

# BUSINESS LEADERS IN PORTUGAL UNITE FOR FAIRER AND MORE EQUAL SOCIETY

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**Leaders from nine organisations in Portugal, including two law firms, have come together to create 'Leaders for Equality'**



Despite global progress in recent years, many people continue to be discriminated against on the basis of their personal characteristics and are at a disadvantage because of their gender, ethnicity, nationality, age or sexual orientation. It was with this challenge in mind that leaders of nine organisations, who believe in the social and business benefits of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion, came together to learn together, stimulate and promote positive change in Portugal.

The "Leaders for Equality" forum will focus its work on creating a movement that seeks to contribute to workplaces and leaders as diverse as the society in which they operate, and as inclusive as the world should be.

"At Accenture we believe that a culture of equality is essential to creating a sense of belonging and ensuring that all employees can thrive and find happiness in the workplace. We are proud to have anticipated the importance of topics such as gender equality and diversity, making commitments to concrete goals, such as gender parity by 2025, not only as a matter of human rights, but also of corporate values and imperative business. It is a key factor for the company's success, creativity and capacity for innovation, and a reflection of the society in which we operate. It is a privilege for us to be able to participate in this forum with some of the great companies in Portugal, who share with us this motivation to inspire our country on its journey towards equality in all its spheres," said José Gonçalves, CEO of Accenture.

"Argo Partners has participated closely and, since always, with several Associations that promote diversity and inclusion. As partners of Associação Salvador, Stand4Good and more recently of the ICF (Inclusive Community Forum) we have helped to raise awareness among our customers about the added value that being more heterogeneous can bring to their teams. As a Consulting company in the Human Resources area, we have witnessed a growing concern with the theme of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion and also sought to serve as a market barometer in sharing some examples of success and good practices. The invitation made by Helen Duphorn to participate in this forum was another opportunity for Argo Partners to enrich its perspectives and continue to contribute to a more inclusive labor market," said Filipa Leite de Castro, partner at Argo Partners.

"At Cisco, we are guided by our purpose of driving a more Sustainable and Inclusive Future for All. It is critical to remove any barriers to inclusion, multiply the impact of inclusive leadership and promote equity. This means building a work environment where there is respect for differences," said Miguel Almeida, Cisco CEO.

"At Cuatrecasas, we are fully committed to the values of Diversity and Inclusion and have implemented specific policies and concrete measures to promote gender equality. It was, therefore, with great enthusiasm and pride that I accepted the invitation of Helen Duphorn, leader of IKEA who had the merit of this initiative, to integrate this group of business leaders, with the aim of creating a platform that contributes to a greater awareness of institutions and organizations in general, through the promotion of the debate of ideas and the sharing of experiences and solutions, in favor of a more just and equitable society," stated Maria João Ricou, Managing Partner of Cuatrecasas in Portugal.

"As leaders, we have a responsibility to create a turning point in the way we manage our companies and our people. Companies such as EDP, which are committed to diversity, equality and inclusion, are more resilient, innovative and competitive and their example inspires and contributes to a fairer society, where everyone has equal access to opportunities. By promoting the sharing of best practices and opening space for reflection and debate on solutions, this forum will certainly be an important lever for change," comments Vera Pinto Pereira, Member of the Executive Board of Directors of EDP.

"Values such as equality and respect are intrinsic to the DNA of the FNAC brand and, for that reason, it makes perfect sense for us to be part of this working group that aims to promote a fairer society in the labor market. We believe that our positioning of 'cultivating the difference' has reinforced with our customers the work we have been developing at home. An example of this is the inclusion policy that we have in place for the integration of people with disabilities, for which we have great ambition to grow. As a recognized brand in the market, it is our mission to set an example and continue to encourage other companies to do the same," commented Nuno Luz, CEO of FNAC.

"It is with a great sense of responsibility and pride that we present this forum of work between peers

who care about Equality in their workplaces and in society in general. It is essential that we bring the topic of Diversity and Inclusion to the table and broaden this debate, in favor of a more just and egalitarian society. This networking is of immense importance to me as a leader, and I hope it can also inspire other organizations to join the movement and end, for example, the pay gap between men and women in Portugal," said Helen Duphorn, CEO of IKEA Portugal.

"Mercer is extremely proud to be part of this "Leaders for Equality" forum, which will certainly contribute to the evolution of our society. Over the last few years, we have implemented policies that eliminate wage inequality and promote equity, and we have worked to eliminate any type of discrimination, promoting a very inclusive culture. In addition to the efforts in our company, which are transversal to the MarshMclennan Group, and aware of our role, we have developed several market studies that help organizations to work on this topic that, unfortunately, still exists. In this context, being part of this Forum makes perfect sense and it is great to see that we are starting to have a structure to start having some positive influence on our society," added Rodrigo Simões de Almeida, CEO of Mercer Portugal.

"Sérvulo & Associados immediately embraced the initiative of the 'Leaders for Equality' forum. Equality is an asset to be taken into account by companies, a productivity and innovation tool that brings gains. It is necessary to generate inclusive environments that favor diversity. We know that different people are capable of identifying different challenges, risks and solutions in organizations. We have implemented numerous inclusion measures, namely neutralization measures, including the non-pro rata reduction of lawyers' performance bonuses due to prolonged absences due to parenting. We welcome and see ourselves in initiatives like this one, which take the lead in social issues of extreme relevance to the progress of civil society," highlighted Paulo Câmara, Managing Partner at Sérvulo & Associados.