



# Charter for Inclusive Communication

From good intentions to a solid approach



**“Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is organizing the party together.”**

**Allyens**

# Content

<b>1. The beginning: what do we want to achieve?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. First, understanding what diversity and inclusion are ...</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. ... then putting them into practice.</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4. And ... action!</b>	<b>10</b>
Steps to an inclusive mindset	11
Getting Started	12
Strategy	12
Creation	14
• Language	14
• Images	16
Evaluation	18
<b>5. Our commitment</b>	<b>19</b>

# 1

**The beginning:  
what do we want  
to achieve?**

Our society keeps changing and evolving every day. The population is becoming more diverse, in terms of origin, but also in age, sexual orientation, disability, language and experience. And our employees and customers reflect this changing society.

Our current communication is not always representative of this diversity. We want to change that in the coming years, together with you.

We want to acknowledge this diversity and commit fully to more inclusive communication. In inclusive communication, everyone feels safe and welcome. This is a responsibility that we take on as an employer and as a brand. We thereby make

room for talent and for growth, for you as an individual, and also for us together as a company. By focusing on inclusive communication, we remain relevant as a brand, we contribute to society, and connect people even more. Ready for tomorrow.

We know that inclusion does not come naturally. That's why we created this Inclusive Communication Charter for everyone who helps build the communication of Telenet, Telenet Business, SBS and BASE. In this charter, we explain what inclusive communication is and offer tips and guidelines that you can use right away.

### **Ready to get started?**

## **Inclusive communication**

When we talk about inclusive communication, it's about written language, spoken communication, and the choice of images of people and groups. It's about communication to our employees, customers and the general public through various channels such as Intranet, e-mail, advertising campaigns, social media, and so on.

Inclusive communication is communication that provides an authentic representation of reality. It is communication without prejudice, stereotypes or discrimination, which welcomes everyone, is accessible to all and generates positive feelings.

# 2

**First, understanding what diversity and inclusion are ...**

**The first step to inclusive communication is to understand exactly what diversity and inclusion are. Therefore, we explain some of the concepts here.**



## **Diversity**

Diversity means that people differ from each other, at different levels, and in various contexts and situations. For example, in terms of experience, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.

## **Inclusion**

Inclusion is taking active steps to ensure that everyone feels safe, respected and included.

## **Equity**

By equity, we mean striving for equal opportunities for all. You recognize that everyone has different needs, and adapt accordingly, so that everyone can participate at an equal level.

## **Accessibility**

Accessibility is ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to use all facilities, services and information. Not just physically, but also financially and socially.

## **Belonging**

Literally translated, belonging is: being at home somewhere. More broadly, it's a sense of security, support and respect that allows people to dare to be themselves.

## **Intersectionality**

Intersectionality is seeing the package of characteristics with which people experience life, and how this affects their opportunities. Specifically, your experiences as a white, heterosexual woman, for example, will differ from those of your neighbor with a different skin color or sexual orientation.

# 3

... and then  
putting them into  
practice.

**We'd like to share with you some of the principles that influenced our approach to become an inclusive organization. These principles reflect the importance of diversity and inclusion, and are tailored to who we are at Telenet.**





### **We create space where everyone can unconditionally be themselves**

At Telenet, we make sure there is room - literally and figuratively - to be fully yourself. Telenet as an organization is also allowed to be itself. We do this by finding a balance between what we radiate as a brand, and who we want to be for our diverse target group(s) and in society at large.

### **We remain positive, while we are grounded in the realities of society**

At Telenet, we always look at everything from the bright side. That is our asset, and we will keep it that way. But, at the same time, it's important to recognize inequalities in society, so that we can take action.

### **We grow when we come together and engage in dialog**

We grow together. At Telenet, we feel that it's important to help each other and learn from each other. As a technology company, we quite literally create connections between people. But we also do this by being open to other perspectives, acknowledging each other's differences and seeing each other as equals.

### **We continuously reflect and act in order to improve**

We engage in constant self-reflection, so that we can keep learning. This allows us to evaluate what we are already doing well, and where we can still make adjustments.

# 4

## And ... action!

**We commit ourselves to actively work on inclusive communication. Some guidelines are concrete and easy to apply. Others will feel uncomfortable, and will confront you with your own thought patterns or require more time, money or effort. Please remember, we don't expect you to communicate inclusively tomorrow without any mistakes, but we do expect you to take steps every day in the process toward inclusive communication.**



## Steps to an Inclusive Mindset

**Inclusive communication starts with your mindset. These three steps help make your mindset more inclusive.**

### **We strive for diverse teams**

We want people with different backgrounds, identities, ideas, and perspectives to work together, and bring together different experiences, perspectives and knowledge. Is the team not yet diverse? Then we call in the help of (experience) experts to come to the right insights.

### **We broaden our awareness and constantly keep learning**

We learn to look at the world through inclusive glasses and to recognize inequalities. We look for ways to learn about diversity and inclusion in order to improve our knowledge and awareness. This can be done informally, for example,

by listening to podcasts on this topic on the way to work, and by sharing these with your colleagues. This can also be done formally, by conducting specific research and by engaging with the relevant target group. This way, we learn how to broaden our view and handle certain themes and sensitivities.

### **We are critical and evaluate regularly**

We remain critical of the steps we take, but also of our impact. It is important to regularly evaluate how far we have come. For example: How diverse are our teams today? Are we actively taking steps to increase our awareness? How inclusive are our campaigns, compared to the previous ones?

# Getting Started

**Inclusive communication goes beyond just your mindset. It's now time to turn that knowledge into actions, so that our communication becomes inclusive from A to Z. From the briefing to the final product.**

## Strategy

**We conduct research to strengthen our inclusive insights. Insights lead to action. We carry out research on what is important to the respective target group and on different themes such as age, language, gender, ethnicity, equal opportunities and connection. We do this, for example, through desk research, interviews and focus groups.**

**We involve our target audience and use experts and practitioners to arrive at authentic, inclusive insights and strategies**

Under the motto "Nothing About Us Without Us," we actively involve the target group in our process. For a long time, people from minority groups did not have their voices heard and listened to. It still often happens that people who do not belong to this group talk about, or over, people, for example, with disabilities or people from

other ethnic backgrounds. This can lead to misrepresentation, and can be hurtful. It is therefore important to always involve the target group and make their voices count.

**We devise customized communication strategies for different parts of the respective target audience**

We take into account the needs and expectations of the target groups who have different backgrounds and who



live in different contexts. We adapt our communication strategy to grow our reach and increase our impact. If your strategy contains a theme such as “freedom” or “love”, you should be aware that this can be interpreted in many different ways. We also adjust our tone of voice depending on the target audience.

### **We communicate through various channels**

We reach a target group as diverse as possible by communicating through different channels that are adapted to the part of the target group we want to reach. Your research and strategy will reveal which channels are ideal for reaching your target audience.

### **We consider diversity and inclusion at every stage of the production process**

Diversity and inclusion are not “checks” that we have to complete, but elements that we constantly consider. For example: we provide clear briefings that address the importance of inclusion, we strive for an inclusive casting process where everyone feels welcome, safe and valued, and we create a safe space during pre- and post-production and on the set, ensure clear procedures and that we have a diverse team on and off the set, and in front of and behind the camera. We evaluate on a regular basis whether the diversity within the production team is still the norm.

# Creation

## We communicate authentically

Authenticity means that the message in words and images matches the living environment and experiences of the target group we are representing. In doing this, we take into account the diversity within different groups, the existing inequalities and the different contexts in which our target group finds itself. This makes our communication empowering and recognizable to the target group that Telenet wants to address and represent.

## We communicate accessibly

Communication is accessible when the message can be read, listened to or seen by everyone in your target audience, and when everyone understands the message. For example, you should provide subtitles for videos and image descriptions for images. Diversifying our channels also contributes to this. Clear writing and visual design also contribute to the accessibility of our communication. Read more on this under 'Language' and 'Image'.

## Language

### We take into account the language diversity within our brand and our target audience

Whenever possible, Telenet offers its communication in multiple languages. In doing this, we choose the language that is most recognizable to our target audience. We ensure that our internal communication is available in correct Dutch, French and English.

### We always communicate clearly and in an accessible way

Inclusive language begins with clear and accessible communication. This way, our messages are clear to the widest possible audience.

- We prefer active versus passive language.
- We prefer accessible and clear vocabulary, but our vocabulary is aimed at an adult target audience.

- We are always as specific as possible in what we write. For example, we say "Sign up now to be a volunteer" instead of "Do you want to make a difference?"
- We avoid using jargon when addressing a large group of people.
- We are consistent in the language we use, and avoid foreign language terminology in our texts.
- We always focus on one core message, so that we can convey it clearly. For example, we limit ourselves to one topic per e-mail or one topic per paragraph in an e-mail, and add clear subtitles.
- We are careful with figurative language, such as sayings, puns and metaphors. This kind of language will not be understood by everyone, and thereby reduces the impact of your message.

## **We use gender conscious language**

We are aware of the language we use, and how we can make it more inclusive.

- We address everyone how they want to be addressed. For example: 'Yasmine - she's on vacation.' Do we not know how someone wants to be addressed? Then we can use gender neutral pronouns (they/their/them in English), for example: 'My colleague, they don't work on Monday.'
- When addressing a group, we use gender neutral terms: 'Hello everyone' instead of 'Ladies and Gentlemen'.
- We avoid gendered words (words that refer to a gender) by looking for an alternative. For example: 'parents' rather than 'mother and father'.
- When in doubt, we rewrite our sentence. For example: 'New colleagues can go to their manager with questions.' rather than "A new colleague can go to his manager with his questions.'

## **We are aware of certain words and statements that are not inclusive and avoid using them**

Some words and expressions have negative connotations, because they were used in the past to oppress or insult certain

people. In turn, some expressions confirm stereotypes or emphasize negative clichés. For example, we avoid the phrase "a female manager" because it suggests that managers are always men. Expressions such as "he's crazy" or "he follows someone blindly" are also statements that reinforce negative ideas and should be avoided.

**“Working on inclusion is a process in which we will continue to invest.”**



## Images

### The representation in our images is authentic

We strive for representation that is recognizable to the target audience and that reflects reality. Representation of a diverse audience is important, but it must also be authentic. The images we show match the story we are telling: we show a diverse group of individuals with whom our audience can identify, and we use images that reinforce positive feelings.

### Our visual designs reinforce our message

With clear and concise communication you reach a broad and diverse target group. How we visually tell a story plays an important role here. We make sure there is a clear color contrast between the text and the background, we choose the most legible fonts (sans serif fonts are usually preferred here) and we provide dynamic design on websites. We use the Telenet Brandbook to create our visual designs, so that they are clear and recognizable.





## Our communication resists existing stereotypes

We avoid imagery that portrays people as clichés, or that insults them or shows them as victims. We look at the 3Ps of the Unstereotype Alliance:

- **Presence:** Who is represented in the communication? Is this diverse and varied? Is this recognizable and authentic?
- **Perspective:** Who frames the story? Who has the power to determine what is and is not said or shown? How can we give a platform to different (underrepresented) individuals and groups here?
- **Personality:** Is the person in the story represented with enough depth? Is the representation not too one-sided or superficial?

## We avoid tokenism

Tokenism happens when you show diversity to avoid criticism. This kind of representation is inauthentic and does not come from the intrinsic motivation of the organization or from the right intention. It is often limited to adding, say, one person of color in a large group of white people.

## We look at diversity across all our communication

It's not possible or desirable to always represent "all" forms of diversity in every form of communication. This would not be authentic either. We strive to provide a realistic representation of diversity in society throughout all of our campaigns.

**“Our goal is the full integration of inclusive communication and to reach a sustainable, positive impact.”**

## **Evaluation**

### **We always evaluate the impact of our actions**

We make sure our actions are always meaningful. Good intentions are important, but we see the results of our actions by measuring our impact. One way in which we do this is by surveying the target audience (customers, potential customers and employees, for example).

### **We make sure that our actions are part of a long-term plan**

Our goal is the full integration of inclusive communication and to reach a sustainable, positive impact. We don't just evaluate diversity and inclusion in one campaign, but look at the overall picture of all our campaigns.

### **We measure how we structurally work on inclusive communication**

We regularly evaluate how we structurally address our actions regarding inclusive communication. Which processes have we put into place to make our communication more structurally inclusive? For example: Have we implemented systems to advance our research? Do we use tools like Textmetrics that help us communicate more inclusively?

### **We take a constructive approach to feedback.**

Opting for more diversity and inclusion can provoke negative reactions from customers or employees. When we receive such negative feedback, we respond constructively, targeted, and directly. Constructive feedback is included in the further development of our communication. We offer a clear counter-response to hateful posts.



# Our commitment

With this charter we commit ourselves to help build inclusive communication at Telenet.

- ✓ We adopt an inclusive mindset and broaden our view.
- ✓ We take concrete steps to make our communication and campaigns more inclusive, from strategy and briefing to production process and execution.
- ✓ And last but not least, we become ambassadors who inspire our colleagues to communicate in an inclusive way.

This way, together we contribute to an organization and world where everyone feels at home and welcome, and where we all prosper.

**“You have a responsibility to make inclusion a daily thought, so we can get rid of the word ‘inclusion.’”**

**Theodore Melfi**