

#RUseen:

Barriers to and solutions for improving inclusion at Radboud University

Interdisciplinary think tank, Radboud Honours Academy

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Table of contents

Introduction	2
Research scope	3
Description of the problem	5
Barriers to improved inclusion at Radboud University	9
Iceland case study	11
Solutions	13
Conclusions and recommendations	20
References	21

Introduction

With regards to diversity and inclusion, Radboud University has been especially successful in recent years in increasing its percentage of female professors; it is ranked third place compared to other Dutch research universities (Women Professors Monitor, 2017 & 2019). There is, however, still room for improvement regarding other aspects of gender equality, and inclusion in general.

Radboud University's policy instruments may have been useful for promoting gender equality, but proved to be not as easily applicable to other dimensions of inclusion, such as LGBTQI+, people with disabilities, people with a migration background, first-generation students and others (H. van Krieken, personal communication, October 1st, 2019). As the university has multiple roles in society such as employer, educator and service-provider, it can make a big impact regarding inclusion.

Commissioned by the Executive Board (CvB) of the Radboud University, an interdisciplinary think tank has been established within the Radboud Honours Academy. For five months, ten students from various disciplines studied the following question:

What are the barriers to and solutions for improving inclusion at Radboud University?

To answer this question, research has been conducted on the basis of interviews with stakeholders, scientific research and a field trip. Within Radboud University, the think tank interviewed Human Resources staff, the rector magnificus, the president of the Gender & Diversity committee of the Science Faculty, and individual students. Additionally, a field trip was conducted to Iceland, where best practices of inclusion policy have been collected from universities, advocacy groups, companies and Reykjavik's city council.

The report will first describe the problem, explaining what inclusion and diversity are and arguing why we need it more. Secondly, the barriers to improved inclusion at Radboud University will be explored, and thirdly, the Iceland case study is highlighted. Fourthly, an extensive overview of important potential solutions is provided. An elaborate overview of one of these solutions, the awareness campaign, can be found in the additional rapport: '#Ruseen: An awareness campaign to improve inclusion at Radboud University'. Lastly, the report will conclude with policy recommendations for the Executive Board of Radboud University.

Finally, it is important to note that the decision was made to write this report in English instead of in Dutch, as this is inclusive towards international students and staff. Providing information in English for the academic community's internationals serves as an example of the many measures to be taken in the endeavour to be more inclusive.

Research scope

Diversity and inclusion are topics that are gaining an increased focus in society, as well as within organisations. However, the more often the terms are mentioned, the more different definitions of the terms seem to occur as well. Where diversity is often more limited to the variety of characteristics and qualities individuals or groups possess, inclusion is a term that refers to society as a collective with its strive to create an environment that embraces and values all individuals and their unique aspects (Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, n.d.). Lately, diversity has become a very important topic, as society (and all aspects of it) is becoming more and more diverse. Additionally, diversity is not only seen as important from a normative point of view, but it could also be beneficial, as it can potentially add new insights and creativity to organisations (Tomlinson & Schwabenland, 2010). However, the topic brings several challenges as well.

One main challenge for instance, is the ideological conflict between increasing diversity and conservative norms and values, often leading to forms of exclusions and limiting the possible benefits (Naezer, Van den Brink and Benschop, 2019). Therefore, inclusion is an important topic to be discussed, limiting exclusionary behaviour, processes, values and norms and creating an environment where every individual is valued for who they are. To achieve this, an inclusive environment must be sensitive to the intersectional power structures, where people deviating from the accepted norm are not valued in the same way as the ones complying to the dominant norm (Acker, 2006).

Although inclusion and diversity are often mentioned in one go, the scope of this research is limited to inclusion, mainly because this think tank believes that diversity is a fact and that it will grow when the focus is on inclusion. An inclusive environment will attract a more diverse student and staff population.

This research therefore works with the following definition of 'inclusion':

"Inclusion revolves around avoiding exclusion, as everything – including both active and passive actions – that is not inclusive is exclusive. Inclusion is about creating a space in which everyone can be themselves and express themselves freely, and are respected as such without infringing on the freedom of other people."

In general, there are two types of inclusion. Inclusion can be about who gets access and who do not (e.g. access to a university). The other type of inclusion is about making the organisation (in this case the university) a more inclusive space (professor specialised in inclusion in education, personal correspondence, November 8th, 2019). In its effort to make the university a more inclusive organisation, the think tank has focused mostly on researching this second type of inclusion.

After brainstorming sessions with each other, discussions with experts and a survey, the think tank observed that people often do not realise that certain remarks or behaviours can be offensive or discriminatory, potentially leading to exclusion. The League of European Research Universities [LERU] (LERU, 2019) states that one of the most damaging issues is not the existence of implicit bias, unequal distribution of privilege, or microaggressions, "but

rather the lack of awareness at the level of the institution and the community at large". The problem therefore occurs at the level of awareness. The focus will be on the so-called "silent majority": people who do not intend to insult anyone, but simply are not aware when they do it anyway. These people may want to be inclusive instead of offensive, but do not yet have the knowledge to achieve this.

As the think tank learned from the LGBTQ+ movement in Iceland, it would be far more effective to focus the attention on this silent majority, whether they are pro or against diversity and inclusion, since they may be incentivised to learn and practice inclusion, rather than the group of people that are actively opposed to it. Since this opposition to inclusion and diversity is clearly not in line with the university's aim for more inclusion, the research and campaign will not target these opponents.

The ultimate goal is to transform the silent majority from unknowingly unable, phase one from the learning circle mentioned in Crosbie (2005), to unknowingly capable, phase four from the circle. Phase four represents a state of mind where inclusive actions come naturally. Before reaching this goal, they will have to pass the second and third phase, respectively knowingly unable and knowingly capable. The campaign will focus on working through these phases.

The research scope is limited to the students level of Radboud University. Since this think tank is composed of students, it is less aware of what is going on at the employee level. Additionally, the university has until now mostly focused on employees and not students (Radboud University Diversity Officer, personal correspondence, September 13th, 2019). For these reasons, it has been decided to leave employees outside the scope of this research, and focus on students. This does not alter the fact that the awareness campaign may still positively influence the organisation's staff culture as well. The campaign will hopefully also be noticed by employees so that they too will start to think critically about inclusion.

Description of the problem

What is the problem? Is there a problem? Even though explicit discrimination is no longer legal, less clear forms of exclusion and disadvantage still occur in day-to-day life. These forms are often difficult to prove for individuals who experience it, or individuals might not even be aware of instances where they are held back because of their gender, the colour of their skin, their sexual orientation, socio-economic background, disability, age or any other characteristic or a combination of them (LERU, 2019).

For those who feel included, it may be hard to grasp what is at stake. Watt (2007) argues that during difficult dialogues on for example diversity, members of the majoritarian 'dominant culture group' show several different 'defence mechanisms' – including denial and deflection of the problem at hand. This is a good example of what the first phase of the learning circle looks like, this phase being unknowingly unable (Crosbie, 2005). The challenge this research deals with is the need for improved inclusion at the university. Instead of automatically assuming this need, the next section will make the case for improved inclusion.

The scientific literature shows two grounds for improving inclusion at organisations. The first is the social justice approach, which produces human rights/moral arguments. The second is the business case, which uses utilitarian arguments. Although the social justice case and the business case may be at tension with each other, they have shown to be compatible in organisations – especially the ones that already have a social goal (Tomlinson & Schwabenland, 2010).

From a social justice approach, diversity and inclusion are principles that should be based on the idea of fundamental equality. It can be argued that they are important for any organisation. The social justice case is based in moral legitimacy, independent from business advantages or the economic situation. This approach seems very appropriate for a university. A university is supposed to be a place where personal development and wellbeing always come before economic gain. Improving inclusion at Radboud University could therefore be strongly advocated through moral arguments.

One of the business case arguments is that “people perform best when they feel valued, empowered, and respected by their peers” (Bersin, 2015). Similar utilitarian arguments for diversity and inclusion in the organisation include the improvement of knowledge about customers, increased innovation and better talent acquisition (Tomlinson & Schwabenland, 2010). Consultancy firm McKinsey & Company even shows a link between diversity & inclusion and improved financial performance (McKinsey & Company, 2018). This once again corresponds with the goal of personal development. Improving inclusion at Radboud University can be based on the argument that an inclusive environment improves the conditions for learning, for both students and staff.

The process of creating an inclusive environment demands an examination of the different levels that exist when discussing the barriers to said environment (Acker, 2006). The first being the macro-level; this level examines the power structures within our society, and the norms and values that come along with those. The existing power structures can usually be detected

in the day-to-day lives of the individuals in society, and they can be seen in patterns we have seen as children. Because the structures are so deeply embedded in society, and are continuously perpetuated, the norms and values create implicit biases. Whether we mean to or not, society can be preferential or biased towards a certain group that conform to or deviate from the norms that exist. This creates a sort of vicious circle. The perpetuation of aforementioned patterns result in the fact that the norms and values cannot be changed overnight.

The second relevant examination is that of the meso-level. This level can be described as a manifestation of the macro-level, as the norms and values within society are more apparent on a physical level. The examination of this level explains how the power structures are detected in the way our society is organised and the physical consequences that result from said structures. Examples of places where the power structures are manifested are the accessibility of public places to disabled people, the lack of diversity in workplaces, the existing wage-gap between male and female employees, etc.

The third level, the micro-level, describes the interpersonal relations between individuals in society and how they respond to the levels mentioned above. The inherited and acquired certain implicit biases from the manifestations of society's norms and values are reflected in the way people behave towards each other. Obvious examples of such behaviour are discrimination, classism, racism, sexism, homophobia, islamophobia, etc. A less obvious, yet very important and recurring example is a 'microaggression'. A microaggression is a brief, commonly used phrase that communicates a hostile, derogatory, or negative prejudicial slight and insult, particularly towards culturally marginalised groups (Sue, 2010). The phrase usually stems from a place of privilege or ignorance, and whether it is said with or without the intention to harm the person, microaggressions can be characterised by its harmful consequence.

This project is mostly focussed on the meso- and micro-levels, and what can be achieved on these levels to improve inclusion. Returning to Crosbie's (2005) learning circle, integrated in this process of improving inclusion is the shift from unknowingly unable or perhaps knowingly unable, to being knowingly able to recognise a lack of inclusion in certain structures or situations and work toward more inclusive actions.

Status quo of Radboud's inclusion policy

Being an emancipation university is historically an important part of the Radboud identity. Radboud University was founded in 1923 to promote the emancipation of Catholics. Starting from the 1960s, first-generation students started to pour in, including more and more women (Radboud, n.d.). Today, inclusion at Radboud University is perceived more broadly, as the university's Strategy document says in the following text:

“As an academic community, the university is characterised by appreciation and respect for each other and for each other's differences. Inclusion in a broad sense, social safety and the safety of the study and working environment are key principles. We attach great importance to diversity, among both students and staff. We actively communicate these principles so that all staff and students are able to achieve, develop and feel at home: their well-being is a subject close to our heart.” (Radboud University, 2019, p.41).

To research where the opportunities for improvement lay, it is important to first assess the status quo of Radboud's inclusion policy. Therefore, this chapter will discuss current policy initiatives with regards to inclusion at the university.

Public commitment to inclusion

A strong point in Radboud's diversity and inclusion policy is the fact that the university explicitly expresses the wish to focus more on the topic and to develop a better policy (Radboud University, 2018; Working Group Gender Policy, 2016). Firstly, this serves a practical purpose, obliging the university to act according to their statements to stay credible. It is for instance an extra drive to make sure that the university actively supports initiatives that contribute to better inclusion.

Explicitly propagating the desire to be diverse and inclusive via the annual plan of the university (Radboud University, 2018b), also serves another purpose. Students, staff members and professors who are considering studying/working at Radboud University, will feel drawn to Radboud more easily, automatically contributing to greater diversity and inclusion.

Active promotion of gender equality

Even though Radboud University still lags behind in certain aspects of inclusivity, it reached its gender equality goals (H. van Krieken, personal communication, October 1st, 2019). In 2018, 27,4 percent of the professors at Radboud University were female, opposed to the national average of 20,9 percent (Radboud University, 2018a; Women Professors Monitor 2019).

One of the causes of the success of the gender policies is, not entirely unexpectedly, simply the fact that the Radboud University made gender equality one of its top priorities, as once again stated in its annual report (Radboud University, 2018b). Radboud for instance started the 'Christine Mohrmannprogramma' and the 'Westerdijk programma', contributing to the appointment of female senior lecturers as professors. Additionally, the university's Faculty of

Science started a Gender and Diversity committee in 2014. This committee published a policy report on gender and diversity, putting focus on several action points such as more women in selection boards and quota for female researchers at the faculty (Working Group Gender Policy, 2016).

Program manager for inclusion

Radboud University recently hired a program manager for inclusion. Given the recency of the position, this think tank has not been able to properly examine the added value of this position to the subject, but the description of the job sounds promising. The new program manager will be a role model and a point of contact and will formulate the policy vision and goals, just to name a few things. This think tank is looking forward to the work they will be doing.

Quantified goals

Quantified goals can be effective to monitor and stimulate progress (Bersin, 2015). This is for instance illustrated by the quantified goals that the university decided upon, for example regarding the percentage of female professors: 30% by 2020 (H. van Krieken, personal communication, October 1st, 2019).

Student life

Regarding the inclusion of migrant students, Radboud University has appointed a coordinator at the Student Life desk. The coordinator is responsible for facilitating and improving the access to and integration of migrants, including refugees, into the university's study programmes (Student Life coordinator, personal correspondence, September 23rd, 2019).

Barriers to improved inclusion at Radboud University

Despite the university's wishes for improvement in the area of inclusion and diversity, there are still several hurdles to overcome if the university wants to reach these goals. Several of these hurdles are described below. Later on in this report, solutions are offered for a number of these points

Lack of inclusion among part of the students

Despite Radboud University's efforts, some individuals do not feel comfortable at the university (Vox magazine, 2018). A small number of students even stopped their studies because they did not feel welcome (H. van Krieken, personal communication, October 1st, 2019). The lack of inclusion is experienced by a very diverse group of students and for very different reasons, making it a complex problem.

To get a better grip on the problem, this think tank conducted a general survey among students with the request to share their experiences with inclusion and exclusion at Radboud University. In the results it has been found that students at Radboud University feel excluded on various aspects such as sexual orientation, speaking with an accent, adhering to certain political ideas or being non-Dutch. This highlights the phenomenon of intersectionality at Radboud University: there are a lot of different minority groups and often people belong to more than one minority group, creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Additionally, the reasons the respondents gave for feeling unwelcome/excluded were very diverse. Reasons named by the respondents for instance were: offensive jokes made by professors, a colonialist curriculum and the Dutch focus of the Radboud introduction week.

The fact that the aspects on which students feel excluded are so diverse could make it difficult to create one coherent policy on this. It is often (unconsciously) reaffirmed to students with certain characteristics that they do not belong to the status quo and therefore they possibly do not feel like they belong at the university or feel unwelcome. This reality clashes with the wish of the Radboud University to be a welcoming, diverse environment and with its principles of inclusion and social security (Radboud University, 2018b).

Absence of a coherent action plan

After several conversations with different faculty members, it appears that there is no concrete centralised action plan to promote diversity and inclusion on the Radboud University. Despite the ambitions, there is still a risk of just 'doing the documents' (Ahmed, 2007). The problem of the absence of a coherent diversity & inclusion action plan manifests itself at two levels.

Firstly, at the faculty level, faculties differ on if, how, and how much they try to improve inclusion and diversity. This can be seen in the differences between their plans and/or strategies. Some faculties, e.g. the Science faculty, do in fact have an action plan. Unfortunately, it is isolated from the rest of the university, even though other faculties might profit from insight in the plans or strategies in question. Some faculties have no actual plan but only aspirations or a vague idea they promote, which is not actionable nor accountable.

Secondly, at the central administration level of the university, there are aspirations mentioned in the annual plan and the mission statement, but a real actionable plan is still lacking. The ambitions that are expressed concern mostly gender equality. The appointment of female professors and the increase of female university head teachers is, however, not enough to change an organisation's culture. In order to improve inclusion at the university, the diversity and inclusion strategies have to be implemented in trainings, policies, HR practices and several other aspects of the organisation (Bersin, 2015).

Additionally, even though Radboud University and its faculties repeatedly state the aim of improving diversity and inclusion, the University has been somewhat one-sided focused on gender diversity (Radboud University, 2018b). Therefore, other aspects of inclusion are still to be explored and implemented.

General lack of awareness on inclusion topics

The think tank has found - through interviews, personal experiences and a survey - that there is a lack of awareness around the topic of inclusion and diversity, not only among students but staff as well. This lack of awareness often contributes to exclusion and remarks that are experienced as mean spirited or annoying, even though there might not have been any ill intent behind such remarks.

Even if students or staff are aware of the topic of inclusion and diversity, they often lack knowledge on the topic of intersectionality. Again, this can be related to the stages of the learning circle (Crosbie, 2005). To shift from unknowingly unable or unknowingly able to the last phase, education on these topics is essential.

Accessibility on campus

Furthermore, it is the case that several buildings are only partially accessible or only accessible with help from the staff to disabled people (e.g. the Berchmanianum building, the Erasmus building during its renovation, or its bridge to the Elinor Ostrom building that was not accessible to wheelchair users for months), which is again an instance that can be blamed on a lack of awareness but can still be an exclusionary experience for people with disabilities.

Lack of a platform for inclusion initiatives

As pointed out before, there is a wish for improvement with regard to diversity and inclusion, a call to action of sorts, but no actual concrete strategies or plans for the university as a whole. A number of people, either staff or students have indicated a want or need for improvement, but a platform or resources are not always available for them to use. This also shows again that individuals or groups that want to promote these ideals are fairly isolated from each other. Therefore, if the university is seriously dedicated to this topic, it needs to show dedication not only in the form of statements, but also in the form of time, resources, concrete solutions and persistence. The expressed wishes to become more inclusive can only be fulfilled if they are translated into concrete actions.

Iceland case study

The purpose of the study trip to Iceland was to collect best practices and solutions of diversity and inclusion policy. In Iceland, the think tank has entered into discussions with universities, activists, companies and a member of parliament. Afterwards, it has been evaluated which solutions could be useful and feasible at Radboud University.

Iceland, and Scandinavian countries in general, are high performers regarding equality and inclusion. After careful comparison with other countries, Iceland was chosen because it is at the top of the lists that measure (gender) equality. For example, Iceland has been topping the Global Gender Gap index for 10 consecutive times (Ćirić, 2018). It is even hailed by the World Economic Forum as a gender equality paradise (Jakobsdóttir, 2018). In addition, this think tank had the privilege to have Sóley Tómasdóttir, someone who has worked in the field of equality and inclusion in Iceland, as a mentor during this think tank. With her extensive network of experts on this topic, this think tank was able to connect with the right people and organisations which resulted in incredibly insightful and relevant ideas and concepts that made every interview meaningful and relevant.

The interviews on inclusion with Icelandic organisations show, however, that even in Iceland there is still a lot of room for improvement on multiple different dimensions of intersectional inclusion. For instance, Iceland has a fairly homogeneous population that has only recently seen a rise in immigration. Thus, it will be interesting to see how the inclusion of immigrants will develop.

One of the lessons learned in the stakeholder research in Iceland is that there is a risk of thinking that 'all has been achieved', because Iceland is placed so high in the equality indexes. This comfortable position at the top may make policy-makers lean back instead of making a continuous effort to improve inclusion and equality policies. This lesson can also be applied for goals that are set by the university. For example, what happens after the goal of 30% female professors has been reached? The advice this think tank has gathered is on the one hand to be content with what has been achieved, as well as to keep striving to create a more equal and inclusive environment on the other hand. This includes constantly setting new goals and to support and develop current policies.

Another lesson learned in Iceland is the importance of concrete action plans. It is not enough to 'do the documents' and talk about inclusion. Once the awareness of the problem is there, a sense of urgency should follow, leading to concrete measures and continuous monitoring of the situation at universities.

The last lesson that has been learned, which might be the most important one, is that subtlety is not always the best way to handle things. At the very start of the project this think tank had the tendency to think that it could not be disruptive, but Iceland revealed that being disruptive might be necessary from time to time to get your point across. Disruptive and so called 'radical' approaches can have benefits as well as negative consequences. Choosing to enforce big and sudden changes, in for example policy, ensure that those changes are made on a shorter term. This is a benefit if placed next to the alternative; negotiations concerning the demanded changes may take a long time because of all the involved parties and stakeholders, and the result that is reached by the consensus may be less invasive and therefore less effective. The

next lesson aligns with this. Iceland revealed that it is simply not possible to involve all possible stakeholders. It is important to gather multiple perspectives and create a support base, but doing this endlessly prevents making actual decisions. The key is to involve a certain amount of experts, by experience or knowledge, and go from there. This will lead to decisions that are well thought out, without taking up too much time.

However, the Dutch culture – especially in terms of policymaking and reaching a political consensus – is based on the so called ‘polder’-model. Essential to this model is the idea that all involved and relevant parties’ opinions and demands are considered when negotiating, and that all parties need to agree to a certain compromise. Making disruptive changes may therefore juxtapose this general culture and cause controversy. Whilst the idea of creating controversy is not a negative effect in itself, it may lead to a movement in the general public that strongly resists these changes. If such an anti-movement exists, it will be even more challenging to enforce any new policy, especially surrounding a topic like inclusion that is dependent on the norms and values of the public.

Although this think tank is limited to the awareness of and impacting the “silent majority”, there is a possibility that the suggested approach is considered ‘radical’ and causes a certain amount of resistance. This think tank has tried to at least consider all opinions on the topic by, for example, interviewing students after conducting a questionnaire on their experiences with inclusion/exclusion on campus. This think tank has also tried to contact students who had negative experiences with the university’s earlier attempts to somewhat improve inclusion, for example the placements of gender neutral bathrooms. Even though think tank was not able to converse with them on this topic, it has been made clear that not everyone will welcome the suggestions from the next chapter.

However, the research in Iceland has not only revealed that resistance is a possibility, but also how it can be dealt with. From experienced stakeholders, who have dealt with people who are opposed to inclusive measures in Iceland, this think tank has learnt that it is always important to keep conversing with every party. Hearing people out about their concerns, and simultaneously explaining why inclusion is beneficial, is key. These types of dialogue ensure that the possible negative consequences of an anti-movement will not limit the effects of a policy.

Solutions

1.a Equality Officer.

From an interview with representatives of the University of Iceland, it has been found that it would be beneficial to the improvement of diversity and inclusion on the Radboud University to appoint an Equality Officer, henceforth referred to as 'EO'. The point of an EO is, among other things, to oversee the development, content and execution of plans and strategies pertaining to diversity and inclusion. Furthermore, an EO would be a supervisor of sorts to all talking points of the university (these talking points will be explained later on in this report).

It is essential that the EO answers directly to the Rector Magnificus, as the Officer needs to be involved with higher management and not placed in a side branch of the university. This way the EO will be dynamically involved in management, which causes diversity and inclusion to be an ongoing process at the university and a permanent point on the agenda. To further support this process, it is important for the Rector Magnificus to be constantly involved as well and even the frontrunner of the cause since a person in this position is, in a way, the face of the university. A key proven strategy that would really show the commitment of the university to improving inclusion would thus be assigning the Rector Magnificus (or any member of the Executive Board) the responsibility for leading and sponsoring the inclusion and diversity efforts and programmes (Bersin, 2015).

It might be a possibility to combine this with the new position of program manager for inclusion. After reading the job advertisement, this think tank believes that the inclusion program manager will be doing similar work as the EO suggested above. Since adding the task of EO to the workload of the new appointed program manager can be too much to handle for one person, this think tank suggests creating an Equality Office, where multiple experts come together like in the Human Rights Office in the city of Reykjavik. This will cover the amount of work that has to be done and facilitates the discussion between experts in this area.

1.b Diversity & inclusion faculty committees.

From interviews with faculties at the Radboud University as well as the University of Iceland, it appears that it would be a good idea to appoint one or two people focussing on diversity and inclusion at each faculty. These people would answer to the EO, and collaborate with each other within a general, university-wide, diversity and inclusion committee. This way, more ideas for strategies and a coherent plan would be generated and there would be more communication and cooperation between faculties. Additionally, appointing each faculty their own committee members would allow them to tailor specific strategies and or plans to their own faculty, as certain strategies might work better or worse for different faculties.

The "hierarchy" of this system would be as follows: the Rector Magnificus stands at the top. As the face of the university it is important they play an integral part. The Rector

is then followed by the EO; the EO can be seen as the overseer of everything pertaining to diversity and inclusion. After the EO comes the central diversity and inclusion committee, where each faculty will be represented by one or two members. A central committee is essential for a coherent structure (this central committee will be further explained in the next point). This committee checks the progress made in the faculty committees. The EO, as chairman of the central committee, could then relay this information to the Rector Magnificus.

1.c Central university-wide Equality & Diversity committee.

The central committee is presided by the EO and/or the program manager for inclusion. The central committee will consist out of the EO, one representative of each faculty and ideally the rector magnificus as well. Since this is probably not realistic, this think tank would advise to follow the recommendation stated above, namely to have the EO relay the information to the Rector Magnificus.

The committee will have multiple aims. The committee will make a central policy on inclusion. Cooperation with faculties is essential here. The representatives of the faculties in this central committee will make sure that the central committee is aware of the problems and opportunities that the faculty representatives have found and that the central policy will be implemented by the faculties. The interaction described above is also essential for the second aim of the committee. It will produce an annual action plan with concrete measures and goals. The third aim is the constant monitoring of the implementation of measures and the achievement of the goals.

This think tank recognises the fact that this idea has not only financial consequences, but also takes up quite a lot of valuable time. However, it is confident that it will be worth it in the end. The structure guarantees an effective, ongoing discussion, and avoids the problem of 'doing the documents' and other one-time solutions.

2. Anonymisation of exams and assignments in order to prevent implicit bias

Research shows that teachers/professors show bias in grading essays and tests, especially with regard to ethnicity. This leads to minorities receiving lower grades than students belonging to the majority (Sprietsma, 2013), which of course is grave and unfair. Therefore, this think tank suggests to anonymise all papers and exams. An example of a university that has successfully implemented the anonymisation of grading is Trinity College Dublin (Trinity College Dublin, 2016).

When talking about this idea with a student representing Akkuraatd in the student council, it became clear that this issue has already been discussed in the past, but has not yet been implemented because of the negative practical consequences it would have, such as students making mistakes in writing down their (anonymous) student number. Their names would then be valuable as a second safeguard mechanism. However, this year it will be discussed again in the student council and this think tank would strongly advise in favour of supporting anonymisation of exams, since it has not

only been proven to be effective in eliminating the disadvantaging of minorities, but it would also be valuable in giving these minorities a feeling of justice.

If this measure is implemented, this think tank would advise to further explore the options of expanding the anonymisation to other cases. An example would be removing the name of the student from their bachelor/master thesis when it is corrected by the second corrector.

3. Structural exit interviews / evaluation form

In order to gain insight into the size of the problem, it is important to know whether or not students leave the university because of a feeling of exclusion. Therefore it is important to analyse the reasons why students leave Radboud University. This can be done through structural 'exit interviews' in the form of evaluations forms with students leaving the university. To make sure that the questions lead to insight in inclusion at Radboud University, it is important that the evaluation forms explicitly ask about a feeling of exclusion and the feeling of social security. These questions for instance could be:

- Did you feel comfortable at Radboud University?
- Did you ever feel negatively impacted at Radboud University because of certain personal characteristics?
- Did you feel valued at Radboud University?
- Did you ever feel excluded and/or discriminated by other students and/or staff of Radboud University?

If a student indicates a feeling of exclusion on their evaluation form, a follow-up can be done to get better insight into the motivations of the students to leave the university. These exit interviews are not only important to get insight in the problem, but also to give (ex-)students of Radboud University the feeling that they are being heard and that they have a possibility to voice their problems with the university.

4. Cooperation with other universities in the Netherlands.

The problem of exclusion is not merely one of Radboud University. Other universities are struggling with creating a diverse and inclusive environment at the university too. However, some universities have already taken more action than others to tackle this struggle. Especially the Vrije Universiteit (VU) in Amsterdam is a progressive university in this area, and it collaborates with the University of Leiden and the University of Groningen to develop a successful diversity program. However, it not only collaborates with Dutch universities, but also with non-dutch universities that already have successful policies on this topic in place. The VU for instance started a collaboration with the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Furthermore the VU plays a leading role in developing a Charter for Diversity in higher education, doing so in collaboration with ECHO, the Expertise Center for Diversity in Higher Education (VU University Amsterdam (VUA), n.d.).

This think tank recommends that Radboud University works together with these universities, profiting from their expertise and participating in a knowledge network on diversity and inclusion in higher education. Another possibility for Radboud University for cooperation and the sharing of best practices on diversity and inclusion is being actively involved with the Association of research universities in the Netherlands (VSNU). The VSNU is currently mapping the research universities' different initiatives in this domain (diversity coordinator VSNU, personal correspondence, December 16th, 2019). It would be interesting to closely follow these developments.

Next to cooperation, 'competition' with other universities could serve as an external benchmark for the University to attain its goals regarding inclusion policy more quickly, and be held accountable in case the goals are not attained (Bersin, 2015).

Furthermore this think tank suggests that Radboud University supports the measures taken by the VU through for instance signing the Charter for Diversity in Higher Education, committing to well-defined diversity targets. Additionally, it would be valuable to stay in close contact with the VU regarding this topic, following their developments and progress.

Radboud and other Dutch universities could learn from Icelandic universities too. They have started 'Equality Days', a programme which focuses on collaboration in the field of equality, diversity and inclusion. In Nijmegen, Radboud University could join forces with HAN University of Applied Sciences, to exchange best practices and together make Nijmegen a place where students feel included. After an interview with employees of the HAN (January 30th, 2020), it became clear that they look forward to a cooperation with the Radboud University to create an inclusive Nijmegen. They also recommended that the Radboud University could join the diversity network of Gelderland.

5. Organising trainings for staff members.

At this moment, trainings are being developed by Susan van Esch where students can learn to unravel the concept of inclusion/exclusion, mainly by exercises and real life situations. These trainings will be given to students, so they can spread the awareness to friends, fellow students and other members of student associations. The goal is to train these students so they can have a positive influence on others.

This think tank believes that training of this kind, where you learn about the concept of inclusion/exclusion, will also be beneficial for the staff. Especially making staff aware of implicit biases is important (Bersin, 2015). Taking action is hard, if not impossible, when you do not know what inclusion exactly entails. For diversity and inclusion to become part of the company culture, every individual must see and understand their role in company culture (Florentine, 2019). Providing the staff with a training of this kind makes sure that they are able to make well thought out decisions, as well as being a role model for the students.

6. Decolonisation of the curriculum / more inclusion in the curriculum.

Even though this think tank does recognise that adapting the curriculum to make it less 'colonial'/Eurocentric or more inclusive is a sensitive topic, it is an important issue that cannot be omitted in this report. It does not mean that history has to be rewritten, nor does it undermine the importance of Western scholars and other ideas being discussed in courses. What is important is recognising the influence of role models a diversity of students can be inspired by. In concrete terms, this can be achieved for example by inviting a more diverse range of speakers and (guest) lecturers. Again, awareness is the crux. Therefore, it is important that the professors make the students aware of the fact that the curriculum may be (Western) biased and emphasise the value of different opinions, theories and points of view.

However, this think tank is aware of the fact that at Radboud University professors have the final say in the content of their own courses and therefore is somewhat reliant on them to implement this solution. Therefore, this think tank advocates for the abovementioned trainings (solution 5) to focus on the importance of paying attention to bias in their content and in the curriculum. The training could provide help/tools for the professors in adjusting their content to become more inclusive.

7. Contact point

As mentioned before, Radboud University would do well to appoint one or several contact points. The idea is that students, or even employees, will be able to go to these contact points to ask for advice or report incidents regarding exclusion. The people or person that work at said point will of course need to be aware of issues pertaining to exclusion such as racism, sexism, homophobia and microaggressions. After the contact point has been notified of an issue by someone, they can then decide if and how further action should be taken. Since it is a possibility individuals working at or associated with the university might be the cause of such an issue, it is important that the talking point appointed is not dependant on the university since a conflict of interest might then occur.

The report on 'Harassment in Dutch Academia' by the LNVH explores a couple of recommendations that can be applied to some extent to problems surrounding inclusion and contact points (Naezer, Van den Brink and Benschop, 2019). The report speaks of creating support structures. The first aspect of such a structure is that current confidential officers need to be made more aware and schooled on the manifestations, facilitating factors and effects of the problems for which they are consulted. This approach can have a positive outcome for exclusion problems: simply raising awareness on negative feelings or situations that marginalised people on campus experience can already be beneficial in creating a certain culture shift. This think tank tries to achieve something similar amongst students with the awareness campaign.

However, education of confidential officers is not sufficient, according to the report. It might be necessary to convene an outside party that can serve as an independent

body where people can ask for advice or an investigation within the institution they work or study in. In more extreme cases, this body should be powerful enough to be able to sanction the institution. Whilst it is not possible to foresee if people will come to such a body to complain about extreme cases of exclusion, this think tank does think it is important for a confidential officer or body to be somewhat independent from the university.

A regular contact point for inclusion, with the aspects of independence and confidentiality, might not be the only necessary measure, as some people still may not feel safe to confide in a confidential officer or may not think it is worth the trouble. People may not particularly feel the need to report exclusion, unlike assault or harassment, because of the different layers exclusion can manifest itself in. For example, the think tank is unsure whether many people will want to report microaggressions to a confidential officer, because of their often unintentional nature. However, it remains important for people to let others know what type of exclusion they are coping with. That is why it might also be wise to implement an online contact point, that has the option to report anonymously.

This think tank believes these aspects are worth looking into when discussing the possibility of creating talking points.

8. Radboud brand identity, external communication and marketing efforts should actively show that Radboud University highly values inclusion.

Making Radboud University's communication and marketing inclusive is an essential step towards creating an inclusive environment on campus. Students and staff should feel empowered, valued and respected by their peers – that is when people perform best (Bersin, 2015). An example of a simple action that can be taken to promote inclusion is hanging LGBTQI+ rainbow flags in several places (LGBTQI+ movement in Reykjavik, personal correspondence, November 18th, 2019).

Furthermore, research has shown that it is vital to create an atmosphere of belonging. Being connected with an organisation or group of people in which you can freely be yourself is not only a psychological need but also leads to increased creativity and engagement in the workplace (Florentine, 2019).

The chapter about the status quo of Radboud's inclusion policy already mentioned that Radboud University actually succeeds in actively expressing the wish to become more inclusive. However, this think tank believes that this can be done more structurally and high-profile through marketing efforts and external communication. The promotion of the university's strive to be more inclusive shows students, staff and outside parties that inclusion is an actual goal of the university, which in itself can bring the university one step closer to inclusion

9. Cooperation with student associations and support of inclusion initiatives

For the Executive Board to know what is going on, it is important to invite stakeholders to the table. Examples of interesting organisations to discuss inclusion with are student unions, the LGBTQIA+ students association 'Dito', the Muslim student association 'MSV', Halkes Netwerk, Student Life and RUNOMI network on migrant inclusion.

The think tank has tried to reach out to some of the student associations mentioned above, but has received little to no response so far. However, an invitation from the university itself to join the dialogue on inclusion remains important and might lead to a more enthusiastic reaction.

10. Improve awareness about inclusion with a campaign

An awareness campaign can be used to kick-start a dialogue on inclusion at the university. To prevent it from petering out, it is important to make this dialogue continuous by generating debate on a university-sponsored social media page. It is essential that the campaign is able to trigger a debate on campus. In the report '#Ruseen: An awareness campaign to improve inclusion at Radboud University', a blueprint for the awareness campaign is provided.

Conclusions and recommendations

The expressed wishes to become more inclusive can only be fulfilled if they are translated into not only statements and goals, but concrete actions. In taking the improvement of inclusion and diversity seriously, it is crucial that enough time and resources are made available, as well as a platform for initiatives to facilitate this improvement. The university needs to provide this platform and funding if it wants to turn theoretical plans and strategies into reality. To further support this process, it is important for the Rector Magnificus to be constantly involved as well, and even being the frontrunner of the cause, since the person in this position is the face of the university.

Most importantly, goal-setting has to be a continuous endeavour. It is not enough to set some targets; the inclusion situation needs to be constantly monitored, goals updated, and policies readjusted. Therefore it is crucial that the university is and remains persistent in its strive to make the Radboud campus as inclusive as can be.

A number of solutions are offered in this report, each based on extensive interviews held with members of the Radboud University as well as numerous organisations and governing bodies based in Iceland. Based on these interviews the solutions were formulated and tailored to the Radboud University. These solutions include changes and expansions to the policy with regard to inclusion and diversity, including an Equality Office(r), recommendations to collaborate with other Universities and institutions such as the HAN and student associations, structural changes including exit interviews and anonymisation of tests, and a campaign promoting awareness among students. The aim is that all of these solutions combined will promote inclusion and diversity on multiple levels, from board level all the way down to the students and will hopefully connect these levels by stimulating inclusion from the bottom up as well as top down. The think tank is of the opinion that these offered solutions are concrete and feasible. Carrying out these solutions will not only improve inclusion at the Radboud University but could potentially make Radboud a frontrunner among Dutch universities with regard to inclusion and diversity as well.

Finally, the think tank has found its establishment, in order to investigate in what ways inclusion at Radboud University can be improved, to be a very positive experience. Throughout the past months of examining literature and interviewing experts and stakeholders, the importance of inclusion and the idea that exclusion does more harm than good has become much clearer. Aside from the personal growth and education throughout the research, the think tank believes that including students in projects like these is very beneficial, as students partly determine the culture on campus and can therefore deliver useful insights to problems students face, as well as what solutions may work. The think tank hopes that not only the given solutions and awareness campaign will be taken into consideration, but also that this research kick-starts the involvement of students in potential inclusion policy.

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