

# MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

*in small and medium enterprises*



[GESDIMEP PROJECT] Progress Initiative. DG Justice. European Commission





<b>1</b>	<b>INSTITUTIONAL PRESENTATION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>DIAGNOSIS OF THE SITUATION</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>KEY AGENTS IN THE PROMOTION AND SUPPORT OF MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN SMES</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>TRANSFERABLE EXAMPLES</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>a</b>	Equal treatment and non-discrimination	11
<b>b</b>	Corporate culture	12
<b>c</b>	Work environment	13
<b>d</b>	Cultural diversity management training	15
<b>e</b>	Internal communication	16
<b>f</b>	External communication	17
<b>g</b>	Customers	19
<b>h</b>	Suppliers	20
<b>i</b>	Selection processes	21
<b>j</b>	Organisation of diverse teams	22
<b>k</b>	Diverse markets	23
<b>5</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAKING PROGRESS IN MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY</b>	<b>24</b>

## Authors:

Camilo Abiétar, Professionals, Self-Employed Workers and Entrepreneurs Organisation (OPA); Rosa Bada, Bayt al-Thaqafa Foundation; Daniela Gallego, Cepaim Foundation; and Nuria Lores, Cidalia 'Consultoría en Diversidad'.

## Project collaborators:

Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP); Business Confederation of Small and Medium Entrepreneurs (CEPYME); Department of Immigration of the Regional Government of Catalonia; Department of Migration Policies of the Regional Government of Andalusia; Department of Integration, Social Inclusion and Cooperation of the Regional Government of Valencia; and Department of Immigration of the Autonomous Region of Madrid.

## People and Institutions that have assisted with the project:

Myrtha Casanova, Founder of the European Institute for Managing Diversity; Marta Muñiz, Director of the Department of Enterprise Globalization, Diversity and Career Development, Universidad Pontificia Comillas; Sonsoles Morales, Business consultant on Diversity Management; Directorate General of Self-Employment, Social Economy and Social Responsibility of Companies (Ministry of Employment and Social Security); Federation of Municipalities of Catalonia (FMC); Andalusian Business Confederation (CEA); Catalanian SME Federation (FEPYME); City of Burgos; Employers' Foundation of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise of Catalonia (PIMEC); Equality Department of Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP); Valencian Business Confederation (CEV); City of Marines-Valencia (FEMP); Spanish Red Cross of Andalusia; British Council Spain; ACCEM; Study Centre for the social integration and training of immigrants (CEIMIGRA); Spanish Association of Foreign Trade Consultants (ACOCEX); City of Castellón; UGT Trade Union of Andalusia; Movement against Intolerance; Mescladís; CC.OO Trade Union of Catalonia; City of Mataró; ARED Foundation; City of Alhaurin de la Torre; University of Seville; Cooperation and Development Partnership with North Africa (Codenaf); Ferroviario; NH Hoteles; Proexport; Agromartín SL; Foundation for Pluralism and Coexistence; UGT Trade Union of País Valenciá; Yong Dong Yin Guo, SME of Andalusia; Dispromerch SL; Transports Metropolitanas de Barcelona; FSG (Roma Secretariat Foundation); City of Torre Pacheco (Murcia).

## Management and coordination:

Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia of the General Secretariat for Immigration and Emigration, Ministry of Employment and Social Security; Nicolás Marugán, Rosa Iturzaeta, Antonio García and Raquel Hernández.

Central government catalogue of publications

<http://publicacionesoficiales.boe.es>



© Ministry of Employment and Social Security  
Publishing and distribution: Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia  
José Abascal, 39 28003 Madrid | Email electrónico: [oberaxe@meys.es](mailto:oberaxe@meys.es)  
web: <http://explotacion.mtin.gob.es/oberaxe/inicio>

NIPO paper: 270-14-058-8  
NIPO internet: 270-14-063-2  
Legal Deposit: M-6796-2014

Design and layout: Printing: Carmen de Hijes  
Photography: Martín Gicheru y Ainocha Rubio Cuadrado

This work has been printed on 100% recycled paper



This publication is supported by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity-PROGRESS (2007-2013). This programme is implemented by the European Commission. It was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment, social affairs and equal opportunities area, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Europe 2020 strategy goals in these fields. The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies across the EU-28, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries. For more information see: <http://ec.europa.eu/progress>  
The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position and opinion of the European Commission.

Numerous research studies show that cultural diversity adds value to companies, boosts the possibilities of capturing talent, improves the organisational culture and increases the number of customers, with minimal economic costs.

One of the research studies, carried out by the European Commission<sup>1</sup>, highlights the five most significant advantages of implementing active Diversity Management policies:

- ✿ Strengthens an organisation's cultural values.
- ✿ Improves the institution's image.
- ✿ Helps to attract and retain very talented people.
- ✿ Boosts staff motivation and efficiency.
- ✿ Increases employee innovation and creativity.

The **Managing Cultural Diversity in Small and Medium Enterprises** [GESDIMEP] project specifically targets workers and owners of small and medium enterprises, which make up the majority of Spain's businesses. We also target business organisations, trade unions, NGOs and other civil society institutions, immigrants associations, universities, business schools, business incubation centres, public administration at local regional and national level, and any other professional environments that are involved in managing cultural diversity.

In Spain there are more than six million people born outside our borders. Not only is the proper management of cultural diversity a legal and moral obligation, but the inclusion of diversity is a business case too. It has a direct impact on a company's economic and human results. We are referring to both economic and social benefits which create industrial harmony in an area as delicate as employment. We are talking about:

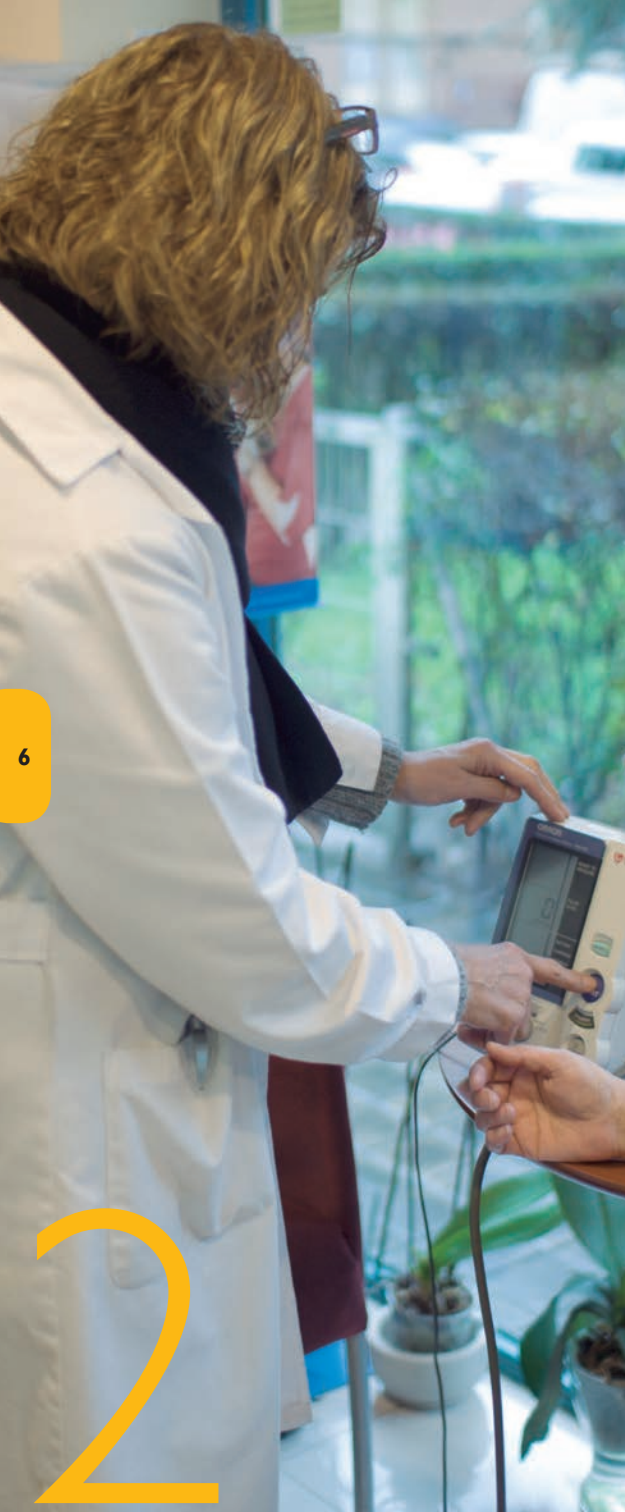
- ✿ Increasing sales, capturing new customers and entering new sectors.
- ✿ Reducing absenteeism.
- ✿ Reducing staff turnover and the talent drain.

Being aware of our cultural and corporate wealth here in Spain, and that creativity is vital for coming out of the crisis, we must support the fight against all forms of racism, xenophobia and other related intolerance.

**Marina del Corral Téllez**  
**Secretary General of Immigration and Emigration**

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.idm-diversity.org/files/EU0708-TrainingManual-es.pdf>. Diversity Management Training Manual.



# DIAGNOSIS OF THE SITUATION

**M**anaging cultural diversity should not be viewed solely in terms of fundamental rights or equality and non-discrimination policies. This is an essential approach to promote democratic values and principles, but does not exhaust cultural diversity management possibilities.

In this respect when we talk about managing cultural diversity, can be, referring to the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity<sup>2</sup>, which states in art. 1 and 2 that: *cultural diversity is a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature. In our increasingly diverse societies, it is essential to ensure harmonious interaction among people and groups with plural, varied and dynamic cultural identities as well as their willingness to live together. Policies for the inclusion and participation of all citizens are guarantees of social cohesion, the vitality of civil society and peace. Thus defined, cultural pluralism gives policy expression to the reality of cultural diversity. Indissociable from a democratic framework, cultural pluralism is conducive to cultural exchange and to the flourishing of creative capacities that sustain public life.*

---

<sup>2</sup> [http://portal.unesco.org/es/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13179&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/es/ev.php-URL_ID=13179&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

The definition provided by the EU Diversity Management Manual is also worth mentioning: “Diversity Management is the active and conscious development of a future oriented, value driven strategic, communicative and managerial process of accepting and using certain differences and similarities as a potential in an organisation. A process which creates added value to the company”.<sup>3</sup>

Managing diversity is also **a vital business management strategy for attracting new customers, opening new lines of business and boosting competitiveness**. If those SMEs which do not yet implement cultural diversity management policies become more aware of the benefits of it, they will include talent and innovation resulting in a better work environment and optimisation of limited resources.

In Europe there are estimated 23 million SMEs (companies with fewer than 250 employees), representing 99% of all companies and around 75 million jobs<sup>4</sup>. Many of them already manage their businesses taking into account the cultural diversity variable. In fact, we know of many experiences of where good Cultural Diversity Management is an opportunity for companies that need tools to turn the existing diversity into an asset.

In the European Union, SMEs belong to a group of companies made up of between 10 and 249 workers (fewer than 10 employees is a micro-enterprise) and whose annual turnover is less than 50 million euros. The annual general balance sheet of SMEs must not exceed 43 million euros either.<sup>5</sup>

As regards Spain, according to the latest figures available from the Central Companies Directory (CCD), for 1 January 2014, 91.68% of Spanish companies have fewer than 6 employees.

Various studies show that good cultural diversity management:

- ✿ Increases business efficiency.
- ✿ Increases the innovativeness and competitiveness of companies in an open, internationalised and global market.
- ✿ Increases the feeling of belonging and loyalty of workers.

<sup>3</sup> Guide for managing cultural diversity in the company. Red Acoge: Diversity Management Manual published by the EU under the European Community action programme to fight discrimination (2001-2006)

<sup>4</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/main.jsp?lang=es&catId=9674&myCatId=9674&parentId=20&acro=news&function=newsOnPortal>

<sup>5</sup> Commission recommendation, of 6 May 2003, on the definition of micro, small and medium enterprises (Text with EEA relevance) [notified with number C (2003) 1422] Official Journal no. L 124 of 20/05/2003 pages 0036 – 0041

Specifically, Ms. Myrtha Casanova<sup>6</sup>, founder of the European Institute for Managing Diversity, stated that “Professor Di Stephano of the University of Lausanne and his team have conducted research of great value that allows us to understand the impact of diversity in all areas of the environment<sup>7</sup>. The study was conducted in 6 countries (Japan, U.S., Canada, Brazil, Germany, Italy) across 72 groups. The result of the study shows that teams/groups with diverse people tend to chaos; that homogeneous teams/groups tend to obsolescence and that only diverse teams/groups handling inclusion are the groups with the highest levels of creativity, innovation and efficiency within the organization.

The 2011 project *Managing Diversity in the Workplace* GESDI, led by the Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia, focused on working directly with professional environments, such as companies, business organisations and other agents interested in introducing diversity management processes in their organisations. As a result, indicators on Equal Treatment and Non-discrimination, Human Resources, Communication, Organisational Commitment and Processes were agreed on as a self-diagnosis and analysis tool for cultural diversity management. More than thirty organisations were evaluated based on the indicators. The organisations listed in the publication were considered success stories. Recommendations were also proposed for the appropriate management of cultural diversity in professional environments<sup>8</sup>.

Connecting, collaborating, learning and sharing are the goals of an intelligent and thriving society. To meet future challenges, with an internationalised market, highly diverse territories, delocalised production, etc. Companies and other organisations need a new outlook, a new agenda that will provide them with a positive, albeit not risk-free, transformation.

***Good management of cultural diversity appears as a future asset.***

<sup>6</sup> Myrtha Casanova, founder of the European Institute for Managing Diversity. Barcelona Seminar. October 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Information available in the website: <http://www.iegd.org/spanish800/innovacion.htm>

<sup>8</sup> This publication is available in Spanish and English at [http://explotacion.mtin.gob.es/oberaxe/inicio\\_descargaFichero.action?bibliotecaDatold=206](http://explotacion.mtin.gob.es/oberaxe/inicio_descargaFichero.action?bibliotecaDatold=206) [http://explotacion.mtin.gob.es/oberaxe/inicio\\_descargaFichero.action?bibliotecaDatold=210](http://explotacion.mtin.gob.es/oberaxe/inicio_descargaFichero.action?bibliotecaDatold=210)

# KEY AGENTS IN THE PROMOTION AND SUPPORT OF MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN SMEs

## 3

**Business organisations, self-employed worker associations, chambers of commerce, NGOs, trade unions, social institutions, public administrations and universities are the main agents for the successful dissemination of Cultural Diversity management. This support could take the following shape:**

- ✿ Advice for implementing diversity management actions for small and medium enterprises.
- ✿ Funding for implementing Diversity Management Plans.
- ✿ SME training on managing diversity.
- ✿ Becoming model institutions on Managing Cultural Diversity, with professionals prepared in this area and by incorporating an intercultural approach in activity programming, project implementation, personnel hiring, etc.
- ✿ Promotion of detailed studies and special training in specific sectors on cultural diversity.
- ✿ Preparing strategies that ensure more effective communication with SMEs and which help establish mutual understanding and cooperation in the field of cultural diversity.

# TRANSFERABLE EXAMPLES

We wanted to provide a few examples of Managing Cultural Diversity in other organisations that we believe may be a useful path to follow for SMEs.



a

## Equal treatment and non-discrimination

Discrimination has serious consequences. It makes us more vulnerable to everyone, more fragile, less together and less competitive.

To discriminate is to treat some people differently and unfavourably compared to others. Discrimination is based on the belief that not everyone has equal rights and dignity, and that differences can therefore be drawn between individuals leading to disadvantages for them; the person who discriminates considers that some people are superior to others meaning people should be treated differently. Discrimination therefore goes against one of the fundamental principles of the Declaration of Human Rights which asserts that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights: *All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.* It also violates one of the basic democratic principles which is the necessary equality and dignity with which all people must be treated.<sup>9</sup>

There is direct discrimination when, on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, a person is treated less favourably than another is, has been or is going to be treated in a comparable situation; so same indirect discrimination exists when an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice puts persons of a particular racial or ethnic origin at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons, unless that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.<sup>10</sup>

### What will my company gain if I implement equal treatment policies?

The company **Marco Aldany** conducts blind CV selection processes, without any personal information about the candidate for the position (man/woman, age, etc.). This ensures the hiring of the best profiles for each position offered without taking into account any other personal criteria.

<http://www.marcoaldany.com/index.php>

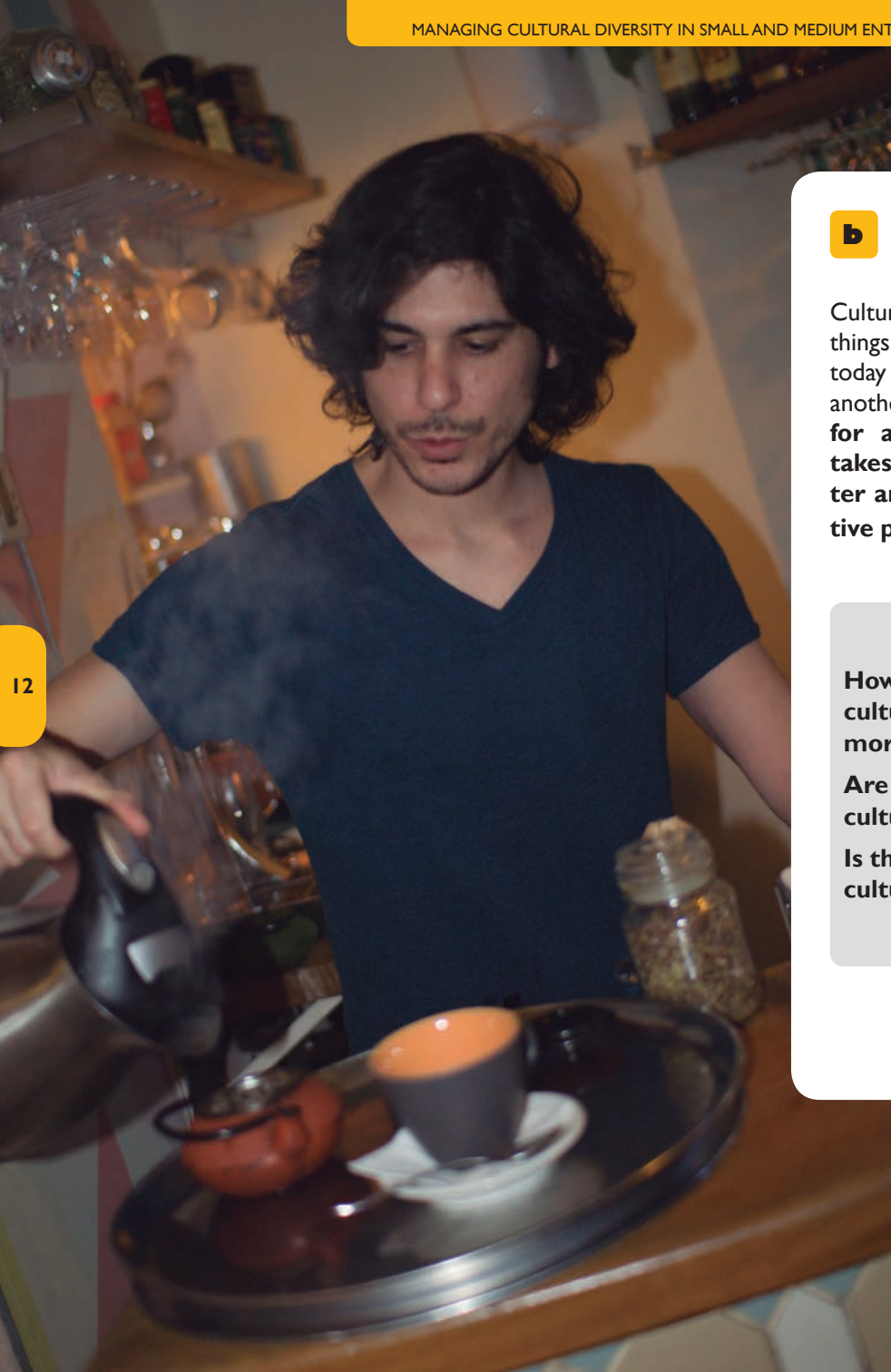
### Should I communicate to my workers messages about the importance of equality and dignity?

### Should I insist that workers be respectful to each other?

### Can derogatory comments even with a touch of humour be an issue?

<sup>9</sup> José Manuel Fresno. Chapter 3: Equal treatment and non-discrimination of immigrants and ethnic minorities in the workplace. Guide for Managing Diversity in Professional Environments [http://explotacion.mtin.gob.es/oberaxe/inicio\\_descargaFichero.action?bibliotecaDatold=206](http://explotacion.mtin.gob.es/oberaxe/inicio_descargaFichero.action?bibliotecaDatold=206)

<sup>10</sup> COUNCIL Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of their racial or ethnic origin. <https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=DOUE-L-2000-81307>



## **b** Corporate culture

Culture reflects a way of being and doing things. This characteristic is what allows us today to differentiate one company from another. **When the principle of respect for and value of cultural diversity takes hold, teams work together better and see the company as a collective project that belongs to them.**

**How can I make people from other cultures and religions feel more identified with the company?**

**Are we proud of our company's cultural diversity?**

**Is the creativity and knowledge of cultural diversity recognised?**

## **c** Work environment

**Provide an optimum work environment** that takes into account the fact that cultural diversity directly affects aspects that benefit the company, such as exchanging new and good ideas that encourage innovation, good employee relations or having access to a more diverse customer base.

### What does my company gain with a good work environment?

The company **Agromartín S.L.**, with a part of its workforce made up of foreign workers, says that something as simple as being concerned for your workers, knowing about them, their personal situation, celebrating good news, birthdays, parties, etc., i.e. generating a good environment in the workplace, makes up for the loneliness that many workers far from their family and home feel. It makes for a positive work environment, a more committed workforce and increased productivity.

[www.agromartin.com](http://www.agromartin.com)

**How can I take advantage of cultural diversity to create a good environment in my company?**

**Should I occasionally organise some activity in the company that promotes cultural exchange?**

**Have I thought about potential conflicts if I do not properly manage cultural diversity?**



## **d** Cultural diversity management training

Managing cultural diversity is closely related to mutual understanding, learning and collaboration. Successful training will produce positive results for the company.

### **What will my company gain if I invest in cultural diversity management training?**

In Andalusia a group of agricultural companies that hire immigrants to work during the harvests have seen that it is a good idea to train their staff in cultural diversity management due to the impact that this has on the work environment and productivity of their workers. For this reason they have requested the Cepaim Foundation, within the framework of the **Mares project**, to design them an online training course on diversity management for their middle managers and staff in general.

<http://www.proyectomares.es/index.php/es/>

The company **Indra** has opted for diversity training. Indra considers that cultural diversity boosts innovation and gives the company a basic level of competitiveness. That is why diversity is considered a key factor for business sustainability. It trains its entire workforce in diversity, but by designing the training for each of its workers with assignments tailored to specific needs in terms of skills and abilities. It manages diversity based on differentiation and segmentation and creating unique career paths for each person. Customised training is a key element in this process.

<http://www.indracompany.com/>

**Am I aware of cultural diversity management training courses offered by NGOs, local institutions, and or other public administrations, trade unions, business organisations, universities and self-employed workers associations?**

**Can cultural diversity training improve my company's competitiveness and prospects?**



## e Internal communication

Working in culturally diverse environments means ensuring that we understand one another, avoid implicit messages and promote regular dialogue and a culture of mutual recognition and collaboration. **What is not communicated does not exist.**

**Do you know your workforce's opinion on production processes?**

To promote internal communication, **Ferrovial** introduced a suggestion box which employees can use anonymously to show their grievances and proposals to human resources department. Launching the suggestion box has enabled the company to acquire more information on the work environment in its offices, obtain valuable information on anything that does not work properly and implement any corrective and improvement actions which have improved the performance of work groups and specific offices. What's more, in many cases, people make their comments and suggestions with names and surnames, raising therefore the level of trust between the various chains of command in the company.

<http://www.ferrovial.com/>

**Do you bear in mind the cultural diversity of the workforce to include their opinions or suggestions?**

**Are there any communication channels that encourage cultural exchange in the workforce?**

**Is communication in your company reciprocal, from employer to worker and vice versa?**

## **f** External communication

Communicating the cultural diversity of our business to customers, suppliers and society in general is a strategy that fosters social cohesion, creates new business opportunities and improves the company's image.

**How can I communicate to customers and the general public that my company is culturally diverse?**

**Proexport**, the Association of Producers and Exporters of Fruit and Vegetables in the Murcia region, decided to support and recognise the efforts of its workers of 104 different nationalities through the production and publication of an international recipe book entitled: *Sowing flavours*.

In collaboration with NGOs and the Torre Pacheco Town Council, the process of compiling the workers' recipes was organised to reflect the cultural diversity of the Murcia countryside and to provide readers of the text with the best tips for turning our kitchen into a melting pot of cultures. The photo shoot for the publication of the text was held at the Torre Pacheco Intercultural Fair. Through this initiative the company publicises its recognition of diversity and the cultural richness that this generates. [www.proexport.es](http://www.proexport.es)

**What would I gain communicating my company's cultural diversity?**

**Should I tell customers and suppliers about my company's cultural diversity?**





## g Customers

**Cultural diversity in the workforce opens the possibility of new customers, knowing their tastes and needs, generating value for society as a whole.** Speak to them in their own language and make the most of the diverse markets that we already have here.

**Have you thought about the cultural diversity in your neighbourhood, city or locality, as potential customers?**

**Delicias Kosher** is a Glatt Kosher Restaurant in Barcelona which has focused its business on the Jewish community. The restaurant offers a wide variety of quality grilled meats, traditional Jewish food and typical Middle Eastern dishes. It also offers a special catering service and home/hotel meal service. Special food is available for Shabbat.  
<http://www.deliciaskosher.com/>

**Eurobook** is a bookshop specialising in languages: Spanish, foreign languages and other languages in Spain. It was established because of a growing need for books and other languages. Within this framework it opted for a range of subjects, not focusing solely on the teaching of languages, but also providing an extensive literature section (particularly English and French, and also German, Italian, Portuguese...), as well as sections on education, history, large format books, dictionaries, travel, software... The business targets the Spanish public who want to learn languages and foreigners looking for books in their own languages.  
<http://www.eurobookonline.com/>

**Do the products you offer cater to the wide range of cultural tastes and needs of your environment?**

**What business opportunities are available to your company from the diverse religions and cultures in your neighbourhood, city or locality?**

## h Suppliers

**Supplier diversification is a competitive advantage.** It opens up opportunities to discovering and accessing new products and markets, growing your sales and business.

**Do you have culturally diverse suppliers?**

The **Ganadera de la Nava cooperative** sells the product Laban Oujda. It is a fermented milk which has the characteristics of a product considered as Halal. *This term refers to the set of practices permitted by Islam. Although the term itself encompasses all types of practices, it is commonly associated with food acceptable under sharia or Islamic law* (<http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halal>)  
<http://www.camposdenava.com/>



The **San Vicente de Mogón cooperative** produces and sells Kosher certified extra-virgin olive oil. This is oil produced according to the customs of the Jewish culture and approved by a rabbi, classing it as Kosher. *Kosher (or kashrut) is the part of the precepts of the Jewish community that deals with what practitioners can and cannot eat, based on the biblical precepts of Leviticus 11. These rules, interpreted and expanded over the centuries, determine precisely which foods are considered pure, i.e. those which comply with the precepts of the religion and those which are not kosher.*  
<http://www.puertadelasvillas.com/>

**Have you offered products that are different to those that you usually sell and which allow you to access new markets or customers from other cultures?**

**What is your return on selling these products?**

## **i** Selection processes

To ensure success and to try to avoid mistakes by discarding the right person, it is important not to take decisions based on prejudice and stereotypes and to base our choice on objective criteria.

**Selecting culturally diverse people can provide your company with more talent.**

**What does a culturally diverse workforce provide?**

A **coffee shop** located in a tourist spot finds that it is not attracting Japanese customers. It hires a Japanese waiter/waitress and now starts to attract Japanese customers to its business.

**Is my workforce culturally diverse and is it made up of workers of different national origins?**

**Am I objective with people of other cultures in the selection processes?**





## **j** Organisation of culturally diverse teams

Having workers of different origins may require managing our company's day-to-day activities differently. For example, it may be a good idea to spread holidays in a more balanced way (as people who come from far-away places would rather choose their holidays at different times to the rest of the workforce so they can be with their families and because they have to travel long distances to their countries).

In terms of teams, the experiences of different small and large companies have determined that it is more efficient to mix teams made up of culturally diverse people rather than group them together according to the same national origins.

### **Have you considered that culturally diverse teams may be more productive?**

**NH Hoteles** initially organised the shifts of cleaning personnel grouping them together by nationality. It decided to change this structure by creating teams made up of people of different national origins. At first there was reluctance to change but as time passed these intercultural teams worked much better than the former single culture groups.

<http://www.nh-hoteles.es/>

The company **Agromartín** used to structure its work groups homogeneously with people all of the same national origin. Common sense dictated that it would be much easier for people from the same country or region that shared the same language and culture to understand each other better. However, after seeing that results did not live up to expectations, the company decided to create diverse teams, with people from different cultures. This change resulted in far greater productivity and efficiency in the workplace.

[www.agromartin.com](http://www.agromartin.com)

## **k** Diverse markets

If we want to access culturally diverse customers and sell our products and services to as many customers as possible, it may prove very useful to hire employees from different cultures. In order to operate in international markets, it may not be enough to know languages, the country of destination and understand foreign trade. Among other factors, it may be a good idea to have specialist and varied personnel.

That said, culturally diverse markets do not necessarily have to be international. In the locality of our businesses there are many opportunities to access and expand our customer base.

### **Do you think SMEs should target culturally diverse markets to increase their turnover?**

The **Spanish Association of Foreign Trade Consultants, Acocex**, is responsible for the “Exporting is Easy” project. It is a programme designed to create business networks overseas that help companies to sell more of their products in different countries. This programme establishes a firm commitment to job creation, the economic development of Murcia’s companies and international dissemination and promotion. The programme is based on the creation of business networks through immigrant entrepreneurs who want to sell Spanish products in their countries of origin and immigrant entrepreneurs who want to set up companies in Spain or in their countries of origin as partners of Spanish companies. This programme also brings together immigrants who want to sign up for the Ministry of Employment and Social Security’s “Productive Voluntary Return” programme, through the General Secretariat for Immigration and Emigration.

<http://www.acocex.com/proyectos.asp>

The company **L’ORÉAL**: has known how to adapt its products to all types of customers, developing 23 international brands in which any type of skin or hair has a specific beauty product available.

<http://www.loreal.es/>

**Have you included cultural diversity management in your internationalisation strategy?**

**Do you take advantage of the cultural diversity of your workforce to reach other markets?**

**Are you aware of the diverse markets in your neighbourhood, city or locality?**

# 5

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAKING PROGRESS IN MANAGING THE CULTURAL DIVERSITY OF YOUR COMPANY



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAKING PROGRESS IN MANAGING THE CULTURAL DIVERSITY OF YOUR COMPANY

- 1 **Managing Cultural Diversity** is a challenge for many SMEs, but one which is achievable and necessary to tackle in order to optimise their possibilities in a globalised and changing market. Every company, regardless of its size, sector of activity or situation, can and should consider cultural diversity management.
- 2 Try to get your company to reflect the cultural diversity of the community in which it is located. This will make it more competitive.
- 3 Discrimination is illegal, can be considered a crime and is not good business for anyone.
- 4 Contact and work with NGOs, local institutions and other public administrations, universities, business organisations, chambers of commerce and trade unions, which offer support, information and advisory services on Managing Cultural Diversity.
- 5 Effectively integrate human rights and the economic perspective in managing cultural diversity: it is not advisable to lessen emphasis on either of these two aspects.

## **Remember that:**

- 6 Good cultural diversity management offers opportunities to capture potential customers both at home and/or abroad, will make your company more competitive and help it to work with more appropriate business logic and therefore avoid exposure to unnecessary risks.
- 7 A diverse staff provides new knowledge, skills and abilities that may be advantageous to the company.
- 8 Proper Cultural Diversity Management can be a useful tool to generate short, medium and long-term benefits.
- 9 Responsible and fair treatment of company personnel generates a better work environment, increases motivation and product quality.
- 10 Increase the cultural diversity of your workforce. Cultural diversity produces different viewpoints and understanding for addressing problems. Each culture's know-how represents an added value which promotes innovation in the company.
- 11 Companies that work responsibly and fairly towards their personnel generate a better work environment. Diversity is also rich in terms of different points of view, from different realities, and innovation is a feature of it.

We cannot lose sight of how European society has changed and, in the last 20 years, Spanish society too.



The services and products we seek are global, and so are our companies.



We are a very diverse society with the local and global society intermingling and reinventing themselves each day.



We need to adapt to this reality, suppliers, markets and internationalised customers, which is why managing cultural diversity is an essential tool.

GESTIÓ DE LA DIVERSITAT CULTURAL EN PETITES I MITJANES EMPRESES  
GESTIÓN DA DIVERSIDADE CULTURAL EN MEDIANAS E PEQUENAS EMPRESAS  
KULTURA ANIZTASUNAREN TRATAERA ENPRESA TXIKIETAN ETA ERTAINETAN  
MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES  
GESTIÓN DE LA DIVERSIDAD CULTURAL EN MEDIANAS Y PEQUEÑAS EMPRESAS

