



# Companies for an inclusive society

A BLUEPRINT

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# Introduction

The European Union (EU) has set a clear and transformational direction for the future with the [European Green Deal](#) and the [NextGenerationEU](#) programme.

The European Social Pillar, together with the Just Transition Mechanism, marks a new era for education and employment, showcasing Europe's leadership and advancement on social rights protection. In July 2020, the European Commission (EC) published a new European Skills Agenda (EC, 2020). Also currently under discussion is the implementation of the EU Social Taxonomy, which is intended to accompany the twin transitions – green and digital – and to ensure recovery from the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In July 2020, the EC adopted its first ever [Report on the Impact of Demographic Change](#). The report examines the drivers of long-term change and its impacts across Europe, from longer life expectancy, to lower birth rates, ageing societies, smaller households and increasing urbanisation. It is also affected by the people mobility to

and within Europe, as well as between local communities and major cities. The shrinking working-age population underlines the need for Europe and its labour market to draw on all of its strengths, talents and diversity.

In 2020, business and investment communities drastically stepped up their endorsement of this social agenda; meanwhile, they continue to grapple with the impact of the pandemic on many aspects of work, further underlining the urgent need for action. Businesses have rapidly undergone digital transformation, and some have even reinvented their business models, to provide a swift response to their employees and communities.

According to the EC, in 2015, just one-fifth of workers used to do some form of remote working (either regularly or occasionally), with lower percentages in Southern Europe. The pandemic has definitely pushed these number higher: in July 2020, around 34% of respondents to an EU-27 survey stated they were regularly working from home.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For more information: Eurofound (2020), [European Working Conditions Survey](#); Eurofound and Cedefop (2020), [European Company Survey 2019 – Workplace practices unlocking employee potential](#).

This situation has accelerated the automation trend, severely impacting displaced workers and putting a large number at risk of redundancy. At the same time, companies have been urged to upskill their workforces in order to remain competitive on the market. However, these sudden disruptions provide opportunities for advancing the debate on the future of work and to ensure an empowered human workforce. All businesses will need to implement appropriate internal processes to develop human capital and strive for a culture of “lifelong employability”, fostering the ability of employees to adapt, in an agile and systematic way, to continuous changes through a long-term experience that appropriately combines the dimensions of adaptability, resilience and aptitude, enabling a career switch when organizational, strategic or market circumstances require it. At the same time, the caring for their employees in an increasingly inclusive work environment becomes fundamental. We must all, collectively, make sure that no one is left behind.

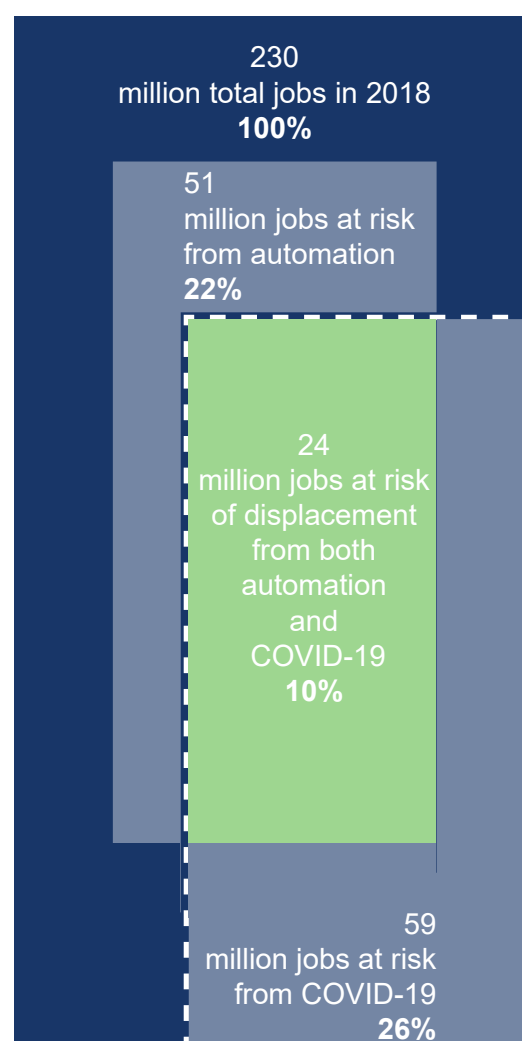
At the same time, research from Eurofound, EU-OSHA, ILO and other sources has identified a wide range of risks connected to remote working. The pandemic has put the mental well-being of the global workforce in jeopardy and is blurring the line between professional and private life. Mental ill-health, one of the leading causes of suffering and disability in Europe, has proliferated during the pandemic, according to the WHO Europe Technical Advisory Group. Everyone’s mental health has been affected in some way, whether a result of worrying about becoming infected or stress from lockdown, self-isolation and quarantine, or linked to lack of employment, income, education or social participation. The younger generation has been more exposed to these conditions.

Meanwhile, the numerous lockdowns have caused a drastic increase in unpaid and domestic work: both women and men have reported more time spent in caring for dependants. Women have added on average 5.2 hours a week for childcare,

reaching a total average of around 31 hours per week, says UN Women. Incidences of stress, fatigue and burnout from the excessive burden increased in 2020.<sup>2</sup>

Companies have therefore assumed a leading position in protecting workers’ health and well-being, promoting healthy and safe environments, and providing employees with additional and tailored support. Workforce mental health is becoming a top priority for business leaders, with a view to unlocking a greater sense of workforce inclusivity, productivity and fulfilment.

*Figure 1: Future of Work Trends framed around Work Type, Workforce & Workplace*



<sup>2</sup> Eurofound (2021), [\*Living, Working and COVID-19 \(Update April 2021\): Mental health and trust decline across EU as pandemic enters another year\*](#), Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.



# The Project

Leading companies, with sustainability embedded in their business and industrial plans, must be even more resolved to tackle the challenges of employability, social inclusion and care for their employees, communities and stakeholders.

What does all of this require from companies? How do we need to prepare for “the new normal” and how can we shape it? What will define corporate leadership in times where well-being, empowerment, engagement, employability and inclusive societies are the key challenges?

As companies continue to respond to and recover from ongoing and new challenges, **we need to define what is practically necessary to stay successful**, as well as to identify what is meaningful as a corporation for employees, communities and other stakeholders.

CSR Europe, with the support of ENEL and PwC Belgium, decided to address these concerns in a time-bound, action-oriented think tank running between May 2021 and October 2021.

**The objectives of the think tank are straightforward and ambitious:**

- Take stock of all insights and challenges and rethink the “entire value chain of creation”.
- List experiences from different industrial sectors and identify best practices, also with a view to intersectional recovery and resilience while considering diversity dimensions.
- Provide policy makers and peers with practical suggestions and potential guidance, based on the challenges experienced.

Two events and numerous individual interviews were held in recent months to collect reflections and insights from participating companies and experts. This Blueprint presents the results of this feedback.

## Participating Companies



CSR Europe is the leading European business network for Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility. With its corporate members, National Partner Organisations (NPOs), and Associated Partners, it reaches, inspires and supports over 10,000 enterprises at local, European, and global levels. CSR Europe supports businesses and industry sectors in their collaboration and transformation towards practical solutions and sustainable growth.

Following the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), CSR Europe aims to co-build, together with European leaders and stakeholders, an overarching strategy for a Sustainable Europe 2030. **People and social rights have been at the core of CSR Europe since its foundation:** major examples of CSR Europe's activity on the future of work include **Upskill 4 Future** and **Business Uniting Talent 2030**, which respectively address the themes of training, and diversity and inclusion (D&I), as well as [Healthy Workplace, Healthy Society](#), a blueprint for business action on health literacy (published in 2020).

**Upskill 4 Future:** Launched in 2019, this pilot project currently involves more than **30 companies in four countries**. Run with the support of **J.P. Morgan**, Upskill 4 Future is a two-and-a-half-year project that looks at **how HR transformation can best support the employability of workers** who are most at risk of losing their jobs due to technological progress and corporate restructuring. More information on this project is available in the study report *Company readiness for inclusive workforce transitions*.<sup>3</sup> In Italy, in the context of the Upskill4Future project, Fondazione Sodalitas and Impronta Etica are involving ten companies from different sectors in pilot activities to upskill their vulnerable workers, giving them direct support and inspiration through capacity-building sessions. In these workshops, HR officers and experts discuss key success factors such as employee engagement, effective

training and cooperation strategies among different actors.

**Business Uniting Talents 2030 (BUT2030):** This project, launched by CSR Europe with the support of the **King Baudouin Foundation** and **Prince Philippe Fund**, aims to **foster the inclusion of Belgium-based talent from non-European backgrounds** in order to develop inclusive business models and reduce inequalities in access to employment opportunities. Currently in the piloting phase, BUT2030 will focus on **D&I assessments** and shared best practices at various companies to achieve impact on the ground.



<sup>3</sup> CSR Europe (2021), Upskill 4 Future study report, [Company readiness for inclusive workforce transitions](#).

Anticipating current events while delivering sustained outcomes, as well as ensuring employee well-being, inclusion and career growth, are challenges on every CEO's plate. To facilitate the transformation of its workforce and its leaders, PwC introduced a new strategy: The New Equation. The strategy helps clients to build trust with stakeholders and deliver sustained outcomes.

Achieving goals within the field of sustainability also requires a shift from PwC's workforce: "We want our people to be the most sought after on the market, because they have the technical, digital and human skills needed to build trust and deliver sustained outcomes," says PwC Global Chairman Robert E. Moritz.

PwC is creating 100,000 new jobs to deepen and expand our capabilities. We are continuously mindful of 'people growth', as this enables us to bring together unique combinations required to help clients meet stakeholder expectations and the social needs of today and tomorrow.

To this end, we are:

- Building new Centres of Excellence for specialists on key Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG) topics, as well as a global ESG Academy that will enable all of our partners and staff across the network to integrate ESG fundamentals into their work;
- Investing to enhance quality across our businesses, including USD 1 billion to accelerate deployment of technology that further automates the implementation of quality auditing frameworks, as well as building a delivery model for future audits;
- Creating Leadership Institutes, the first of which will be headquartered in the United States and will empower more than 10,000 of today's and tomorrow's C-suite leaders, executives, and board members to build trust and navigate the [Six paradoxes of leadership](#);



- Continuing to rapidly expand our use of cloud, AI, virtual reality and other emerging technologies to deliver insight and drive competitive advantage for clients.

We are aware of the opportunities and challenges that come with a more diverse talent pool. To support and advance our people, we are offering flexible and remote working, as well as progressing with our commitment to workforce upskilling.



# Trends in the Future of Work

## Work type – Automation and artificial intelligence (AI)

New technologies are replacing human tasks and jobs, and are also changing the skills that organisations are looking for in their people. Considering the future of work presents huge organisational, talent and HR challenges at a time when business leaders are already wrestling with unprecedented risks, disruption and political and societal upheaval. What influences will the continuing march of technology and AI have on where we work and how we work? Will we need to work at all?

## Workplace – Hybrid working

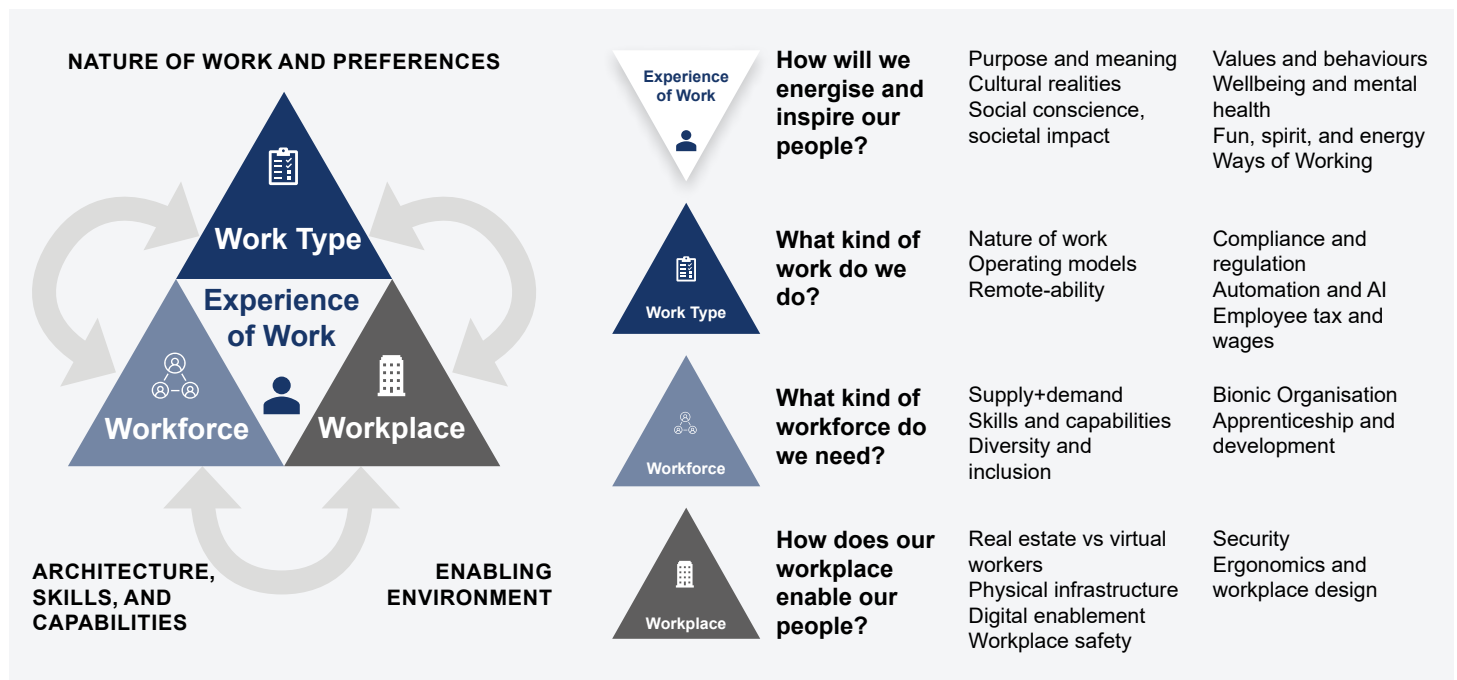
The pandemic accelerated the need for digital transformation, creating immediate and large-scale workforce challenges while highlighting vulnerabilities within our society, economy and the way we view work. Already in 2019, the

OECD warned that 32% of jobs were radically transforming due to digital transformation<sup>4</sup>, and this number has increased due to the pandemic: 43% of people had never, or very rarely, worked from home before COVID and were forced to adapt to the situation. According to Eurofound, 37% of jobs in the EU are currently teleworkable, and most workers have expressed a preference for working from home several times per week.<sup>5</sup> Working from home has brought benefits – mainly in terms of less time spent in commuting and transport – as well as challenges: 27% of people reported increased workloads, 42% believed working from home led to working longer hours, and 40% felt a worsened quality of social interactions.<sup>6</sup>

## Workforce – Sustainability

Rapid digitalisation and the pandemic have contributed to people's anxiety about the future and feelings of job insecurity. Providing support

Figure 2: Future of Work Trends framed around Work Type, Workforce & Workplace



<sup>4</sup> CSR Europe (2021), Upskill 4 Future study report, [Company readiness for inclusive workforce transitions](#).

<sup>5</sup> Eurofound (2020), [Living, working and COVID-19](#), Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

<sup>6</sup> PwC and Atlassian



for employee well-being, mental health and upskilling is a key to responding effectively to challenging new ways of working. A PwC survey revealed that 73% of people think technology can never fully replace human capabilities, while 37% are worried about automation putting jobs at risk.<sup>7</sup> Building on this, CSR Europe has launched the [Enterprise 2020 Collaborative Project on Health Literacy](#) initiative, which explores how businesses can actively contribute to improved health and health literacy in Europe, both at business and community levels.

## Work experience – Inclusiveness

Diversity and inclusion in the workplace (D&I) is now considered a business imperative for global organisations: the link between diversity in board and management and the likelihood of financial outperformance has strengthened in recent years. Diversity winners are now widening their initiatives through the adoption of more horizontal and intersectional approaches to work, and are increasingly able to foster inclusion and sense of belonging. There is now greater sensitivity with regard to gender, ethnicity, cultural background, age, sexual orientation, disability etc.

The pandemic provides us with an opportunity to rethink the future of work and to build back better. A people-centred approach needs to be implemented, as CSR Europe aims to do, if we are to put sustainability at the core of organisational business models. At PwC, the future of work is approached in terms of work type, workforce and workplaces, with work experience at the core.<sup>8</sup>

**‘Work type’** relates to new ways of working, from macro and systems-level trends (such as labour market trends and related policies) to legal and compliance requirements. The future workforce will comprise human resources alongside complementary cognitive systems, machines and robots. Skills will take precedence over the organisational chart and geographic boundaries. Furthermore, gig workers and ‘entreployees’ (those who develop business ideas while on the

job) are expected to co-exist with the ‘traditional’ workforce.

**‘Workforce’** refers to the resources – including people and technology – needed to do the work. This is all about having the right capabilities and the right skills in the right place at the right time. Retraining and upskilling will be required to close the skills gap. According to CSR Europe research on 33 companies from 14 sectors,<sup>9</sup> businesses score well on average on strategic workforce planning: this means that mid-term and/or long-term business plans on forecasting megatrends are in place, and that the business is able to forecast future skills and map its workforce to accommodate a variety of elements, including personal aspirations. For training and development, specific training and processes for educating this target group should be put in place, possibly with the support of external funding and engagement with public initiatives, such as mobility efforts for vulnerable workers.

**‘Workplaces’** are the physical and digital environments where work is structured and undertaken. This includes everything from an organisation’s real estate strategy to the layout of office space and the way work gets done. A new workplace model will emerge, with less time spent in the office and more time spent at home and other alternative work locations. Workplace safety is a top agenda priority for CFOs, as is improving the remote work experience and making this a permanent option for roles which allow it. The PwC’s COVID-19 CFO Pulse report revealed that a majority of CFOs are planning new workplace safety measures and a reconfiguration of work sites to promote physical distancing. At the same time, more than half of CFOs indicate that they will take steps to improve the remote work experience (52%) and to make remote work a permanent option (52%), while 50% report that they plan to accelerate automation and new ways of working.<sup>10</sup> Similar reflections emerged in the first Inclusion Think Tank Focus Group, during which some participating companies presented new HR tools and frameworks for hybrid ‘phygital’

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<sup>7</sup> PwC report, [Workforce of the future: The competing forces shaping 2030](#).

<sup>8</sup> PwC Australia, [Future of work design for the future](#).

<sup>9</sup> CSR Europe (2021), [Upskill 4 Future study report, Company readiness for inclusive workforce transitions](#).

<sup>10</sup> PwC Global (2020), [PwC’s COVID-19 CFO Pulse](#)

environments, focusing on the main challenges to ensure a fully integrated work experience.

The ‘**experience of work**’ is how workers experience the purpose, values and culture of the organisation, as demonstrated by their behaviour and engagement. The experience of work is diverse and mainly depends on various factors, each of which has an impact on well-being, chances for success, employee satisfaction, sense of belonging and support. Companies and leaders will need to reimagine ways to collaborate, foster innovation and communicate with stakeholders, while offering (virtual) coaching and socialising opportunities to sustain employee commitment. Companies should also identify new opportunities for interaction as they prepare to face the possible loss of informal learning caused by hybrid work modalities.

**Higher productivity costs of worker upskilling are impeding growth in many economies across the EU.** At the same time, it is important to identify the nature of the skills needed, ranging from job-specific skills to digital skills and a broader set of transversal abilities such as critical thinking, adaptability, and capacity to learn and relearn. It is equally important to recognise that such skills are best learnt on the job, thereby requiring close cooperation between education and training, employers, and social partners.

Leaders will have to rethink the workplace by reflecting on the level of desired flexibility and the creation of a working environment and experience that helps people feel engaged, driven and included.

**Achieving a sustainable hybrid working model is not an easy task:** it requires an in-depth rethinking of the role of human resources within each company and their connection and collaboration with different business functions, as well as integrating inclusion, proximity and new ways of working into the business approach.<sup>11</sup> The core challenge is to reinvent the company’s work dimension, giving it a focus to unlock value



for employees, the company, its customers, and society at large.

The following questions can provide some helpful guidance:

- What kind of work do employees/workers perform?
- What kind of workforce and skills do you need?
- Within a hybrid model, what is the best way to ensure a healthy, diverse and inclusive workforce?
- What does the work model need to look like, and how does it meet employee preferences and customer expectations?
- What sorts of obligations do current changes in work and workplace models place on employers?
- How might remote work practices, policies, and toolsets be better adapted to foster innovation?

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<sup>11</sup> Proximity as a key business need for being a driving force of change was discussed at CSR Europe’s Just Transition Multi-stakeholder Roundtable (2020).

# Well-Being

The pandemic led to mental health becoming one of the biggest challenges for employers and employees, with **70% of employees reporting that 2020 has been the most stressful year of their career**.<sup>12</sup> During the last year, the boundaries between work and private have blurred, jeopardising a healthy work-life balance. Additionally, major trends, such as an ageing population and reduced public welfare, have significantly increased the burden for workers, who are often thus impeded from entering or re-entering the job market. The pandemic has made clear just how important individual well-being – both physical and mental – is for quality of life and productivity at work; therefore, maintaining health and well-being should be a priority for workers and employers alike. Providers of services of general interest such as water, energy, transport, or social services, represent a relevant example of the activities that remained operational throughout the lockdowns, guaranteeing the well-being and security of citizens throughout the crisis.<sup>13</sup>

**Well-being is related to all aspects of working life**, from safety in the physical environment to working culture, with psychosocial risks gaining in importance as a workplace health hazard. More and more organisations recognise the importance of employee well-being, some because they appreciate that their most important resources are their human resources, others because a lack of commitment to their workers causes workplace problems such as stress, bullying, conflicts, and alcohol and drug abuse. Organisations can also do their part to support workers who are victims of domestic violence or workplace harassment. As the *Me Too* movement highlighted dramatic rates of domestic violence and psychological abuse, these statistics have severely worsened during the pandemic. Within the CSR Europe stakeholders' community, gender-based violence (GBV) is perceived as a primary source of inequality and one major area that demands corporate involvement and commitment.



Two CSR Europe National Partner Organisations, CSR Hellas and FACE, have collaborated to create the CEASE project<sup>14</sup> in the framework of the European Corporate Network (ECN), the first network created to support victims of GBV and to transform companies into positive leaders and encourage behavioural change within the private sector.

**A healthy and sustainable economy depends on healthy people** capable of expressing themselves and free to pursue fulfilling private and working lives. Due to the sudden shift to smart-working, new needs have surfaced, such as flexibility and autonomous work planning and scheduling. We therefore need to reconsider the concept of care in terms of impact and scope, especially for women and parents. Because of Europe's rapid

<sup>12</sup> Oracle and Workplace Intelligence (2020), *As Uncertainty Remains, Anxiety and Stress Reach a Tipping Point at Work*.

<sup>13</sup> Ceep (2021), *Ceep Input on the Next Generation EU Recovery Instrument*.

<sup>14</sup> For more information: <https://cease-project.eu/>.



demographic change, organisations will have to come to terms with workers who are struggling to balance work with care for children and elderly relatives, while often confronting declining mental health or other age-related diseases. Facing these shifts may become particularly challenging for SMEs, whose organisation chart is normally smaller and characterised by a multitude of tasks assigned to each employee.

Organisations can support their employees by appointing a **mental health leader** and promoting communication on mental health topics and policies. Leadership can take responsibility by monitoring employee well-being and organising mental health-related workplace programmes targeting specific health problems in the workplace. During the pandemic, about 70% of employers reported a planned investment in mental health resources to help promote employee productivity, increase worker satisfaction and attract talent. Leadership should communicate the importance of well-being for the organisation, work to reduce mental health stigma, and promote awareness of available resources. In this regard, managers assume the fundamental role of “employees’ coaches”, ensuring well-being and comfort of their teams and the resonance of company policy.

**The use of technology and AI to promote mental health has become prominent during the pandemic.** It is now clear that employees appear to be more productive when they work outside of the conventional office, but they are also more vulnerable to longer working hours, a more intense pace of work, and work-home interference. In some cases, home-based workers suffer from poor social relationships, added anxiety and other forms of personal and emotional stress. The mass adoption of collaboration and video conferencing tools during home-working has left employees wondering how technology can support them in overcoming mental health issues and workplace stress. From applications that allow employees to do mindfulness and meditation exercises to robots that give quick answers and information, and from the automation of administrative tasks to recommending new skills, the opportunities are endless.

The Inclusion Think Tank focused mainly on how companies are addressing the following:

- Are companies able to recognise such issues and therefore support their employees?
- What policies might be introduced to ensure that new needs are effectively tackled?
- How should companies deal with burnout, work overload and work-related stress?
- What are the main learnings and impacts of the last 12 months?
- How can companies better assist employees in facing smart-work-related challenges?
- What policies can companies implement to ensure employee health and well-being?

## Companies Best Practices

### TOTALENERGIES

#### *Context and main challenges*

As a company attentive to its workforce, TotalEnergies continues to build its One Company project through a participatory approach that invites employee input. One concrete example of that policy came in 2019 with the launch of the **One Company, Better Together project**.

Over the past few years, regular remote working options have been gradually introduced within the company as part of the One Company, Better Together project. TotalEnergies is **encouraging home-based remote working and flexible hours worldwide**. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, company subsidiaries have turned to remote working wherever possible, going beyond the company's global guidelines (and, in some cases, instituting 100% remote working), based on government recommendations.



## Initiative

By showing agility in adapting to the exceptional circumstances brought on by the pandemic, the company has been able to maintain business continuity during government-imposed lockdown periods. These new ways of working have been made possible by the worldwide deployment of digital solutions offering collaborative services that promote remote work.

In a pandemic context, the company has furthermore strengthened its resources worldwide for preventing psychosocial risks by giving employees access to a support service staffed by psychologists trained in crisis response and capable of offering advice tailored to each employee's concerns. A **global voluntary programme** was also launched with the aim of supporting all employees exposed to such risks.

The programme has four main aims:

- **Achieve a minimum level of awareness and training** through the distribution of a PSR prevention kit translated into 11 languages and validated by international experts.
- **Introduce a single system for measuring individual stress and a collective assessment of PSR factors** in the working environment as to facilitate the production of action plans.
- **Introduce a system for listening to and supporting all employees**, supervised by international experts and available in more than 50 languages, thus providing care and support to employees in their native language and in accordance with their specific cultural environment.
- **Conduct regular monitoring** of indicators for enhanced control of the system, guaranteeing anonymity, confidentiality and security of personal data during the entire period of support.

## TITAN

### Context and main challenges

Since its founding in 1902, TITAN has held as a core value the prime importance of health and safety of all employees, contractors, customers, and neighbouring communities. Building on this legacy of care, TITAN continues to improve health and safety performance through training and engagement, applying an **integrated, holistic approach to health and well-being** across the Group.

### Initiative

Safeguarding their people and operations against COVID-19 was a top priority during the pandemic. In close cooperation with medical experts, TITAN implemented action plans at all sites, putting an emphasis on frequent and open communication. The company promoted remote working, while numerous protective measures were taken for people working on-site. At the same time, TITAN stood by its neighbouring communities and acted to support local partners and contractors to sustain their business.

To ensure an inclusive and integrated approach at worldwide level, while tackling complex challenges and issues such as employees' well-being, TITAN has introduced a **holistic Group Health & Wellbeing framework**. The framework covers **four dimensions of health and well-being**: physical, mental, social, and financial. Various actions and initiatives linked to the four dimensions are implemented in each business unit to address local priorities. The framework is also the basis for a continual review of actions, programmes and resources in the future.

Furthermore, in 2020, TITAN's **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**, a consulting support service that offers expert advice on personal, family, or work-related issues to employees and their families, was extended to all countries to provide support to people in balancing their work-life duties and to enhance their mental and emotional health and well-being.

# Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion in the workplace, known as D&I, has become a business imperative for global organisations. Companies that create diverse and inclusive work environments are more dynamic and creative, and become magnets that attract top talent. Most organisations now invest in diversity across the spectrum of gender, ethnicity, culture, age, sexual orientation and disability, while others go further still by taking into account work styles, skills, personality profiles, education and different perspectives when creating diverse teams.

In the beginning of the pandemic, some organisations reduced their focus on D&I initiatives as a strategic priority and fixated on their most pressing needs. It soon became clear, however, that **a diverse and inclusive organisation is critical for business recovery, resilience and re-imagination** to enable business performance and organisational health. The crisis has led to women's jobs being disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, often referred to as a "she-cession". This is the result of existing gender inequalities in society and an impact of the pandemic on service sectors with elevated levels of female employment. Women were more likely to exit the workforce to engage in unpaid care and domestic work.<sup>15</sup> These career interruptions can have long-term impacts on women's labour market prospects, and it is possible that they will return to lower-paid and lower-skilled positions.

It is important to acknowledge the **interconnection between working conditions and living conditions**. Services such as social and health care, public transport and housing, are essential to enable both women and men to participate in the workforce on equal terms. To achieve gender equality in the labour market there must be a range of effective and well-funded essential services in place, such as child and elderly care, social and health care, transport, and education.<sup>16</sup>

D&I is already on the agenda of many companies and public authorities that are addressing gender,



sexual orientation, disability, age, and ethnicity, with the aim to promote non-discrimination and inclusion. In 2010, the European Commission launched the [EU Platform of Diversity Charters](#) to support companies, public institutions and non-profit organisations in putting diversity, inclusion and solidarity at the core of their activities. Currently, the platform consists of 27 diversity charters from the Member States. The Italian delegation of the platform consists of Fondazione Sodalitas together with companies adhering to the Italian Charter for Equal Opportunities and Equality at Work. The charter covers all fields of discrimination (gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and religion) and has more than 800 signatories – about 500 private enterprises (including around 400 SMEs) and 300 public authorities and NGOs – which together employ more than 700,000 people.<sup>17</sup>

On the other hand, a recent study by the *Financial Times*<sup>18</sup> shows that **European companies perform worse on including ethnicity in their workforce compared to other diversity criteria**, with Belgium registering the lowest level

<sup>15</sup> Strategy& (2021), [Women in Work 2021: The impact of COVID-19 on women in work](#).

<sup>16</sup> For more information: [Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights on his visit to the European Union](#).

<sup>17</sup> For more information: [www.cartapariopportunita.it](http://www.cartapariopportunita.it)

<sup>18</sup> *Financial Times Diversity Leaders 2021*. For more information: <https://www.statista.com/page/ft-diversity-leaders>

of employment in the EU for non-EU immigrants.<sup>19</sup> More needs to be done to support the inclusion of foreign and migrant workers, as their overall working conditions have worsened in the wake of the crisis due to increased discrimination and more unstable contracts. Besides unequal access to education and training, talents with ethnic diversity encounter practical challenges in terms of identifying job offers and applying for jobs. From poorly inclusive communication strategies to lack of confidence, people with diverse, non-EU backgrounds do not enter the labour market as easily as natives. CSR Europe's BUT2030 project assesses this issue by providing companies with practical suggestions for improving the ethnic diversity of their workforce.

**Organisations willing to invest in D&I face multiple challenges.** A primary example is the frequent reluctance of upper management to allocate resources to D&I efforts, as well as a lack of communication and clear vision on such matters. Additionally, industry attractiveness may hinder D&I policy implementation: while some industries find it easier to attract and retain diverse talent, other sectors (e.g. in technology, finance and chemical industries) are failing to meet diversity needs due to challenges such as stereotypes, lack of interest in a given field of study, or organisational culture.<sup>20</sup>

In recent years, organisations have used AI and other technologies to accelerate progress

in D&I. AI, for example, can be used to reduce **unconscious bias in hiring** by targeting job ads to underrepresented candidates and creating blind assessments, or to reduce bias in background-checking processes. Greater emphasis on **data analysis and use of real-time data** provides opportunities to make data accessible to everyone in the organisation, identify key areas for improvement, prioritise, and efficiently track D&I progress. **Virtual reality technology** can deliver more effective D&I trainings by allowing participants to see other points of view, including those of a different gender, race or ability level.

The Inclusion Think Tank focused mainly on how companies are addressing the following:

- What are the main D&I-related challenges that companies are facing?
- Do companies recognise the human value of their employees?
- Are there policies/tools/spaces that allow employees to express themselves?
- What are the main best practices that companies can implement to boost their D&I?
- How can companies ensure that any D&I policies in place are effective and able to meet the needs of their employees?

Figure 3: BUT2030's Business Model for Ethnic Diversity & Inclusion (D&I)



<sup>19</sup> Eurostat (2019), *Migrant integration statistics: labour market indicators*, p. 5

<sup>20</sup> For more information: CEPS (2020), [Gender equality and industrial relations in the EU: an analytical framework](#); Atomico (2020), [State of European Tech 2020: 06.1 – State of Diversity & Inclusion](#).

# Companies Best Practices

## TOTALENERGIES

### *Context and main challenges*

The company has a long-standing commitment to promoting equal opportunity and diversity, which constitutes, for everyone, a source of development where only expertise and talent count. By drawing on this culture of diversity, TotalEnergies can seek out the best talent regardless of career background of personal experience, wherever it may be attracting and retaining talent, based on key skills sought by the company while abiding by the principle of non-discrimination and equal opportunity. This clearly stands as a main challenge.

### *Initiative*

TotalEnergies has prioritized two key components of diversity, **gender balance and international diversity**, with the aim of offering women and men of all nationalities the same career opportunities up to the highest levels of management. **New targets have been set for 2025** for gender balance and international diversity among its highest executive bodies, other governing bodies and leadership positions.

In addition to gender balance and international diversity, disability forms an integral part of the company's diversity policy. The company's disability policy, initially deployed and coordinated in France and later extended worldwide, which implied the signature of the [ILO Global Business and Disability Network Charter](#), is one prominent example of their strong commitment to diversity culture. Aside from the company's diversity policy, specific initiatives to promote the integration and retention of people with disabilities have been enhanced. The **TotalEnergies Mission Handicap structure**, housed within the Diversity & Skills division of Corporate Human Resources, is responsible for implementing the disability policy across business segments, with the help of trained disability coordinators.

Internationally, 40 subsidiaries have voluntarily signed on to the policy and set goals for the next two years on the basis of the **five principles** identified as priorities by the company: respect and promotion of rights, non-discriminatory policies and practices, accessibility, job retention, and confidentiality. Signing the ILO's Global Business and Disability Network Charter has generated new momentum, which is reflected in tangible form by ongoing discussions of best practices among the subsidiaries and wider access to resources for raising awareness.

## ENGIE

### *Context and main challenges*

ENGIE now faces growing societal imperatives that reflect a change in the expectations of civil society and the authorities towards companies. Indeed, the Company is now seen as an actor that, because of its activities, is deeply rooted in society and must therefore play a role in improving it. At ENGIE, a commitment to building a more inclusive society is at the backbone of the company business model. Since 2017, inclusiveness has been one of the pillars of a **Global CSR Policy** of ENGIE that provides special attention to vulnerable groups – for example, those with disability or different ethnic backgrounds, NEETs,<sup>21</sup> long-unemployed workers, women and LGBT+ people – through the implementation of specific project and initiatives.

### *Initiative*

ENGIE collaborates with Diversicom, an NGO supporting people with disability in the research of employment and relation with the working environment. The partnership, started in 2014, provides a three-year guidance programme from Diversicom's experts to the employee, who is supported in the initial contact phases as well as in his or her day-to-day relation with the company. Furthermore, the **DuoDays project** allows people

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<sup>21</sup> NEET: acronym for 'Not in Employment, Education, or Training'.



with disability to experience various activities by sharing a working day with ENGIE employees in different business units and sectors.

Regarding D&I in relation to ethnicity, encounter and mediation are fundamental aspects. For this reason, ENGIE has established a partnership with Belgian institutions to highlight the plurality and productive richness of different cultures and backgrounds present on the national territory. The project “A bridge between in two worlds”, created in collaboration with the National Opera, aims to close the gap between EU and Middle East by providing insights on the Afghani and Syrian cultures.

## TITAN

### *Context and main challenges*

As a multinational company, TITAN's sustainable growth relies on the calibre, behaviour and involvement of its people worldwide. TITAN supports equality, diversity and inclusion, and is committed to **providing equal access and removing biases** in their operations.

### *Initiative*

A review of CSR and HR policies and processes from a D&I perspective has been completed in line with the goal of laying the foundations to

embed diversity and inclusion in people-focused practices, while seeking to ensure that the company's approach is meaningful in the context of their business strategy, and impactful and sensitive to the cultures and communities of the regions where TITAN works.

Internal and external executives from across different operating countries and roles have been engaged in this work. Each review raised strategy-level questions related to D&I and included recommended changes to existing policies and next steps to further strengthen TITAN's D&I policy framework. Working on these findings will allow TITAN to enhance core policies and ensure that it has an inclusive and diverse environment with equal opportunities.

## ADECCO

### *Context and main challenges*

The Adecco Group, has committed to making the future work for everyone. As a people business focused on providing talent solutions and advisory services, they envision a world in which everyone has the chance to participate in the world of work.

### *Initiative*

Besides many Diversity & Inclusion actions such as training, testing, social dialogue and longstanding



commitment against all discriminations, the company has developed a dedicated **Adecco Inclusion network** which started in France 25 years ago through social ventures and public-private partnerships aiming at bridging the gap between long term unemployed populations or socially disadvantaged groups and inclusive career paths towards sustainable employment. Adecco helps yearly 10,000 individuals enter or re-enter the labour market with a sustainable employment rate up to 70%.

The **Adecco Inclusion programme** is now being developed in other major markets with adapted solutions and actions targeting underserved populations.

## ENEL

### *Context and main challenges*

Including all diversity has a great impact for sustainability and innovation of the energy industry. Among D&I priorities Enel pays a special attention to **closing the gender gap and ensuring full participation at work of people with disability**.

### *Initiatives*

**Gender:** Enel is addressing the gender gap through an organic set of actions that influence all phases of women's journey within the organisation, while paying specific attention to issues of flexibility and harassment. The gender action plan is constantly monitored with a structured, evidence-based reporting system that links actions to specific KPIs and includes public disclosure of relevant targets.

Enel's main actions to support women are the following:

- Ensure a balanced representation of both genders in the initial phases of the recruitment process and promote the growth of women in management, middle-management positions and in succession plans, while impacting the managerial pay gap and empowering women in leadership.

- Organise in all countries of presence initiatives to raise awareness, especially for girls, of the opportunities arising in STEM fields.
- Ensure flexibility measures and remote working opportunities, sustaining also family care and parental experience, work-life integration and psychophysical well-being.
- Launch communication campaigns and initiatives to promote the value of inclusive behaviours and work environments, while raising awareness on bias and harassment in the workplace.

**Disability:** The **Value for Disability project** follows the public commitment undersigned in 2019 to the Valuable 500 network. The project is organized around inclusive interfunctional local teams from P&O, IT, Innovability and Market functions, directly involving people with disability in the needs' analysis and implementation of initiatives with an eye both to the employees and to customers. Specific streams of the project are dedicated to Enel clients, employees, and wider ecosystem. The "people stream" focuses on **physical and digital accessibility**, participation in organizational life and evolution in the inclusivity of the corporate culture. As part of the project, a specific tool to detect organizational needs of people living with disabilities has been designed, many training and awareness initiatives have been organized in many countries and digital accessibility of different platforms and APP has been improved. A **Disability community network** has also been launched to increase coordination of practice sharing among focal points for disability globally.

The global and local action plan resulting has been approved by the Board in Dec 2020 and the implementation is ongoing in the main countries of the Group.

## MICROSOFT

### *Context and main challenge*

More than 1 billion people around the world live with a disability, and at some point, most of us likely will face some type of temporary, situational or permanent disability. The practical impacts are huge: employment and education rates are lower and poverty rates are higher for people with disabilities. There is cause for optimism in closing what the World Bank rightly calls a “disability divide” and digital technology can play a critical role in bridging barriers to communication, interaction and information.

### *Initiative*

As the world begins recovering from the pandemic, the commitment to helping decrease the gap, starting with affordable and accessible technology, is stronger than ever.

In light of this, in April 2021, [Microsoft announced a new five-year commitment](#) to create and open doors to bigger opportunities for people with disabilities. That includes creating technology software and hardware that is accessible to people with wide-ranging physical and neurological abilities and helping people with disabilities gain education and job skills, connecting them with

employers, a more inclusive digital and physical work environments. The motto “nothing about us, without us” is something that Microsoft takes to heart every single day as all stakeholders work to create a more inclusive future.

All of this work is interrelated. It is not possible to create the next generation of accessible technology unless more people with disabilities play a bigger role in helping to develop it. The digital era is creating a new generation of technology that will require everyone to learn new skills, including people with disabilities. Microsoft has committed to act for creating an inclusive workplace that nurtures this talent. That is why this new initiative is founded in part on work to train more people about accessibility needs and accessible design. This stronger foundation will allow the company and partners to implement an “accessibility by design” philosophy.

Today there is a gap in datasets that include people with disabilities, known as the data desert: to be more inclusive and avoid biases that skew decision-making in artificial intelligence and machine learning systems, Microsoft aims to **increase the representation of people with disabilities in datasets**. Microsoft Research has one of the few dedicated accessibility research teams in the industry geared toward user-focused research advancing human-computer interaction.





# Personal Growth

In recent decades, various sources predicted that technological advances would heavily impact existing jobs, both in terms of operating models and the ways that work is performed. Indeed, the growing importance of technology and automation methods that favour these innovations have become more and more relevant for organisations and their employees. Moreover, automation, cloud computing and various applications of AI have contributed to economic growth and improved overall performance. Unfortunately, these digital disruptors also pose workforce challenges. CEOs are worried about the **availability of key skills**, as disappearing functions could result in severe skill mismatches in the workforce. Forty percent of European employers even report that they are unable to find people with the right skills to grow and innovate.<sup>22</sup>

In addition, we have seen an **increased demand for technological and (basic) digital skills**, while demand for manual and routine work, as well as basic cognitive skills, has decreased. As a result, some workers have acquired greater social value while other low-skilled employees are left to worry whether automation or other technological innovations will take away their job. In this context, the scope and targets of training initiatives become fundamental to ensure that the needs of vulnerable workers are correctly addressed. The already existing skill divide was only amplified when a large part of the workforce was forced to work remotely and organisations were pushed to invest in new forms of infrastructure. Moreover, the twin transitions towards climate neutrality and digital leadership are deeply impacting business models and ways of working. Avoiding change is no longer an option.

Despite considerable effort, **educational reforms and public policies are not keeping up with the rapid pace of transformation**. Consequently, corporate leaders are exploring new ways to ensure employability of the most vulnerable, while at the same time guaranteeing competitiveness and sound performance. Instead

of seeking out the most desirable candidates in the labour market, they have turned to upskilling and reskilling.

Low-skilled people represent a high percentage of the EU working-age population, and more strategic, sustainable, and coherent approaches are needed to support them in accessing and progressing through upskilling pathways. Adequate levels of both private and public investment should be stressed, as only a combined effort will succeed in addressing existing major funding gaps in this area. In this sense, **it is essential to connect multiple stakeholders** and allow the consolidation of efficient and coordinated actions that bring together public and private employers, including social partners.

To meet the challenges of today's technological disruptions, **organisations need to use upskilling to build a highly competent workforce**: this involves providing employees with new sets of knowledge, qualifications and skills to enter into a new or transformed function. While there are many ways to upskill and reskill, there are **two predominant approaches**. The first consists of upskilling everybody with a foundational level of transversal knowledge: a classic example is providing training courses accessible to all employees and improving the use of digital platforms to enable remote working. The second approach upskills a specific number of employees with a deeper level of expertise, targeting jobs that will be most impacted or even disappear. Creating a lasting relationship between providers of education and training and employers, as well as improving training providers' capacity to deliver green-oriented training for developing green skills, is indispensable for an efficient transition to climate neutrality – especially for the energy, water and transport sectors.

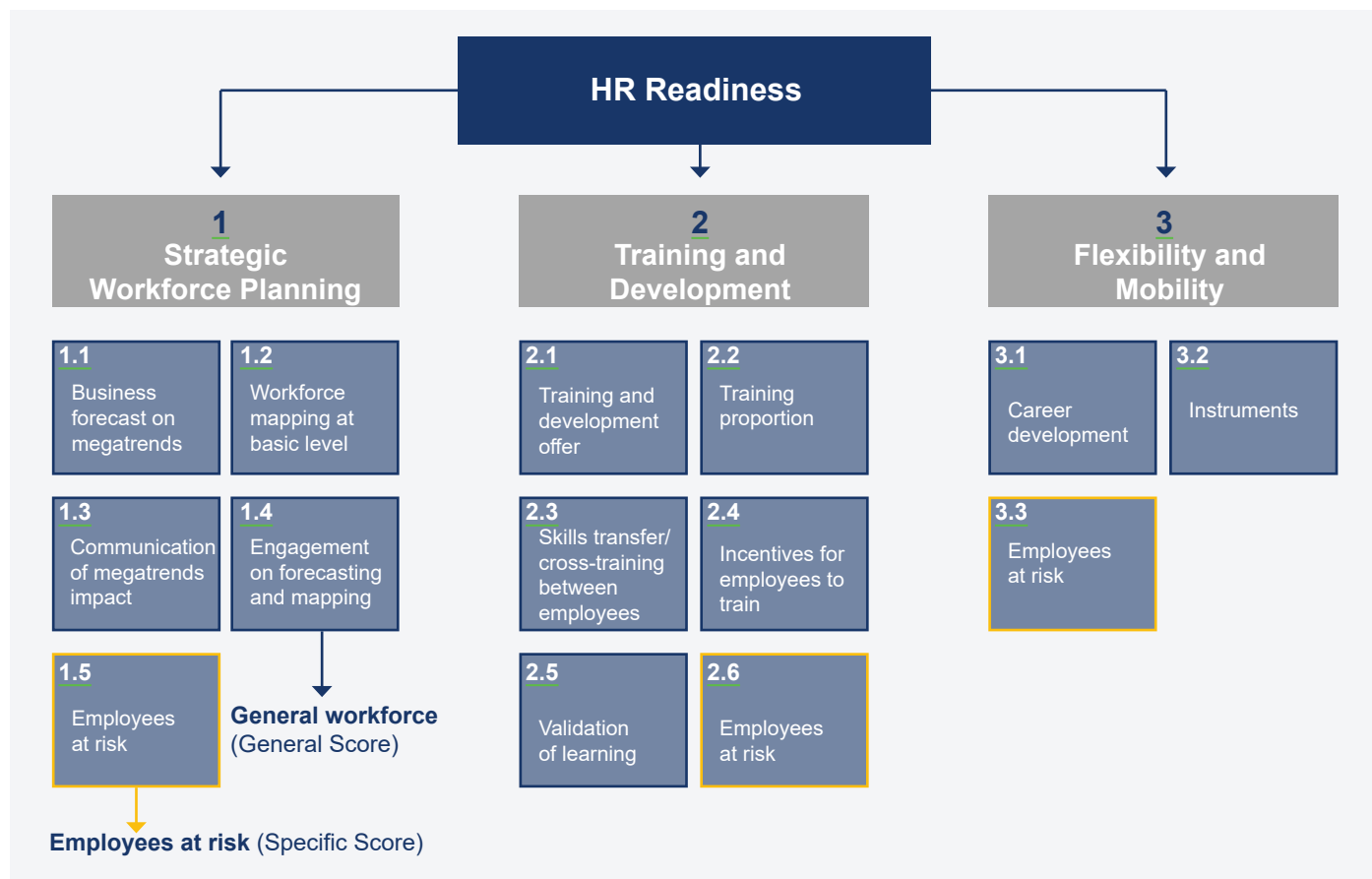
Human Capital leaders can take the lead in navigating leadership and the workforce towards being a future-proof organisation. It is their responsibility to create the right environment for

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<sup>22</sup> PwC (2020), [\*23rd Annual Global CEO Survey: Navigating the rising tide of uncertainty\*](#).



Figure 4: Upskill 4 Future's HR Readiness Assessment Framework



agility and continuous learning, making sure that people policies and processes are enablers of personal growth while anticipating the challenges of ongoing technological disruption.

Regarding personal growth, the following questions should be borne in mind:

- How can HR transformation support employability of the most vulnerable workers?
- How can organisations foster a culture of continuous learning and empower employees to shape personal growth?
- Which new competencies will be most in demand in the future?

## Companies Best Practices

### ENEL

#### Context and main challenges

In the current scenario of transformation and uncertainty, which requires new skills, professionalism and flexibility of adaptation, Enel's ambition is to provide an experience that inspires and empowers its people with the aim to enable the long-term employability during the transition and to build the clean energy workforce of the coming decade(s). The company is facing the challenges of the future of work by creating sustainable value, promoting inclusiveness, enhancing skills and fostering a proactive knowledge-sharing platform.

## Initiatives

A **new skills model** has been recently designed in line with the “Open Power” vision, which links three main areas – **Individual - Group - Organisation, Soft Leadership, and Creation of Sustainable Value** – and allows for reciprocal interaction. The new skills model, part of Enel's evolutionary roadmap, is an initiative focused on empowering people through a set of key factors aimed at meeting specific challenges, namely: Future of Work, New Way of Working, Digitalisation, Customer Centricity, and Life-Long Employability. The new model is based on **15 competences**, divided into three main areas, and encompasses characteristics, abilities and soft skills. Each area has specific characteristics that are well integrated in the Enel roadmap to and help build the employee Identity.

The three main areas are outlined as follows:

- **Individual - Group - Organisation relationship:** (Emotional, Social and Organisational Intelligence; Creativity and Disruptive Innovation; Sense-making and Storytelling, New Team Working; Goal Setting/ Orientation)
- **Soft Leadership:** (Empowering and Coaching; Entrepreneurship and Risk-taking; Decision Making; E- leadership and Complexity Management)

- **Creation of Sustainable Value:** (Safety/ Well-being and the Environment; Digital Content and Critical Thinking; Flexibility and Continuous Learning; Customer Centrality; Inclusiveness and Cross-culture; Data Management)

Skill empowerment and reskilling on digitalization becomes particularly relevant in a fast-changing digital work environment and industry, especially considering the significant percentage in Enel of employees over 50.

The **Re-Generation project**, launched in Italy in February 2021, aims to ensure lifelong employability, enhance specialistic skills on digital economy and technology to fill the generation gap and encourage vocational retraining. The first edition of the project, run in partnership with the telematic University Uninettuno, was addressed to employees with school-leaving certificate who joined on voluntary base. Around 9,000 people have been involved in a dedicated communication campaign and 996 colleagues enrolled in the courses (called Short Learning Programs, i.e., short academic training paths lasting 8-10 weeks). Enel bears completely the costs of the initiative. Moreover, if the training is successfully completed by the students, it will give the possibility to obtain University Training Credits (ECTS), which can be used for the enrolment in new complete training courses such as degree courses at Uninettuno University and in all European Universities.



## MICROSOFT

### *Context and main challenges*

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the pace of digital transformation for organisations of all shapes and sizes. It has also highlighted a worrying **divide between those with the skills to succeed in the new world of work and those without**, which has been reinforcing the need for skills/learning opportunities for youth/job-seekers to meet the requirements of an evolving labour market. At the same time, extended career interruptions may impair re-learning and the acquisition of digital competencies, hindering the possibility to re-enter the job market. European Businesses and the European regulators must commit together to equip professionals and future generations with the necessary skills to compete on today's global market. There is more work to be done to create equal opportunities for everyone.

### *Initiative*

In June 2020, [Microsoft announced a global skilling initiative](#) to reach 25 million people worldwide and to ensure their acquisition of digital skills needed in a post-pandemic economy. Within nine months, Microsoft helped more than 30 million people worldwide and more than 9 million in Europe. This is reflected in the extensive uptake in LinkedIn courses that address horizontal skills needed for a wide variety of jobs, including: critical soft skills, diversity, inclusion and belonging, and digital transformation.

The company's [commitment for 2021](#) is to support 250,000 companies in making a skills-based hire, boosting understanding of skills amongst both employers and governments. To do so, Microsoft has introduced resources designed to help job seekers and employers all over Europe move to a more skills-based economy. Examples are represented by Microsoft Slovakia's training project to support and empower 2000 women following maternity leave, and Microsoft Viva, an employee experience platform that brings together communications, knowledge, learning, resources and insights.

Microsoft Viva includes **Viva Learning**, empowering employees with formal and informal learning when and where it is needed, making it easier for people to learn while working.

Additionally, a series of programs to support efforts for refugee integration across Western Europe has been launched, with the goal of upskilling current generations for the jobs of tomorrow. These free training and curriculum resources were created to help humanitarian organizations deliver training that will help refugees gain digital literacy and computer science skills.

### **Some examples in European countries:**

- **Germany:** launch of a new version of Schlaumäuse language-learning app, designed to help migrant children learn German quickly and easily; Skills for Employability initiative in partnership with the ReDI School of Digital Integration to fill a vacancy of 100,000 jobs in 2020.
- **Italy:** collaboration with Fondazione Mondo Digitale to help refugees develop their digital skills
- **Denmark:** series of workshop for over 100 refugees looking to get back on track with their careers.



# Opinions and Recommendations on the Future of Work

Over the course of two focus groups, corporate and non-corporate stakeholders have discussed the **three main pillars of the Inclusion Think Tank: Diversity & Inclusion, Skills, and Well-being**. Some of the main reflections and recommendations from companies, experts and civil society are outlined below.

## Cultural change & Private-Public Partnerships

For the first time, there is a win-win situation on D&I and well-being, as business issues, societal issues and people issues are starting to align. As the Future of Work discussion is shaping a cultural change in the workforce and in the political agenda-setting, it is fundamental to align company policies with this change. Initiatives need to be able to shift the paradigm and the framework of discussion within companies, reaching all stakeholders and embedding comprehension at all levels.

**Inclusiveness for being effective needs to be fully integrated at all levels of governance**, from executives to heads of units and employees, and in line with public goals and interests. For this purpose, those actors are in need of training on themes such as D&I and well-being. With the right support and guidance, they can transform into role models and coaches for their team. A more inclusive leadership might favour an open dialogue on such sensitive themes, favouring solutions that are truly capable of addressing employees' new needs and concerns. In this context, **social dialogue and consultations with social partners at EU and national levels can provide valuable support**. Additionally, public-private partnerships (PPPs) or other forms of collaboration with governments and local public authorities could ensure alignment and a corporate endorsement of inclusion, training and well-being public initiatives and policies.

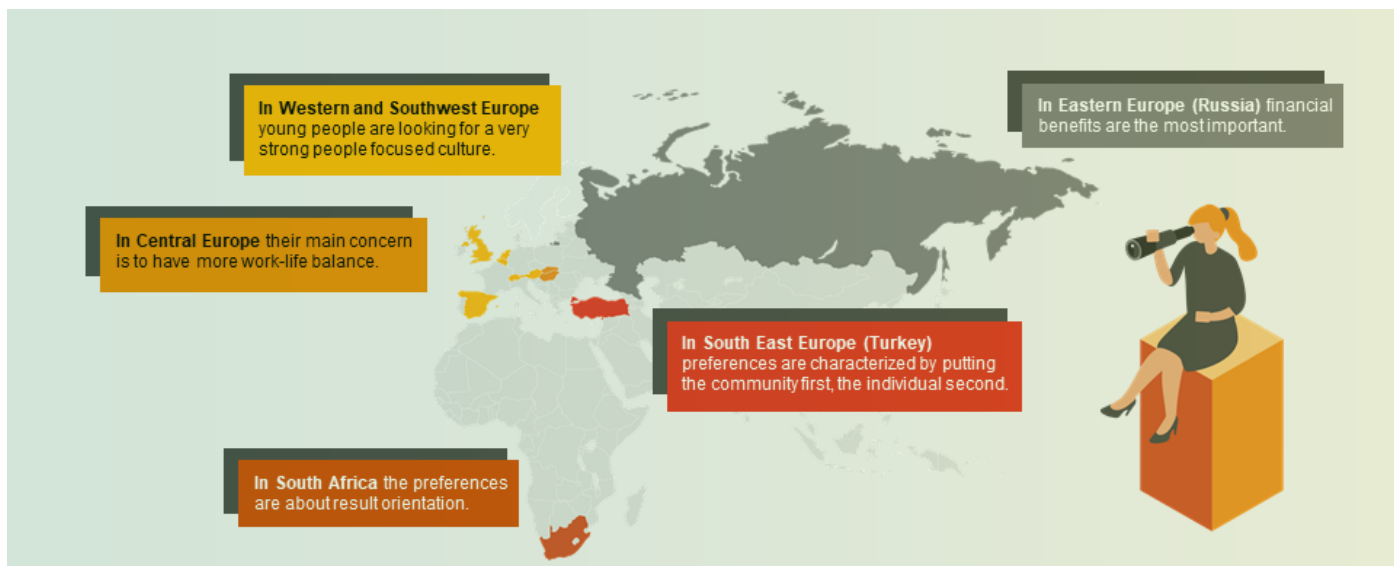
## Lifelong learning & Personal Development

Regarding personal development, focus groups have highlighted **the need to create a culture of training** that is oriented towards constant change and facilitates a true comprehension of the added value of education and training. Training may be embedded in work and management practices and aligned with external societal macro-trends, such as the green and digital transitions. Individuals should be empowered independently from their role and be provided with tools and competences that enable them to freely decide where and when to use them. In this regard, it is important to be **sensitive to personal difficulties and differences in the ability to make independent choices on training** or seek career pathway guidance.

Companies also express the need for support in trying to solve training-related issues: SMEs are more often affected by limited expertise and budget constraints and therefore find it more difficult to provide training. At the same time, companies are still too concerned with time and costs: **trainings are not seen as an integrated part of working activities** and are still dependent on regulatory input. Additionally, the language barrier often impedes the inclusion of people with a foreign background, such as refugees, since training is often provided solely in the company's home language.

**Initiatives focussing on talent research in underrepresented groups often lead to external research**, thereby excluding or not making full use of competences already present in the country. The risk here is to misplace or undervalue second-generation talent, which has negative impacts on social inclusion in the work market. Another issue is related to training distribution across functions and business units: migrants, low-skilled workers





and blue-collar workers receive less training than other groups, due in part to their non-traditional backgrounds or the positions they fill, and their timetables are often more difficult to reschedule. In this context, it is important for companies to **ensure the provision of tailored services and training** to effectively address employee needs and concerns.

Overall, companies agree on the importance of employee empowerment and personal development. The focus groups have shared several examples of workers' training and personal growth initiatives: these include internal mobility projects, personalised support for professional development, guidance through interviews, career reviews and tailored training plans.

### Employees' needs

The focus groups have also discussed the impacts of digitalisation and the pandemic on employees. The PwC 2020 workforce preference study gathered valuable international insights from the workforce of the future.<sup>23</sup> The study peers through the lens of students and career starters around the world to highlight a set of **common values and workforce preferences**, namely: transparency and fairness, reputation, mobility, and flexibility.

The study aligns with reflections from participating companies on tailored and personal needs: it is

clear that **a one-size-fits-all approach is not the best way for an organisation to build its external and internal employer brand**. It will be crucial for organisations to build on reliable data when creating an attractive workplace, both now and in the future. Additionally, local culture, history, social norms and the main attributes of the labour market seem to be affecting young people's preferences. There are clearly some unique preferences – besides the globally prevailing ones – in each of the regions surveyed: in Western and South-Western Europe, young people are looking for very strong people-focused environments. They favour high standards of living and long-standing traditions of conscious corporate culture development, and are driven by a desire for self-fulfilment.

As a result, **corporate cultures that focus on people and employers whose work is people-oriented rank highly**. At the same time, individual autonomy and responsibility are of lower priority than teamwork (i.e. shared responsibility), which is highly valued. In addition, an organisation becomes more attractive to (potential) employees the more attractive the reward package and the greater the opportunities for lifelong learning. However, an attractive reward package alone will not be enough to satisfy an employee in Western and South-Western Europe.

As mentioned during the focus group workshop, there are several approaches that companies can develop to support their employees.

<sup>23</sup> PwC Belgium (2021), [PwC Workforce Preference Study 2020: EMEA Focus](#)

# Conclusions

This report aims to represent the first step in corporate reflection and action on social inclusion and the inclusive workplace. As outlined, rapid changes in work activities and models, which the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated, require policy makers, companies and stakeholders to put forth an ambitious vision and take long strides towards promoting personal development, inclusion and well-being.

The numerous transformational system changes that are happening, the spectre of environmental overshoot, and the rise of inequality and poverty of the last two years are pushing companies to unlock their full potential and work proactively to achieve the Just Transition, where no one is left behind.

It is more relevant than ever for all stakeholders to play a role in this transition: governments, civil society, international organisations, social partners and companies must work together in the pursuit of shared goals. The Inclusion Think Tank has aimed to provide a framework for discussion and dialogue among different stakeholders, and to

support companies that are reflecting on their role for the future and factors critical to their success.

Some of the important questions to be asked are:

- *What can be done today to be resilient and successful in the future?*
- *Which initiatives will need to be implemented to fit the specific needs of employees without leaving people behind?*
- *What will be the new work-related challenges that stakeholders will have to face?*

There is much more work to do, but there is now significant momentum for action that could have profound impacts for our future.





*In collaboration with:*



## **DISCLAIMER**

The contents and opinions in this paper are those of the authors alone.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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CSR Europe is the leading European business network for Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility.

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