (European Disability Forum), and other relevant stakeholders.
7. Recommend that established measures be assessed with a view to increasing the accessibility of EP electoral campaign actions that are organised within the EP's premises.
8. Where reasonably possible, ensure that appropriate measures are taken ensuring that the 2016 Web Accessibility Directive is applied by analogy to the EP.
9. Examine the possibility of providing training on digital accessibility to relevant services and staff on an ongoing basis.
10. Gradually ensure that all communication and publications are accessible to persons with disabilities.
11. Relaunch and rebrand the GTIS (Interservice Working Group on Accessibility) with a broad accessibility mandate, including web accessibility issues, also as a means of embedding and spreading disability awareness in the various DGs and services.
12. Continue in 2019 the positive action scheme for the recruitment of contract staff with a disability.
13. Adopt measures to render all emergency communications, currently involving number 85112, accessible for people with disabilities, including for MEPs, staff members, trainees, and visitors with hearing/speech loss.
14. Review EP evacuation procedures and information in order to provide equal security and assistance to all persons, including those with reduced mobility or a disability.
15. Provide specific training to staff, especially those in frontline positions, on accessibility requirements and assistance guidelines
16. Examine the possibility of providing assistance to staff and trainees with disabilities to safely reach destinations within and between EP buildings, where and when they cannot do so autonomously in the prevailing circumstances.

17. Propose solutions to ensure access for visitors with disabilities and reduced mobility to large public events in the EP.

Specific measures regarding sexual orientation and gender identity

18. Foresee the establishment of clear procedures and provide specific training to staff, especially those in frontline positions, about respectful behaviour regarding sexual orientation and gender identity in order to ensure that the welcoming procedures are conducted in a sensitive way in relation to these aspects and in particular towards LGBTI+ staff and visitors.
19. Examine the feasibility of setting up toilets for all genders as a supplement to already existing gendered toilets.
20. Consolidate the yearly awareness-raising event to observe the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia on 17 May.
21. Evaluate the impact of a possible introduction of a third, non-binary box 'X' in all EP administrative forms that require personal data.
22. Examine the possibility of using social names for both internal and external badges.
23. Consolidate the recognition of academic diplomas and professional certificates that bear the previous names of a transgender candidate when assessing their eligibility for vacant posts.

Second semester 2019 / 2020

Cross-cutting inclusion measures

24. Organise a yearly meeting of the HLG with relevant stakeholders and/or associations (e.g. Anti-racism and Diversity Intergroup, Égalité LGBTI+ staff association and EP and Disability Support Group) in order to discuss progress and open issues.
25. Specifically address all different kinds of potential discrimination (based on race, ethnicity and/or religion, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity) in mandatory unconscious bias training for managers, selection panels, and security/accreditation staff.
26. Monitor and evaluate the progress of all crosscutting and specific measures in preparation of High Level Group meetings with specific regard to timing and targets.
27. Share best practices with other EU institutions, bodies and international organisations in order to ensure convergence of inclusion policy and equal treatment of all EU staff irrespective of their institution or body of employment.

28. Examine practices from other private and international organisations in the areas of data collection and workforce diversity that help ensure workplace inclusion.
29. Publish in Newshound and Intranet articles on a wide range of topics related to a safe, diverse, and inclusive working environment for all diversities other than gender, such as disability, LGBTI+, and ethnicity or religion.
30. Interview diversity role models and publish on Newshound and Intranet.
31. Make proposals, in conformity with legal and internal procedures, for the use of anonymous data regarding the safety and inclusion of the working environment for all diversities other than gender, so that a range of relevant data is available to support the policies.
32. Encourage EPSO to construct and implement an open and inclusive recruitment policy that attracts candidates with disabilities and varying abilities; different sexual orientations and gender identities; different ethnicities and religions.

Specific measures regarding disability

33. Assess the implementation progress of the ongoing UNCRPD monitoring process - the UN Committee, the European Ombudsman, EP implementing reports - and take input from disability organisations in due consideration. Assess and monitor in particular the implementation of the UNCRPD's 'Universal Design' principle as well as internal guidelines for building accessibility, and the implementation of a return to work and job retention policy that is compliant with Articles 25-27 of the UNCRPD.
34. Further develop inter-institutional cooperation with the other EU institutions in the implementation of the UNCRPD in order to prepare and launch an awareness campaign for management and staff.
35. Review existing rules and regulations in the EP to assess their compatibility with the UNCRPD. If necessary, make recommendations on the basis of this review.
36. Evaluate the possibility of facilitating the use of sign language interpretation or speech to text captioning in disability awareness-raising events.
37. Support the UNCRPD implementation regarding real, inclusive education in the European schools.
38. Contribute to inter-institutional efforts with a view to improving the accessibility of the European Institutions' buildings, as well as the European schools' buildings, in full compliance with national and regional legislation where these buildings are situated and in conjunction with relevant regional and local authorities.

39. Support and promote the recruitment of well-trained support teachers with a view to improving the welcoming and inclusion of all children in the European Schools, and thus allowing the EP to attract and retain these children's parents as staff members.
40. Encourage the Commission to provide full coverage of the school fees for staff members who have children with disabilities attending a special school.
41. Launch review of the EP's Intranet site as regards information on disability and accessibility in order to ensure its compliance with the UNCRPD.
42. Through the contact point, ensure the systematic and active involvement of internal disability organisations in the development of new policies and projects.
43. Follow up on the number of trainees with a disability under the new traineeship scheme, T-People, for the traineeship period starting March 2019, in order to see if the downward trend observed since the mainstreaming of the special programme in 2016 continues.

Specific measures regarding sexual orientation and gender identity

44. Designate a contact person within the Directorate for HR Support and Social Services (DG PERS) for the European Parliament who should offer support, advice and information to staff and deliver expertise to HR services on LGBTI+ issues, assist in the implementation of EP Diversity and Inclusion policy, and contribute to the further development of policies in this field. It is essential that the contact point can be confidentially approached (specific functional mailbox).
45. Through the contact point, liaise with relevant LGBTI+ staff associations.
46. Ensure that appropriate information is available as regards any evolution in PMO's and JSIS policies towards person benefiting of these policies.
47. Engage in a dialogue on the inter-institutional level (CPQS) in order to find the appropriate solution concerning special leave for families where children are born through assisted means of pregnancy, for the benefit of the child and the family as a whole.
48. Develop training and guidelines for managers on supporting and fostering an inclusive and respectful working environment for their LGBTI+ colleagues.

Specific measures regarding racism

49. Designate a contact person within the Directorate for HR Support and Social Services (DG PERS) for the European Parliament who should offer support, advice and information to staff on racial discrimination issues, assist in the implementation of EP Diversity and Inclusion policy, and contribute to the

further development of policies in this field. It is essential that the contact point can be confidentially approached by means of a specific functional mailbox.

50. Organise an annual awareness-raising event to observe the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March, with the first event to be held in 2020.
51. Plan training courses involving staff, especially those in frontline positions, with regard to best practice in respectfully treating people of different ethnic or racial origins, religion or belief, and nationality. The information should focus on the need to respectfully observe variations in traditional dress, in particular.
52. Foster tolerance towards request for leave in periods corresponding to religious festivities not included in the EP calendar of public holidays.

Annex: Action plan for the promotion of gender equality and diversity in the European Parliament's Secretariat for the period 2014-2019 + state of play for present action plan.

Achievements of the objectives of the action plan for the promotion of gender equality and diversity in the European Parliament's Secretariat for the period 2014-2019

LINE II		
Guaranteeing full equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities and favouring their full participation and inclusion		
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	STATE OF PLAY
II.1. Develop the institution's culture vis-à-vis disability	a. establish facts and figures on persons with a disability among the staff of the European Parliament (through the disability survey, the disability establishment procedure, reasonable accommodation, etc.)	Report on the reasonable accommodation measures in 2016/2017 and continuous review
	b. continue to raise all staff's awareness of the theme of disability via specific one-off events and awareness training programmes	Annual events on the International day of persons with a disability (3 December)
	c. monitor the situation of carers and create a working environment that is open to their specific needs, even beyond what is expressly provided for in the Staff Regulations	Bi-annual event for carers; HLG hearing with the Deputy Secretary-General of the European schools
II.2. Launch/pursue positive action measures to further the employment of persons with disabilities	a. mainstream the programme of traineeships for persons with disabilities into the standard programme ensuring an adequate participation rate of persons with a disability	Mainstreaming in place since March 2016, less participation than in the specific programme
	b. continue the targeted recruitment of contractual agents with a disability; monitor and evaluate this recruitment procedure	Continuous process
	c. study the desirability of introducing objectives for the employment of persons with disabilities	No targets introduced
II.3. Facilitate entry into work and career development for persons with disabilities	a. adopt Internal rules implementing Art. 1 d (4) of the Staff Regulations (persons with a disability)	Done, but compliance with UNCRPD needs to be ensured
	b. implement and monitor the disability establishment and reasonable accommodation procedures to be set up by the Internal rules implementing Art. 1 d (4) SR	Done, review via the report on reasonable accommodation
	c. develop additional supporting measures to allow persons with a disability to stay in employment	
II.4. Promote accessibility of buildings, work stations and information	a. promote the accessibility of all buildings as well as the principles of Design for All to be automatically applied when any building is constructed or converted	On-going according to audits and followed by DG INLO and the design for all concept
	b. promote the development and content of the Internet (Europarl) and Intranet (Inside) sites in compliance with the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) guidelines	On-going, followed by DG ITEC and with DG TRAD support

LINE III		
Promoting an open and inclusive working environment		
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	ACHIEVEMENTS
III.1. Work towards developing measures to improve work-life balance	a. encourage acceptance by managers as regards the use of work-life balance measures	Done via roadmap
	b. analyse and publish statistics on the use of work-life balance measures	Twice a year: in the women in the EP brochure and in the observatory
	c. study best practice in other organisations and EU-Institutions and promote additional measures to improve work-life balance (i.e. flexitime, teleworking, new part-time formulas)	DG PERS internal working group
III.2. Within the framework of the Staff Regulations, promote information and awareness-raising in the field of combating homophobia and transphobia	a. devise ad hoc awareness-raising measures to celebrate the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia	Stand of information and event in the EP on 17 May of each year
	b. act in cooperation with various partners in equality and diversity involved in this topic	Cooperation with EGALITE and Rosa Letzeburg for the info stands and events
III.3. Pursue the development of a culture devoid of any form of harassment	a. continue raising awareness of staff including on the role and mandate of the Advisory Committee on Harassment	Review of procedures and Hearing of HLG in November 2018
	b. promoting environment of zero-tolerance towards harassment in order to ensure respect of dignity of all staff	Review of procedures and Hearing of HLG in November 2018
III.4. Raise awareness on the importance of open and inclusive environment	a. organize awareness events on diversity and non-discrimination	Done
	b. gather and publish relevant data on equality and diversity	As far as available : number of contract staff recruited under positive action scheme, number of trainees with a disability, number of requests for reasonable accommodation
	c. produce relevant material promoting equality and diversity	Done
	d. promote awareness-raising actions aiming at developing the organisational culture vis-à-vis ethnic and cultural diversity	Awareness raising events on 8 March, 17 May and 3 December each year
III.5. Reinforce leadership and accountability as regards open and inclusive environment	a. promote the inclusion of equality and diversity into management trainings	Done
	b. provide relevant information at management level and in cooperation with equality and diversity officers	Raised profile of the Equality and Diversity Coordination group and collaboration with inter-DG Steering group since autumn 2017
	c. recognize success and promote good practice in equality and diversity	2016 Equality and Diversity award 2018 Simone Veil Award for Equality and Diversity