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Diversity & Inclusion E-Learning

Module 1 – General
Knowledge and Awareness



Congratulations! You've found your way to the e-learning module on diversity and inclusion.

Diversity and inclusion is an important topic that must also be addressed in the workplace. And everyone can contribute to that, including you! This module will provide you with some **general information** relating to diversity and inclusion. Are you ready? Let's go!

The following topics are covered in this e-learning:

The alarm clock in each theme gives an estimate of how long it will take to complete this part of the e-learning.





DIVERSITY IS
EVERYWHERE

Diversity is everywhere

Diversity can be **simple**. For example, do you like to drink tea or coffee during your break? And what does your colleague like to drink?

Sometimes, however, it's **more complex**. Who are you attracted to? And what about your colleague? Perhaps you don't know the answer to one of these questions. One difference is therefore **more visible** than another, while some differences are **easier to discuss** than others.





Diversity...

- ... is about the 'mix', the differences
- ... is about numbers and percentages
- ... is "about being invited to the party"

Inclusion...

- ... is about handling the 'mix'
- ... is about values and rules
- ... is "about being asked to dance"

Reflection exercise



The next slide shows photos of six artists.

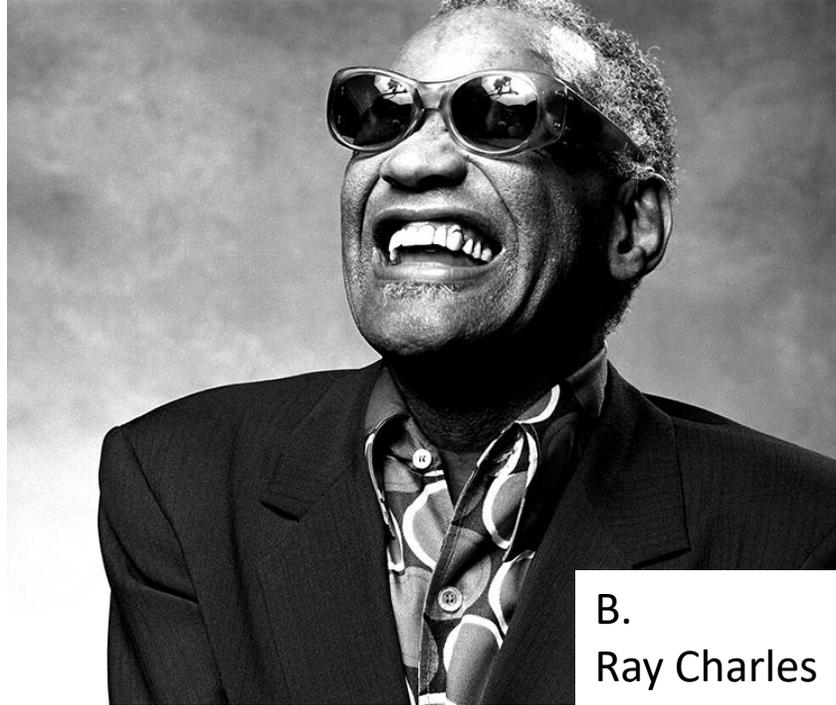
Which photos do you think go together?

Note down the groups you form for yourself.

Note: Multiple combinations are possible.



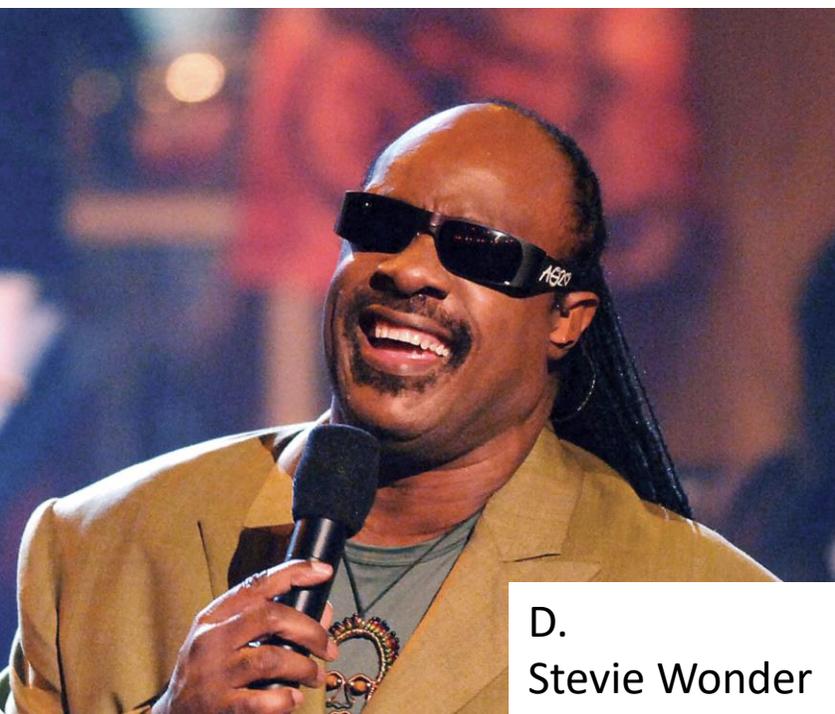
A.
Sam Smith



B.
Ray Charles



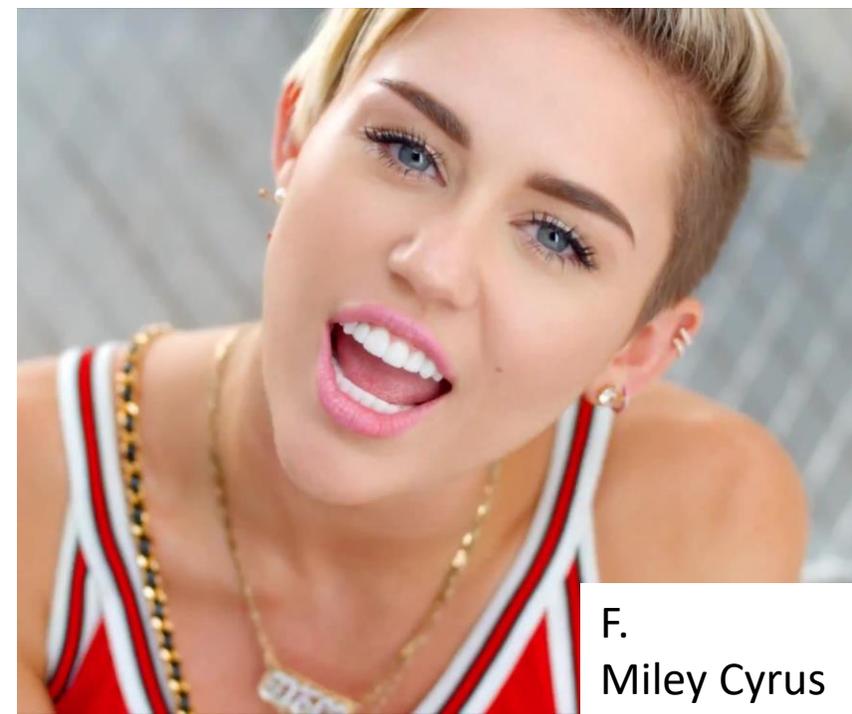
C.
Billie Eilish



D.
Stevie Wonder



E.
Elton John



F.
Miley Cyrus

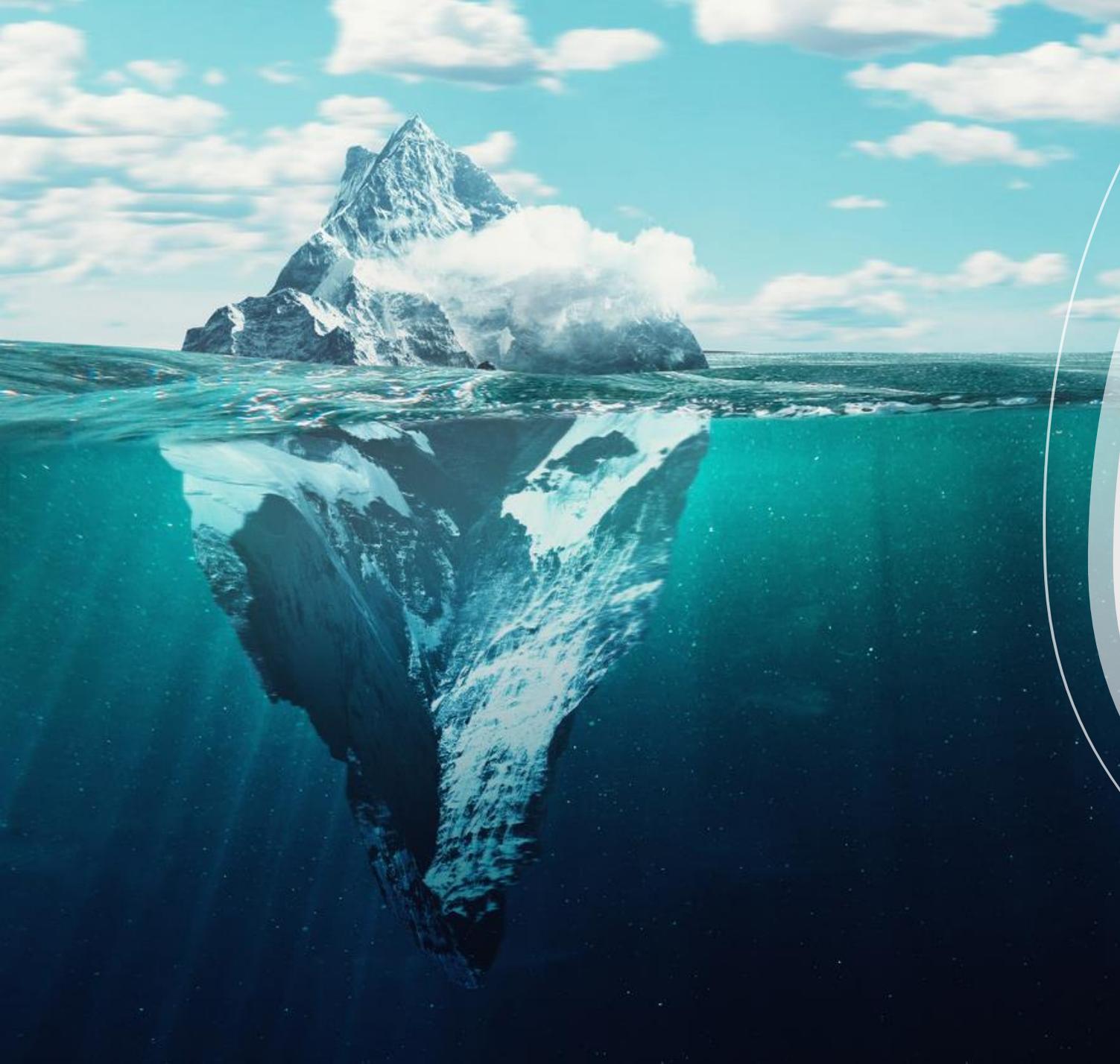
Reflection exercise – Discussion

How many groups of photos did you come up with? Which criteria did you use?

Did you put the men and women together, for example, or did you group the white people and people of colour together? You base your judgement on **visible differences**.

There are, of course, **less visible differences**, too. These may result in different groups. Did you choose people B and D because they have an eye condition, for example? Did you group all six together because they can play the piano and sing?

As you can see, there are **different types of diversity**.

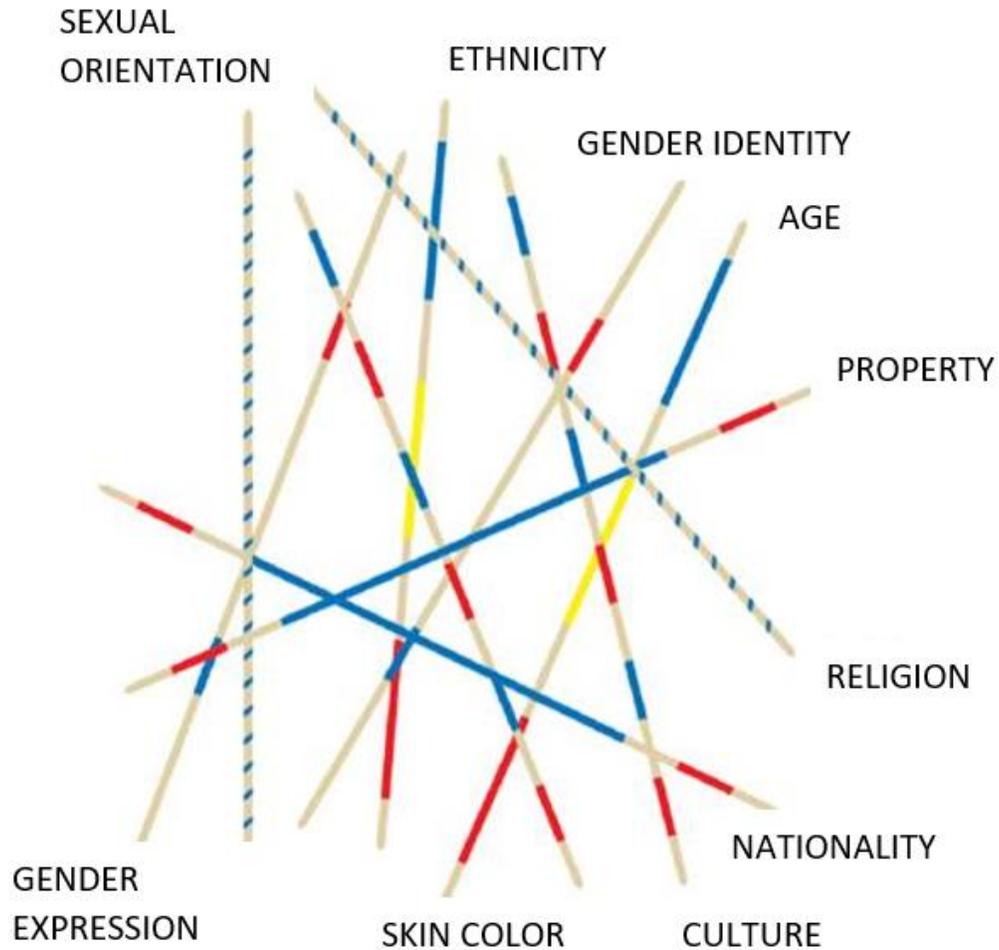


Types of diversity

Surface-level diversity concerns external, demographic differences that are visible.

Deep-level diversity concerns deeper differences that are not readily observable. These differences usually only become visible after a while.

Reflection exercise – Discussion



Some photos may well appear in multiple groups in your answers.

People often have different identities at the same time. As an example, person C may not only be white; she also has Tourette's syndrome. Taking different identities into account is called **intersectional thinking** – a crucial framework for anyone seeking to combat different forms of exclusion and suppression (which are intrinsically linked).



Faultlines

We can easily **divide people into groups** based on **visible differences**. You experienced this in the reflection exercise, but this may also apply to your daily life.

Placing too much emphasis on visible differences, or surface-level diversity, can be dangerous as it creates **faultlines** between groups of people. These groups then no longer have the opportunity **to get to know each other on a deeper level**. And yet... we share much more than we think.

Click [here](#) to watch a video on visible and less visible differences

The message we want to share with this video is integrated into the exercise on the next slide.

Exercise

Indicate the statement that best describes the video you just watched:

- At the beginning, the groups of employees showed **surface-level diversity**, and throughout the video the new groups showed **deep-level diversity**.

- At the beginning, the groups of employees showed **deep-level diversity**, and throughout the video the new groups showed **surface-level diversity**.



Oops... you
chose the wrong
answer.

[Click here to try
again.](#)



Congratulations! You chose the right answer.

Initially, the groups of employees showed surface-level diversity: they were formed based on **visible and rather superficial differences** (such as occupational group). If you don't know anyone, you usually seek out someone who looks similar to you. And that's okay to start with. However, take the opportunity to get to know others, such as the employees in the video. Once you get to know someone, visible differences are often quickly forgotten. This leads to **deep and lasting relationships** in which, for example, employees don't work together because they are both black or white, but because they share the same goals and ambitions.

Click [here](#) to watch a video on inclusion as a
bridge between faultlines

You'll find the takeaways from this video on the next slide.
Feel free to write down your own takeaways too.

Inclusion: a bridge between faultlines and takeaways

- We often prefer to be around colleagues who are similar to ourselves.
- When colleagues who are **different** join the team, this initially creates a feeling of unease.
- **Subgroups** are created based on visible (e.g. cultural background) and less visible differences (e.g. educational level).

- There is a **risk** that a team will break down into subgroups, causing **far-reaching fragmentation**.
- This may lead to an **internal battle** with detrimental consequences for the organisation, team, individual and customer.
- **Talent is wasted**, while human potential may be **underused**.

INCLUSION

- Seek out differences and **make the most of them**.
- Leverage talents and human potential **to the maximum**.
- A **positive effect** on performance.

WHY DON'T WE HAVE ANY
FRESH IDEAS AROUND HERE?



It doesn't have to be like this...

A photograph of a person in a wheelchair, seen from behind, looking up at a wide set of concrete stairs. The person is wearing a dark purple shirt and dark shorts. The wheelchair is black and blue. The stairs are made of light-colored concrete and lead up to a building with a curved, metallic roof. There are trees and greenery in the background. A large, dark blue diagonal shape is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text.

EQUAL TREATMENT
=
EQUAL OUTCOME?

Exercise

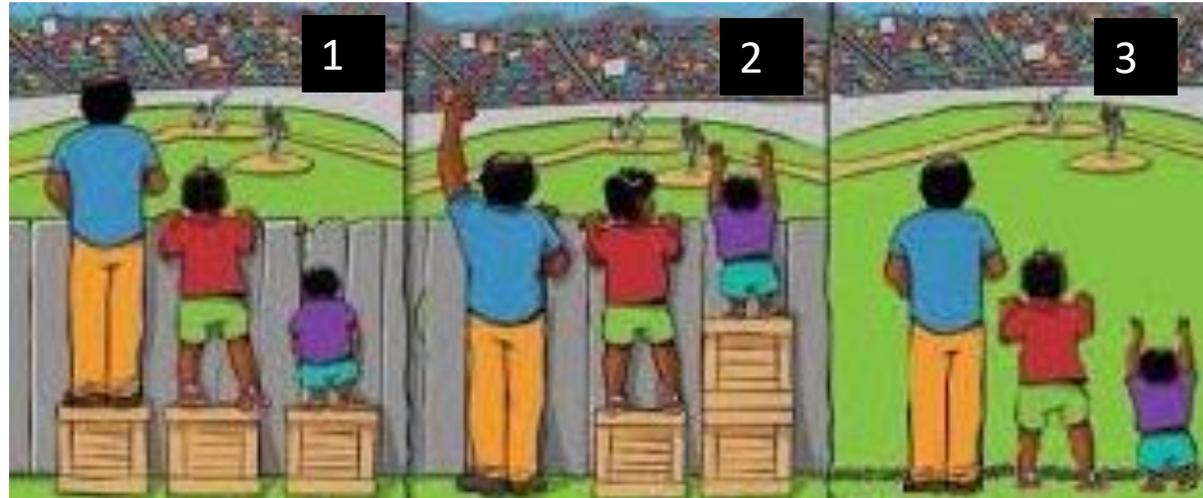
Read the case study below:

From now on, Organisation X decides to hold all meetings on Tuesdays at 4pm. This decision is met with a great deal of resistance. Half the employees won't be able to attend because they need to pick their children up from school, while the other half don't want to meet with only half the team. In response to the resistance, Organisation X presents three options:

- 1) **Equality:** meetings will take place for all employees on Tuesdays at 4pm.
- 2) **Equity:** meetings will take place on Tuesdays at 4pm and staff with children will receive compensation for childcare costs.
- 3) **Inclusion:** following consultation with all employees, Organisation X decides to arrange all meetings on Fridays at 10am from now on.

Exercise (continued)

Click on the correct combination of images using the three options presented by Organisation X:



- Equality – 1, Equity – 3, Inclusion – 2
- Equality – 1, Equity – 2, Inclusion – 3
- Equality – 3, Equity – 1, Inclusion – 2



Oops... you
chose the wrong
answer.

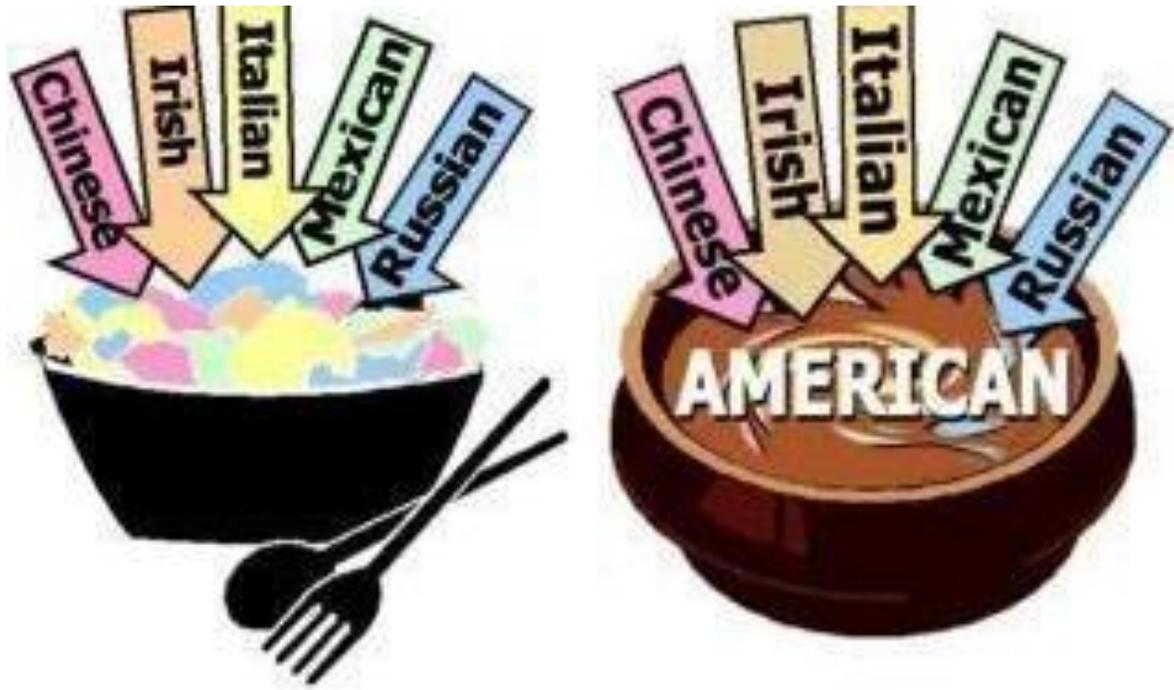
[Click here to try
again.](#)



Congratulations! You chose the right answer.

- **Equality** means that everyone is treated equally. This doesn't necessarily lead to the same outcome: the smallest spectator has no view of the competition, while the tallest spectator has the best view.
- **Equity** means that a group is compensated for restrictions they experience. This may lead to the same outcome: the three spectators have the same view of the competition. This scenario is not sustainable. The compensation requires effort and money, and there's a risk that not everyone receives the compensation they deserve.
- **Inclusion** means working on equality on a structural level. This usually leads to the same outcome: the fence has been taken down and the three spectators have the same view of the competition from their own position. It is best to opt for inclusion if possible. This leads to sustainable solutions: they meet the entire group's needs and requirements for a longer period of time.

How do I deal with cultural diversity?



We suggest two ways of dealing with cultural diversity.

- The **salad bowl** or **multiculturalism**. Differences are recognised, valued and taken into account.
- The **melting pot** or **colour blindness**. Disregarding differences is central. The prevailing principle is that everyone is equal before the law.

Exercise

Read the case study below:

Alex is 14 years old and recently moved from the UK to China with his family. As a result, he's now attending a Chinese school. He, Alae (Egyptian) and Sophia (German) are the only foreign pupils in his class. Alex's new teacher doesn't pay any attention to the cultural differences between his students and treats everyone the same. This means that Alex, Alae and Sophia get the same homework (in Chinese) and follow the same rituals as their Chinese classmates.

Exercise

What approach does Alex's Chinese teacher take to diversity?

- Salad bowl or multiculturalism
- Melting pot or colour blindness



Oops... you
chose the wrong
answer.

[Click here to try
again.](#)

Congratulations! You chose the right answer.

Alex's new teacher uses the melting pot or colour blindness approach. He ignores the differences between the children as well as the cultural differences between the Chinese and foreign pupils.

In your opinion, does this equal treatment also lead to the same outcomes?

Yes

No



Oops... you
chose the wrong
answer.

[Click here to try
again.](#)

Congratulations! You chose the right answer.

Equal treatment doesn't necessarily lead to the same results.

First of all, not everyone **starts from the same position**. For example, Alex, Alae and Sophia will probably find their homework more difficult than their classmates because they haven't yet mastered the Chinese language. Can you think of an example where this happens in the workplace?

Secondly, there's something to be said for 'everyone being equal in the eyes of the law'. Which laws are we talking about exactly? In groups with a clear majority, the **laws, standards and values used are often those of the majority group**. Alex, Alae and Sophia may find school rituals more difficult than their Chinese classmates, for example, as the rituals are rooted in Chinese culture. Can you think of an example where this happens in the workplace?

Is multiculturalism better then?

This approach is often desirable as it recognises **individual needs and requirements**. This does, however, **require a joint effort** and good management, where collaboration (rather than subgrouping) is encouraged.

Click [here](#) to watch a video on **the importance of listening to all voices.**

Deep democracy is a method to include a **minority vote** into a **majority decision.**

You'll find the takeaways from this video on the next slide.
Feel free to write down your own takeaways too.

Takeaways deep democracy

To make a **quick and efficient** decision...

- One can **vote**. For example: who prefers option A and who prefers option B?
 - The majority votes for option A, so option A it is. This is a democratic decision.
 - But the minority, who preferred option B, is unhappy about this decision.
 - On top there were some who preferred option C, R and Q...
- A **leader can also impose** a decision.

In the short term, the above strategies of decision-making may seem to be useful, but the **voices that were not heard do not disappear**. In the long term, we see **negative consequences**...

- When certain opinions or ideas are not allowed to be expressed, people start to feel **unsafe**.
- The **wisdom** that was between all the different opinions **was not exploited**.
- Gossip, sabotage, cynism and arguments are **signs** that there is something important that cannot be said.

In **deep democracy**, on the other hand, **all voices can be heard and each other's ideas are built on** so that all ideas of employees are optimally involved in the process of decision-making.

Reflection exercise

- Did this video seem familiar to you?
- Have you ever experienced a situation at work when the group made a decision and you had a different idea?
- Did you put your idea on the table? Why did you, or why didn't you?
- What were you hoping for?
- How did others react to your suggestion? How did that make you feel?
- Was your idea taken into account? How did that make you feel?
- What was the outcome of this train of thought?
- Does your organisation and/or team apply the deep democracy methodology?

Exercise

Lisa regularly arrives late, has been absent for a few weeks in the past year and is irritable towards colleagues. HR becomes aware of the situation, and things don't look great for Lisa to start with. There is even talk of dismissal – until we talk to Lisa and find out that she's struggling financially. She's also struggling with being overweight and suffering from depression. It turns out that she doesn't have enough money to pay for her bus pass, which explains why she was absent on a regular basis. The employer decides to pursue a multi-opportunity policy and look at possible solutions, one of which is a lease bike. This is a cheaper solution and a positive investment. After a few months, Lisa seems to feel better about herself due to the daily commute to and from work by bike.

- Which issues do you recognise in this case?
- How did the employer address the problem for Lisa?
- How could the employer address the problem for everyone? (for the entire organisation?)

Exercise: A framework for the future

Try to raise a diversity and inclusion issue within your organisation. Proceed as follows:

Problem X	Write down your answer here
Via which channel was the question received?	
Who within the organisation is experiencing the situation to which the question relates?	
What are these employees' needs?	
Can I address the issue for other employees? Did I take the minority vote into account?	
What is the added value (and for whom)? (Take discrimination into account – see legislation in section 4)	
Why do we want to offer a solution for this?	
What are the possible solutions?	
Which solutions will we choose?	
How will we communicate this?	

A group of people in a meeting room. A man in a dark suit is pointing at a sticky note on a glass wall. A woman with blonde hair and glasses is smiling. The glass wall is covered with various colored sticky notes (yellow, orange, green) and handwritten notes. A large green arrow-shaped graphic is overlaid on the left side of the image, pointing towards the right.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AS ADDED VALUE

Click [here](#) to watch a video on diversity and
inclusion as added value

On the next slide you will find the takeaways from this video.
Feel free to write down your own takeaways too.

Takeaways diversity and inclusion as added value

- Inclusion ensures a **higher well-being** of employees because they can feel **both unique and part of the group**.
- Various employees can **represent a wide range of diverse customers**.
- Various employees provide **various ideas**. Inclusion then ensures that all **ideas are expressed and exploited**, leading to **innovative products** and services that the organization could not have yet foreseen.
- Diversity and inclusion are **key to continuing to grow** as an organization.

Case: Tortillas in space

In 1985, Dr Rodolfo Neri Vela became the first Mexican to go into space. He suggested that NASA's food engineers develop a tortilla for astronauts. This didn't just prove to be a hit, but also proved to be a better alternative to bread as they didn't produce crumbs. Crumbs floating around inside spaceships are considered dangerous as they can end up in the ventilation system. Dr Vela's Mexican influence is a fun example of the added value of diversity.



Diversity increases the quality of ideas

Diversity leads to better solutions because **a variety of perspectives** can be taken on board. Employees with different mindsets challenge each other's ideas in order to arrive at the best solution together. In addition, **the more diverse your organisation's offer, the more potential customers** you can attract. You could therefore say that a diverse team offers a **competitive advantage** over less diverse teams.

"Doesn't it work faster and more efficiently if we all agree?" I hear you ask. This phenomenon is called **group thinking**. And while it may seem useful, group thinking also involves **risks**. We then no longer dare to take a critical look at our own group and are simply more inclined to say yes. You will learn more about group thinking on the next slide.

Click [here](#) to watch a video on groupthink

The message we want to share with this video is integrated into the exercise on the next slide.

Reflection exercise

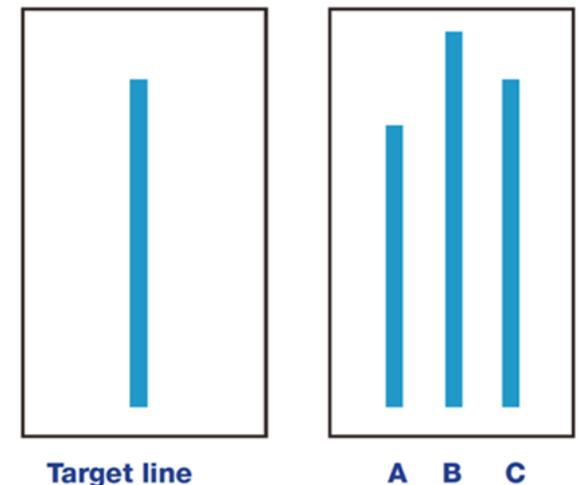
As an experiment, researcher Solomon Asch invited **eight participants** under the guise of coming for a **visual test**. They were shown a **target line** and then had to indicate **which of the three lines was the same length as the target** (see image). The participants sat in a row and each had to give their **answer out loud in turn**. The participants were shown 18 images.

What the eighth participant didn't know was that Asch had agreed **with the first seven participants that they would give the same, incorrect answer 12 out of 18 times**. The experiment focused on group thinking and examined whether the **eighth participant would go against what was clearly a wrong answer provided by the other participants**.

Suppose you are the eighth participant.

Would you go against the answer provided by the previous seven participants?

Why should (or shouldn't) you do so?

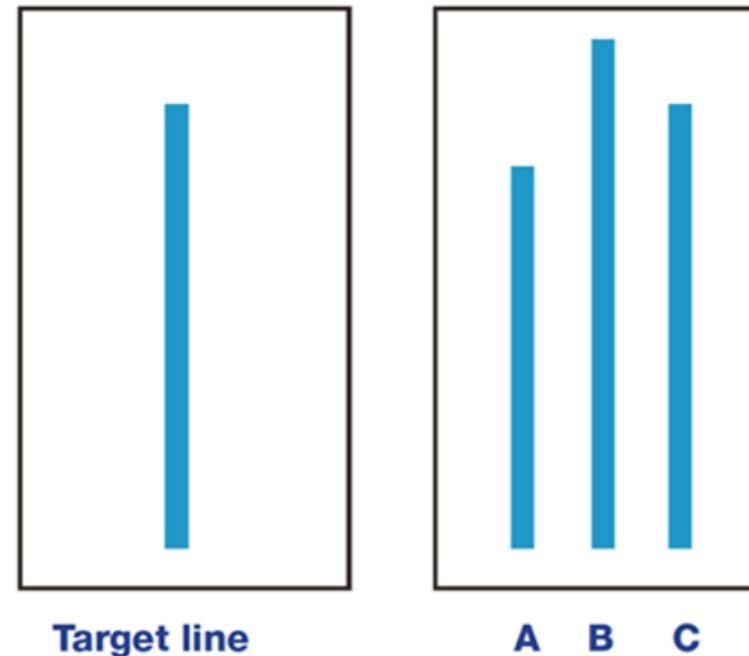


Exercise

Asch conducted this experiment with a large number of groups, each containing eight participants (with seven fake participants and one genuine participant).

What percentage of the participants in eighth position agreed with the clearly incorrect answer provided by the fake participants on at least one of the 12 occasions?

- 15%
- 35%
- 65%
- 75%





Oops... you
chose the wrong
answer.

[Click here to try
again.](#)

Congratulations! You chose the right answer.

75% of the participants in eighth position **agreed** with the **incorrect group response** on at least one in 12 occasions.

(For information: in the control group, where participants took the test individually, less than 1% of participants answered incorrectly. The test was therefore easy enough to take without making any mistakes.)

Differing opinions are often less pronounced in groups where **group thinking** is present. Group members tend to take a less critical view of decisions, which poses a risk to the quality of the decisions. Statements such as: "Hey, didn't anybody say anything to stop this?" or "How could that have happened?" are avoidable. With this experiment, we want to highlight **the added value** of bringing **various voices to the table and creating an inclusive environment** in which those voices **are also heard**.

Click [here](#) to watch a video on jamming with
differences

On the next slide you will find the takeaways from this video.
Feel free to write down your own takeaways too.

Takeaways jamming with differences

Increasing differences is the best way to make them smaller. It's only when you start **looking for contradictions** that you can **connect points of view**.

You also don't always have to choose between points of view, sometimes you can do both and sometimes you can take a new stand together. Think of inclusion as a **jam session** in which all musicians **agree on one rhythm** and **can make their own melody**. To make a beautiful whole, the musicians sometimes have to follow each other, but sometimes also let go. And the music only gets better when there's some **variety** in it.

And don't forget: **inclusion you do together!**

Reflection exercise: Case study

Telecom company X is strongly committed to diversity and inclusion, including at the highest level. They recently recruited **two female executives**, creating a **gender balance** within the management team. They then organised an **internal event** for all employees, with speakers including diversity experts on the topic of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Thanks to the telecom company's commitment, **women within the company are more likely to apply for technical positions internally**. This results in a **better gender balance** within the technical teams, which are indicating that they are **more productive and creative** than before. In addition, **vacancies for technical profiles attract better and higher-quality staff**: there is a greater number of applicants to choose from, which increases the chance of finding a good match.

Do you recognise a minority group in this case?

How does the organisation ensure that the opinions and ideas of employees from this group are still discussed? What is the result?

LEGISLATION

An open book is shown from a low angle, with its pages fanned out. The left side of the book is partially obscured by a large, semi-transparent red triangle that points towards the center. The right side of the book is set against a light blue background. Numerous white, 3D-style letters and symbols are scattered across the blue background, appearing to float or fall from above. The overall composition suggests a theme of law, knowledge, and the process of legislation.

EU legal frameworks against discrimination at work

There are a number of European legal frameworks that prohibit discrimination at work. These European legal frameworks have subsequently been transposed into national laws. We do not discuss these frameworks in detail in this module, but name them so that you can look them up and find out more.

Directive 89/391/EEC

This Directive concerns the adoption of measures to improve the **health and safety of workers**. This includes **all work-related aspects**, including employees' mental health.

Special attention should be paid to **the most vulnerable groups**. This Directive already highlights potential vulnerabilities in certain groups that should be taken into account.

Directive 2000/43/EC

This Directive concerns **the equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin**. This Directive covers several areas, including **employment and occupation**.

Directive 2000/78/EC

This Directive deals with **equal treatment in employment and occupation** and prohibits discrimination based on religion or beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Via this [link](#), you will find more information on this Directive.

Directive 2006/54/EC

This Directive deals with **equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation**. This Directive also protects against discrimination arising from the gender reassignment of a person.

European legislation **therefore prohibits discrimination at work** based on six grounds:

- Age
- Gender
- Disability
- Ethnic or racial background
- Beliefs
- Sexual orientation

European legislation therefore provides a form of **protection** based on the above criteria **for employees in the European Union**. Employers may not discriminate and employees have the right not to be discriminated against.

Types of discrimination according to law

European legislation prohibits four different types of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Instruction to discriminate

It also provides protection for victims and witnesses of discrimination against retaliation.

You'll learn more about the different types in the following slides.

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination takes place when an employer treats someone worse than someone else in a comparable situation, in relation to the different grounds for discrimination.

Example: You are not hired by Organisation X because you are over 35 years old.



Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a practice, procedure or rule that applies to everyone has a negative effect on some people. The measures seem neutral at first sight, but actually discriminate against certain people.

Example: A certain rule that is unfavourable for part-time employees is introduced. This may indirectly discriminate against women because most part-time employees are women.



Harassment

Harassment can take the form of undesirable behaviour, bullying or other behaviour that has a hostile, derogatory or degrading situation as its aim or effect.

Example: A colleague tells an offensive joke about homosexuality to a homosexual colleague.



Instruction to discriminate

Instruction to discriminate occurs when a person incites another person to discriminate someone else.

Example: An employer asks a recruiter to recruit only Christians.



Protection against retaliation

The law also stipulates that victims and witnesses of discrimination are protected against retaliation.

Example: An employee is dismissed for lodging a complaint related to discrimination against the employer. The employee may contest this dismissal.



Exercise

An employee has had a serious accident at work. One of the consequences of the accident at work is heightened sensitivity to external stimuli. Adapted work will be provided as part of the reintegration following the accident at work. After a few years, however, the organisation's vision changes, and the employee's position is adapted without taking their heightened sensitivity to external stimuli into account.

This is **direct** discrimination

This is **indirect** discrimination



Oops... you
chose the wrong
answer.

[Click here to try
again.](#)

Congratulations! You chose the right answer.

In this case, changing the job content is an example of indirect discrimination.

The adjusted vision and any corresponding changes in job content should be the same for everyone. However, this has a negative effect on some people.

This means that the employee can no longer perform the job due to their heightened sensitivity to external stimuli.

Exercise

There are two applicants with equal qualifications and skills. The male applicant is preferred over the female applicant, who is also a single mother.

This is **direct** discrimination

This is **indirect** discrimination



Oops... you
chose the wrong
answer.

[Click here to try
again.](#)

Congratulations! You chose the right answer.

This case involves direct discrimination based on gender. The female applicant is treated differently in a similar situation (i.e. equal qualifications and skills when applying for a job) based on gender and any prejudices involved (e.g. "the female applicant's performance will be worse as she has to combine her work with her care tasks at home").

Exercise

Read the statement below and select the correct answer:

Employers in Europe are obliged to combat discrimination or discriminatory behaviour in the workplace.

True

False



Oops... you
chose the wrong
answer.

[Click here to try
again.](#)

Congratulations! You chose the right answer.

Employers in Europe are obliged to combat discrimination or discriminatory behaviour in the workplace. Employers may not discriminate and employees have the right not to be discriminated against.

Exercise

Read the statement below and select the correct answer:

An actress over the age of 45 is sought for an anti-wrinkle cream advert. This is direct discrimination based on age.

True

False





Oops... you
chose the wrong
answer.

[Click here to try
again.](#)

Congratulations! You chose the right answer.

A direct distinction is made based on age. However, this is not an example of discrimination because this distinction is justified. It is less credible to promote anti-wrinkle cream with a young actress.



STEREOTYPES, PREJUDICES AND DISCRIMINATION

Click [here](#) to watch a video on stereotypes,
prejudice and discrimination

The message we want to share with this video is integrated into the
exercise on the next slide.

Exercise

Read the 3 statements below about Muhammad and click on the correct combination:

Muhammed is a man of Moroccan origin and has recently failed to meet the agreements made with his female manager.

1. Moroccan men have difficulty accepting women being in a position of authority.
2. It is possible that Muhammed hasn't been asked why he's failing to meet certain agreements and what can be done to change this.
3. Muhammed will always struggle with women's authority and will not change even if we talk to him about it.

1 = Prejudice, 2 = Stereotype, 3 = Discrimination

1 = Discrimination, 2 = Stereotype, 3 = Prejudice

1 = Stereotype, 2 = Discrimination, 3 = Prejudice



Oops... you
chose the wrong
answer.

[Click here to try
again.](#)

Congratulations! You chose the right answer.

- A **stereotype** is a widely held view of a group of people. This picture is based on one (former) characteristic that often corresponds to a real situation. Example: It is assumed that all Moroccan men cannot accept women being in a position of authority.
- A **prejudice** is someone's opinion based on such a stereotype. One such idea is that Muhammed will always find it difficult to be under a woman's authority because he is of Moroccan origin.
- **Discrimination** is the unequal or unfair treatment of a person based on personal characteristics. An example is failing to ask Muhammed what the problem is, as it is assumed that he always finds it difficult to deal with women in a position of authority because he is a Moroccan man.



Reflection exercise

Does Muhammed's story seem familiar?

Perhaps your case didn't involve a Moroccan man, but an employee with a disability, an older employee, an employee who speaks a different language, or an employee with different political opinions.

Task: Have a chat with a colleague you don't know well yet or who you wouldn't contact out of the blue. **Put yourself under the microscope:** do I hold stereotypes and prejudices about that person and why? Could this lead to discrimination?

Did you know...?

... 21 March is the International Day for the
Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Click [here](#) to watch a video about this day.

On the next slide you will find the takeaways from this video.
Feel free to write down your own takeaways too.

Takeaways

- March 21st is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.
- On March 21, 1960, thousands of black South Africans gathered in Sharpeville (South Africa) to demonstrate against the apartheid regime that hindered their freedom.
- Police opened fire and 69 died and 100 were injured, including women and children.
- To remember this incident, the United Nations declared March 21 as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.
- Yet racism and discrimination persist in our society and it remains necessary to actively stand up to racism and discrimination every day.