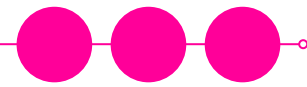


CELEBRATING  
**25**  
YEARS  
OF IMPACT

**BUSINESS  
IN THE  
COMMUNITY  
IRELAND**



The Elevate Pledge 2025 Annual Report



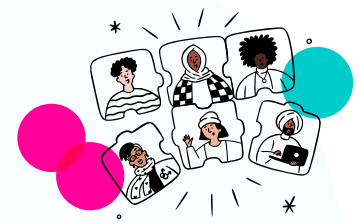
## Context

Glossary of Terms

- Foreword
- Elevate – The Inclusive Workplace Pledge
- Elevate Pledge Signatories

- Elevate Workforce Data Disclosure
- Signatory Approach to DE&I at a Glance
- Elevate Signatory Performance Scorecard on Diversity Indicators
- Elevate Signatory Performance Scorecard on Inclusive Practices

## Signatory Diversity Profile



## Exploring Key Indicators

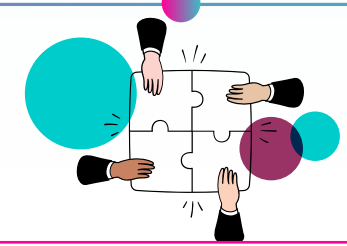
- Focus on Gender (Female Representation)
- Focus on Disability
- Focus on Ethnicity
- Focus on Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity
- Focus on Neurodiversity
- Focus on Socio Economic Status

BITCI's Leader's Group on Social Inclusion

Building Inclusive Pathways – A Strategic Framework for Inclusion

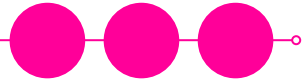
## Future Progress

The Path Forward





# Glossary of Terms



**ACCESSIBILITY** is ensuring that everyone can access places, opportunities, resources, and support no matter their physical or mental abilities. Designing for use by all ensures no one is excluded. This involves considering who may not be able to access or use something, physically, online, visually, and ensuring it is designed so everyone can benefit.

**ALLYSHIP** is about recognising personal privilege or power and using it to advocate for people in underrepresented groups. Understanding and promoting allyship is essential in fostering inclusive environments.

**DIVERSITY** is understanding and recognising difference. A diverse workforce is one with a range of people from different backgrounds, generations, ethnicities, races, cultures, accessibilities, sexual orientation, beliefs, ideologies and more.

**EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS** (ERGs) are employee-led groups at workplace that foster a diverse and inclusive culture aligned with organisational missions and values. ERGs allow employees to make connections with colleagues and build a sense of community.

**EQUALITY** means ensuring that everyone has the same opportunities and receives the same treatment, resources, and support. Inequality is used to describe a lack of equality.

However, **EQUITY** recognises that individuals have different circumstances and may require different types of treatment, resources, and support. It is about giving people what they need, to make things fair, rather than giving everyone the same. This is not the same as equality, nor is it the same as inequality.

**ETHNICITY** is a broader concept than race and includes or combines nationality, citizenship, race, colour, language, ancestry, religion, and customs of dress or eating.

**ETHNIC MINORITY** refers to racial and ethnic groups that make up a smaller proportion of the population of a particular country or group. Minority ethnic groups vary in each country.

**GENDER IDENTITY** refers to an individual's personal sense of their own gender. It encompasses how a person perceives themselves in terms of being male, female, a combination of both, or neither male nor female.

**GENDER PAY GAP** in Ireland is the difference between the average hourly wages based on biological gender (i.e. Male and Female), calculated across all jobs and employees, not just for those in similar roles. The gender pay gap is different to equal pay which ensures equal pay for equal work regardless of gender.

**INCLUSION** An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels that they belong, that their contribution matters, that they can be themselves no matter their background, identity, or circumstances. It is about ensuring that everyone in society is represented, and that people's differences are valued, ensuring there are equal opportunities for everyone to thrive in the workplace.

**INTERSECTIONALITY** is a concept that examines how various social identities (e.g., ability, race, gender, sexual orientation, socio economic status) intersect to create unique modes of discrimination and privilege. Understanding intersectionality is crucial in addressing the multifaceted nature of discrimination.

**LGBTQIA+** stands for: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual with the + encompassing any sexual orientations or gender identities that do not correspond to heterosexuality.

**RACE** is defined based on people's shared distinctive physical traits, such as skin, hair and eyes. Race and Ethnicity are a similar concept, however ethnicity also includes cultural characteristics such as those outlined in the definition earlier.

**SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS** usually reflects access to financial, educational, social and health resources within the society. A combination of factors like income, education, and occupation can influence various aspects of life, including health, education, access to employment and overall wellbeing.

**SOCIAL COHESION** can be defined as the glue that holds communities together. It encompasses various elements such as trust, shared values, and social interactions, which contribute to a sense of belonging and solidarity among community members. The importance of social cohesion cannot be overstated, as it fosters cooperation, empathy, and resilience in the face of adversities.

**UNCONSCIOUS BIASES** are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their conscious awareness. Recognising and addressing these biases is crucial to ensure fair & inclusive treatment.

**UNDERREPRESENTED GROUP** refers to a population of people who are insufficiently or inadequately represented compared to their actual proportion of the general population. Terms such as underrepresented ethnic groups, underrepresented communities, and underrepresented cultures are also used to describe these groups.

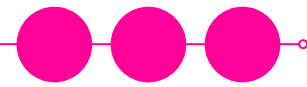
Adapted version of Glossary from [Driving Inclusion Powering Change Report](#) by SSE Airtricity



## Context

At Business in the Community Ireland our purpose is to inspire, challenge and facilitate businesses to bring about a sustainable, low carbon economy and more inclusive society where everyone thrives.

- Ireland in 2025 is experiencing a multitude of complex social issues. From rising health inequalities to housing shortages, a cost-of-living crisis and increasing demands of immigration – the fabric of our society is being put under huge pressure and divisions are growing. Communities are being pitted against each other in a bid for scarce resources. We're seeing hate speech on the rise and genuine social issues being used to stoke anger and cultivate resentment.



As we enter 2025, the global conversation on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) is both evolving and being tested. While some markets have seen pushback against structured DE&I efforts, leading organisations—particularly those committed to responsible business—are reaffirming inclusion as a core business and social imperative. In this context [Elevate: The Inclusive Workplace Pledge](#) remains a vital catalyst for progress in Ireland.

DE&I strategies should not be viewed as an obligation, rather they are strategies that create pathways to innovation, resilience, and long-term performance. In Ireland, this recognition is deepening: business leaders increasingly understand that **inclusive workplaces are central to addressing inequality, unlocking talent, and strengthening social cohesion.**

The Elevate campaign—through its focus on **measuring workforce diversity, fostering peer learning, and driving accountability**—is uniquely positioned to support this shift. In 2025, its role is amplified by transformative policy developments such as the EU Pay Transparency Directive and rising expectations around social value in procurement, both of which bring inclusion and fairness into sharper focus for employers.

At the same time, Ireland's demographic diversity is increasing, alongside a growing awareness of intersectionality—how overlapping identities such as ethnicity, disability, gender, and socio economic background shape workplace experiences. Against this backdrop, Elevate helps companies move beyond awareness to **data-informed, actionable strategies for real inclusion.**

BITCI's role in convening companies, sharing best practice, and linking inclusion with the broader ESG agenda means the Elevate Pledge is not just an initiative but a foundation for how Irish business can **drive equality, opportunity, and a fairer society.**

**Inclusion is not optional**; it is a business necessity and a driver of long-term success—it requires **deliberate action, transparency, and accountability.** By signing up to Elevate, organisations commit not only to measuring progress but to driving change where it matters most: in the lived experiences of their people. We call on every employer to take this step, to share the responsibility, and to **stand with us in building workplaces that reflect the true diversity of Ireland today and tomorrow.**



**Tomás Sercovich**

CEO, Business in the  
Community Ireland



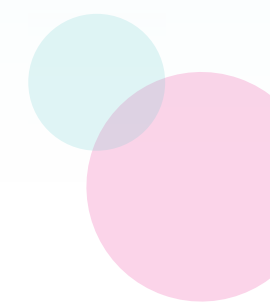
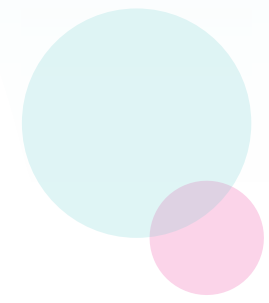
**Sinéad Patton**

Chief Finance and Commercial  
Officer – Ireland and Nordics,  
Finance Director – Industrial,  
Water & Energy UK  
Veolia



**Harry Goddard**

CEO, Deloitte Ireland LLP





At BITCI our purpose is to inspire, challenge and facilitate businesses to drive a sustainable, low-carbon economy and foster a more inclusive society where everyone thrives. Central to this mission is Elevate: The Inclusive Workplace Pledge, a collective commitment by Irish businesses to build more inclusive workplaces that reflect the diversity of our society.

With over 60 signatory companies representing more than 160,000 employees, Elevate brings together businesses at all stages of their diversity, equity, and inclusion journey—united by a shared ambition to make meaningful progress.

Despite Ireland's strong employment figures, too many people continue to face barriers to work. Migrants, members of the Traveller Community, people with disabilities or long-term health conditions, and many women remain underrepresented or concentrated in low-paying roles. At BITCI, we believe employment is the most powerful tool to break the cycle of poverty and exclusion, enabling individuals to participate fully in society.

Real change requires intentional design. Too often, individuals from underrepresented backgrounds are overlooked—excluded by job descriptions, discouraged by selection processes, or unable to see themselves reflected in the workplace. Elevate challenges employers to design for inclusion, to “screen in” talent, and to build workplaces where everyone, regardless of background or circumstance, has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

The Elevate Pledge goes beyond statements of intent. It requires action. Signatories commit to two key steps:

- **Understand – Build a diversity profile of their workforce to identify gaps and opportunities.**
- **Act – Take a public, tangible action to increase inclusion.**

Now is the time for employers to lead with intention, to move beyond passive inclusion, and to take responsibility for shaping a workforce that truly reflects our society. Elevate: The Inclusive Workplace Pledge is more than a promise—it's a pathway to action, accountability, and impact.

We invite your organisation to join us. By signing the Elevate Pledge, you demonstrate your commitment to building a fairer, more inclusive Ireland.

**Take the first step. Be part of the change. [Sign the Elevate Pledge today.](#)**



## **A&L Goodbody**

David Widger (Managing Partner)

## **ABM**

David Ferguson (Interim Joint Managing Director)

## **Accenture**

Hilary O'Meara (Country Managing Director)

## **AIB Group**

Colin Hunt (CEO)

## **Aldi**

Niall O'Connor (Country Managing Director)

## **An Post**

David McRedmond (CEO)

## **Aviva Life and Pensions**

Barry Cudmore (CEO)

## **Aviva General Insurance**

Declan O'Rourke (CEO)

## **Bank of Ireland Group**

Myles O'Grady (Group Chief Executive)

## **Bidvest Noonan**

Declan Doyle (Group CEO)

## **Bord Gáis Energy**

Dave Kirwan (Managing Director)

## **Britvic Ireland, Carlsberg Group**

Kevin Donnelly (Managing Director)

## **BT Ireland**

Shay Walsh (Managing Director)

## **Bus Éireann**

Stephen Kent (CEO)

## **Cairn**

Michael Stanley (CEO)

## **Calor**

Duncan Osborne (CEO)

## **Central Bank of Ireland**

Gabriel Makhoul (Governor)

## **Coillte**

Imelda Hurley (CEO)

## **Compass Group Ireland**

Deirdre O'Neill (Managing Director)

## **Cook Limerick**

Bill Doherty (Executive Vice President)

## **Cork Chamber**

Conor Healy (CEO)

## **daa plc**

Kenny Jacobs (CEO)

## **Deloitte Ireland LLP**

Harry Goddard (CEO)

## **DHL Supply Chain**

Patrick Corbett (Managing Director)

## **Diageo Ireland**

Louise Ryan (Managing Director)

## **Eason**

Liam Hanly (Managing Director)

## **eir**

Oliver Loomes (CEO)

## **EirGrid plc**

Cathal Marley (Chief Executive)

## **Energia Group**

Ian Thom (CEO)

## **ESB**

Paddy Hayes (Chief Executive)

## **ESW**

Eric Eichmann (CEO)

## **Gas Networks Ireland**

Ronan Galwey (Acting CEO)

## **Glenveagh Properties PLC**

Stephen Garvey (CEO & Co-Founder)

## **Grant Thornton Ireland**

Stephen Tennant (Managing Partner)

## **HEINEKEN Ireland**

Sharon Walsh (Managing Director)

## **HSBC Ireland**

Laura Trimble (CEO)

## **Iarnród Éireann**

Jim Meade (CEO)

## **IBM Ireland Ltd.**

Nathan Cullen (Country General Manager)

## **J&J Innovative Medicine Little Island**

Andrew Flynn (General Manager)

## **J&J Innovative Medicine Ringaskiddy**

Dana Daneshvari (General Manager)

## **John Paul Construction**

Liam Kenny (Managing Director)

## **John Sisk & Son**

Paul Brown (CEO)

## **KPMG Ireland**

Ryan McCarthy (Managing Partner)

## **KSG**

Michael Gleeson (Managing Director)

## **Lidl Ireland**

Robert Ryan (CEO)

## **Marks & Spencer (Ireland) Ltd**

Eddie Murphy (Country Director – Ireland and Northern Ireland)

## **Musgrave**

Noel Keeley (CEO)

## **Ornua**

Conor Galvin (CEO)

## **PTSB**

Eamonn Crowley (CEO)

## **PwC**

Enda McDonagh (Managing Partner)

## **Roadstone**

Donal Rigney (Managing Director)

## **RSA Insurance and 123.ie**

Kevin Thompson (CEO)

## **Servier (Ireland) Industries Ltd.**

Pascal Baraffe (General Manager)

## **Sky Ireland**

JD Buckley (CEO)

## **Sodexo Ireland**

David Fox (Managing Director)

## **SSE**

Klair Neenan (Managing Director, SSE Airtricity)

## **Sumitomo Mitsui Trust (Ireland) Limited**

Hiroyuki Takano (CEO)

## **Sysco Ireland**

Mark Lee (CEO)

## **Tesco Ireland**

Geoff Byrne (CEO)

## **Three Ireland**

Elaine Carey (CEO)

## **Uisce Éireann**

Niall Gleeson (CEO)

## **Veolia**

Sinéad Patton (Chief Financial and Commercial Officer – Ireland and Nordics, Finance Director – Industrial, Water & Energy UK)

## **VHI**

Brian Walsh (Group CEO)

## **William Fry**

Stephen Keogh (Managing Partner)



## Signatory Diversity Profile

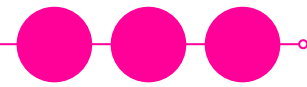
A cornerstone of The Elevate Pledge is the presentation of a diversity profile of the collective workforce of Signatory companies. To create this diversity profile Signatories were asked to submit a dataset with their organisation's diversity profile in as much detail as they could provide. 60 companies provided anonymised data of their workforce.

These datasets were aggregated to create one Elevate Workforce profile.

In addition to diversity demographic data, Signatories also completed a short survey which captured characteristics of their approach to managing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The summary findings of this survey are also presented in this section.



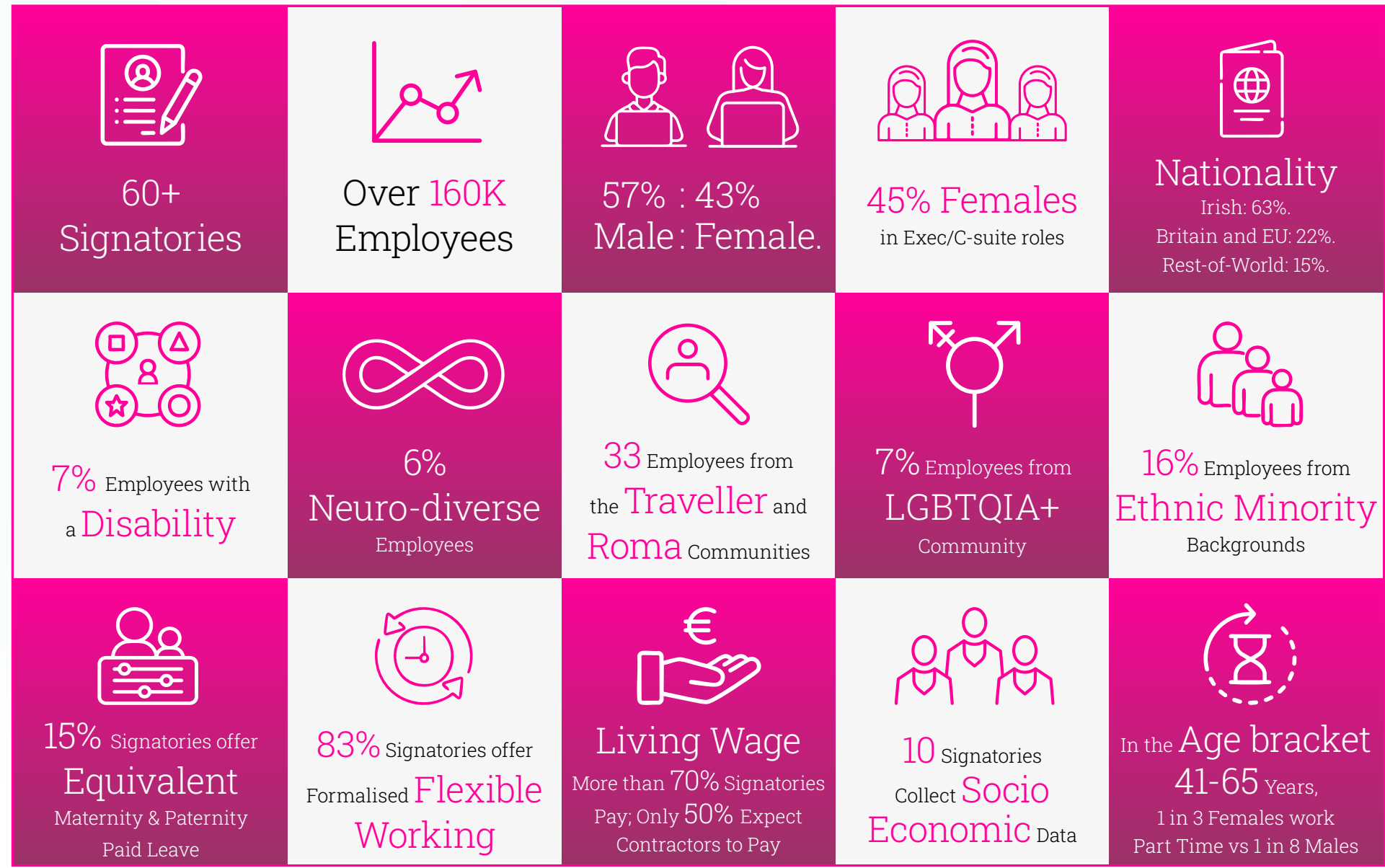
# Elevate Workforce Data Disclosure



The Elevate Inclusive Workplace Pledge continues to grow in reach and impact, with over 60 signatories representing more than 160,000 employees across Ireland. The data shared by signatories highlights both progress and the work still ahead. Females now account for 45% of Executive and C-suite roles, while overall workforce representation stands at 43% female. Increasingly, diversity is visible across other dimensions too: 16% of employees identify as being from ethnic minority backgrounds, 7% as LGBTQIA+, 7% as living with a disability, and 6% as neurodiverse. Representation also includes 33 employees from the Traveller and Roma communities.

Beyond demographics, signatories are advancing inclusion through practical commitments—83% now offer formalised flexible working, 15% provide equivalent maternity and paternity leave, and more than 70% pay the Living Wage. These actions, combined with growing data collection on socio economic backgrounds, demonstrate the collective steps Irish businesses are taking to build fairer, more inclusive workplaces.

\*percentages are based on disclosure rates

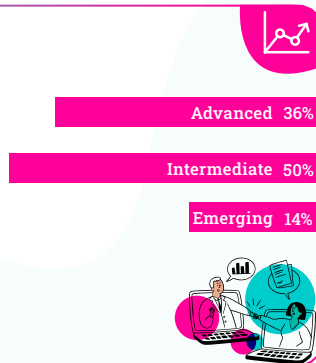


# Signatory Approach to DE&I at a Glance

## Maturity

65% of Signatories who rated themselves as Advanced link Performance Management to DE&I KPIs.

Signatories self-rate their maturity on DE&I.



## Inclusive Hiring Practices

74% of Signatories have a **formal recruitment strategy** to attract and select the best talent from the widest possible pool. 50% have set DE&I targets around diverse recruitment. However, only 28% have set DE&I targets for development, progression and retention of colleagues.

### Most Popular Activities to Support Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Recruitment

- Job descriptions in neutral language
- Only necessary requirements/ skills listed on job descriptions
- Diverse selection panels for all roles
- Diverse shortlist of candidates for all roles



## Voluntary Disclosure Campaigns

Almost **70% Signatories** are currently **gathering diversity profile data** (or plan to start in 2025) through Voluntary Disclosure campaigns. More than half of these Signatories are capturing Disability, Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation in addition to Age & Gender.



## KPIs and Targets

90% of Signatories set **KPIs for DE&I**. The most common KPI relates to Increasing Female Representation In Senior Roles, with 69% of Signatories setting targets for this. **43%** of Signatories **link DE&I Targets to Executive/C-Suite performance**.



## Partnerships with Employment Support Groups

62% of Signatories have **partnered with Employment Support Organisations** to widen their recruitment channels. These partnerships have resulted in over **160 hires** into the Elevate workforce during 2024.



## Diverse-Ability

Disability/ Diverse-Ability has been a big focus for Signatories during 2024. Data showed a **53% increase in the number of signatories tracking disability**, 35% rise in the number of Ability/ Disability focused Employee Resource Groups, however, the number of companies setting disability related KPIs has stayed the same at only 8% Signatories.

### Most Popular Ability focused Activities amongst Signatories are:

- Mental Health First Aid Training
- Provision of Sensory Rooms
- Introduction of Neurodiversity Policies



## Under Employment for Ethnic Minority Groups

Representation of Ethnic minority groups in Elevate Workforce is at 16% which reflects positively against wider society where there is 13% representation. However, there is **over-representation at entry level**, and under-representation in more senior roles. External reports confirm that almost **40% of non-EU migrants** working in Ireland are **over-qualified for the roles they are employed in**.



## Employee Resource Groups

Employee Resource Groups continue to be a strong component within Signatory DE&I strategies. **84%** of Signatories have **at least one ERG** in place. Majority of them report into the Senior Leadership although **only 36% set KPIs for their ERGs**.



## Training

Unconscious Bias and General Diversity Awareness are the most popular training topics offered. **80%** of Signatories offer at least one of these, however, **only 46% of Signatories offer the training to All Colleagues**.



## Resourcing













**90%** of Signatories have a **DE&I Sponsor at C-Suite or Board Level**. However, only 57% of Signatories have a dedicated, Full Time DE&I Manager.



# Elevate Signatory Performance Scorecard on Diversity Indicators



Elevate's ultimate ambition is to create a workforce that reflects the diversity of Irish Society and with this scorecard we aim to highlight both representation metrics and inclusive practices. The scorecard is being introduced as a quick reference guide to encourage accountability and to drive measurable change.

 <p><b>Gender</b></p>	<p><b>Leading</b></p> 	<p>Representation of women at Exec/ C-suite roles within the Elevate Companies is 45% which is higher than the national average as per the <a href="#">Gender Balance in Business Survey</a>. Female representation in senior roles is the most popular DE&amp;I KPI amongst the Elevate signatories.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Set targets for building pathways for women to be represented in all work streams and organisational levels.</p>
 <p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p><b>Committed</b></p> 	<p>The current representation of people with disabilities within the Elevate Companies is 7%. Census 2022 indicates that 16% of people in the labour force identify as having a disability. We are seeing progress on building inclusive culture and accommodating environments focused on people with disability, but often it is left to chance.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Set targets for disability representation.</p>
 <p><b>Ethnicity</b></p>	<p><b>Committed</b></p> 	<p>16% employees in the Elevate workforce belong to ethnic minority background, which is more than the 13% in Ireland's overall ethnic population. However, employees from ethnic backgrounds are over represented at the entry level roles and as we progress up the organisational levels, the representation numbers decline.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Build pathways for minority groups to participate in internal progression opportunities.</p>
 <p><b>LGBTQIA+</b></p>	<p><b>Committed</b></p> 	<p>The Elevate workforce showed an increased disclosure on Sexual Orientation in 2025 and 7% of the Elevate workforce identifies from LGBTQIA+ community. We have also seen an increase in Pride focused ERGs as well as more companies capturing sexual orientation via voluntary disclosure campaigns.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Foster belonging through visible allyship, inclusive events, and everyday respectful language.</p>
 <p><b>Neurodiversity</b></p>	<p><b>Supportive</b></p> 	<p>Neurodiversity was added as a new indicator in 2025, with 6% of Elevate employees identifying as neurodiverse—significantly below the global estimate of 15–20%. However, it is positive to see that more than 10 signatories are actively working towards neuroinclusion/ reasonable accommodation policies and awareness building at their workplaces.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Promote understanding through awareness, flexibility, and celebrating diverse cognitive strengths.</p>
 <p><b>Socio Economic Status</b></p>	<p><b>Supportive</b></p> 	<p>Only 10 companies are capturing Socio Economic Status for their employees and very little data is provided for the Elevate report. Social mobility is an increasing area of interest for many signatories, and about 70% are partnering with DEIS schools to address the challenge of access of opportunity to those from socio economically disadvantaged sections of the society.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Strengthen recruitment from disadvantaged communities by deepening DEIS school partnerships.</p>

**Leading:** The organisation is setting a strong example in inclusion—demonstrating impact, innovation, and meaningful change.

**Committed:** The organisation is committed and taking consistent steps, but progress is steady rather than transformative.

**Supportive:** The organisation is laying the groundwork—engagement has begun, but more intentional action is needed.

# Elevate Signatory Performance Scorecard on Inclusive Practices



## Targets and KPIs

Leading



90% of signatories set DE&I KPIs and 43% link DE&I targets to Executive/ C-Suite/ CEO performance measurement. Target setting allows for focused interventions to be implemented and linking the targets to performance measurement will allow for the required resources to be spent on DE&I KPIs.

**Recommendation:** Set targets on your key workforce representation challenges.



## Family Friendly Policies

Committed



An increasing number of signatories are focussing on family friendly policies. 96% signatories provide maternity leave over and above statutory with 15% signatories offering equal maternity & paternity leave. Focus on life stages and circumstances has been brought into consideration through various policies e.g. Fertility, Surrogacy, Flexible Working etc.

**Recommendation:** Encourage all colleagues especially Senior Leadership to avail of flexible working.



## Pay Gap

Committed



Despite fair gender representation at senior levels within the Elevate signatory companies, the collective Gender Pay Gap is at 10.3%.

**Recommendation:** Set gender based representation targets for all work streams and organisational levels.



## Voluntary Disclosure Campaigns

Committed



Voluntary Disclosure campaigns are imperative to understanding the diversity profile of the workforce driving evidence based action. 70% of signatories have confirmed that they are currently, or will start in 2025, to gather staff diversity data via voluntary disclosure campaigns.

**Recommendation:** Build awareness on the purpose of diversity data collection amongst staff and allow for space to address concerns.



## Living Wage

Supportive



The most recent Elevate data shows that almost 10,000 employees of the Elevate workforce that had direct permanent contracts and were working full time were earning less than the living wage. More than 90% signatories confirm providing financial wellbeing support, however the percentage of companies paying the living wage is at 75%. Signatories that expect contractors to pay the Living wage is lower at 54%.

**Recommendation:** Become a Living Wage Employer.



## Training

Supportive



Unconscious Bias and General Diversity Awareness are the most popular trainings and majority of the signatories offer at least one, however less than 50% of signatories offer these to all staff. Training is an opportunity for employers to do more to advance inclusion, particularly with the growing divisions in society on Migrants/ Ethnicity/ Race and Sexual Orientation/ Gender Identity.

**Recommendation:** Provide workplace training to equip colleagues with facts (dispelling myths) which will support in wider social cohesion.

**Leading:** The organisation is setting a strong example in inclusion—demonstrating impact, innovation, and meaningful change.

**Committed:** The organisation is committed and taking consistent steps, but progress is steady rather than transformative.

**Supportive:** The organisation is laying the groundwork—engagement has begun, but more intentional action is needed.



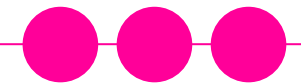
## Exploring Key Indicators

This section of the report provides an in-depth exploration of six key diversity indicators featured in the Elevate Diversity Profile: Gender, Disability, Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity, Socio economic Status, and Neurodiversity. For each indicator, we outline the rationale behind its inclusion in the Elevate framework and highlight its significance for employers striving to build inclusive workplaces.

We present headline statistics from the Elevate Dataset, offering insights into how the collective is currently performing in each area. Complementing this data, we share personal narratives from jobseekers that reflect real-world employment experiences, adding context to the numbers.

To support employers in making tangible progress, we suggest practical actions tailored to each indicator. Additionally, we showcase brief case studies from Elevate Signatory companies, illustrating how these organisations are leading by example in fostering diversity and inclusion.

# Focus on Gender (Female Representation)



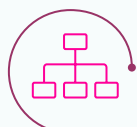
## Why does Elevate Capture Gender Data

**Gender inequality remains a persistent and measurable barrier to fairness, productivity, and progress** in the world of work. Women are still underrepresented in leadership roles and overrepresented in lower-paid, part-time, or precarious jobs. Also, **Intersectionality Matters**. Gender does not exist in a vacuum—it intersects with race, disability, socio economic background, and more. Addressing gender is often the foundation to wider and deeper inclusion strategies.

## Elevate Dataset – Topline Statistics on Gender



**43%** of roles within the Elevate Workforce are held by females



**45%** of **Senior Executive Positions** are held by females



**69%** of Signatories set targets for **Female Representation** at Senior Level



**50** Signatories provided **Gender Demographics by Seniority**



**42** Signatories have a **Gender Related Employee Resource Group**



**13%** of Signatories have a **Female CEO**



**83%** of Signatories have **formalised flexible working** practices



**76%** of Signatories offer **paternity leave** over and **above statutory requirements**



**16%** of Signatories offer **equivalent maternity** and **paternity** paid leave

## Scorecard: How is the Elevate Workforce performing when it comes to Gender



Gender

Leading



Overall the combined Elevate Workforce is performing relatively strongly when it comes to gender inclusion. Elevate Signatories have more females represented in Senior and Executive/ C-Suite roles than the general business community. They are also setting targets for representation and they are introducing supporting policies and practices.

Female representation in senior roles is the most popular DE&I KPI amongst the Elevate signatories.

# Focus on Gender (Female Representation)

## Jobseeker Story – Amina

Amina is a 34 year old woman migrant from Somalia who has been living in Ireland for 6 years.

She is a single mother of two school-aged children. She has a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration outside of Ireland and Amina has worked in plenty of admin roles before relocating here.

Unfortunately, since her arrival in Ireland, Amina has primarily worked in casual roles, and has been underemployed in comparison to her qualifications and experience. In her places of work she has faced multiple cultural and religious misunderstandings.

There are a number of barriers to Amina's Irish job search. Her foreign qualifications are not always recognised, she has gaps in her CV due to caregiving and she has very limited relevant, local experience. Her experience of work to date in Ireland has contributed to a loss of confidence in her ability to secure a suitable career. Additionally, she is currently struggling with childcare support options and needs to find a role that offers flexibility so that she can work around her responsibilities.

Amina is a very motivated and capable jobseeker that has been vastly underemployed for the last 6 years. For Amina to secure a professional job enabling her to progress in her career and provide better support for her family, she needs employers to see her potential, to recognise her qualifications and prior experience and to offer flexibility in working hours and locations so that she can navigate her personal circumstances.



Businesses have come a long way in building policies and practices that support gender balance in the workplace. Over the years, organisations have moved beyond compliance and embraced DE&I as strategic priority. This shift has been driven by a growing recognition that gender-balanced workplaces foster innovation, productivity, and long-term business success. Regardless of size or sector, all employers can take active steps to progress the gender agenda.

## What can business do to support jobseekers

**Review legacy processes and address systemic inequalities** – what may seem like a business as usual may not be equitable and inclusive.

**Training and Education** – build awareness on the need and purpose of gender based initiatives. Provide training to all stakeholders and encourage participation.

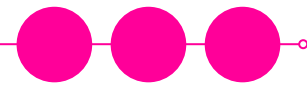
**Embed gender diversity in hiring and progression processes** – build pathways that allow employees of all genders to grow and build a career of their choice.

**Build enabling culture** – create, implement and encourage policies and practices that support people of all genders to contribute to work in the same manner.

**Measure and review** – establish a baseline and utilise that data to further track impact of various practices and initiatives e.g. are you setting targets on take up of flexible working options, family friendly policies.

**Create a Support System** – assign mentors to support new joiner onboarding and integration into the company culture. Encourage participation in employee networks for safe space conversations.

## Focus on Gender (Female Representation)



**Progressive Practices in Action:** Below are some examples of initiatives taken by Elevate Signatories.



### AIB

To better understand the barriers to female progression and what the culture is like for women in AIB, we conducted a Women in Leadership diagnostic. The research included interviews with key stakeholders and larger focus groups from various levels and areas of the Bank. As a result, we compiled a roadmap of

short, medium, and long-term actions, which we will continue to develop and embed in our people strategy for 2025-2026. Having been an early signatory of Ireland's first Women in Finance Charter, we aim to have a gender-balanced ELT, management and Board each year. Specifically, we target between 40% and 60% of female representation in ELT and management, which is underpinned by the Equileap annual Gender Equality Global Report and Ranking's definition of 'gender balance'. In addition, AIB has an ongoing target for the Board of a minimum of 40% female representation. These targets have been reviewed by the Board. We have maintained a gender balanced Board, ELT and management in 2024. HR monitors our performance against our gender diversity target across all management (including ELT) and reports to senior management on a monthly basis.

Our leadership programme had a 53% female participation in 2024. It has an inclusive leadership module that fosters an environment conducive to progress regarding gender and all groups at risk of marginalisation.



### Bidvest Noonan

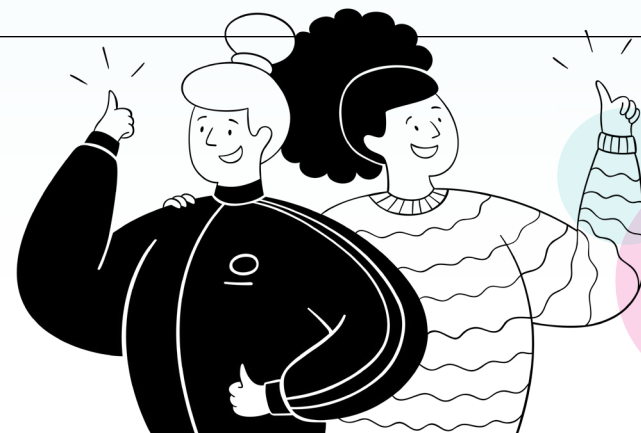
To support the recruitment, development and progression of females in a traditionally male dominated sector, we have introduced a number of new initiatives. These include:

- Introduced a new Careers Website and Application Tracker System to enhance our diversity data. Inclusion statements and accessibility options have been incorporated within the system.
- Mobilised a pilot female mentorship programme to create a support network for women, as they navigate what is traditionally a male dominated sector.
- Implemented recruitment training to 800 Hiring Managers to include a focus on managing bias and hiring inclusively
- Agreed new recruitment principles focusing on improving the gender balance of leadership roles.
- Delivered recruitment campaigns to strengthen our female representation in the security, transport and technical areas of the business.



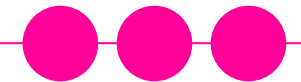
### KPMG Ireland

Over the past year, one of our key areas of focus has been around improving our diversity metrics. We have refined and embedded our gender diversity metrics through the use of gender scorecards, tracking key data such as gender pay gap, promotions, retention, leadership programmes, and recruitment. Each of these is reported at a function level which takes into account the specific challenges and opportunities in different areas of the business. It has helped us create gender action plans across each area of the business that better enable us to drive change and hold leadership accountable.





## Focus on Disability



### Why does Elevate Capture Disability Data

**Over 1 in 7 people in Ireland have a disability**, yet employment rates among people with disabilities remain significantly lower than the general population. The labour force participation rate of people with disabilities is 40% compared with a rate of 61% for the general population. By actively including candidates with disabilities and long term health conditions, employers not only gain access to skilled, motivated individuals who are often overlooked, they also get a strategic advantage creating a more dynamic and innovative environment.

### Elevate Dataset – Topline Statistics on Disability



Data on disability captured for **26,963** employees. **17%** disclosure rate



**26** Signatories **provided data** on disability



**7% of employees** who disclosed information identified as **having a disability**



**38** Signatories have an **Ability Related Employment Resource Group**



**26** Signatories provide **Disability Confidence Training**. **6** Signatories have made Disability Awareness training mandatory for **All Colleagues**



**49** Signatories provide **Mental Health First Aid Training**



**16** Signatories provide a **Sensory Room**



**9** Signatories operate an **Inclusion Passport**



**5** Signatories have set specific **targets to increase representation** of colleagues with a disability

### Scorecard: How is the Elevate Workforce performing when it comes to Disability



Disability

Committed



Disability or diverse-ability has been a big focus for Signatories during 2024. There has been a 53% increase in the number of signatories tracking diverse-ability. Additionally, there has been a 35% rise in the number of Employee Resource Groups with an Ability/Disability Focus. Delivery of Mental Health First Aid training, provision of sensory rooms and introduction of neurodiversity policies are just some of the tangible actions signatories have been introducing to build more disability confident organisations. However, the number of companies actually setting disability related KPIs has stayed the same at just 5 Signatories.



## Jobseeker Story – Ciara

Ciara is 41 years old and has a Master's degree in Human Resources. She was working as a HR Manager in the past but now she is out of the workforce for 2 years following an acquired disability. Ciara had an accident which led to a spinal cord injury and now she is a wheelchair user.

Even though Ciara has experience of people management, employee engagement, core HR services as well as strategic planning, she is unable to find employment due to many systemic barriers. For example, many offices have physical inaccessibility and limited transport options. Employers are concerned about workplace adjustments that they might need to make for her. She has an employment gap from her medical rehabilitation and is often screened out for lacking continuous work history. Ciara believes that potential employers make assumptions about her ability to perform tasks is because she has a physical disability.

The lack of visible representation of people with physical disabilities in leadership roles together with the mental and emotional burden of not being able to find employment has had a huge impact on Ciara. She is feeling demotivated and is filled with self doubt and pity.

Ciara is a very experienced HR professional. For Ciara to secure a job that matches her experience and restores her professional identity she needs employers to see beyond her disability, not to make assumptions about what she may not be able to deliver, and be open to offering simple accommodations so that she can demonstrate her credentials as a skilled and experienced candidate.



Ireland has made progress in promoting the employment of people with disabilities, but significant gaps remain. Despite commitments under the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities and obligations as a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Ireland consistently reports one of the lowest employment rates for people with disabilities in the EU. Barriers such as stigma, inaccessible workplaces, and limited tailored supports continue to hinder progress.

## What can business do to support jobseekers

**Adopt inclusive hiring practices** – Use accessible job descriptions, application systems, and interview processes that focus on skills rather than limitations.

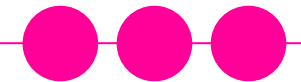
**Ensure workplace accessibility** – Invest in physical accessibility, digital accessibility, and reasonable accommodations tailored to individual needs. Offer tools that enable people with different abilities to thrive in their roles.

**Provide disability awareness training** – Equip managers and teams with the knowledge to challenge stigma, support colleagues, and build confidence in working inclusively.

**Set clear targets** – Establish measurable goals for recruiting, retaining, and advancing employees with disabilities.

**Partner with Employment Support Organisations** – to build alternative channels for recruitment and widen the candidate pool to actively include jobseekers with disabilities.

**Access government support schemes** – such as the Workplace Subsidy Scheme or the Work Placement Employment Programme providing financial incentives to hiring and supporting employees with disabilities.



**Progressive Practices in Action:** Below are some examples of initiatives taken by Elevate Signatories.



## Sky Ireland

In 2020, our D&I strategy was formally established and has continuously evolved since then with the focus on strengthening practices that promote inclusion. The practices we have introduced to ensure a culture where everyone thrives include supports for colleagues that identify as having a disability or being neurodiverse.

We want our people to be confident that having a disability or being neurodivergent won't hinder their career progress or experience and that they are able to get the adjustments they need in a timely manner to do their best work. We have built a workplace adjustment model with plans to create adjustment champions and embed this into management education. We have also built neurodiversity education models to support managers and their teams to ensure that all colleagues can do their best work with or without a formal diagnosis. Progress will be monitored through our people survey.

## A&L Goodbody

## A&L Goodbody

To ensure that all individuals, irrespective of their abilities (visible and/or non-visible), can independently and safely access our new office building and facilities, we have implemented features like:

- Gender neutral changing rooms
- Sloped entrance, expanded pathways, non-slip surface and automated doors for easy access to our building
- Lowered reception desk
- Installation of induction hearing loops
- Assistance animal relief area
- Designated quiet space for sensory relief and individual wellbeing
- General accessibility features across all floors including digital and communication accessibility ie. meeting rooms fitted with accessible VC technologies including captioning capabilities

Our Accessibility Committee worked on this alongside our new office move project team to ensure our new building meets best practice accessibility standards in collaboration with Disability consultants – Access Earth.



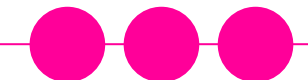
## PTSB

In 2024 our Employee Resource Group (ERG) Network expanded with the addition of our ADAPT ERG. ADAPT's vision is to Empower, Educate, Elevate, Equip and Empathise by creating an inclusive and equitable place to work for abled and disabled colleagues. ADAPT led the delivery of Disability Awareness Training for the Senior Leadership Team, delivered a communications and promotions campaign which included Town Hall presentations, 'Inclusivity at Our Core' series featuring colleagues and their personal stories, and virtual and in person events featuring both colleagues and external partners AsIAM, Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities and Paralympics Ireland. As a result, we have seen an increase in the number of colleagues sharing their optional Disability and broader Diversity Data.





# Focus on Ethnicity



## Why does Elevate Capture Ethnicity Data

Ethnic minorities make up approximately 13% of the population of Ireland. In Ireland—people from ethnic minority backgrounds, including migrants and Travellers, experience **higher unemployment rates, lower pay, and fewer opportunities** for advancement. Ethnic minorities often face systemic barriers in recruitment, progression, and recognition.

## Elevate Dataset – Topline Statistics on Ethnicity



Data on Ethnicity captured for **approximately 40K** employees – **25% Disclosure rate**



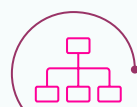
**31** Signatories **capture information** on Ethnicity



**28** Signatories **provided data** on Ethnicity



**36** Signatories have an **Ethnicity related Employment Resource Group**



**9** Signatories have **formal targets for Ethnicity Representation**



Ethnic minorities are **over represented** in **Entry Level roles** and under represented in more Senior roles



**19 employees** from the Elevate workforce disclosed their identity as **Irish Traveller**



**14 employees** from the Elevate workforce disclosed their identity as **Roma**



**15** Signatories engaged with the **BITCI Traveller Employment Programme** in 2024

## Scorecard: How is the Elevate Workforce performing when it comes to Ethnicity



Ethnicity

Committed



16% employees in the Elevate workforce belong to ethnic minority background, which is more than the 13% in Ireland's overall ethnic population.

However, employees from ethnic backgrounds are over represented at the entry level roles and as we progress up through organisational levels, the representation numbers decline.



## Jobseeker Story – Ahmed

Ahmed came to Ireland 8 years ago from Algeria. He has a Bachelor's degree in Accounting with 15+ years of experience in finance and administration roles abroad. Unfortunately, his qualifications are not yet formally recognised in Ireland and he is currently working part time in a warehouse. Even after so many years in Ireland, he has still not been able to find a professional role that is aligned with his skills. At some places, he is considered over experienced for the roles and other places he is overlooked due to lack of a formal qualification as per local norms. Language is not an issue for Ahmed—his first language is Arabic, but he speaks English with fluency albeit a slight accent, he also can understand French and is presently learning Irish.

He lacks access to local professional references and networks and has limited knowledge of Irish workplace norms. In the past he has faced bias in recruitment based on his name, accent, background and that has shaken his confidence.

For Ahmed finding a job that reflects his past experience and qualification is not only a way to support himself and his family, but also a foundation for building his life in Ireland.

Ahmed is an experienced finance professional but is currently working in a role that does not utilise his skills or qualifications. For Ahmed to secure a role that will set him up on a career path in finance he needs employers to recognise his prior experience and offer opportunities for a work placement where he can gain experience of an Irish workplace in a role for which he is qualified.



Ireland is a diverse country, and the representation of ethnic minorities in the workplace has steadily increased over time. It is important that employers go beyond representation and take active steps to support ethnic minorities in building and advancing their careers. Prioritising the growth and wellbeing of ethnic minority staff not only strengthens individual career trajectories but also drives innovation, enhances team performance, and reflects a company's commitment to inclusion in an increasingly diverse society.

## What can business do to support jobseekers

**Establish measurable targets for ethnic minority representation** at all levels within the organisation.

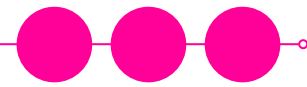
**Eliminate systemic biases in job requirements**, such as unnecessary local qualifications or experience. Ensure job descriptions focus on skills, potential, and merit.

**Broaden recruitment channels by engaging with employment support organisations** and community networks. Implement diverse shortlists and interview panels to ensure fair evaluation for internal and external candidates.

**Provide mandatory cultural awareness training** for all staff, covering topics such as unconscious bias, racism, microaggressions etc.

**Support development and career progression** by offering programs such as mentorship, buddying, and on-the-job education to help employees bridge experience gaps.

**Create non-linear career pathways** that recognise potential and merit, enabling minority employees to progress into leadership roles.



**Progressive Practices in Action:** Below are some examples of initiatives taken by Elevate Signatories.



## RSA Insurance and 123.ie

Supporting our commitment to building an inclusive environment where all employees can grow their career with us, our partnership with Business in the Community's EPIC\* programme has gone from strength to strength. Through career talks, interview skills workshops, and site visits the EPIC programme has supported the career journey of jobseekers from a migrant, refugee or asylum-seeking background. In 2024 we supported over 30 jobseekers in their employment search and in a targeted recruitment drive with EPIC, we hired two new colleagues from the programme. The partnership with BITCI has played an important role in our DEI strategy in RSA Insurance and 123.ie.

\*EPIC is BITCI's employment programme working with jobseekers from migrant and asylum backgrounds.

## Deloitte

## Deloitte

The Deloitte Aspire Programme (previously known as the Development Programme), launched in 2020, supports those in the international protection process or in direct provision in Ireland to secure employment. It offers a 6-month work placement within Deloitte to an individual who has submitted their application for international protection/refugee status and is awaiting a final decision. The goal of the programme is to normalise employing marginalised groups in our communities and promote greater integration into Irish society while providing participants with meaningful project work and skill development opportunities. To date, 20 participants completed a work placement with Deloitte since 2020 across 8 distinct areas of the business. Many participants have gone on to convert to permanent roles within Deloitte while others have taken up exciting opportunities in County Councils, the banking industry and professional services and higher education. In 2024, Deloitte launched an additional online pre-programme to complement the six-month internship where candidates can participate in a series of online 'skills for business' sessions to support their employment journey. Deloitte also collaborates with BITCI, to deliver an important WorldClass programme called 'Time to Talk'. This is a language skills programme created to specifically support people from immigrant and refugee backgrounds to gain more confidence in their English conversational skills. In 2024 65 jobseekers from 20 different countries participated in this programme.

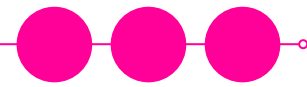


## VHI

Our Inclusion, Diversity & Equity (IDE) mission for Vhi, is to be an organisation where differences are valued, recognised and supported. As part of our IDE Strategy, one initiative under our Inclusive horizon was to introduce our Inclusive Holiday Swap, allowing colleagues to swap current company closure days, Good Friday and Christmas Eve, for other days of significant importance to them, recognising the various backgrounds and beliefs/ non beliefs of all our colleagues.



# Focus on Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity




## Why does Elevate Capture Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Data

LGBTQIA+ employees often face a range of challenges in the workplace, including the emotional strain of hiding their identity, exposure to microaggressions, biased recruitment and promotion practices, and a lack of visible role models or mentors. They may also experience exclusion from networking opportunities, unequal access to benefits, stereotyping, mental health pressures, and fear of retaliation when reporting discrimination.

When LGBTQIA+ employees can be their authentic selves at work, they're more likely to be engaged, loyal, and productive. Conversely, hiding one's identity is linked to stress, isolation, and lower performance.

Measuring and monitoring data on sexual orientation and gender identity is essential to uncover these barriers and ensure that DE&I initiatives address the real experiences of LGBTQIA+ colleagues.


## Elevate Dataset – Topline Statistics on Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity




**24** Signatories **disclosed data** on Sexual Orientation **up from 15 in 2024**



**18% disclosure rate** for **sexual orientation** for overall **Elevate Workforce**




**7% employees** amongst the Elevate Workforce are from **LGBTQIA+ community**



**43** Signatories have an **LGBTQIA+ related Employment Resource Group**




More signatories are **reviewing representation** of **LGBTQIA+** colleagues within the workforce




Some signatories **releasing** focused policies like **'Transition at Work'** and 'Adoptive Leave for Same Sex Partners'

## Scorecard: How is the Elevate Workforce performing when it comes to Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity



**LGBTQIA+**

**Committed**



The Elevate workforce showed an increased disclosure on Sexual Orientation in 2025 and 7% of the Elevate workforce identifies from LGBTQIA+ community. We have also seen an increase in Pride focused ERGs as well as more companies capturing sexual orientation via voluntary disclosure campaigns.

## Jobseeker Story – Jordan

Jordan (pronouns: they/them) is 29 years old and working for the last two years as a Marketing Executive at a mid-sized professional services firm. Jordan is non-binary and pansexual but they are not out at work—they have not disclosed their identity to any colleagues or management in the company.

Jordan worries that disclosing their identity could affect how they're perceived professionally or limit career progression. While growing up Jordan had no visible LGBTQIA+ role models and they are not seeing any colleagues or senior leaders who are out at their workplace. Colleagues frequently use binary language or make heteronormative assumptions, which make Jordan feel excluded. Jordan is under constant self-censorship that leads to emotional fatigue and reduced job satisfaction.

Currently Jordan's company is not providing them with an environment where they can be their true selves. The company must establish DE&I policies and practices that build awareness around the LGBTQIA+ community, ensure zero tolerance of discrimination and provide them with safe spaces like an employee network group to discuss concerns confidentially. Providing training on inclusive language and unconscious bias would help colleagues understand their colleagues better and encourage the use of appropriate language.



Members of the LGBTQIA+ community often face unique challenges in the workplace, from subtle bias to limited career opportunities. Employers who include sexual orientation and gender identity in their diversity strategies can help break down these barriers fostering a strong culture of belonging where all employees feel valued.

## What can business do to support jobseekers

Establish LGBTQIA+ **Employee Resource Groups**.

**Ensure Leadership Visibility and Support** – share stories or profiles of out LGBTQIA+ colleagues to model inclusion from the top.

Provide benefits that **support diverse families and trans-inclusive healthcare**.

Set **targets for representation** of LGBTQIA+ colleagues.

Partner with expert community organisations to implement practices that help in **building a safe and welcoming environment** for LGBTQIA+ colleagues.

For a business to become a more inclusive employer, the company should focus on creating a safe, supportive, and visibly inclusive environment for LGBTQIA+ community.

# Focus on Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity



**Progressive Practices in Action:** Below are some examples of initiatives taken by Elevate Signatories.



## Aviva

At Aviva, our ambition is to help in building stronger inclusive communities which is why we are proud to support Outhouse LGBTQ+ Centre and its transformative Continuum of Care programme, offering vital mental health support for the LGBTQ+ community.

Despite progress in equality, many LGBTQ+ individuals in Ireland continue to face systemic challenges. The Continuum of Care is there to help address these challenges with compassion, consistency, and community-based solutions. This comprehensive programme is tailored to the unique and often underrepresented needs of LGBTQ+ individuals, offering community-based support that spans from early-stage intervention to crisis support and long-term recovery.



## Sisk

Sisk is embedding LGBTQ+ inclusion into its culture year-round, creating a workplace where authenticity, allyship, and support are central to employee experience. In 2025, Sisk combined visible Pride Month participation with lasting initiatives, including the Dublin Pride Run and Parade, charity fundraisers, and a toolbox talk encouraging open dialogue. An Active Allyship Toolkit was launched alongside a public webinar featuring experts such as Moninne Griffith, CEO of Belong To.

Further initiatives include a second toolbox talk addressing inappropriate language and behaviour, celebration of National Coming Out Day, and development of a gender identity and transitioning in the workplace policy—ensuring that support for LGBTQ+ colleagues extends well beyond Pride Month.



## Bord Gáis Energy

We're proud to have introduced our new Transgender Inclusion Policy this year – a first in the Energy & Utilities sector. This policy provides practical tools and guidance for managers supporting colleagues undergoing gender-affirming treatment. It reflects our deep commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace where every colleague has the support and resources they need to thrive and be their true authentic selves at Bord Gáis Energy.



# Focus on Neurodiversity

## Why does Elevate Capture Neurodiversity Data


In Ireland 86% of autistic individuals feel they do not have the same opportunities as their non-autistic peers. Many neurodivergent people face challenges in traditional hiring and workplace systems—not due to lack of ability, but due to **rigid processes**, social expectations, or sensory environments. Inclusive strategies help remove these unnecessary barriers. When neurodiversity is acknowledged and supported, it sends a clear message that different is not deficient. This promotes a culture where all employees feel safe to be themselves—boosting morale, retention, and team collaboration.


**Approximately 15-20% of the population is thought to be neurodivergent.** Considering neurodiversity when building an inclusive workplace strategy recognises and values the different ways people think, process information, and solve problems—turning cognitive differences into organisational strengths. Neurodivergent individuals—such as those with autism, ADHD, dyslexia, or Tourette’s—often excel in areas like pattern recognition, focus, memory, creativity, or systems thinking. By fostering inclusive environments, employers unlock these often underutilised talents. Diverse ways of thinking challenge groupthink and introduce novel approaches to problem-solving. Neurodiverse teams are shown to be more innovative, adaptable, and capable of thinking “outside the box.”

## Elevate Dataset – Topline Statistics on Neurodiversity


 **20** signatories **collect neurodiversity data**

 **12** signatories **provided neurodiversity data**


 Of those disclosed, **6% identify as having a neurodiversity**

 **Neuroinclusion policies** and awareness building is **gaining traction**

 Neuroinclusion **recruitment guides** for **hiring managers** are being developed

 Quiet spaces for staff and **neuroinclusive ways of working** are being brought into workplace

## Scorecard: How is the Elevate Workforce performing when it comes to Neurodiversity

 **Neurodiversity**

**Supportive**



Neurodiversity was introduced as a new indicator in 2025 with 6% neurodiverse employees reported in the Elevate workforce. It is estimated that 15-20% of the global population is neurodivergent, which is substantially higher than the current Elevate representation/ disclosure. However, it is positive to see that more than 10 signatories are actively working towards neuroinclusion/ reasonable accommodation policies and awareness building at their workplaces.

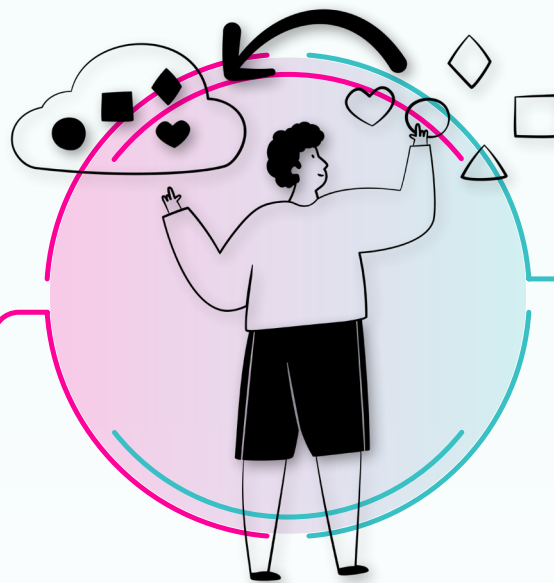
## Jobseeker Story – Daniel

Daniel holds a Diploma in Information Technology; he is 28 years old and has Autism Spectrum Disorder. While he has excellent problem solving skills, he has struggled to secure permanent roles and has worked in freelance web development in the past.

His attention to detail is very high and technically he has strong coding and design skills, although he struggles with traditional interview processes and social cues. He finds open plan offices with sensory distractions very hard to navigate and these can get extremely uncomfortable for him.

In his experience there is very little understanding of neurodiversity among hiring managers and maybe a lot of stigma attached to neurodivergent job applicants. He fears being misunderstood and his capability questioned when (and if) he discloses his condition. This is emotionally and mentally taxing for Daniel.

Considering Daniel's qualifications and his expertise, he would like to grow his career, but potential employers need to be open to hiring neuro-divergent colleagues. For Daniel, providing accommodations during the selection process, for example, providing him with questions in advance of the interview, or giving him access to a sensory space and tools could allow him the opportunity to showcase his expertise and talent to the interviewers.



Making workplaces neuroinclusive requires specific actions to be taken to remove bias and misunderstandings. To start on the neuroinclusion journey businesses can implement some of the above mentioned actions.

Given the growing societal awareness and acceptance of Neurodiversity, employers should build their own capacity and understanding of neurodivergence to ensure they are not missing out on a valuable talent pool.

## What can business do to support jobseekers

**Move away from Medical to Social Model** of understanding Neurodiversity.

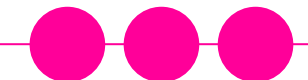
**Review job descriptions and job advertisements** to make them more competence based instead of outcome statements.

**Train hiring managers** on Neuroinclusive ways of recruiting and removing an unconscious bias.

**Enhance the recruitment process** making it more neuroinclusive, for example, build in the process of requesting accommodations; allow alternative ways of assessment like skills based submission; extra time to respond to questions; interview questions in advance etc.

**Provide simple, precise and structured communication.**

**Introduce policies and practices** that offer support and build a culture of trust where neurodiversity is acknowledged and actively included.



**Progressive Practices in Action:** Below are some examples of initiatives taken by Elevate Signatories.



## Bord Gáis Energy

Our Neurodiversity Network developed a Neurodiverse inclusive hiring guide, advising hiring managers how to ensure our recruitment practices are accessible to neurodivergent applicants. This guide was supported by workshops for hiring managers for further information and an opportunity to ask questions in a safe environment. This has contributed to our commitment to recruit a diverse workforce.



## Bank of Ireland

Bank of Ireland aims to become one of the most neuroinclusive organisations in the country, and has introduced a range of policies and practice improvements to support neurodivergent colleagues and candidates in three key areas: Understanding, Infrastructure and Culture.



## KPMG Ireland

KPMG Ireland has introduced Sensory Friendly Hours in its Stokes Place, Harbourmaster, and Cork canteens to support neurodiverse employees. Held daily from 2:00–3:00pm, these quiet hours feature reduced noise, soft lighting, and trained staff who completed Autism Awareness training via AsIAM, Ireland's National Autism Charity. Employees can pre-order meals to minimise sensory stressors. The initiative fosters inclusion and respect, encouraging all staff to be mindful of noise and space during these hours. This initiative reinforces KPMG's commitment to creating a safe, supportive environment for neurodiverse colleagues.



## Veolia

Recognising the importance of understanding neurodiversity in the workplace, Veolia successfully achieved accreditation by AsIAM, Ireland's Autism charity, to become an Autism friendly workplace. We audited our offices to understand what adjustments were needed to make them more suitable for neurodiverse employees. We also conducted a review of our recruitment, induction, onboarding and training process making our talent acquisition teams more confident about neuroinclusion in our hiring practices. Tailored training for our employees has increased awareness of neurodiversity. Supports for employees and their direct family members are also available through AsIAM as part of being an Autism friendly workplace. These help to make Veolia a more inclusive and supportive workplace in line with our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.





## Focus on Socio Economic Status



### Why does Elevate Capture Socio Economic Status Data

Socio Economic status directly affects access to opportunities, career progression, and the ability to fully participate in the workforce. **Talent is everywhere but opportunity is not**, people from lower socio economic backgrounds often face systemic barriers to education, networks, and early career opportunities.

Employment is one of the most powerful levers for breaking cycles of poverty. Inclusive hiring and progression practices allow individuals to thrive regardless of family background or income level, helping to create a more equitable society.

Despite progress made in this space, **educational attainment, career progression, and income levels** in Ireland remain strongly linked to socio economic background. For example, students from DEIS schools are significantly underrepresented in professional careers, and areas of concentrated disadvantage experience higher unemployment.

Overlooking socio economic background risks reinforcing cycles of inequality.

### Elevate Dataset – Topline Statistics on Socio Economic Status



**10** Signatories **track data on Socio Economic status**



**More than 70%** of Signatories **pay the Living Wage** but only **50%** of Signatories **expect contractors** to pay the Living Wage



**6%** of the Elevate Workforce with Permanent Full time positions are **earning below the Living Wage**



**36** Signatories have partnered with Employment Support Organisations resulting in **over 160 hires during 2024**



**32** Signatories **engage with local communities for recruitment**



**37** Signatories **partner with local DEIS schools**

### Scorecard: How is the Elevate Workforce performing when it comes to Socio Economic Status



**Socio Economic**

**Supportive**



Only 10 companies are capturing Socio Economic Status for their employees and very little data is provided for the Elevate report. Social mobility is an increasing area of interest for many signatories, and about 70% are partnering with DEIS schools to address the challenge of access of opportunity to those from socio economically disadvantaged sections of the society.

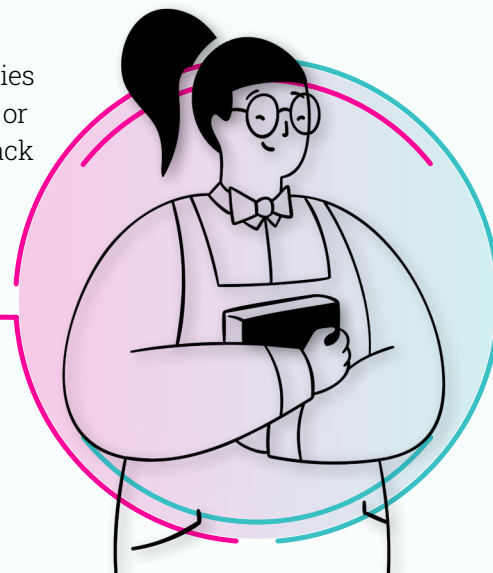


## Jobseeker Story – Katie

Katie has recently turned 18 and has completed her Leaving Certificate. Katie lives in Limerick City and she comes from a single-parent household where financial pressures meant she took on part-time work during school. No one in her immediate family has completed higher education. She didn't apply to college due to financial constraints and a lack of support navigating applications. She hasn't had access to internships, networks or career coaching and she feels very intimidated by professional environments and is uncertain about workplace expectations.

She doesn't know anyone in her community working in large companies or professional sectors. Katie never had exposure to different roles and companies that she could potentially work with and she worries that she "won't belong" or be taken seriously in certain industries due to her accent, background, and lack of qualifications.

To allow Katie build a career, she needs business to create outreach programmes for young talent like hers. Katie needs an early intervention and access to opportunity created via community support organisations, academic institutions and local youth organisations. Businesses need to create programmes that go beyond the linear pathway of entry into the organisation while allowing young talents explore the available opportunities for future growth.



Focusing on socio economic status in the workplace is essential for building a truly inclusive and equitable organisation. Employees from diverse socio economic backgrounds often face unique barriers, such as limited access to education, professional networks, or resources, which can impact access to employment and career progression. Talent is distributed equally but access of opportunity is not, and hence by understanding and addressing these challenges, employers can provide fairer chance to those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Building socio economic status into diversity strategies is essential if we are to make real progress on creating equal access to opportunity and tackling the rising poverty in Ireland.

## What can business do to support jobseekers

**Build awareness on Socio Economic Status** within the organisation and track information on social mobility

**Include Socio Economic Status into your recruitment** and progression strategy

**Partner with DEIS schools and youth services** to create early career pathways such as apprenticeships, internships, or traineeships that don't require prior experience or university degrees.

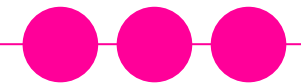
**Rethink hiring criteria, focus on potential**, not polish—avoid rigid qualification requirements that may exclude non-traditional applicants.

**Offer clear, supported career progression pathways** to prevent young employees from stagnating in entry-level roles.

**Consider stipends for transport, workwear, or lunch** to remove hidden costs of employment.



## Focus on Socio Economic Status



**Progressive Practices in Action:** Below are some examples of initiatives taken by Elevate Signatories.



### Sky Ireland

In 2022, Sky prioritised Social Mobility (SoMo) within our Sky Up initiative. In 2024, Sky conducted a review of the approach to SoMo this resulted in SoMo being formally incorporated into our Group Diversity & Inclusion strategy. This integration involved streamlining the disclosure process and signposting FAQs to enhance understanding. These efforts laid the groundwork for more comprehensive socio economic inclusion within our organisation. Ireland's declaration rate has improved to 8.9%. Sky's commitment to fair pay and rewards for all staff further supports our efforts to incorporate socio economic status into our DE&I strategies. In 2024, Sky conducted external benchmarking and pay analysis which resulted in an investment of over €300,000 into salary adjustments to address socio economic disparities and ultimately benefiting 33% of our contact centre population.



### Bank of Ireland

Bank of Ireland continues to ensure all employees are paid a living wage that meets or exceeds local cost-of-living standards. Along with it we continue our flexible working policy in supporting colleagues' ways of working and life circumstances.

We provide Financial Wellness Programs to build on financial wellbeing and literacy for all staff members through information webinars and tailored supports.

Our Emerging Careers team, along with Business in the Community Ireland, run 3 different programmes in 16 DEIS schools across the country. Time to Read provides children in 2nd class with reading support, Time to Count provides numeracy support to 3rd class children and Student Mentoring Programme encourages students to stay in school, increase their self-esteem and develop an awareness of the workplace over the course of their senior cycle. These programmes are very valuable for all participants—the children get an increased exposure to the working world, and at the same time it brings a strong community engagement element for the staff.



### SSE

Understanding employee backgrounds helps SSE identify and address barriers to joining, progressing, and remaining in its workforce. SSE has expanded the ways colleagues can share diversity data and increased trust in how it is managed through clear communications, increasing disclosure from 20%

in 2020/21 to 77% in 2024/25. In 2023/24, SSE introduced a three-point plan to strengthen its commitment to social mobility: collecting socio economic background data, reaffirming its membership of the Social Mobility Pledge, and submitting to the Social Mobility Employer Index to seek best practice. Since starting data collection in 2023, advocacy from senior leaders and targeted campaigns have increased disclosure from 43% in March 2024 to 62% in March 2025 (excluding 'prefer not to say'). This provides a clear baseline to measure progress and guide action. A working group was also established in late 2024 to assess outcomes against external benchmarks and recommend next steps. These will be reviewed and taken forward in 2025/26 as SSE continues to build a more inclusive and socially mobile workforce.





## Future Progress

Elevate Signatories are making a public commitment to building inclusive workforces. But they are going beyond that. They are holding themselves accountable for their claims on equity, diversity and inclusion. They are measuring their performance and they are taking action to improve. This report presents a diversity profile made up of a collective workforce of over 160,000 employees from 60 leading employers. This final section of the report provides a strategic framework for inclusion that signatories can adapt for continued progress.



# Building Inclusive Pathways – A Strategic Framework for Inclusion



Building an inclusive workforce is not a one-off initiative but an ongoing commitment to equity, fairness, and opportunity. Inclusion strengthens organisational performance, drives innovation, and reflects the diverse communities we serve. To achieve this, employers must move beyond intent to action—embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion into leadership priorities, recruitment practices, workplace culture, learning opportunities, and systems of accountability. Leaders, in particular, play a pivotal role: their actions, decisions, and accountability set the tone for the entire organisation.

The following five pillars provide a structured framework to guide this journey, outlining practical steps every organisation can take to create lasting change.

## Leadership & Accountability

### Why it matters

Leadership sets the tone for inclusion. Without visible commitment, diversity efforts risk being seen as symbolic rather than systemic. Leaders must role-model inclusive behaviours, set measurable goals, and hold themselves accountable.

### Key Actions

- Set clear organisational DE&I goals linked to business outcomes.
- Establish inclusive leadership training for managers and executives.
- Create safe reporting mechanisms for discrimination and exclusion.
- Regularly review policies and remove systemic barriers.
- Celebrate and amplify diverse role models at all levels of the organisation.

## Representation & Fair Recruitment

### Why it matters

Representation ensures that opportunities are open to all and that the workforce reflects the diversity of society. Inclusive recruitment and progression systems prevent systemic exclusion and enable fair access to advancement.

### Key Actions

- Remove bias in job descriptions and selection criteria.
- Build diverse candidate pipelines through outreach and community partnerships.
- Use structured, bias-aware interviews with diverse panels.
- Establish clear career progression pathways for underrepresented groups.
- Set measurable targets for recruitment, retention, and advancement of diverse talent.

## Inclusive Culture & Belonging

### Why it matters

Diversity alone is not enough—employees must feel safe, respected, and valued in order to thrive. A culture of belonging enhances engagement, retention, and innovation by allowing people to contribute authentically.

### Key Actions

- Introduce policies that support flexibility, family, and life circumstances.
- Support employee resource groups for shared identity and allyship.
- Ensure workplace accessibility—physical, digital, and cultural.
- Promote visibility of diverse voices through storytelling, events, and campaigns.
- Provide structured mentorship and peer support for onboarding and integration.

## Learning & Inclusive Practices

### Why it matters

Ongoing learning helps dismantle bias, builds empathy, and equips employees with the skills to work inclusively. Embedding inclusive practices into daily operations ensures DE&I is lived, not just spoken.

### Key Actions

- Provide regular training on bias, allyship, and cultural competency.
- Equip hiring managers with skills in inclusive and neurodiverse recruitment.
- Offer mentorship, sponsorship, and development programmes to support career progression.
- Invest in assistive technologies to enable participation from all abilities.
- Run awareness programmes on socio economic diversity and gender equity.

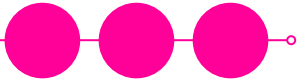
## Measurement & Continuous Improvement

### Why it matters

What gets measured gets managed. Data-driven insights ensure DE&I efforts are not symbolic but effective, allowing organisations to identify gaps, track progress, and refine strategies over time.

### Key Actions

- Collect and analyse diversity data across protected and underrepresented groups.
- Monitor employee experiences through surveys and focus groups.
- Establish baselines and track impact of inclusion initiatives.
- Publish progress reports to maintain transparency and accountability.
- Regularly review and adapt policies to address systemic inequities.



Inclusion is not achieved by policies alone—it is brought to life through consistent action, courageous leadership, and a shared sense of responsibility. Leaders must champion this agenda visibly, own the outcomes, and hold themselves accountable for progress. By embracing these pillars, organisations can ensure that every employee not only has a place at the table but also feels empowered to contribute, grow, and thrive. The opportunity before us is clear: **to build workplaces where diversity is celebrated, equity is the standard, and belonging is the lived experience of all.** The next step demands commitment at every level, with leaders driving the momentum and ensuring that words are matched by measurable action.

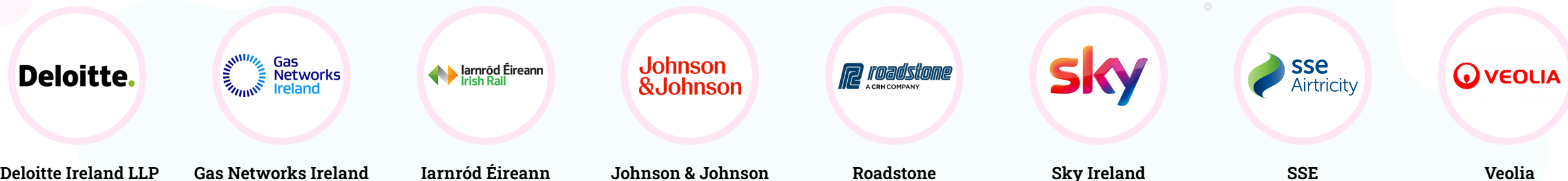


# BITCI's Leader's Group on Social Inclusion

The Elevate Pledge is an output of BITCI's Leader's Group on Social Inclusion which is co-chaired by:

**Harry Goddard**, CEO of Deloitte Ireland & **Sinead Patton**, Chief Financial and Commercial Officer – Ireland and Nordics, Finance Director – Industrial, Water & Energy UK, Veolia.

This group is made up of representatives from BITCI member companies:



Deloitte Ireland LLP

Gas Networks Ireland

Iarnród Éireann

Johnson & Johnson

Roadstone

Sky Ireland

SSE

Veolia

The Elevate Pledge is also supported by Deloitte Ireland as a Knowledge Partner.

**Thank you to all members of the Leader's Group on Social Inclusion for their support and commitment in building an inclusive Ireland together.**

CELEBRATING  
**25**  
YEARS  
OF IMPACT

**BUSINESS  
IN THE  
COMMUNITY  
IRELAND**



For more information on Business in the Community Ireland: [www.bitc.ie](http://www.bitc.ie)

For more information on The Elevate Pledge [click here](#)

Thank you to the team at Deloitte Ireland for their support on design and layout of this publication.

For any queries on this publication please write to [elevate@bitc.ie](mailto:elevate@bitc.ie)

Established in 2000, Business in the Community Ireland are leaders in sustainability and social inclusion. Our mission is to inspire, challenge and facilitate businesses to bring about a sustainable, low carbon economy and more inclusive society where everyone thrives.

For 25 years, Business in the Community Ireland have been leaders in sustainability and social inclusion. Our work spans all four pillars of sustainability – Economic, Environmental, Social and Governance. Our passion and impact have guaranteed we've advanced sustainable business practices.