

The World of Work

An Interview with Gordana Landen, Group Chief Human Resources Officer, The Adecco Group

EDITORS' NOTE Gordana Landen joined Adecco Group in 2019 from Signify (formerly Philips Lighting), where she held the position of Chief Human Resources Officer. She previously worked in senior human resources and project management positions at Ericsson and SCA (Svenska Cellulosa AB). Landen holds a bachelor's degree in human resource development and labor relations from Stockholm University.



Gordana Landen

COMPANY BRIEF The Adecco Group (adeccogroup.com) is a leading global talent advisory and solutions company. The Group's mission is to make the future work for everyone, and every day enables more than 3.5 million careers. The Adecco Group skills, develops, and hires talent in 60 countries, enabling organizations to embrace the future of work. As a Fortune Global 500 company, the Group leads by example, creating shared value that fuels economies and builds better societies. Its culture of inclusivity, entrepreneurship and teamwork empowers its 30,000 employees. The Group has been consistently ranked one of the 'World's Best Workplaces' by Great Place to Work®. The Adecco Group AG is headquartered in Zurich and listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange (ADEN). The Group is powered by three global business units: Adecco, Talent Solutions and Modis.

How has the role of the CHRO evolved and how critical is it for the role to be engaged in business strategy?

Over the past years, and especially after the COVID-19 crisis we have just experienced, the role of CHROs – and all HR people – has evolved. The rising emergence of new world working, diversity and inclusion, wellbeing, HR analytics, upskilling and reskilling, and the changing role of leadership have turned the HR function into a core focus. Therefore, it is critical that CHROs are closely involved in business strategy.

Will you provide an overview of the Adecco Group's diversity and inclusion initiatives?

We envision a world in which talent, not labels, matters and where everyone has a chance to be part of the world of work. Our diversity and inclusion strategy aims to foster trust and collaboration and a corporate culture where we recognize and value differences to help our business, communities and clients win. Our approach encompasses multiple pillars:

- Inclusive leadership – ensuring diverse thinking is respected, managed and applied at leadership levels. For example, we aim to reach gender parity at the leadership level by 2030 and we have put in place different incentives and programs, such as the Female Talent Program, to promote female leaders across all of the organization. Our board of directors earlier this year already achieved gender parity.
- Conscious inclusion – driving an inclusive culture and dialogue across our entire organization through our behaviors, actions and continuous learning. For example, we

conduct regular pulse checks across the whole organization as part of a quarterly employee engagement survey. We have also included an "inclusion" section to track and monitor progress. Moreover, we are rolling out a global training program for our 30,000 global employees, regardless of their position or rank.

- Equity by design – enabling accessibility and equality for all through our processes and initiatives, minimizing barriers to maximize our collective potential for success. For example, we have put in place inclusive hiring practices, through addressing our recruitment processes, technology and behaviors

- Putting well-being at the heart of everything we do – placing value on mental, physical and cultural well-being and providing services and support appropriate for the needs of everyone at the Adecco Group. For example, we have launched several well-being initiatives at Adecco Group to support people around the world during repeated lockdowns.

How engrained is diversity and inclusion in the Adecco Group's culture and values?

As a people business, we put our expertise and energy into improving everyone's chances of being part of the world of work. As one of the largest employers in the world, we recognize that we have a responsibility and opportunity to make a real difference around inclusion in the workplace. The path to inclusion starts with a single-minded focus on skills, on what each candidate or employee can do, rather than on their nationality, gender, race, age, background, religion, ableness or sexual orientation. Through

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leveraging the power of diversity, we can drive more innovative decisions significantly faster, truly understand and represent our global customers, and improve our company culture, employee satisfaction and, ultimately, productivity and performance. We have a firm commitment to promoting equal opportunities for everyone working with or through the Adecco Group.

How critical is it to have diverse perspectives and experiences at the table when making business decisions?

Absolutely fundamental. More than ever, we need innovative, creative and curious mindsets to help us navigate a turbulent and constantly shifting landscape and the only way we can successfully do this is with diverse perspectives, experiences and approaches. Our new strategy is all about reimagining how we operate as a business to better serve our customers around the world. We have highlighted the behaviors we need to prioritize to meet the changing needs of our clients. Those behaviors include agility, curiosity, creativity and collaborative listening. In this context, upskilling our employees is key.

How is the Adecco Group reaching out to different organizations and institutions to make sure it is reaching a diverse talent pool?

Complementing our internally focused activities, we actively engage with employers to develop programs that embrace diverse talent. This can be through bespoke programs where we, for instance, support employers in increasing the representation of people with a disability in their workforce, support them in the recruitment of refugees, help build out their employer value proposition, or via

dedicated solution lines such as our subsidiary Humando in France or the Fundacion Adecco in Spain. We also provide training on how to manage diversity effectively and run work-readiness and apprenticeship programs to help address skills shortages and increase the labor market participation rate of groups like young people. Through our new business unit, Adecco Inclusion, we are looking to deploy these solutions at scale, leveraging learnings from leading countries such as France and Spain.

We also campaign for more inclusive employment worldwide through a range of global partnerships, associations and other initiatives, including:

- **Paradigm for Parity®:** A business coalition focused on eliminating the gender gap in corporate leadership, and we're proud to lead by example in this respect. From 2019 to 2020, the share of female global leaders at Adecco Group increased to 32 percent from 26 percent. About two thirds of our employees are women which is a great testament to our efforts.

- **Valuable 500:** In 2019, we joined this global movement which puts disability and inclusion on the global business leadership agenda. Hundreds of global leaders are uniting to unlock the business, social and economic value of the 1.3 billion people living with disabilities around the world. As part of our membership, we will continue to champion the integration of people with a disability in the labor market, notably by strengthening their employability.

- **ILO Global Business and Disability Network (GBDN):** As part of our role on the Steering

Committee, we're encouraging business-to-business support and peer-to-peer learning to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in workplaces. In 2020, the GBDN's efforts focused on how to ensure that disability and inclusion remain a priority for companies.

- **European Network Against Racism's Equal@work:** This multi-stakeholder network brings together businesses, social partners, NGOs, public authorities and academics committed to diversity and inclusion to find solutions to increase the participation of ethnic minorities and migrants in the labor market.

- **Tent Partnership for Refugees:** Tent was founded to mobilize the private sector to improve the lives and livelihoods of more than 25 million men, women and children forcibly displaced from their home countries by helping businesses identify and understand opportunities to help refugees. We joined this movement in 2020 because we strongly believe work is a social integrator and recognize the opportunity and the responsibility we have to contribute to the labor market integration of refugees.

What are your key priorities as you look to the Adecco Group's continued efforts regarding diversity and inclusion?

Regarding diversity and inclusion, my key priorities are the implementation of our diversity and inclusion agenda in the new world of working (especially the hybrid model), the monitoring and tracking of the activity through data and analytics, and leading our transformation and our new strategy (called Future@Work) with diversity and inclusion in mind. ●

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