



Press release

Paris, 21 June 2022

## Cegos international survey

### "Diversity and inclusion in organisations: the skills-related challenges of a cultural transformation"

## **63% of employees say they have experienced discrimination in their working life**

The Cegos Group, an international leader in Learning & Development, today released the results of its international survey entitled *"Diversity and inclusion in organisations: the skills-related challenges of a cultural transformation"*.

This survey polled 4,007 employees (of which 1,003 in France) and 420 HR Directors and Managers / (HRDs/HRMs) all working in private- and public-sector organisations employing fifty employees or more, in seven countries in Europe (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Great Britain, Portugal ) and Latin America (Brazil).

### **ESSENTIAL POINTS**

#### **I – DISCRIMINATION STILL VERY MUCH PRESENT IN THE PROFESSIONAL ARENA**

- 82% of employees claim to have witnessed at least one form of discrimination
- 63% of employees claim to have experienced at least one form of discrimination.
- These acts of discrimination are perpetrated first by colleagues and then by direct managers (line managers),
- The most willing stakeholders in the fight against discrimination: colleagues and direct managers according to employees vs. members of the HR team according to HRDs/HRMs.
- The movements to free speech against sexism and racism have had a positive impact... but there is still plenty of room for improvement
- Diversity-related conflicts within organisations are generally resolved by the HR department.

#### **II – FROM ONE WORLD TO ANOTHER: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICIES NEED TO BE SHARED EVEN MORE WIDELY**

- 71% of employees have a clear understanding of what diversity is; 74% have a clear understanding of what inclusion is.
- 49% of employees see themselves as "promoters" of diversity in their organisation and 11% as "active advocates".
- 75% of employees and 68% of international HRDs/HRMs believe the corporate structure of their organisation reflects the diversity of society.
- 65% of employees believe that the diversity policy contributes to the organisation's overall performance.
- 67% of employees are in favour of the quota policy, as are 65% of HRDs/HRMs.

#### **III – THE MINDSET IS IN PLACE: IT IS UP TO ORGANISATIONS TO IMPLEMENT AND EVALUATE ACTIONS**

- 87% of employees say they feel "fully included" in their organisation.
- A variety of awareness-raising actions are carried out to "shake things up" in organisations.
- To further inclusion, employees and HRDs/HRMs are primarily interested in levers related to work organisation, recruitment and training.
- 75% of HRDs/HRMs say they apply non-discrimination in recruitment, from sourcing to integration;
- If they were to change jobs in the future, 84% of international employees say that taking inclusion issues into account would be an "important" criterion in their choice of a new employer.
- 34% of managers feel that the actions their organisation has taken (information, training, HR support, etc.) help them "quite a bit" in dealing with sensitive diversity and inclusion issues.
- 39% of employees and 43% of HRDs/HRMs believe that their direct manager acts as a solid ally in dealing with these issues.

# I – DISCRIMINATION STILL VERY MUCH PRESENT IN THE PROFESSIONAL ARENA

## I - The current state of discrimination in organisations

The forms of discrimination most frequently encountered by HRDs/HRMs are: age (25%), health (19%), gender (18%), physical appearance (16%). Age discrimination seems particularly prevalent in Italy (40%), as does gender discrimination (27%).

82% of international employees say they have already witnessed at least one form of discrimination. This is an alarming figure, which tends to show that discrimination persists strongly despite existing anti-discrimination laws. Employees mention physical appearance first (46%), followed by age (42%), racism (41%) and gender (38%). Scores are even higher among 18-24 year olds on each of these issues, while fewer over-50s report experiencing discrimination.

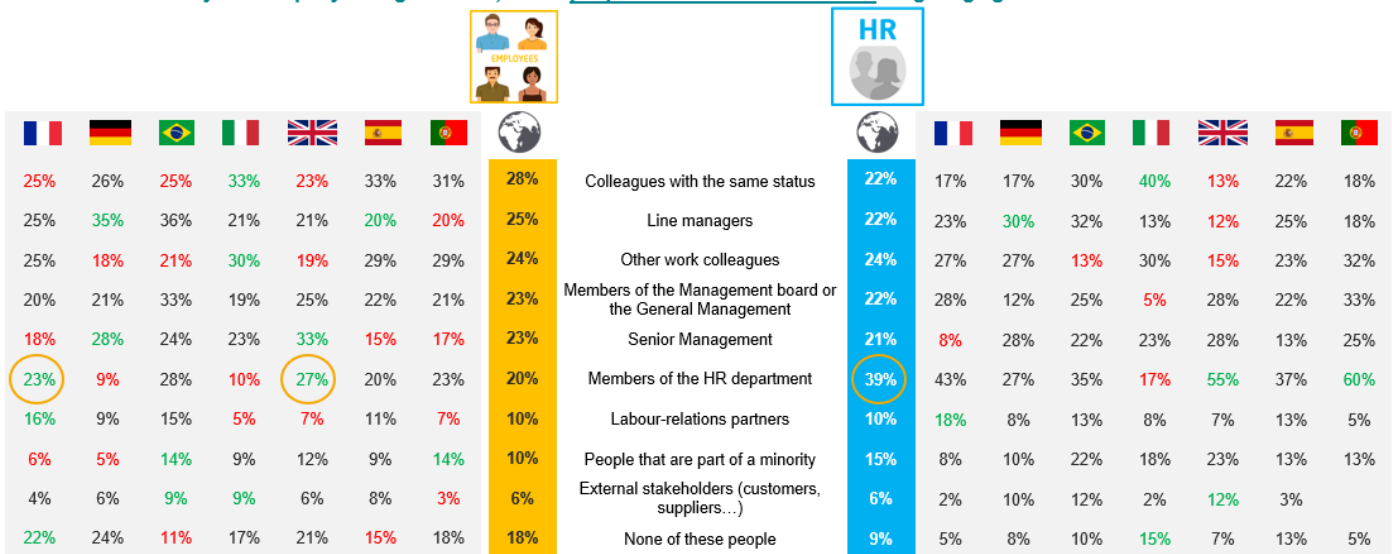
63% of international employees say they have experienced at least one form of discrimination. They mention physical appearance (24% overall, 17% in Germany vs. 37% in Brazil), age (23%), political views (20% overall, 10% in France vs. 42% in Brazil) and gender (18%). Here again, the 18-24 year olds stand out with higher than average figures on each of the items.

Employees and HRDs agree that discrimination is mainly found at three key moments in an employee's career: during recruitment, during integration and during promotion.

These acts of discrimination are perpetrated first by colleagues and then by direct managers (line managers), and the same observation is made by employees and HRDs.

However, perceptions differ as to which actors are identified as the most willing to fight discrimination. International employees mention colleagues and the direct manager, while HRDs point first to... members of the HR team:

Within your company or organisation, which people are the most committed to fighting against discrimination?



Source: Cegos Observatory – June 2022

## Impact in the organisation of whistleblowing movements

More specifically, actions to denounce sexist acts and fight for equality between women and men (#BalanceTonPorc, MeToo, etc.) have had a positive impact... even if there is still a long way to go.

Thus, for 63% of international employees, sexist acts are less frequent. Among them, 36% say that women's voices have been completely liberated and 27% say that they have not yet been completely liberated. For the remaining 37%... nothing has changed.

Similarly, actions to denounce racism (#BlackLivesMatter, etc.) have had a positive impact but again there is still a lot of room for improvement... 56% of international employees feel that there are fewer racist acts and words. But only 31% of them say that the speech of the people concerned has been totally liberated and 25% that it has not yet been totally liberated. For the remaining 44%, nothing has changed. Once again, there is a strong divide between 18-24 year olds, managers and those with qualifications, versus those aged 50+, non-managers and those without qualifications.

The same observations can be made by HRDs on the subject of both sexism and racism: the situation is changing... but there is still a long way to go.

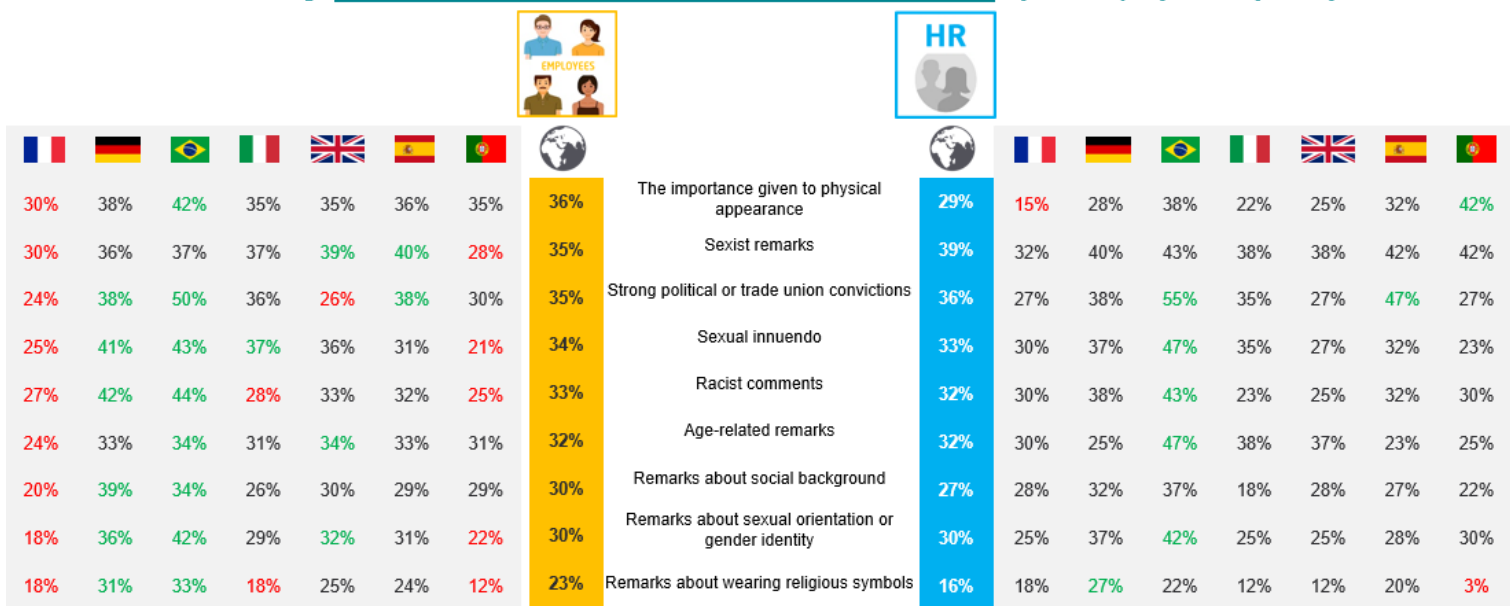
**Worsening work atmosphere and conflict resolution**

On a day-to-day basis, for employees, the working atmosphere is worsened first and foremost by the importance attached to physical appearance and by sexist comments. Young people (18-34), managers and employees with higher qualifications are more likely to perceive the working environment as being worse, irrespective of the item. This is in contrast to older employees (50-64), non-managers and those with lower qualifications.

The perceptions of HRDs/HRMs differ: on the international panel as a whole, sexist comments, strong political or trade union beliefs and sexual innuendo are the three main reasons for a worsening work environment. The French HRDs/HRMs mention sexist remarks, sexual innuendo, racist remarks and remarks related to age.

Also noteworthy are the very high scores in Brazil, on almost all items, and for both the employee and HRD/HRD groups.

**What kind of things damage or undermine (even slightly) the working environment in your company on a day-to-day basis?**



Source: Cegos Observatory – June 2022

Lastly, diversity-related conflicts within organisations are resolved by the HRD (for 42% of international HRDs) and then by managers (for 32% of international HRDs).

**Annette Chazoule, Manager Offer & Expertise "Management and Change", Cegos Group, explains:**

*"Discrimination remains at a very high level, and all the stakeholders, whether employees or HRDs/HRMs, note this in all the countries surveyed. This is all the more alarming as many countries, notably France, have enacted targeted legal provisions to combat these issues. These results show once again that companies do not operate in a vacuum, but are affected by the same societal issues that affect society as a whole. In this respect, the positive but still too limited impact of the movements to free speech testifies to the strength of sexist, racist and difference-related stereotypes and prejudices. Fighting discrimination today requires a much more proactive and powerful commitment from company management, particularly in terms of awareness-raising and training."*

## II – FROM ONE WORLD TO ANOTHER: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICIES NEED TO BE SHARED EVEN MORE WIDELY

### Level of knowledge and involvement of the organisation's stakeholders

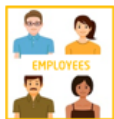
The concepts of diversity and inclusion seem to be well known by employees overall:

- 71% of employees in the international panel have a clear understanding of what diversity is;
- 74% have a clear understanding of what inclusion is.

Awareness is particularly high among younger employees, managers and those with higher education.

Internationally, 49% of employees (59% in Portugal) position themselves as 'promoters' of diversity in their organisation and 11% as "active militants" (19% in Spain).

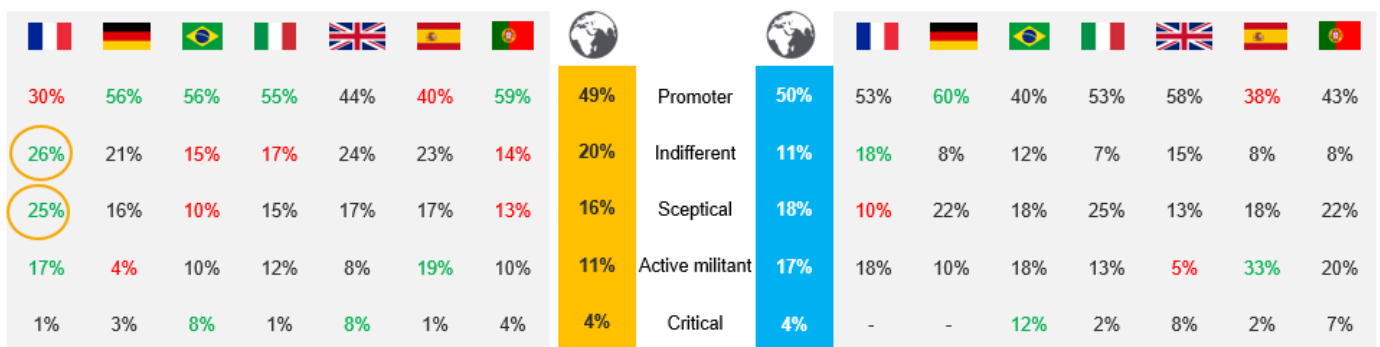
Among HRDs/HRMs, 50% of them in the international scope are "promoters" (53% in France vs. 60% in Germany) and 17% "active militants" (18% in France vs. 33% in Spain).



On a personal level, how would you qualify your position towards diversity issues in your company/organisation?



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Source: Cegos Observatory – June 2022

As in any change process, HRDs/HRMs seem to be one step ahead and the challenge now is to get employees on board, especially the 40% of employees who are "indifferent", "sceptical" or "critical".

### Benefits of a Diversity and Inclusion Policy

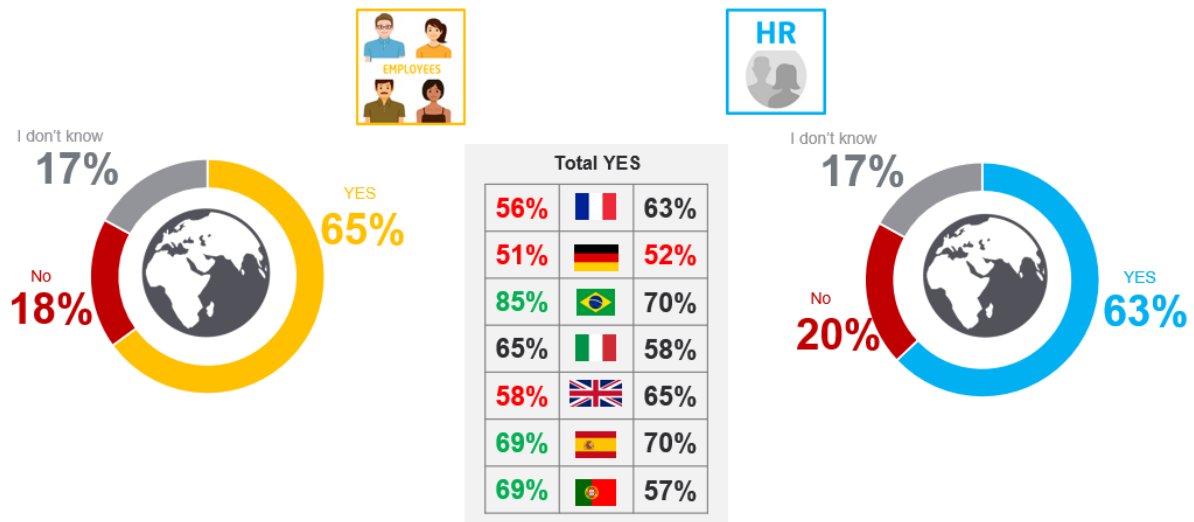
For all stakeholders, the social body of their organisation reflects the diversity of society: this is the case for 75% of international employees (76% in France vs. 83% in Brazil and 72% in Spain, Italy, Portugal and the UK) and 68% of international HR managers (72% in France vs. 62% in Italy). This diversity is now visible and must now be valued. To do this, the deployment of a Diversity and Inclusion policy in the organisation is perceived as positive by 82% of international employees (77% in France vs. 93% in Brazil and 68% in Germany) and by 83% of HRDs/HRMs (88% in France vs. 90% in Brazil and 65% in Germany).

Moreover, these dedicated policies already exist, but their communication remains to be improved. While 40% of international employees say that a Diversity and Inclusion policy exists in their organisation and that it is clearly defined and displayed, the figure drops to 28% for French employees.

Interestingly, the Diversity and Inclusion policy appears to be a positive lever for quality of life at work: 66% of international employees (57% in France vs. 86% in Brazil and 53% in Germany) and 63% of HRDs/HRMs (52% in France vs. 73% in Portugal and 70% in Brazil) believe that, in their organisation, this policy contributes to the well-being of the people concerned.

Similarly, 65% of employees in the international panel (56% in France vs. 85% in Brazil and 51% in Germany) say that it also contributes to the overall performance of the organisation. This is also the case for 63% of HRDs/HRMs (63% in France vs 52% in Germany and 70% in Brazil and Spain).

Would you say that diversity and inclusion contribute to your company's/organisation's overall performance?



Source: Cegos Observatory – June 2022

To encourage change, quota policies (which aim to favour certain categories of the population) are relatively well perceived: 67% of international employees (59% in France vs. 81% in Brazil and 77% in Italy) are in favour, as are 65% of HRDs/HRMs (58% in France vs. 78% in Italy and 43% in Germany).

**Isabelle Drouet de la Thibauderie, Manager Offer & Expertise "Human Resources", Cegos Group**, explains:

*"Even if they say they are convinced of this, HRDs/HRMs are still struggling to get all employees on board with a Diversity and Inclusion approach, especially the older and less educated populations. On the other hand, they can count on a solid base of allies among the younger generations and the managerial line. There is fertile ground to be exploited, especially as employees and HRDs/HRMs agree that the deployment of a Diversity and Inclusion policy has a positive impact on well-being at work and on the collective performance of organisations."*

### III – THE MINDSET IS IN PLACE: IT IS UP TO ORGANISATIONS TO IMPLEMENT AND EVALUATE ACTIONS

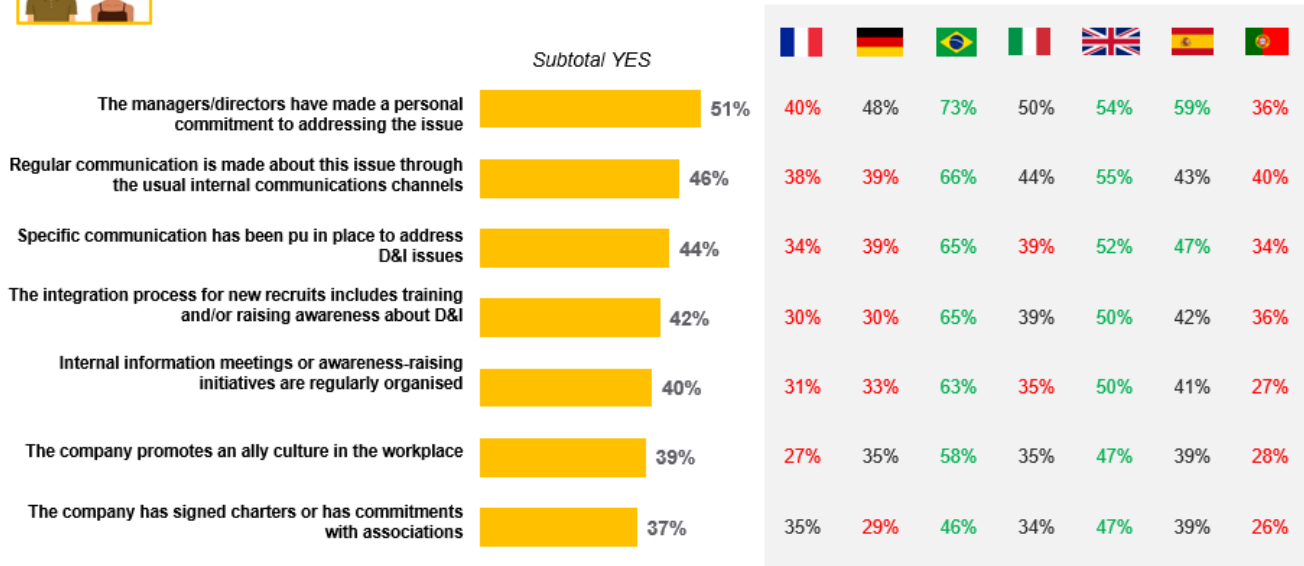
#### **Actions already implemented... and those that could boost the company's commitment**

An encouraging starting point is that 87% of international employees (86% in France vs. 92% in Brazil and 79% in the UK) say they feel "fully included" in their organisation.

A variety of awareness-raising actions are being carried out by HRDs/HRMs and employees to "shake things up" in organisations. In particular, we note the commitment of General Management, numerous internal communication actions and, notably, awareness-raising actions carried out by the HRD:



**Has your company/organisation put in place one of the following initiatives in terms of diversity | inclusion:**



Source: Cegos Observatory – June 2022

To further inclusion, employees and HRDs/HRMs are primarily interested in levers related to work organisation, recruitment and training. As such:

- 79% of employees and 80% of HRDs/HRMs believe that their direct Organisation should develop ways of recruiting and assessing potential;
- 78% of employees and 82% of HRDs/HRMs encourage the introduction of more flexible working arrangements (to improve work-life balance);
- 76% of employees and 82% of HRDs/HRMs want to raise awareness of inclusion among all stakeholders in the company;
- 76% of employees and 82% of HRDs/HRMs want specific training for managers on inclusion.

When asked about the benefits of a Diversity and Inclusion Policy, 64% of HRDs/HRMs (67% in France vs. 75% in Brazil and 53% in Germany) believe that it enables them to have more diverse and creative teams. 53% (50% in France vs. 73% in Brazil and 40% in Spain) believe that it strengthens the company's social commitment.

**Recruitment practices to promote inclusion**

In terms of recruitment, HRDs/HRMs have already implemented a number of actions to foster inclusion within their organisation. As such:

- 75% of HRDs/HRMs in the international panel (75% in France vs. 82% in Brazil) say they apply non-discrimination in recruitment, from sourcing to integration;
- 73% (72% in France vs. 83% in the UK) have identical selection criteria for all candidates for the same position;
- 69% (67% in France vs. 80% in Brazil) select candidates on the basis of their belief in the company's values;
- In contrast, only 31% (18% in France) apply the principle of CV-free recruitment.

For employees, inclusion is a key criterion for choosing a new employer. If they were to change jobs tomorrow, 84% of employees (77% in France vs. 93% in Brazil and 90% in Italy) say that taking inclusion into account would be an "important" criterion for choosing a new employer. For HRDs, the challenge of communicating about their employer brand is therefore fundamental for the future

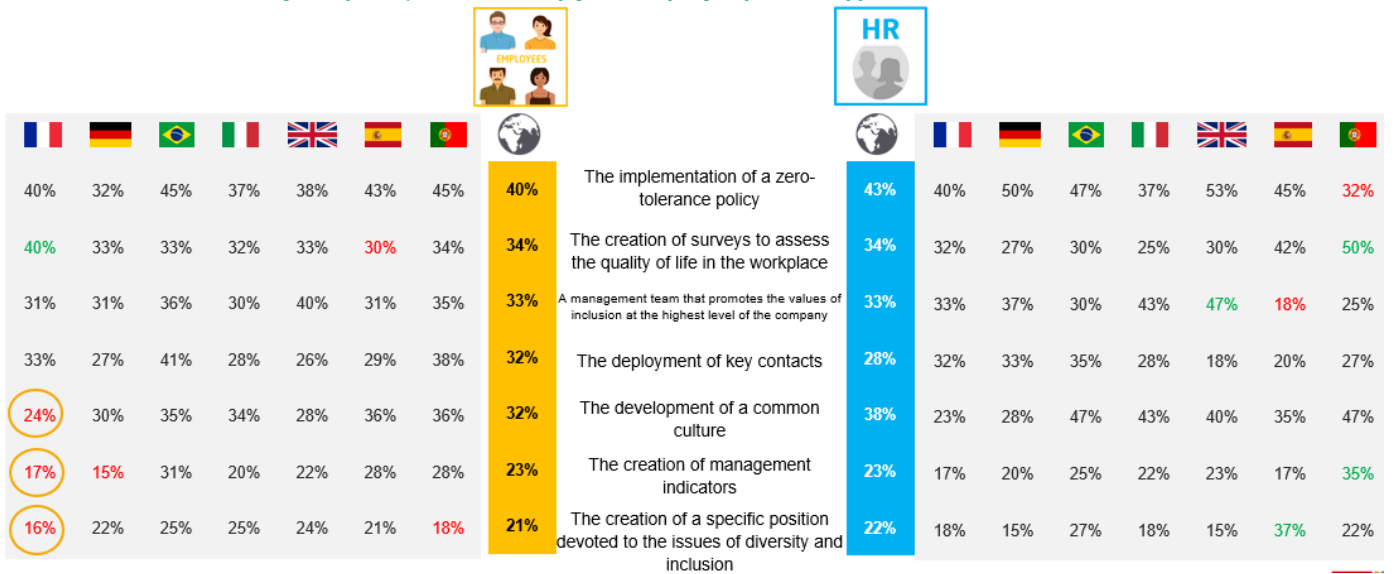
**Areas for improvement: requiring, evaluating and promoting**

What then could move the organisation forward in terms of inclusion? Employees and HRDs/HRMs provide relatively consistent answers. As such:

- 40% of employees and 43% of HRDs/HRMs mention the implementation of a "zero tolerance" policy for discrimination and harassment;

- 34% of employees and 34% of HRDs/HRMs promote the implementation of quality of work life surveys to measure employees' perceptions of inclusion;
- 33% of employees and 33% of HRDs/HRMs point to the commitment of the management team to take these inclusion values to the highest level of the company

**In your opinion, what could help your company improve its approach in terms of inclusion?**



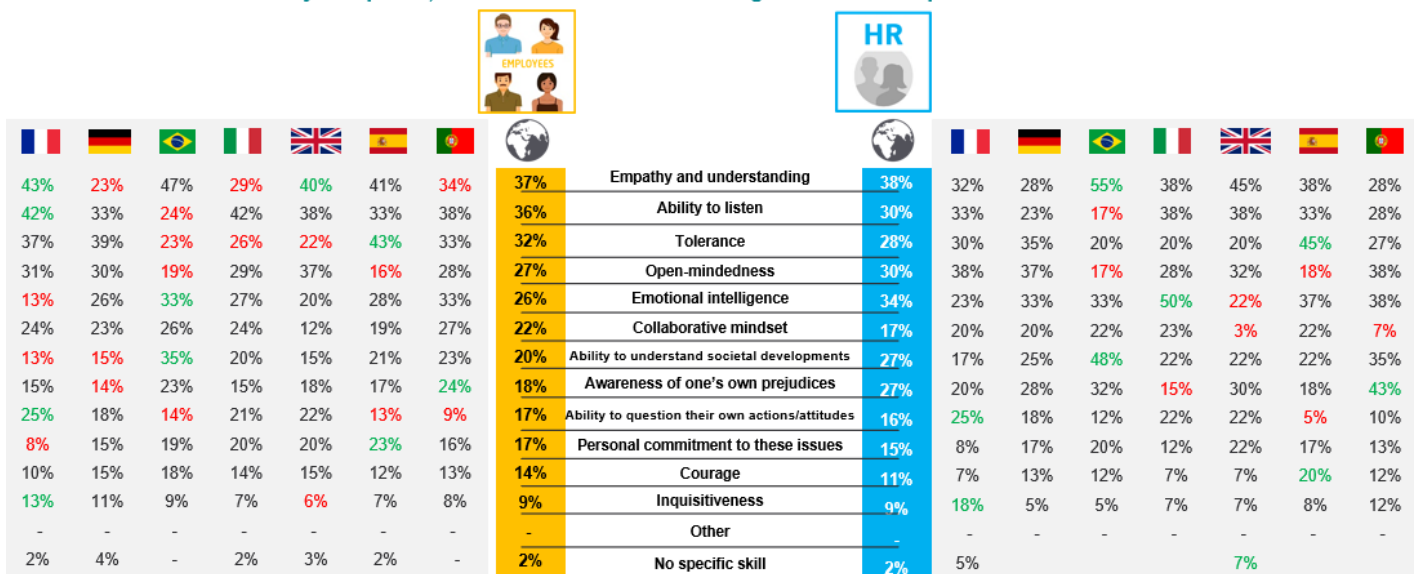
Source: Cegos Observatory – June 2022

**Role of managers**

34% of the managers in the international panel believe that the actions implemented by their organisation (information, training, HR support, etc.) help them "quite a bit" to manage sensitive situations related to diversity and inclusion. There is therefore real room for improvement...

The main soft skills that a manager should develop to be more inclusive are empathy and benevolence, listening and tolerance:

**In your opinion, what are the main skills a manager should develop to become more inclusive?**



Source: Cegos Observatory – June 2022

**Employees and HRDs/HRMs expect managers (who are already overstretched!) to be more engaged on inclusion issues:**

- 44% of employees (34% in France vs. 61% in Brazil) and 37% of HRDs/HRMs (35% in France vs. 43% in Italy and Spain) believe that their direct manager seems to be aware of the impact of these various inclusion issues;
- 39% of employees (38% in France) and 43% of HRDs/HRMs (43% in France vs. 60% in the UK) think their manager acts as a solid ally when dealing with these issues;

- Only 15% of employees (17% in France vs. 8% in Brazil and 20% in Portugal) and 17% of HRDs/HRMs (13% in France) feel that their line manager does not recognise the impact of his or her biases on decision making.

**Annette Chazoule, Manager Offer & Expertise "Management and Change", Cegos Group, says:**

*"The assessment has been made, the levers for action have been identified, the tools exist and the conditions are favourable. In particular, recruitment, awareness-raising and training are clearly identified as key levers for action, but they are not yet sufficiently exploited. Managers, who are already overstretched, have a key role to play in developing the Diversity and Inclusion policy, but it is clear that they are not yet sufficiently supported and equipped to do so. More generally, HRDs are facing a major challenge for the future: to strengthen their employer brand in order to continue to attract young talent and make the job of manager attractive. In a particularly dynamic job market in certain sectors of activity, this is an essential lever today for filling vacancies."*

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**Benoit Felix, CEO of the Cegos Group, gives his views on this international barometer survey:**

*"As an international leader in Learning & Development, we have been able to observe, for several months now, in all the countries where we operate, the same willingness of organisations to take up the challenges of Inclusion and Diversity. Far from being a fad, it is a structural concept and part of a real cultural and societal transformation. We firmly believe that organisations that do not dare or do not know how to grasp these issues will miss out on history, especially if they do not take into account the expectations and demands of the younger generations. Verbalising, raising awareness, training and recruiting: these are the four priority levers for action."*

*In terms of skills development, we are already deploying numerous missions directly linked to these issues, whether it be training in unconscious perception bias, inclusive leadership or the fight against harassment. We are, for example, rolling out programmes to nurture a new generation of women leaders. These are complex and time-consuming issues. But they are also, and above all, galvanising issues because they force us to change our outlook in order to imagine and build the organisation of tomorrow, which is more diverse, more inclusive and therefore more efficient and responsible."*

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**About the Cegos Group - [www.cegos.com](http://www.cegos.com)**

Created in 1926, the Cegos Group is a worldwide leader in training and development. The Group now has its own operations in 12 countries in Europe, Asia and Latin America. It is also present in over 50 countries through its network of partners and distributors, leading training providers and top-tier technology experts.

Thanks to a staff of 1,200 and over 3,000 partner consultants, the Group trains 250,000 people throughout the world every year, generating revenues of €200 million.

Cegos deploys a global offer, including turnkey and tailored training and development, operational consultancy, Managed Training Services and international training projects. Its 'blended learning' approach aims to provide the most suitable and competitive learner experience by combining multiple learning formats (classroom training, e-learning modules, videoconferences, webcasts, e-training programmes and more).

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