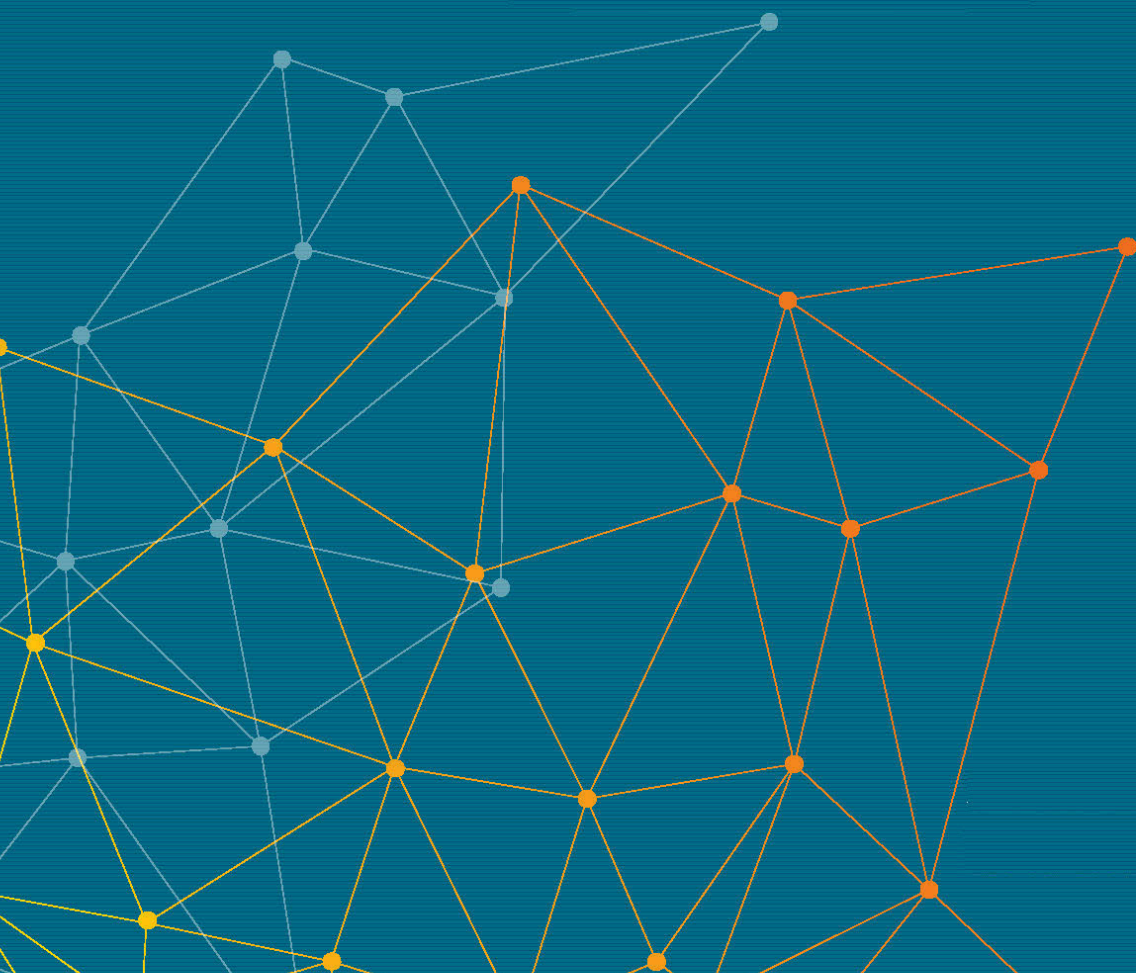




SURVEY ABOUT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES

An Informatics Europe report
by IE's Diversity & Inclusion Working Group



Survey about diversity and inclusion initiatives

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prepared by IE's Diversity & Inclusion Working Group

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Survey about diversity and inclusion initiatives

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Introduction

The working group on diversity and inclusion promoted by Informatics Europe aims at: 1) creating awareness about the problems, challenges, and values of diversity, 2) acting as a collector of European initiatives on diversity and inclusion, 3) defining best practices to cope with diversity through inclusion.

With the objective to assess the status of initiatives in Europe, the working group has launched an initiative to develop a mapping study concerning ongoing and passed research activities, tools and initiatives aiming at understanding, respecting, and preserving diversity and at promoting and facilitating inclusion.

We have prepared a questionnaire to collect information about initiatives and artefacts that members of university departments in Europe have developed/are developing and want to share with the community. Our first objective is to develop and publish a mapping study on the diversity and inclusion area. Furthermore, we would like to increase the visibility of the ongoing activities hoping that they will determine the development of best practices in the field.

The questionnaire was launched in December 2022 and closed in March 2023. Data we have collected include information about 33 initiatives with various objectives and scopes. In this report we provide an overview of the obtained results.

The objectives for future work concern the following steps:

- Prepare a repository of relevant initiatives and activities where those collected through the questionnaire will be included.
- Develop a mapping study, possibly, re-opening the questionnaire to acquire more information.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was defined through multiple iterations within the diversity and inclusion working group participants and was targeting researchers from the computer science community. It was organized in the two parts described below.

The first part was devoted to collecting information about specific research initiatives and or tools devoted to support inclusion and cope with diversity. For simplicity, we chose to design the questionnaire for acquiring an individual initiative at a time.

Table 1 presents the questions included in this part.

Table 1. First part of the questionnaire.

| Question | Answer structure |
|--|--|
| Which kind of diversity are you targeting in your work? | Multiple choice. Possible values: race, gender, age, socio-economic status, different ways of learning, religion, physical disabilities, mental disabilities, perceptual/sensory disabilities, multiple disabilities, other (in this case there was a possibility to include new elements in the list) |
| Please provide a short description of the research activity, tool, and initiative you are describing | Textbox |
| Is this an ongoing or closed activity? | Single choice between Ongoing and Closed |
| Please provide a link to any open resource/website describing the research activity, tool, and initiative | Textbox |
| Please specify the scope of the activity, tool, or initiative | Institution level, Local |
| How would you classify the contribution you are describing? (If you want to insert more than one initiative/project/tool, please fill in the form multiple times one per item) | Choice between the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● A tool compensating a disability● Research activity, tool, and initiative to increase inclusion in the working environment● Research activity, tool, and initiative to increase inclusion in the education process |
| Which part of the education process is impacted by your initiative? | Multiple choice. Possible values: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Admission of new students● Teaching and learning process● Examination approach● Grading approach● Special needs support |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support communities • Other (in this case there was a possibility to include new elements in the list) |
| Which aspect of the working environment is impacted by your initiative? | <p>Multiple choice. Possible values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment • Day to day working environment • Periodical evaluation • Sick/maternity leave • Supporting careers • Work-life balance • Special needs support • Support communities • Other (in this case there was a possibility to include new elements in the list) |

The second part of the questionnaire was dedicated to collecting information about the questionnaire respondents. These included name, affiliation, position and country. The questionnaire was analysed and approved by the Ethical Committee at Politecnico di Milano. Moreover, all respondents agreed with the publication of their anonymised data in the map resulting from the study.

Respondents

The survey has been disseminated both through personal channels of the working group participants as well as those offered by the Informatics Europe association. We received 35 answers so far, two of which were filtered out as incomplete.

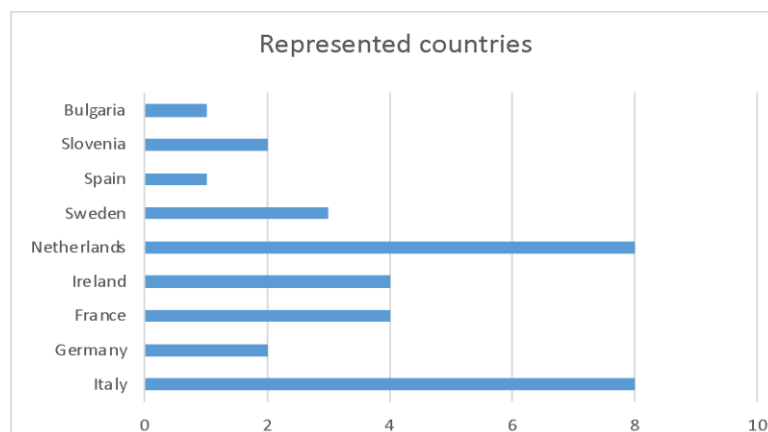


Figure 1. Distribution of respondents by country.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of respondents by country. Given the relatively low number of respondents, it is not statistically relevant and suggests that we should try to gather further inputs from the under-represented countries.

Respondents were asked to provide also information about their role in the represented institution. Most of them are part of university faculty at various levels, but mostly at the full professor and associate professor level. Seven respondents explicitly mentioned their coordination or leadership role at the departmental level.

Summary of collected data

Targeted diversity issues

Figure 2 presents an overview of the issues targeted by respondents. Gender is the most addressed issue followed by disabilities of different types. Other aspects emerge as well, such as attention to age, socio-economic status, and religion.

Some of the respondents included other possible targets such as LGBTQIA+ activities. We felt that all included new targets could be incorporated in the pre-existing ones. For instance, LGBTQIA+ activities have been merged with sexual orientation.

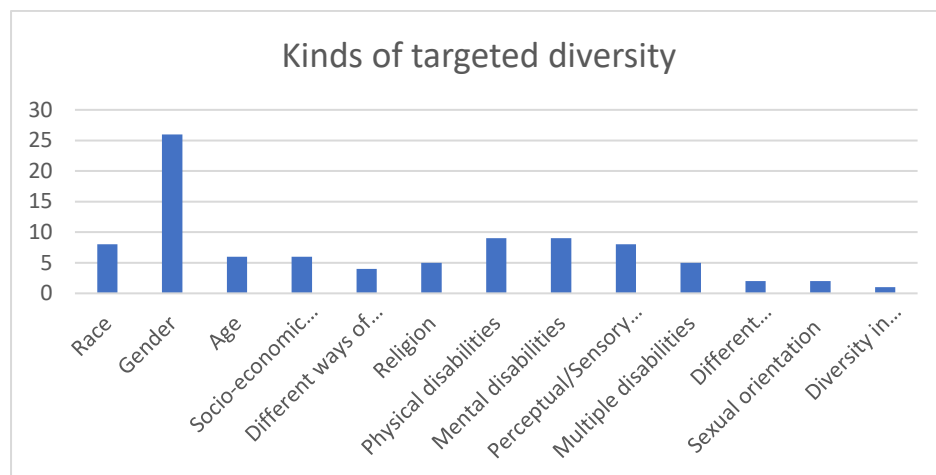


Figure 2. Kind of targeted diversity.

Classification of contributions

Most initiatives are focusing on increasing inclusion in education (see Figure 3). While 7 are focusing on inclusion in the working environment and 5 target both aspects. Three among the surveyed initiatives have resulted in the development of a tool. In two cases the tool is supporting some type of disability.

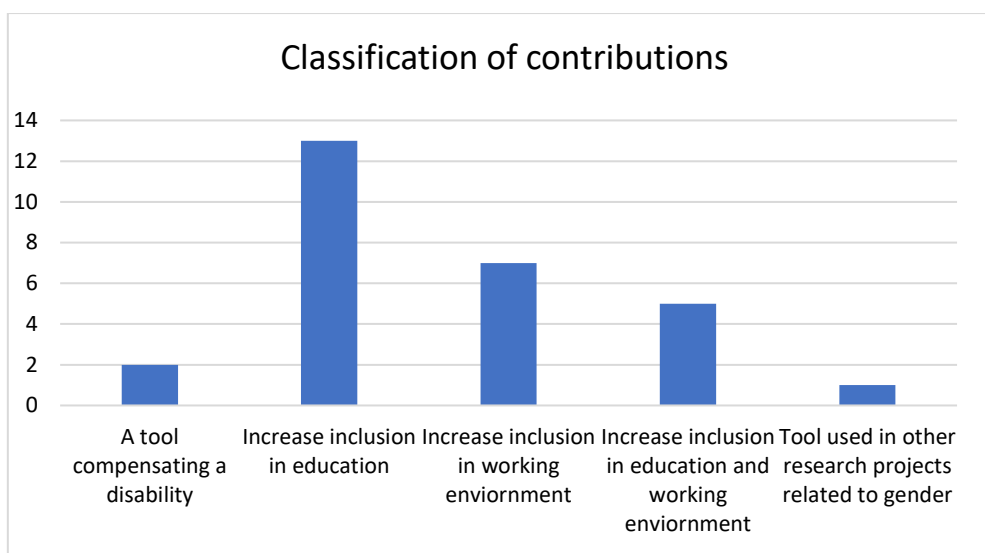


Figure 3. Classification of contributions.

Drilling down in the specific aspects addressed by the initiatives focusing on education (Figure 4), a significant attention is given to the admission phase followed by the teaching and learning process. The examination approach is considered only in two cases while the grading approach and the possibility to encourage the creation and the management of communities are not considered. These two particular areas could deserve further analysis in the future.

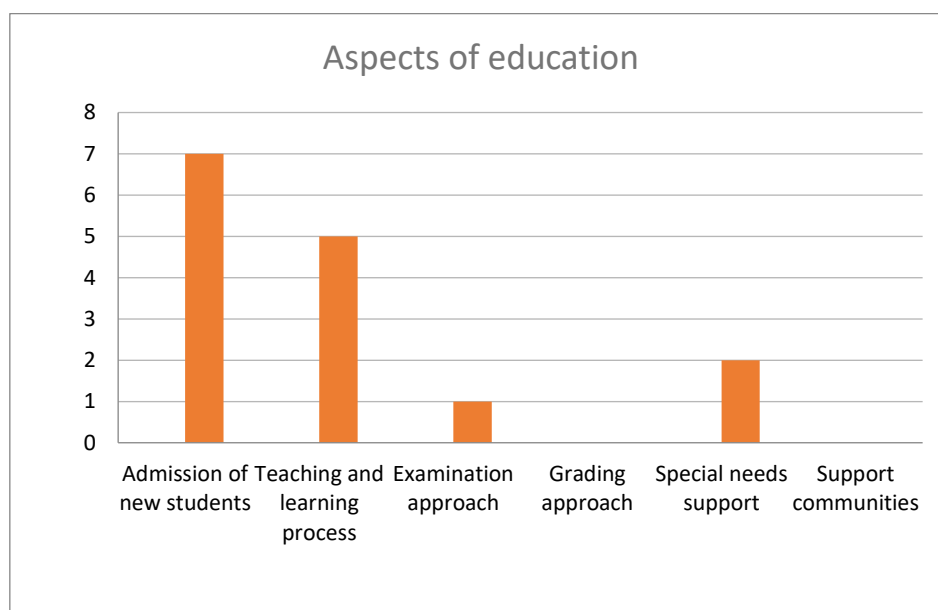


Figure 4. Education aspects considered.

The specific aspects considered when focusing on the working environment concern all areas listed in the survey, with the highest attention on supporting careers, recruitment and day to day working environment (see Figure 5). Two additional aspects were included by the respondents, support to overload management and “speech liberation” as a way to provide psychological support.

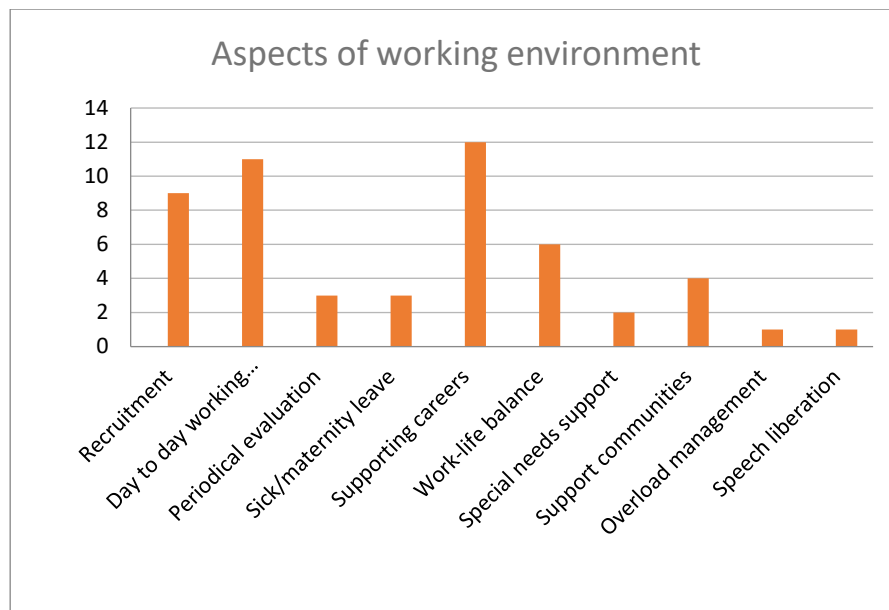


Figure 5. Addressed aspects concerning the working environment.

Conclusion

In this report we have analysed the results of the diversity and inclusion survey the working group launched at the end of 2022. The target group for the survey was the members of university departments in Europe.

The collected results are not statistically relevant considering the number of respondents (33 valid answers) and the number of universities in Europe, thus, the sample should be improved at least guaranteeing a minimal percentage of respondents per country depending on the number of university institutions in that country.

The preliminary considerations we can make are the following:

- Quite naturally given the target group, most of the answers are addressing aspects concerning education. The main areas of interest were the admission and the teaching and learning processes. We argue that greater attention should be posed especially to providing extra-curricular support to communities as they play an important role on the emotional health of students and educators. Another aspect that could deserve further analysis regards the grading approach and its impact on special categories.
- The initiatives devoted to support faculties in their working environment appear to target a larger variety of aspects when compared to those focusing on education. This seems to suggest a more mature understanding of the problems concerning inclusion of faculties in university life.

Besides the data we have presented in this report, the collected answers also include detailed description of the initiatives undertaken by respondents. This material will constitute the basis for the further development of this work. More specifically, we plan to:

- Prepare a repository of relevant initiatives and activities where those collected through the questionnaire will be included.
- Develop the study further starting from a rigorous analysis of the descriptions and keywords used by respondents. Possibly, we will re-open the questionnaire to acquire more information.

For enquiries and feedback about this report,
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