

Global Compact Target Gender Equality Group, that promotes gender equality in the private sector, as well as participate in SDG5 Cluster, a working group that joins together several companies that want to reach gender equality and empower all women. To make sure that the company is on the right track regarding diversity and inclusion, every year Ageas monitors its developments by reaching out to all employees, making sure that they are treated with respect and that the company provides equal opportunities despite their gender or sexual orientation [2].

Sonae MC Group

The Sonae MC Group is one of the largest Portuguese retail groups. For years it has adopted an inclusive policy based on diversity, but in 2020 Sonae decided to formalise this strategy. According to Catarina Oliveira Fernandes, manager of the Learning, Development and Inclusion area of the retailer, diversity and inclusion have benefits in terms of attracting and retaining talent, innovation, and performance. For her, the theme is not new, as it is basically about managing people, considering them for their individuality and creating conditions for them to develop to their full potential, but there is now greater intentionality and consistency and an innovative way of taking this approach. So, in 2020, Sonae MC wanted to increase intentionality in action, promoting an environment where people felt valued for their skills and talents. The dimensions of diversity on which Sonae MC focused – gender, disability, LGBTIQA+, generations, nationalities and ethnicities – were defined and principles of action were established with the objectives of (1) promoting equity and not equality, i.e. giving the necessary opportunities for each person to develop to their full potential; (2) clarifying that diversity and inclusion are everyone's responsibility and benefit the whole organisation and (3) fostering uniqueness as a catalyst for sustainable personal and professional development, ensuring that people feel respected and valued for their skills and have confidence in the organisation. The adaptation of this human resource management strategy based on diversity and inclusion is inspiring and perfectly possible, even in small companies [2].

ITALY - Sinapsi; IAL FVG

Female Leadership Acceleration Program

The Female Leadership Acceleration Program is a development program created by an Italian bank, aimed at women who work in the organization at the managerial level. Since women are less likely to have promotions and reach for top positions, the program aims to develop and consolidate these women's leadership potential. Trusting their employees' talent and investing in their professional growth helps leverage the gap between men and women at top-level positions and makes it possible for the business to have a more diverse management team. Having the chance to reach for their

fullest potential also allows women to break the so-called glass ceiling and to reach for job positions usually taken by men. To further help women, the company also provides paid leaves or special permissions for all things related to childcare and caregiving, such as birth preparation courses or placement of children in the nursery. Given that women still often struggle to balance their family life and work, the firm cares to promote the importance of fathers' role, giving them paid leave for childbirth and extending their parental leave.

IsProud

IsProud is a community of LGBTQ+ people whose mission is to create a safe and inclusive working environment. The community, born after the pandemic in 2021, has a monthly meeting to discuss issues and ideas, share experiences, cooperate together and create proposals. The result of their meeting is then submitted to the company, creating direct communication between LGBTQ+ workers and the business. This allows the community to participate in their own well-being at work proactively, gives them the chance to make their voices heard, and makes it easier for both them and the company they work with to come up with actual and concrete initiatives. The community has already achieved some outstanding progress, such as creating and implementing a protocol to help transgender workers with their social transition and providing awareness moments with the work groups of transitioning people.

Human Capital Development

The Human Capital Development, Diversity & Inclusion is a special team created by a medium-sized company that works in the energy infrastructure field. The unit is born during the covid-19 emergency, in 2020, in response to a call for action launched by the company. It now involves thirty-five employees and its purpose is to coordinate all the initiatives related to inclusion, to create a more inclusive organizational culture, and to implement diversity at all levels. The team has its own budget and uses it to plan for inclusion measurements, follow up on them, and monitor their results. Then, twice a year, the unit presents its achievements and proposes new strategies to the firm. Since the birth of the Human Capital Development team, the company has hired more women and has had its first women in the factory department. Noticeable results were also achieved regarding the employees' perception of inclusivity. To make this possible, special attention was given to training, such as talks about diversity issues, videos about unconscious biases, and sessions about sexual orientations. The company has also promoted a Manifesto, stating clearly its position on inclusion and endorsing the use of inclusive language.

Direct experiences of IAV FVG

- a) Establishment of professional support figures within VET institutions, in charge of supporting learners with particular fragilities during the orientation and job placement phases, helping them to overcome difficulties either by intervening directly or by putting them in contact with specialized external support networks (e.g., counselling centres, associations, etc.).
- b) Among the most widespread practices to ensure inclusivity for LGBTQI+ learners, some VETs such as IAL FVG grant them the possibility of using bathrooms and locker rooms accordingly to their gender identity, to use in informal exchanges and daily school life their name of choice, to report to dedicated staff any needs, critical issues, discriminatory episodes of which they have been victims, so as to ensure concrete and timely forms of protection.
- (c) VETs are staffed with professionals such as Tutors and Coordinators with liaison functions, who are in charge of identifying the companies that are best suited to host LGBTQI+ learners and dialoguing with them to ensure that internship activities take place in an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual enrichment.

PARtime

PARtime is a training and research project promoted by INDIRE in collaboration with the Region of Tuscany and is aimed at promoting a culture of equality and respect and combating violence in schools of all levels and in services for children (0-6). The project aims to promote a gender-sensitive educational perspective in schools by monitoring the training needs of teachers and offering them specific training on issues related to gender equality.

The training, offered to teachers, school leaders, ATA staff, and educators in the Tuscan territory, is organized in video lectures and teaching kits to be consulted asynchronously and independently. The video lessons are both theoretical (they provide a concise yet comprehensive overview of the topic of gender education, with particular regard to curricular teaching and the role of schools in the prevention of gender stereotypes and violence) and workshop-based (specific and declined for schools of all levels, they offer ideas, suggestions and materials to be adopted in daily teaching).

NEW-D, New educational models for vocational and initial educational training of disadvantaged youth to reduce school dropout.

NEW-D is a project that aims to propose a new didactic model for vocational training for young people from disadvantaged groups (e.g., those with migration backgrounds or socioeconomic disadvantages), which current didactic models in use are unable to motivate. Research conducted as part of the project has shown that the pedagogical methodologies used in VET do not meet the

needs of an increasingly large target group and do not propose effective solutions to the schools and companies involved either.

The NEW-D project aims to develop and propose a new teaching approach that takes greater account of the needs of young people from disadvantaged groups, so as to prevent their abundance and accompany them up to the time of their induction into the company, supporting them more effectively during their transition between training and employment. Among the outputs of the project, we highlight in particular the drafting of guidelines dedicated to the implementation of this new inclusive model addressed to VET trainers and managers of companies that receive young people in internships.