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Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: A Year in Review

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Introduction

It's fair to say that the events of the past 12 months have affected every one of us and it is equally as fair to say that every one of us has lived a different experience, whether it be professionally or personally.

As I sit here, with the sun beaming through the windows, following the latest business updates, I am buoyed to see Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) in its rightful position, firmly at the table as a primary objective for businesses. There is no doubt about it that the events of the past year have impacted the world of work but have they altered the path of our future inclusion strategies?

The aim of this paper is to revisit some of the recent lifechanging global and national events and, with the help of our contributors, understand how they have influenced inclusion in business.

With so many lessons learnt, 2020 gave us time to reflect on our own privileges, understand the challenges of others, and start thinking about how we can offer more support. The fundamental message coming out of many conversations that I have had is one of 'less talk, more action', which leads me to wonder whether 2021 will be the year that Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is redefined.

The *New York Times* listed 'Systemic Racism', 'Essential Workers' and 'Zoom' in their top 20 phrases that defined 2020. American Data Research Company, *Global Language Monitor*, picked up 'Truth', 'Progress', 'Sustainability', 'Black Lives Matter', and 'White Privilege' in their 50 most used words and phrases of 2020.

Based on this data, and the powerful language widely adopted by many, my question is, are the conversations becoming easier? And if not, what can we do to make them easier?

Claire

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First and foremost, we want our workforce to feel both physically and psychologically safe at work.

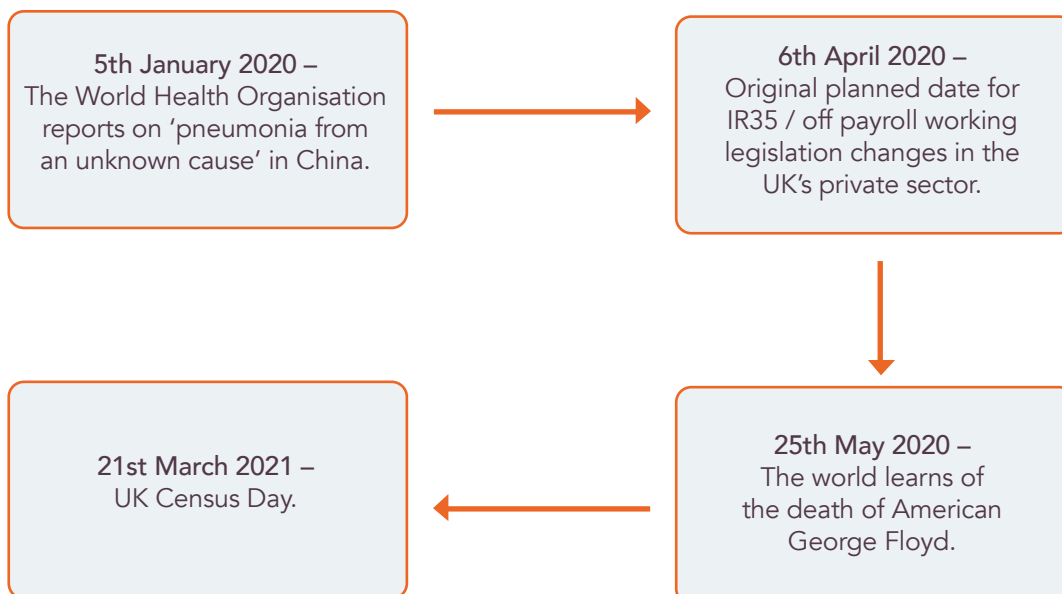
There are many reasons why adopting inclusive working practices makes good business sense:

- 1. Future recruitment:** Positive employee experiences, reviews, and referrals will prove invaluable when looking to attract future, diverse talent. Brand is everything and with greater flexibility on the table, competition is high.
- 2. Employee engagement:** Understanding the challenges and requirements of your workforce will aide you with your engagement efforts, help to reduce absences and attrition, and build a positive working environment for all involved.
- 3. Business continuity:** It has been proven that organisations with existing equity action plans have been able to respond faster and more positively to new challenges. In fact, research also shows that diverse teams can be much more productive since the focus on the task involved is far greater.

<https://hbr-org.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/hbr.org/amp/2016/09/diverse-teams-feel-less-comfortable-and-thats-why-they-perform-better>

2020 / 2021: A time we will never forget

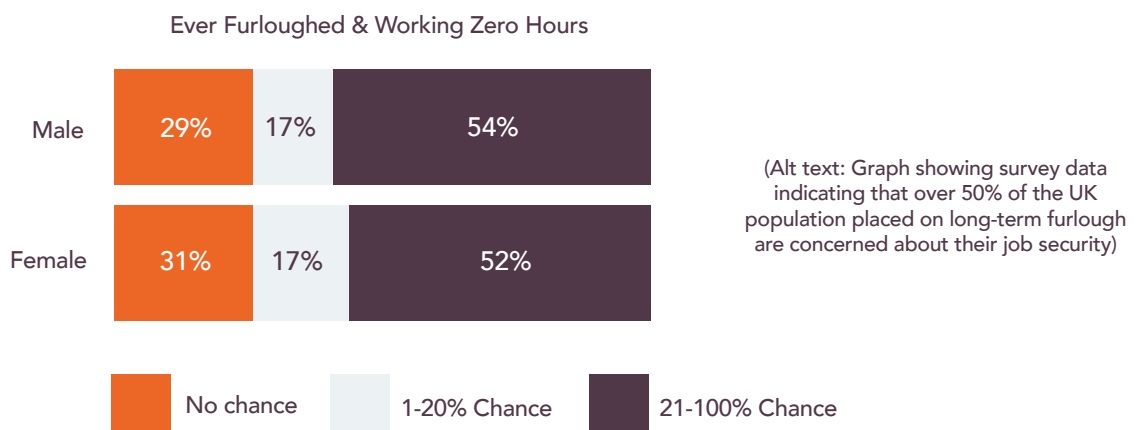
For the purposes of this paper, we have focused on four key events, which took place throughout 2020 and in the early stages of 2021. I must acknowledge that, of course, many other life changing events took place during this period, which should not and cannot be forgotten, many of which will, without a doubt, also play a contributory part in future inclusion strategies.



1. COVID-19

For many of us, we are now in our second year of homeworking having experienced three national lockdowns, and for some, homeschooling too. Some have been furloughed, some worked from home, others remained onsite due to the unique requirements of their role, and most importantly, many worked two, three, four times harder, as we all faced this unprecedented and lifechanging situation.

To support businesses and individuals through this tough time, the UK Government introduced the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), and in March 2021, [The Global Institute for Women's Leadership at King's College, London](#) published a report looking at the gendered experiences of the scheme. This report showed that, regardless of gender, those who have been 'ever-furloughed', meaning that they have been placed on the CJRS for longer periods, have a worryingly high concern around their job security.



Source: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/giwl/assets/does-furlough-work-for-women.pdf>

From this data alone, it is clear that good communication is vital. Employee engagement surveys, manager one-to-ones, and company updates are crucial. Now is not the time to make blanket decisions, we must listen to every individual in our workforce and take on board any workplace adjustments which may be required as we move into our 'new normal'.

In a previous whitepaper entitled 'COVID-19: this could be YOUR opportunity to kick-start or test your inclusion strategy', I wrote about post-lockdown personas and the importance of discussing your back to work strategy with every employee. It is crucial to pay attention to heightened feelings of anxiety or stress brought on, or exacerbated, by the pandemic. Many of your workforce quickly adapted to a new working style, which has now been in practice for 18 months, and for some, they may wish to hold on to all or some aspects of this new style. Flexibility in working patterns or styles could make the world of difference to your existing workforce and new talent joining your business, in addition to reasonable adjustments required by law. Whether it be starting and finishing later to avoid rush hour, a weekly manager one-to-one, or 5 work from home days per month, for example, it may be possible to take some of the positives of the pandemic into our new normal.

Action point

Instead of inviting applicants to share IF they need any workplace adjustments, we should take the approach that everyone does and simply ask 'what are' your workplace adjustments? Offer suggestions if needed, be it a shift in hours, location, tools and technology, preferred working or management style, etc.

To discuss how Outsource may be able to help you review your talent attraction campaigns, literature, and processes, contact diversity@outsource-uk.co.uk

Amy Lobé, Product Designer at Seccl, shared what they are doing to 'stay human' during homeworking:

STAYING HUMAN DURING LOCKDOWN

Checking in on each other comes naturally to us here at Seccl. And while lockdown can make that a bit more difficult, we've tried to reinforce the behaviour by setting aside time in the diaries for wellbeing and 'cross functional communications' (aka chats). Little things like making sure that meetings don't clash with dedicated learning time, or reaching out to talk to someone who has shared they're having a hard time go a long way in creating an environment that's supportive and, well, human.

What's more, we're really keen to understand what types of post-lockdown personas are in our team. We've continued to gather opinions and information about emotional wellbeing through regular anonymous questionnaires, using a system called **Officevibe**. It's super user-friendly, so we don't mind taking a few minutes to fill each one out.

Is the hybrid workplace here to stay?

According to the BBC, 43 out of the UK's 50 largest employers said they would embrace a combination of home and office working, with staff encouraged to work from home at least two days per week.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-57727567>

In Spring 2021, Nationwide Building Society unveiled their 'new normal', allowing 13,000 staff to work 'anywhere'. Research by the Society, and many of their peers, suggests that the majority of the UK workforce would welcome a 'hybrid' approach to returning to work, offering a mixture of home and office working.

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/nationwide-building-society-why-we-decided-staff-could-work-from-home/>

The consensus seems to be that those who have been able to work from home have missed the social interaction that the workplace offers, but do not miss the commute, which for many can be in excess of three hours per day.

We do recognise that there have been many workers who, due to the sensitivity, logistics, or nature of their role, have not spent the last 12 months or more in their home office.

In a recent poll created by Outsource UK, 86% of respondents see the main purpose of the office as a place for collaboration, suggesting that there is and always will be a need for real estate, but perhaps not a permanent full-time arrangement. Could coworking spaces be the future?

What's the purpose of your office?



(Alt text: bar chart showing 86% say purpose of their office is to facilitate collaboration, 7% social interaction, 5% to see people working and 1% other.)

Tracey Newton, Director of Colleague Experience, shared with Outsource UK how Yorkshire Building Society (YBS) responded to the pandemic:

YORKSHIRE BUILDING SOCIETY

Throughout the pandemic we've had two business priorities: to continue to be there for our members when they need us, and to protect our colleagues' health and wellbeing.

At YBS we aim to support all aspects of a colleague's wellbeing; mental, physical, financial and social health. During lockdown, we put a series of measures in place to support our colleagues and ensure they continued to feel valued for the work they do. In order to make it easy for colleagues and leaders to access the tools and resources they need, we created an online Covid-19 support hub, including, but not limited to:

Support on all aspects of health and wellbeing:

- The Bupa Digital GP service with 24/7 access to a doctor and online resources, including mental health support;
- Expert webinars with tools and top tips from Bupa, Nuffield Health, Unmind and Salary Finance.

Support with financial wellbeing:

- A commitment not to furlough colleagues, or reduce pay for colleagues in the Branch Network and Telephony Contact Centres where our core operating hours have been reduced;
- Changes to our Emergency Dependants and Carers Leave policies, giving people unlimited paid days to care for family members during the pandemic when they need it most;
- A commitment that colleagues continue to be paid for any absence caused by Coronavirus, regardless of whether they have (for whatever reason) already exhausted their company sick pay over the last 12 months,
- Proceeding with our annual 2020 and 2021 pay reviews and continuing to pay all colleagues at or above the Real Living Wage.

During lockdown, we were aware that a large percentage of our colleagues were not able to work from home, and achieving equity was of paramount importance. We therefore took the decision to cover additional costs colleagues may have incurred from having to travel to different places of work and offered 'free' refreshments at regular office sites.

Support with mental health:

- A wellbeing check-in guide for leaders to use in a 121 or team meetings, and mini-guides providing tips for colleagues who are remote working;
- A personal resilience huddle pack designed to help individuals and teams to take responsibility for building their own resilience;
- Access to the Unmind app with tools to help maintain good levels of mental health;
- An Employee Assistance Programme, accessible to all 24/7.

Support with physical health:

- Moving our critical operations from three sites to six sites to enable more 'social distancing' in the early days of the pandemic;
- Exercise videos created by colleagues, as well as access to workouts on the Bupa wellbeing hub and Unmind app;
- A designated walking route at office sites designed to help people boost their physical health and walking meetings encouraged, with regular screen breaks for those working at home.

Support with social wellbeing:

- Colleague podcasts and videos, including role modelling home-schooling from our leadership team;
- YBS Cuppa and Catch Up events;
- 'Clap for our YBS key workers' - colleagues from across the organisation stopped to clap and cheer, and some filmed themselves doing this, including our Chief Officers, and in branches, even our customers got involved! It was a very special moment and made a real difference to our front-line colleagues.

Dean Corbett, Chief People Officer at Avado shared how they have approached hybrid working:

AVADO

As Avado is building out its hybrid working environment, it is doing so with clear intent. Specifically, we are meaningfully avoiding the 'recreation of the office, online' approach adopted by many organisations over the last 15 months. We have applied design thinking methodology to purposefully design our hybrid working environment - this involved a great deal of consultation and co-creation with all our people and the types of people we wanted to be attractive to.

In doing this, we have:

- Moved offices, and changed both the design and purpose of our new physical workspaces to be places where people can connect with others socially, collaborate in-person on specific work, and drive towards specific outcomes.
- Overhauled our performance management approach, focused only on outcome and collaborative work styles in line with our values - note this is not the same as simply referring to our values in our performance reviews. This is also about making completely visible - transparently - the things people are working on, which others may want to contribute to.
- Re-written our philosophy for growth and development, which has led to offering learning products and services such as on-demand coaching to underpin an 'employee led and empowered' approach to their growth and development.
- Adjusted or in some cases removed many a policy or working practice for things like hours of work (flexibility) and time off.
- Provided clear guidance on what work is best done where, or where to be to meet employees' own known needs to manage both their work and their lives. Alongside this guidance, we have also focused on ways to manage personal energy, energy of others, psychological wellbeing and physical wellbeing, wherever and whenever our people work.
- Significantly increased the ways and key messages in our business communications, mostly focused on results and the importance of being intentional in how people work together or independently.

You don't 'go hybrid' overnight - to make a real success of it, you have to design it in a way that is iterative and adaptable according to the needs of your people and your business.

Action point

Why can't the role be flexible?

Is it now time to flip the conversation? Instead of flexible working being a workplace adjustment, considered on a case-by-case basis, consider the value in addressing this requirement at the creation stage, even assuming that ALL roles can be completed flexibly.

In 2019, Zurich became the first company in the UK to advertise all vacancies with the option of part-time, full-time, job share or flexible working. Thanks to these six words, and coupled, with the use of gender-neutral language, Zurich has seen a rise of 16% in women applying for roles and a 20% increase in female applications for management roles. Additionally, Zurich has seen the number of male and female applicants for roles more than double, indicating that flexible working and part-time opportunities are equally as desirable to men as women. Now that we have our technology in order and as we look at our 'new normal', perhaps it's time to include these six words on all vacancies?

Source: <https://www.zurich.co.uk/en/about-us/media-centre/company-news/2020/zurich-sees-leap-in-women-applying-for-senior-roles-after-offering-all-jobs-as-flexible>

To discuss how Outsource can support you with reviewing your job descriptions, contact diversity@outsource-uk.co.uk



Wellbeing, wellbeing, wellbeing

Earlier this year, the [Harvard Business Review](#) published its nine predictions for the future of work with the top prediction being a shift from the 'employee experience' to the 'life experience of employees'. Over the last 12 months, business leaders have had greater insight into the personal lives of their workforce, and the benefits of supporting staff personally and professionally, including mental and financial health, have been recognised.

Source: <https://hbr.org/2021/01/9-trends-that-will-shape-work-in-2021-and-beyond>

"Work is what we do, not who we are"

After many months of juggling our personal and professional lives in an unprecedented manner, now is the time to focus on self-care.

In another poll conducted by Outsource UK on LinkedIn, an overwhelming 91% of respondents said that they felt employers could do more to talk about mental health concerns.

'Zoom-free' afternoons, additional paid leave, and stress-busting workshops are being widely adopted by many businesses with online dating app Bumble recently announcing that they will be closing for a week to give all 700 staff some paid time off to de-stress.

What if there were a way to track the correlation between mental health and productivity to better understand when 'quiet hours' or early finishes could be adopted? The good news is, there is! Workplace mental health platform 'Unmind' takes the six in six approach to supporting wellbeing, with the mindset that everyone has mental health. Unmind users are encouraged to measure their daily wellbeing using the platform, aiding performance and prevention. Other similar apps are available.

We're certain that wellbeing support is on the agenda of all businesses as we look to move out of COVID restrictions and begin to return to the workplace. For useful resources, [The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development \(CIPD\)](#) and [The British Psychological Society](#) both offer guides for employers. [Mindful Employer](#) is also a valuable source of information and support.

Action point

When was the last time you 'checked in' with your workforce? When was the last time you looked at your absences? Who isn't taking all of their leave?

Start normalising the conversation and make it 'OK to not be OK'.

To discuss how Outsource may be able to help support your diverse workforce wellbeing needs, contact diversity@outsource-uk.co.uk

The pause on gender pay gap reporting

In February 2021, **The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)** confirmed a further extension to the pause on gender pay gap reporting, allowing organisations until October 2021 to prepare their 2020 data. Early signs were indicating that mandatory gender pay gap reporting was having a positive impact on workplace equality and organisations such as **The Fawcett Society** and the **Trades Union Congress (TUC)** have publicly called for enforcement action to be reinstated to ensure we don't see a decline in progress.

Fortunately, as with many others, the Big Four accounting firm, **PwC**, continued to publish not only their gender pay gap but also their ethnicity data, leading them to announce their five-point action plan ensuring an inclusive culture, with senior level accountability, fair work allocation, a flexible talent network, a ban on all male shortlists, and career sponsorship for high potential female and ethnic minority directors.

Action point

Are you tracking and publishing your data?

Many organisations, including the **Tech Talent Charter**, have adopted the mantra of 'what gets measured gets done' and the introduction of the gender pay gap reporting has certainly proven this to be true. Ultimately, transparency drives accountability and the data itself is a great catalyst to a wider conversation around goal setting on closing the gap.

To discuss how Outsource can help with your data gathering and related strategies, contact diversity@outsource-uk.co.uk



Specialist talent solutions

Gender pay gap reporting has served as a catalyst for the introduction of a variety of talent programmes, including 'Career Comeback' and 'Returner' programmes, all of which are published annually by return to work specialists, Women Returners.

Source: <https://womenreturners.com/returners/returner-opportunities/>

However, a more recent development has been the creation of retraining or upskilling programmes for those who have been out of work for an extended timeframe, irrespective of the reason for absence. This could be for those who have been made redundant during the pandemic, as an example.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-for-jobs-skills-and-employment-programmes-information-for-employers#free-level-3-qualifications-for-eligible-adults>

Case study

Outsource UK's Women in Cyber and Veteran Returner programmes are just two examples of our suite of bespoke upskilling recruitment solutions.

Our client had been struggling to hire for some time. They were at the start of a huge transformation project and needed to upskill their entire workforce by 50%. The client had an objective to try to increase the number of people that they were hiring into Cyber roles.

We proposed the programme, pre-screened a total of 47 candidates from suitable backgrounds and invited them to an interview day with a view to putting them on a 12 week CSTM (Cyber Scheme Team Member) training course. Less than one week post-interview day, they held 10 final interviews with a view to offering permanent full time roles immediately to four putting the remaining seven through the 12 week CSTM course – they were ready to work with their clients within 3 months from the date they started the course.

"Having recently engaged in the Women in Cyber programme I have been greatly impressed by the broad range of candidates involved and it has been amazing to meet a group of people so passionate about the challenge digital adoption brings and the need for cyber security across industry and Government. As Operations lead for a cyber-business I struggle to find appropriate resource and having access to candidates through alternatives means such as this scheme has been a great help in closing this gap."

Head of Security Operations, Global Cyber Security Defence services business

To discuss Outsource's upskilling programmes, contact diversity@outsource-uk.co.uk

2. OFF-PAYROLL WORKING LEGISLATION (IR35)

In January 2020, as COVID-19 had unknowingly hit UK shores, off-payroll working legislation (commonly referred to as IR35) was the hottest topic for many UK organisations and Outsource UK was busily discussing sourcing options with clients.

Several organisations applied a recruitment freeze whilst they navigated the world of IR35 and what it would mean for their contingent population. Then, COVID-19 hit and a one-year delay was announced to the planned legislation reform, allowing companies to focus their time and resource on business continuity and crisis planning. HMRC made their position clear that private sector organisations should be ready to act from April 2021.

With much of the preparation already completed, some chose to push on with their planned changes, whilst others took the opportunity to reassess what contingent labour meant to their organisation.

How did organisations approach the planning?

NO PERSONAL SERVICES COMPANIES (PSCs)



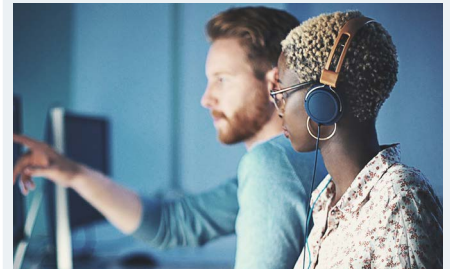
- Many businesses made a commercial decision no longer to use contractors operating via their own limited company, offering the option to operate on a temporary PAYE basis, or via an umbrella provider only. This meant an increase in hiring demands and increased competition.

CONTRACT TO PERMANENT SKILLSET CONVERSIONS



- Some organisations took the opportunity to assess the business need for a particular skillset on a longer term, more permanent, basis, offering the current worker the opportunity of a permanent role, or reaching out to the permanent market. This, coupled with new working practices offered organisations an opportunity to source from a potentially more diverse talent pool.

ALTERNATIVE TALENTS SOLUTIONS



- Some businesses considered innovative ways to engage flexible resource, such as Statement of Work (SoW) or Outsource UK's Employed Consultancy model, negating IR35 risk, as the worker is permanently employed by us.

This method also ensures that the individual is appropriately supported in their role, with access to our suite of employee benefits, regular one-to-one's and appraisals, and inclusion in all of Outsource UK's employee engagement activities.



Employed Consultants testimonials: alternative talent solution

“Just want to say a massive thank you for all your hard work, you have been so efficient! From receiving the offer acceptance form to the candidate being compliant had a 3 day turn around, AMAZING! You have been an absolute pleasure to work with and will look forward to working with you in the future.”

Hiring Manager, technology company

“Outsource has assisted us with a number of contractor hires and always made the effort to ensure that the requirement was well understood and that the potential candidates were a good fit. There was always follow up to ensure that we were happy with our final choices and that things were working well.”

Talent Director, global bank

Have you considered the impact that IR35 has had on your diversity?

Given the shorter term and often more frequent nature of contingent hiring, the opportunities to learn from a diverse pool of workers are further augmented, but how can we attract diversity within our contingent workforce?

To consider this, we need to differentiate between flexible roles that are ‘inside’ of IR35, and those that are ‘outside’ - when you are engaging a business, rather than an individual.

For those engaged on an ‘inside’ of IR35 basis, the word ‘flexibility’ is key.

It’s fair to say that one of the more favourable outcomes of the pandemic was the acceleration of flexible working practices for all. With a greater focus on output, rather than presenteeism, there is no better time to shout about your flexibility from the rooftops, and to consider how you can apply these new practices to your contingent workforce.

For those engaged in an ‘outside’ of IR35 arrangement, it is important to highlight that rather than focussing on the diversity of individuals, we are looking at a business to business arrangement. It is crucial therefore to consider substitution clauses and work schedules defined by the business you are engaging, rather than your own internal policies, when discussing diversity.

To discuss Outsource’s inclusive recruitment audits and other diverse candidate attraction techniques, contact diversity@outsource-uk.co.uk

Action point

The impact of IR35 reform on the gender pay gap

If your business has had to make significant changes to the contingent population as a result of IR35 reform, have you considered the impact on your diversity data and your gender pay gap? Are you collecting data for your contingent population? Have you considered the impact that IR35 has had on your inclusion & diversity strategies and metrics?

To discuss how Outsource can support you with diversity data collection, contact diversity@outsource-uk.co.uk

Look out for past and upcoming E, D & I thought leadership from our Diversity Matters events on our website. <https://www.outsource-uk.co.uk/>

3. BLACK LIVES MATTER

On the 25th May 2020, the world learnt of the news of the murder of American Hip-Hop Artist George Floyd, sparking increased support for the social movement, **Black Lives Matter**, and firmly placing the phrase '**Systemic Racism**' in our vocabulary.

The events which followed the death of George Floyd, showed us that consumers will no longer accept superficial responses to racial injustice and are watching how organisations respond. Public statements and social media solidarity are a starting point, however the consensus is that now is the time to spend, not save. The public is no longer interested in what you intend to do, they want to know what you **HAVE** done and **ARE** doing right now. In the US, **UOMA Founder and CEO, Sharon Chuter**, launched the **#PullUpOrShutUp** campaign urging brands to display their diversity data and initiate change. In the hospitality sector, tech platform **Airbnb** launched **Project Lighthouse**, in partnership with civil rights not for profit '**Colour of Change**' to measure and combat discrimination when booking or hosting. In education, the **Welsh Government** confirmed that all Welsh schoolchildren will be taught about racism and Black history as part of the national curriculum from 2022.

With only one Black CEO in the FTSE 100 and 37% having zero non-white members, it's clear work needs to be done from the top down. It's important to be aware of tokenism; the practice of hiring from an oppressed community simply to boost quotas. Those who have experienced discrimination in the past will approach with caution, gravitating towards organisations where they already have a trusted network, or following recommendations.

It is important to set goals and targets, however it is also fundamental not to lose sight of the true objective, which is to build a genuinely inclusive organisation; giving everyone a voice, a sense of belonging, and a purpose.

At Outsource UK, we believe that there is no 'one size fits all approach' to talent attraction and we work with our customers to create a bespoke hiring campaign, which takes into consideration the diversity of our own society. We have and continue to learn from those with lived experiences and put those learnings into practice, removing barriers for potential applicants, ensuring equity, and enabling the right candidate to be hired.

Action point

Involve your existing workforce

A good starting point is to involve your existing workforce. Ask them to review their hiring experience. What's missing or potentially discriminatory, which you may not have noticed? Are any of your workforce affiliated with any charities? Are there any schools / colleges in your area which would welcome an offer of mentoring or PAID internships?

Don't forget that, before spending time and resource reaching out to oppressed communities, it is crucial to bring your hiring community up-to-speed with your objectives. Societal bias is still prevalent and at the very least everyone involved in the hiring process, third parties included, should be aware of the pitfalls.

To find out how we can support development of your Employee Resource Groups, Employer Brand and Employer Value proposition, contact diversity@outsource-uk.co.uk

Ethnicity data reporting

As mentioned, it's also time to start diving into your data. Ethnicity pay reporting may not have become mandatory yet, but that doesn't mean you can't start reporting internally. The narrative which accompanies the gender pay gap data has proven to be a great initiator of change, so why not do the same for race? This will also give you a good idea of where you need to focus your talent attraction efforts.

Click here to listen to our recent conversation with Nadia Hutchinson, Global Payroll and HR Service Delivery leader currently with Kantar, on the importance of collecting ethnicity data.

Action point

When collecting ethnicity or any other form of diversity data, it is important to do it in a GDPR-compliant manner, ensuring full transparency on what is being collected and what it will be used for. It is also crucial that the data is put to good use, in the way it is intended, and all individuals can see the personal benefit in doing so.

To discuss how Outsource can support you with collecting diversity data compliantly, contact diversity@outsource-uk.co.uk

Social mobility and career coaching

Many organisations are working with social enterprises supporting young people in the UK, such as the [Youth Group](#), [The Princes Trust](#), [Business in the Community](#) and [CareerReady.org.uk](#), in addition to career comeback programmes designed for those looking to return to work. [The Social Mobility Employers Index](#) can also be a great source of information and support.

[#10000BlackInterns](#) is a programme designed to help transform the prospects of young Black people in the UK. It will offer paid work experience, provide training and development, and create a sustainable cycle of mentorship and sponsorship for the Black community. The initiative follows the previously successful [#100BlackInterns](#) programme within the investment management industry and is set to commence in the summer of 2022 for 5 years.

At the time of writing, [Shelley Ferris-Smith, EMEA & ZIP Diversity and Inclusion Specialist at Zurich Insurance](#), confirmed that Zurich have committed to offering 8 internship opportunities to ethnic minority talent in the summer of 2022, working with [#10000BlackInterns](#) on their programme.

Source: <https://www.10000blackinterns.com/>

Action point

Could paid internships create a new talent funnel for your business? Many education leavers are looking for ways to 'try before they buy', with a view to having several careers, many skills and 'side hustles' in their plan. If they are working for you, and are classed as a worker and not a volunteer or work shadower, then remember they should be remunerated with at least National Minimum Wage.

To discuss how Outsource can support you with alternative talent solutions, contact diversity@outsource-uk.co.uk

4. CENSUS 2021

The data collected in the Census is used for the benefit of society when predicting trends, policy writing, town planning, and allocating funds to public services. For the first time in history, the Census 2021 offered LGBTQi+ communities the opportunity to record voluntarily their sexual orientation and trans status, sparking the hashtag [#ProudToBeCounted](#), and urging LGBTQi+ communities to seize the opportunity to influence future public services.

Do as the Census did

Nadia Hutchinson, Global Payroll and HR Service Delivery leader currently with Kantar, tells us: if we can collect this data at UK Government level, we should be able to collect it at an organisational level. It's crucial to ensure that we are clear and transparent on why we are collecting the data and what it is going to be used for.

Set the intention

- What do you hope to learn?
- Be clear that you are prepared to change.
- What will do you do with the information?
- Tell your workforce you are ready to listen and learn. And be ready!
- Who will be involved in the conversations?
- Who will facilitate the conversations?
- What follow-up will there be?
- What further action will be taken?

[Click here to listen to our recent conversation with Nadia Hutchinson, Global Payroll and HR Service Delivery leader currently with Kantar, on the importance of collecting ethnicity data.](#)

Tracey Newton, Director of Colleague Experience, shared with Outsource UK how Yorkshire Building Society (YBS) are going about building inclusion with trust.

YORKSHIRE BUILDING SOCIETY

At YBS, we are sharing more colleague stories, to support inclusion empathy and understanding, using the power of relatability. We've also been honest about where we are and where we want to be, with the acknowledgment that not everything is perfect, which has helped colleagues build trust and belief in our work and aims. We have also leaned into more inclusion related news in society as a whole, which has led to quite difficult conversations and debates, but have resulted in the highest engagement levels seen with the blog posts published by our CEO.

Momentum Measures

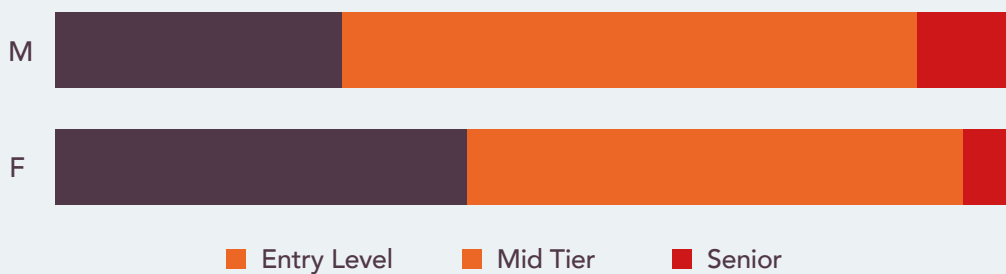
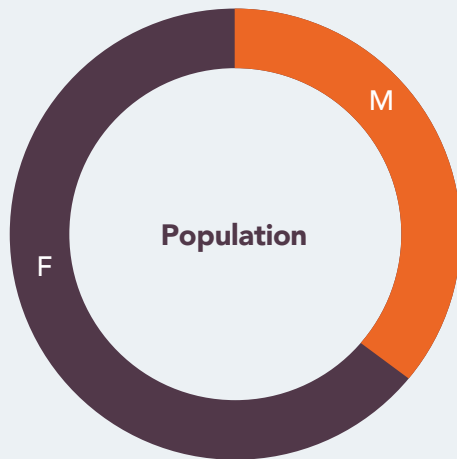
In January 2021, our Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) Committee agreed a series of measures, with the original target numbers influenced by the Census. We have recently revisited from a 'six months on' viewpoint, with a plan to explore alongside the new Census results, once they're published.

The measures covered the following target areas:

- The percentage of females at level E and above
- The percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues at YBS
- The percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues at Level E and above
- The number of Black, Asian and minority ethnic colleagues seen as potential successors for director level roles
- A reduction in the % of unknown data (including sexuality and disability)
- The number of males in customer facing roles
- The number of males in branch (over 3 grades)
- The percentage of females in technical roles.

All YBS directors also receive quarterly data breakdowns, with commentary (example overleaf), currently covering gender and ethnicity.

YBS OVERVIEW (GENDER)



Amy Lobé, Product Designer at Seccl, shared how they have used the latest Census as a springboard:

SECCL

The latest census was a welcome reminder of just how useful it is to know the differences that exist in a group of people. At Seccl, we know that diversity can play a powerful role in helping teams to collaborate and produce better products. But we didn't have a clear view on what the diversity of our own team looked like. With that in mind, we recently completed our first anonymous survey on in-house diversity. We're currently analysing the results, so keep an eye out for our blog post about it.

Now that more people are seeing the benefits of remote jobs and flexible working, we really want to push ourselves to tempt in a wide variety of personalities – and plan on periodically conducting similar surveys to help us measure the impact of our recruitment. If we can remove bias, we can hopefully do a better job of reaching anyone with the expertise and knowledge we need for the role.

In summary

Having had several conversations with employers and employees, it seems clear that there is no better time to redefine what inclusion means to your business. Whether it be a shift in working patterns, a redesign of your office space to allow more scope to fulfil its purpose, or perhaps a specific recruitment campaign, there is plenty to be focusing on and we are here to help you.

HERE'S A USEFUL CHECKLIST TO SUPPORT YOU:

- Review your talent attraction materials, recruitment processes and policies – are they genuinely inclusive?
- Review your HR data and normalise the conversation around mental health
- Collect diversity data on your applicant base, set the intention, and use it for positive change
- Consider an alternative talent solution
- Collect diversity data on your contingent population
- Involve your existing workforce in your planning and build focus groups
- Consider ethnicity pay reporting
- Offer paid internships
- Reach out to specialist charities for support

How can Outsource UK help?

In 2017, during the introduction of Gender Pay Gap reporting and increased discussion around gender parity, Outsource UK appointed a dedicated Inclusion and Diversity Client Partner. Very quickly, we moved the dialogue from solely that of gender parity to equity for all people, including support for BAME communities, LGBTQi+ applicants and colleagues, and those with physical and / or hidden disabilities, as just a few examples. Our consultancy team now works with our Clients to help build a bespoke strategy, removing barriers to inclusion when attracting talent, and ensuring that we, and they, have access to the widest and most diverse talent pool possible.

Our team's bespoke approach supports the specific requirements of your business, depending on your priorities and objectives. Whether you are looking for consultancy advice and guidance, an inclusive recruitment audit, or a full Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) model, we can build a handcrafted solution, which fulfils your specific requirements.

Our solutions include:

- Inclusive Recruitment Audits
- Thought leadership
- Talent pooling
- Workshop facilitation
- Communication plans
- Employee Value Propositions
- Supplier management
- Fully managed recruitment programmes

Again, to underline: first and foremost, we want our workforce to feel both physically and psychologically safe at work. However, there are many reasons why adopting inclusive practices makes good business sense.

1. **Future recruitment:** Positive employee experiences, reviews, and referrals will prove invaluable when looking to attract future, diverse talent. Brand is everything and with greater flexibility on the table, competition is high.
2. **Employee engagement:** Understanding the challenges and requirements of your workforce will aide you with your engagement efforts, help to reduce absences and attrition, and build a positive working environment for all involved.
3. **Business continuity:** It has been proven that organisations with existing equality action plans have been able to respond faster and more positively to new challenges. In fact, research also shows that diverse teams can be much more productive since the focus on the task involved is far greater.

If you have any questions, would like to join the conversation, or you are currently looking at your Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy and would like a discussion, we would love to hear from you.

Get in touch to find out more about the specialist recruitment services we offer:

T: 01793 430 021

E: diversity@outsource-uk.co.uk

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Dean Corbett at Avado, Nadia Hutchinson at Kantar, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Shelley Ferris-Smith at Zurich Insurance, Tracey Newton at Yorkshire Building Society and Amy Lobé at Seccl.

Useful links:

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/supporting-mental-health-workplace-return#gref>

<https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Policy/Policy%20-%20Files/Covid-related%20anxiety%20and%20stress%20in%20the%20workplace.pdf>

<https://www.mindfulemployer.dpt.nhs.uk/>

<http://unmind.com>

<https://womenreturners.com/>

<https://www.employersforcarers.org/carer-confident>

<https://blacklivesmatter.com/>

<https://www.10000blackinterns.com/about>

<https://www.theyouthgroup.com/>

<https://careerready.org.uk/>

<https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/>

<https://www.socialmobility.org.uk/get-involved/professionals/ways-to-get-involved/>

Consultancy Services Business Partner

Claire Farrow



Claire started her career with Outsource in 2009 as a delivery recruiter for a number of Outsource's key financial services accounts. From there, she moved over to account, and later, programme manager. Claire now spends her time advising Clients on diverse hiring and in 2017, set up the Outsource UK Inspiring Inclusion team, to highlight the worrying lack of diversity and inclusion in the tech and engineering sectors.

"I believe that to adopt truly inclusive recruitment practices, it is necessary to support everyone in their career search, since achieving total Inclusion, should mean considering EVERYONE. By this, I mean enabling oppressed communities to have the same opportunities and recognising when to adapt the hiring process to ensure equity."



About Outsource UK

We're proud to be one of the country's largest independent recruitment companies, supplying highly-skilled technology, change and engineering talent to clients within a range of specialist sectors. Our success is built on a uniquely consultative approach, and we are

committed to working in partnership with our clients, our candidates and each other. We listen. We understand. We offer forward-thinking, efficient strategies and deliver tailor-made permanent, contract and interim recruitment solutions. *Above all, we enable the companies and organisations we work with to thrive.*

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