

MAKING EMPLOYMENT ACCESSIBLE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Valuable 500 Global Trends Report



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Identifying the most
significant changes in
this quarter



Top global trends

Investing in nurturing D&I talent

Brands invest in nurturing D&I talent from university to build an inclusive pipeline.

Customer experience fit for all

Accessibility of public spaces becomes a priority and brands aim to create a customer experience fit for all.

Global innovation

Technology and mental health become central to global innovation.

Top regional trends

Focusing on accessibility

Asian and European governments focus on making spaces and services more accessible.

Enhanced quality of life

Asia and the Middle East innovate with technology to enhance quality of life.

Promoting mental health

The Americas promote mental health and emotional connections through marketing and innovation activity.



LET'S DISCUSS

Disability employment



Disability employment

October was National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) in the US, but there is no doubt that this is an important global issue.

The theme for this year's NDEAM was "America's Recovery: Powered by Inclusion," and it highlighted the importance of ensuring that people with disabilities have full access to employment and community involvement during the national recovery from the pandemic. In this quarter's 'Let's Discuss' we celebrate people with disabilities in the workforce, the challenges they face and moves that support their success.

In the US it's clear that the pandemic has had a significant impact on employment rates. Unemployment rates among people with disabilities has risen by **12.6%**, while among people without a disability, rates have risen by **7.9%**.

In 2020 only 17.9% of people with a disability in the US were employed.

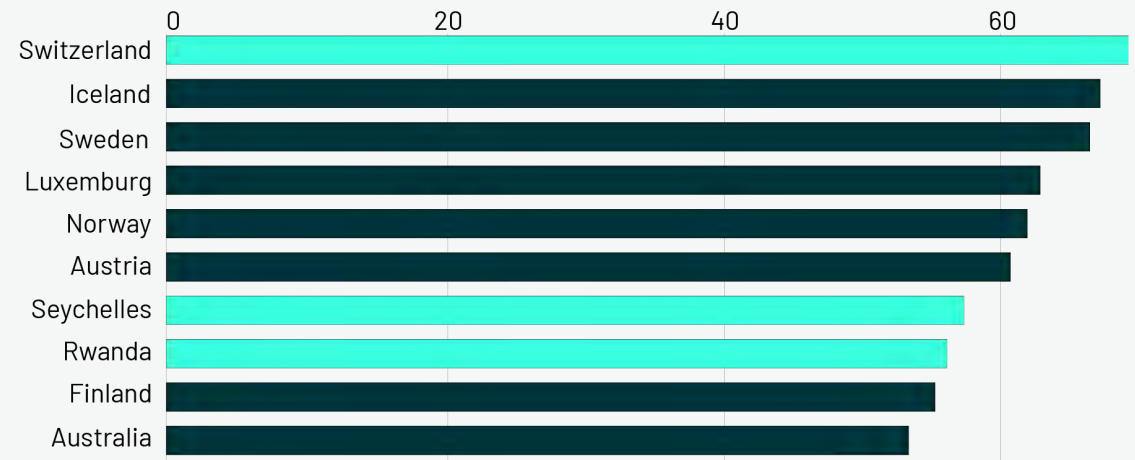
Source: House of Commons, Bureau of Labour Statistics, BBC, TeenVogue, The Guardian

The UK government's report into disabled people in employment in May 2021 showed that the number of disabled people in employment has increased, but the proportion of disabled people who are in employment has fallen. Of the 8.4 million disabled people of working age, 4.4 million (**53.6%**) are currently in work.

This compares to **81.7%** of those who are not disabled. While disability employment numbers are growing in the UK, there is still a large 'disability employment gap' showing that the work is far from inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities.

Most recent data shows that Switzerland has the highest rate of employment of people with disabilities and the Seychelles and Rwanda both have a high rate of employment and a small 'disability employment gap'.

Employment rate (%) for people with disabilities



Source | International Labour Organisation

The pandemic has caused a well overdue reassessment of the job market.



A 2020 analysis of job market data shows that, although people with physical or mental disabilities can benefit greatly from workplaces with flexible remote work policies, they were more likely to be denied these jobs, and instead find employment in precarious, inflexible service work. However, even in office positions, the disability disclosures that many employers require for even the most basic accommodations can be a challenge.

Source: House of Commons, Bureau of Labour Statistics, BBC, TeenVogue, The Guardian

People with disabilities have long asked for more flexible working options. And then came the pandemic. Despite its disruption and tragedy, the pandemic has shown the world how working from home long-term is achievable and even beneficial, especially for people with disabilities. Remote and flexible working has meant that for some people with disabilities, holding down a full-time job is now achievable.

Ruby Jones, a disability activist, shared her experience with the BBC saying:

"The pandemic has improved accessibility for disabled people... Working from home means I am able to work a full-time job without exhausting myself to the point of hospitalisation."

Ruby Jones' Twitter campaign sparked lots of similar reactions from people with disabilities. Some say they have actually gained more work friends and have a better social life by having the option to attend events virtually, while others say working from home meant they were more comfortable and able to work even when they were having a bad day.

However it isn't the same story for everyone.

The mental health challenges of working in isolation disproportionately affected people with disabilities and some people say the total reliance on screens has caused sensitivity to blue light. Of course, there is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to work set-up, but the one thing the pandemic has taught us is that flexibility is key for people with disabilities to thrive at work.

It's important these flexible ways of working aren't forgotten as we return to 'normal'.

Lockdown showed that huge changes can be made practically overnight. So, now it's up to us to build back a more inclusive workplace, with equal opportunities, where people with disabilities can get and keep good jobs and thrive at work.



The last 12 months have just normalised digital access, despite it being quite frustrating that these provisions have only been put in place when it benefits the mass population – despite many disabled people asking for these things for years.

Ruby Jones



THE GLOBAL VIEW

*Analysis of notable moves,
changes or developments*



The global view

Business leadership

Investing in talent

Global businesses are starting to invest in talent from university level up. Growing a pipeline of D&I specialists and nurturing people with disabilities in early stages of their career is a great way to ensure the future of the workplace is inclusive.

WeThe15 calls upon all industries

The Paralympics has been a celebration of sport and achievement and is set to leave behind a legacy like no other. WeThe15 calls upon all industries and business leaders to better represent the 15% of people with disabilities around the globe.

Disability hiring and development take priority across regions

01 APAC

Large tech corporations like Fujitsu and Amazon continue to lead the way on hiring D&I roles across Asia and the Pacific.

02 EMEA

The European job market is looking for more broad-based D&I roles compared to other regions. For example some brands are looking for D&I communications specialists and product managers.

03 LATAM

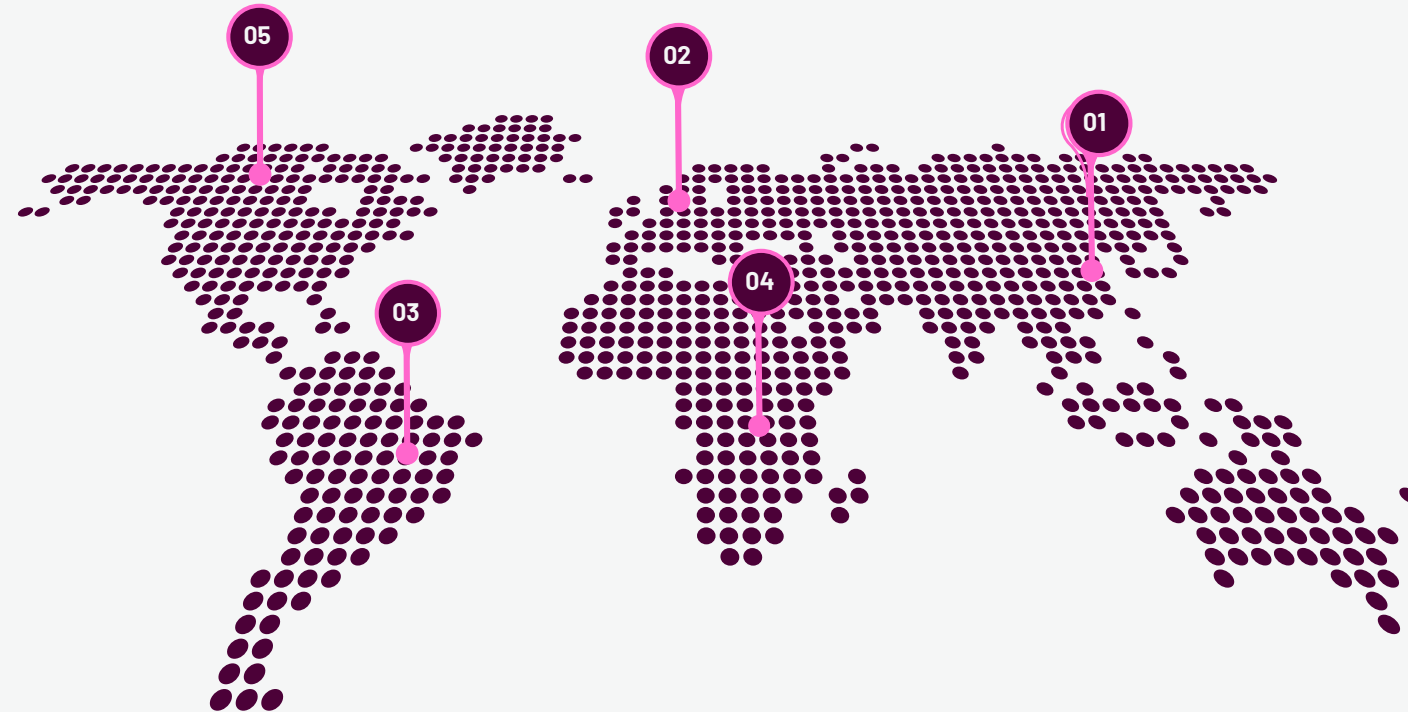
Large corporations like Coca-Cola are advertising for various diversity and inclusion roles in South America, with most continuing to be advertised in Brazil.

04 MEA

Kenya has plans to come up with a National ICT Accessibility Standard, a first in Africa. The country seeks to help people with disabilities find work, stay connected and live better quality lives by giving easy access to digital services. The standard will promote digital inclusion of people with disabilities.

05 NAM

Large companies are investing in D&I campus recruiters, while Google and Stanford University are also teaming up to launch a recruitment programme for people with autism. D&I roles across USA have become remote working-friendly.



The global view

Culture + Brand

Investing in accessibility

This quarter saw global brands and governments invest in the accessibility of their physical spaces. From Disneyland to Shanghai transportation, there has been great effort to knock down barriers and create fully inclusive experiences.

Customer experience

Building an inclusive customer experience is also top of the agenda for consumer-facing brands, like Home Depot. Training up staff to better help customers with disabilities leads to a more accommodating and profitable brand experience.

Big corporations invest in disability recruitment and training

It's unsurprising news that the global job market has significantly contracted due to the pandemic.

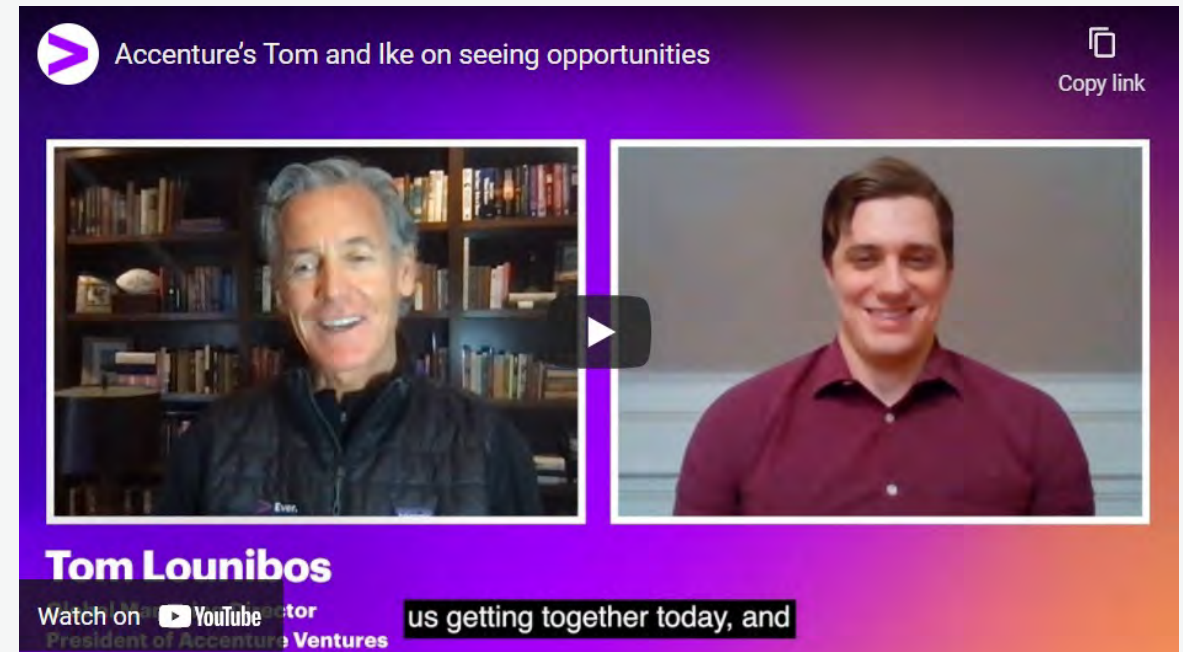
According to the International Labour Organization, there's estimated to be a **4.4%** reduction in total working hours worldwide in Q2 2021.

However, now that restrictions have been lifted in some regions, there has been initial movement in the job market and a glimmer of hope that employment rates could be on the rise. In the Labour Market Review in the UK (July 2021) data shows the labour market continuing to recover. The number of payroll employees showed another monthly increase, up 356,000 in June 2021 to 28.9 million.

There is no doubt that the pandemic will have lasting implications for global employment but in the meantime employers have taken the opportunity to review their disability hiring and training programmes. Google, GSK, Accenture and Zain have all launched disability hiring and inclusion programmes.

Source: Labour Market Review, International Labour Organization, Google, GSK, Accenture, Zain

Accenture will focus on "launching programmes that will benefit persons with disabilities, building inclusive workplaces, and creating deep sensitisation among Accenture's staff on the nuances of disability inclusion".



The Paralympic legacy: WeThe15 plans to ignite change

Although the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic games have come to a close, in so many ways it signals the beginning.



Source: WeThe15, TheDrum, International Paralympic Committee, The Economist

Mental determination, rather than disability.

It was the first year that US Paralympic athletes were paid the same as Olympic athletes. This Paralympics saw the most athletes competing since the games began and saw more countries win medals than ever before.

Channel 4 also tried something new, with great success. In its Paralympic campaign it chose to focus on 'human' over 'super', focusing on Paralympians as elite athletes and painting a story of mental determination, rather than disability.



Breaking down barriers.

WeThe15 used the games to launch its campaign to “break down barriers”, with plans to ignite change over the next decade. It’s bringing “together the biggest coalition ever of international organisations from the world of sport, human rights, policy, communications, business, arts and entertainment” to “publicly campaign for disability visibility, inclusion and accessibility”.

Their recent campaign video also rejects the term 'superhuman' and embraces the phrase 'wonderfully ordinary' instead.



Loughborough University and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) joined forces to provide “free-to-air coverage of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games in Sub-Saharan Africa” as part of its efforts to raise awareness of Para sport and its athletes. The project will go beyond broadcasting, with in-school education activities in schools (using the IPC’s official education programme l’mPOSSIBLE) and Para athlete development activities across communities in Ghana, Malawi and Zambia.

Trending topics on social media

#ParalympicGames produces 225k social media posts, with 94% of the posts having a positive sentiment.

The Paralympics drew attention to both sport and different countries around the world. As a global event, it's not surprising that the Paralympics was discussed globally, and by fairly high-influence people. Major influential accounts discussing it were news-based.

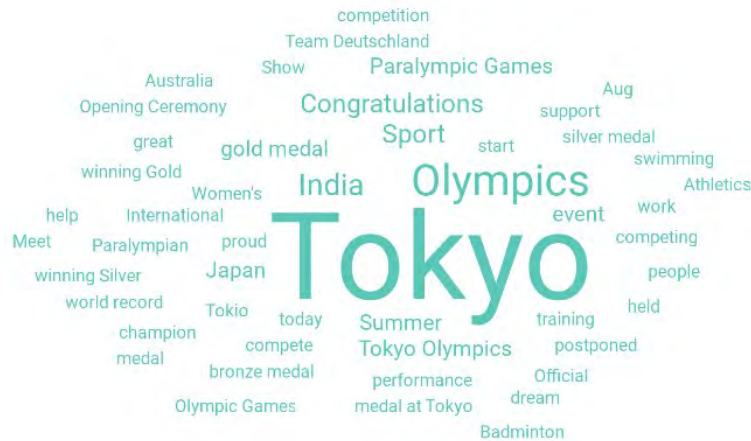
Most engaged age groups



Age data based on 18,536 posts

Source: Infegy

Paralympic Games Post Topics

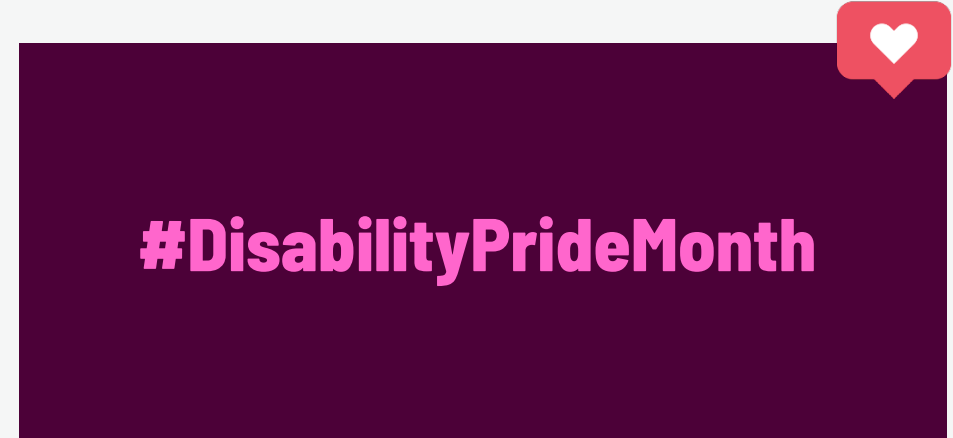


Source: Infegy

#ParalympicGames

#DisabilityPrideMonth produced 396k social media posts, but Pride Month has garnered more negative sentiment due to the sensitivity of discussion around sexual orientation.

Disability Pride Month was more about celebrating small, tight-knit communities and spreading awareness of issues. Disability Pride Month had a much more Western focus, and it didn't get much exposure through major influential accounts. Disability Pride Month also engaged more females than males online.

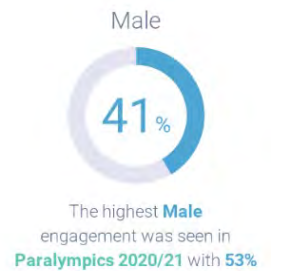
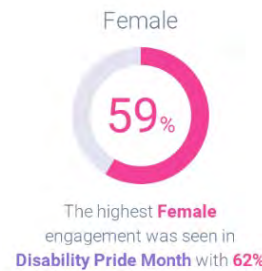


Disability Pride Month Post Topics



Source: Infegy

Male / Female Engagement



The global view

Innovation

Growth in innovation

This quarter has seen a growth in innovation helping consumers to better manage their mental health. Products and services that help to manage mental health are in high demand post-pandemic, as people settle back into life and recover from the long periods of lockdown and isolation.

Focus on technology

There is a growing focus on technology that has the potential to 'level the playing field' for people with disabilities. Tech that can truly and seamlessly help consumers will continue to be the focus of innovation.

Can technology 'level the playing field' for people with disabilities?

In July, the World Economic Forum published an article on developments in technology and the impacts they have on disabled people in the workforce.

Over the last 18 months we have seen technology enable a new way of working and connecting with others – from the comfort of our own homes. For some this digital transformation has been lifechanging. Ruby Jones spoke out about being able to keep a full-time job due to the move to digital remote working. (Read more about the barriers to employment for disabled people on page 7.)

The article suggests that digital transformation linked to edtech, remote working, fintech and networking are the areas that can drive people with disabilities towards greater inclusion and success in the workplace. By focusing on developing tech to support these areas, we can create a fair society that enables and gives access to everyone.





What is Gerontechnology?

Gerontechnology concerns matching technological environments to health, housing, mobility, communication, leisure and work of older people.

Technology isn't the only important factor in improving disabled people's working lives.

This quarter has seen innovation aimed at improving the general quality of life for disabled people. A gerontechnology hub at Tallaght University Hospital (TUH) in Ireland, is exploring how technology can assist elderly people with disabling or degenerative conditions.

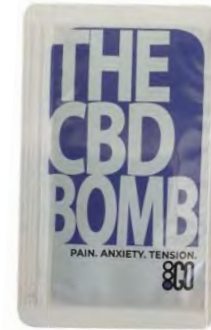
The hub is led by consultant geriatrician Prof Sean Kennelly and comprises a group of developers, innovators, clinicians and patients. Innovations that have come from the hub include a collaboration on an app that uses AI to analyse walking ability, which is something that can predict physical and cognitive decline, as well as the analysis of speech patterns to predict cognitive and psychological conditions. The hub is also looking into the use of robotics to support independent living.

New product development focuses on supporting mental health, in both charity and product functionality

Data from the Office for National Statistics (UK) has found that levels of depression in adults have doubled during the pandemic with stark differences by gender, disability status and affluence:

39% of disabled adults experienced depression, compared to 13% of non-disabled adults.

Source: Mintel GNPD, Philosophy, ONS



The CBD Bomb is a drink that claims to provide relief from pain, anxiety and tension. (South Africa)



Moon Milk claims to help relax consumers pre-bed to aid a good night's sleep. (Germany)

Source: Mintel GNPD

According to Mintel's Global New Products Database (GNPD), 'stress and sleep' claims on-pack have seen an increase (**25%**) over the last 3 years (2018-20). Asia Pacific and MEA are seeing the most growth in emotional wellbeing claims.

It has been established that self-care routines can have a positive impact on the emotional wellbeing of consumers and therefore beauty brands are using charitable partnerships to effect positive change with a joint mission. According to Mintel's GNPD there has been a **319%** increase (2019-20, Beauty and Personal Care only) in beauty products communicating support for mental health charities on-pack.

Authentic charitable partnerships between brands like Philosophy (owned by Coty) and the Hope and Grace Fund show how brands are keen to unite over and positively impact mental health causes.

To the right is a French product example launched this year. Philosophy states on-pack that the brand supports community-based mental health efforts, with the Hope and Grace Fund.

319%

Increase in beauty products communicating support for mental health charities on-pack.

Source: Mintel Global New Product Development (GNPD) Data





GLOBAL TREND DRIVERS

Analysis of the topic
chapters for each of
the five regions

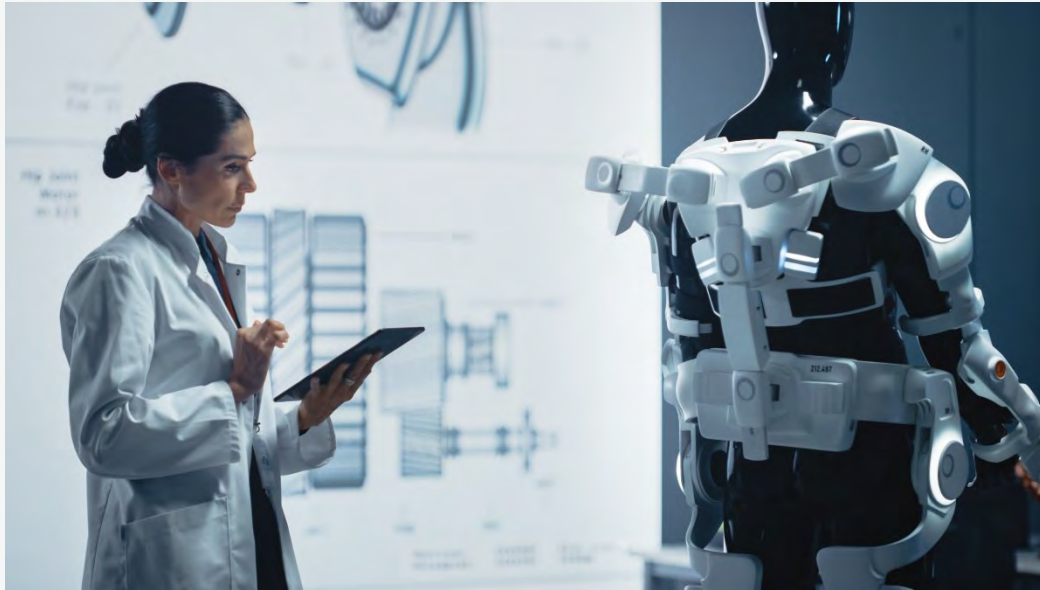


Mintel's Global Consumer Trend Drivers

In each of these reports we will address the most relevant trends driving consumer behaviour within the quarter. This time we will be looking at Technology and Rights.

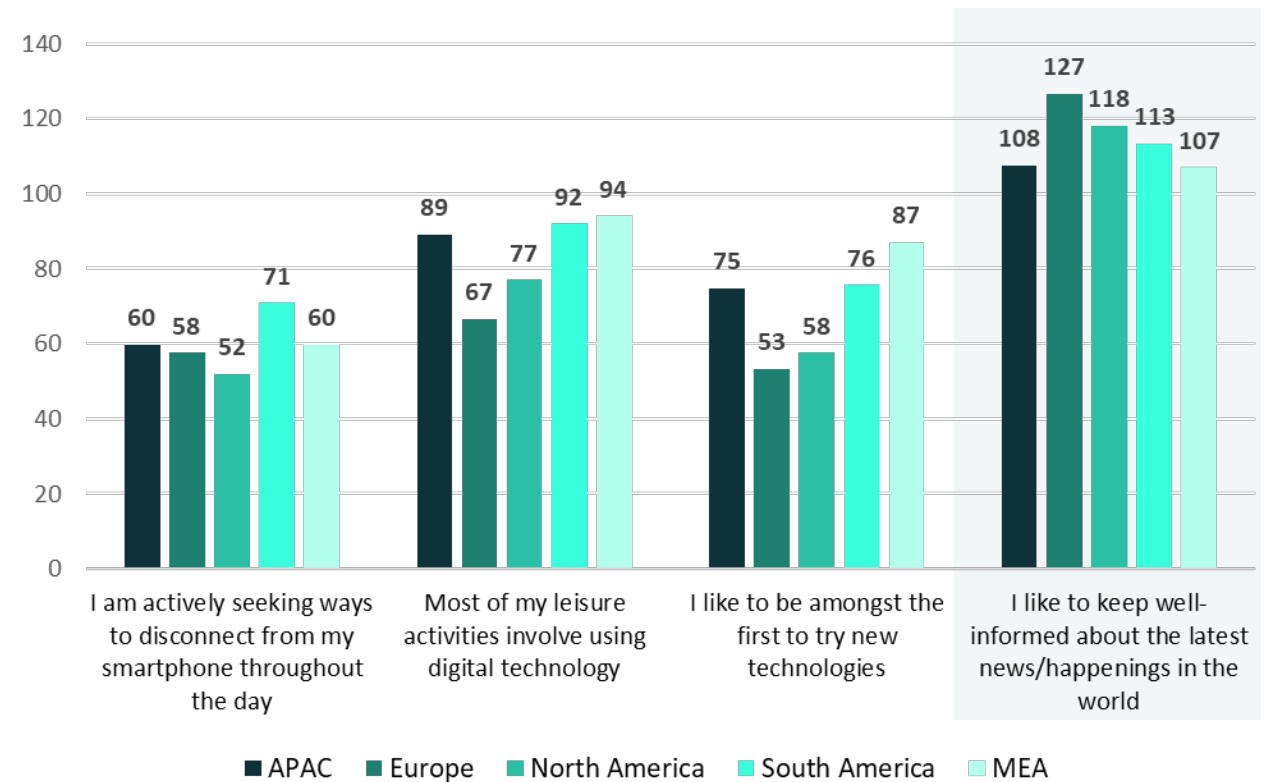


Technology could be used to improve quality of life for disabled people



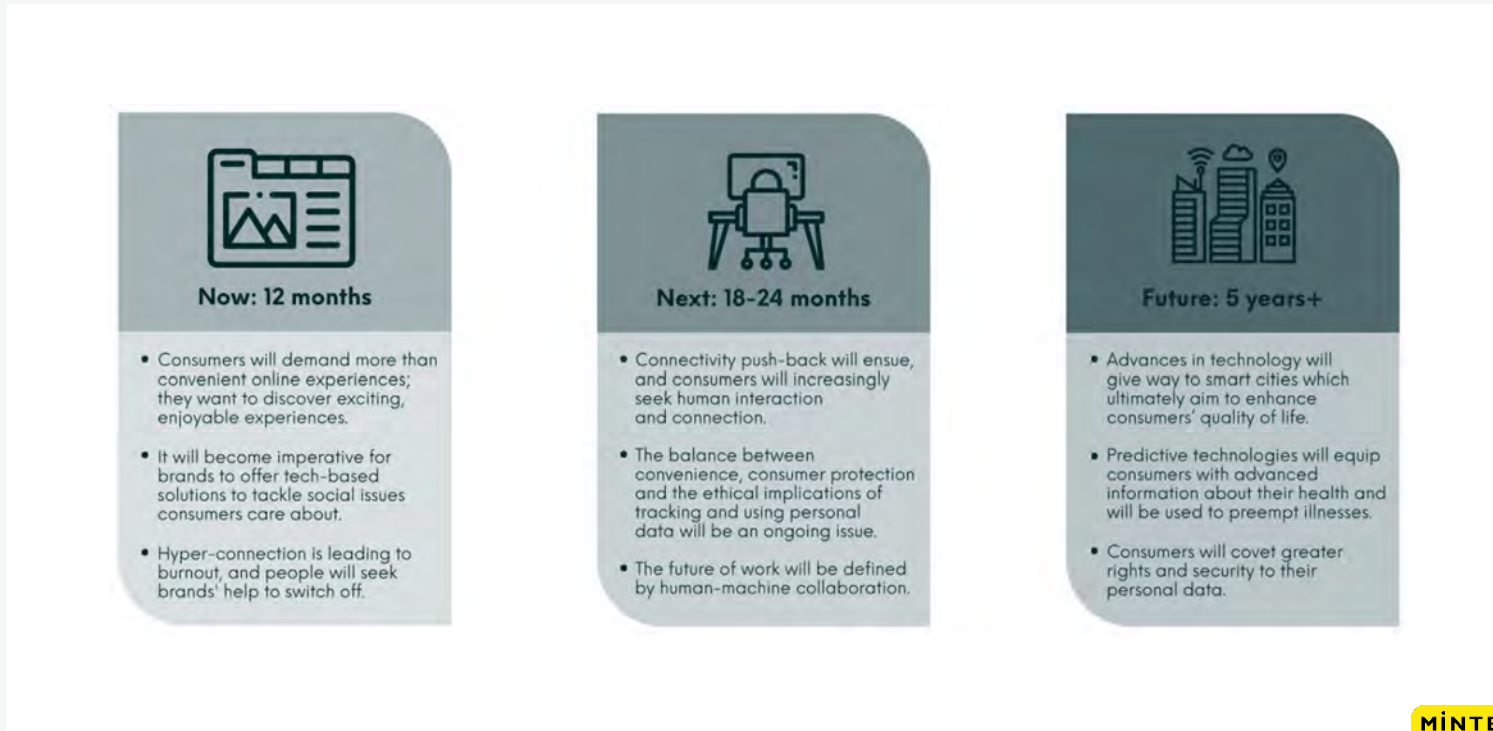
Technology has played a massive role in offering solutions that provide peace of mind for consumers in such uncertain times. We know that technology is meant to improve life, and is becoming more integral to everything we do, but it is worth taking a step back to assess how disabled consumers can benefit from advancing technology.

Key factors driving consumer behaviour around Technology



Source: Mintel G35 Data, 3 months to March 2021, displayed as an index.

While technological advancements have immense potential to enhance people's lives, wariness is also growing as tech-dependency increases.



There is a growing interest in automation, AI and robotics as people strive to make their busy lives easier. Advanced technology also offers new forms of support for disabled people, especially in health-tech. When building new tech, brands must also ensure their products are accessible to all.



Rights – statistics on global disability discrimination

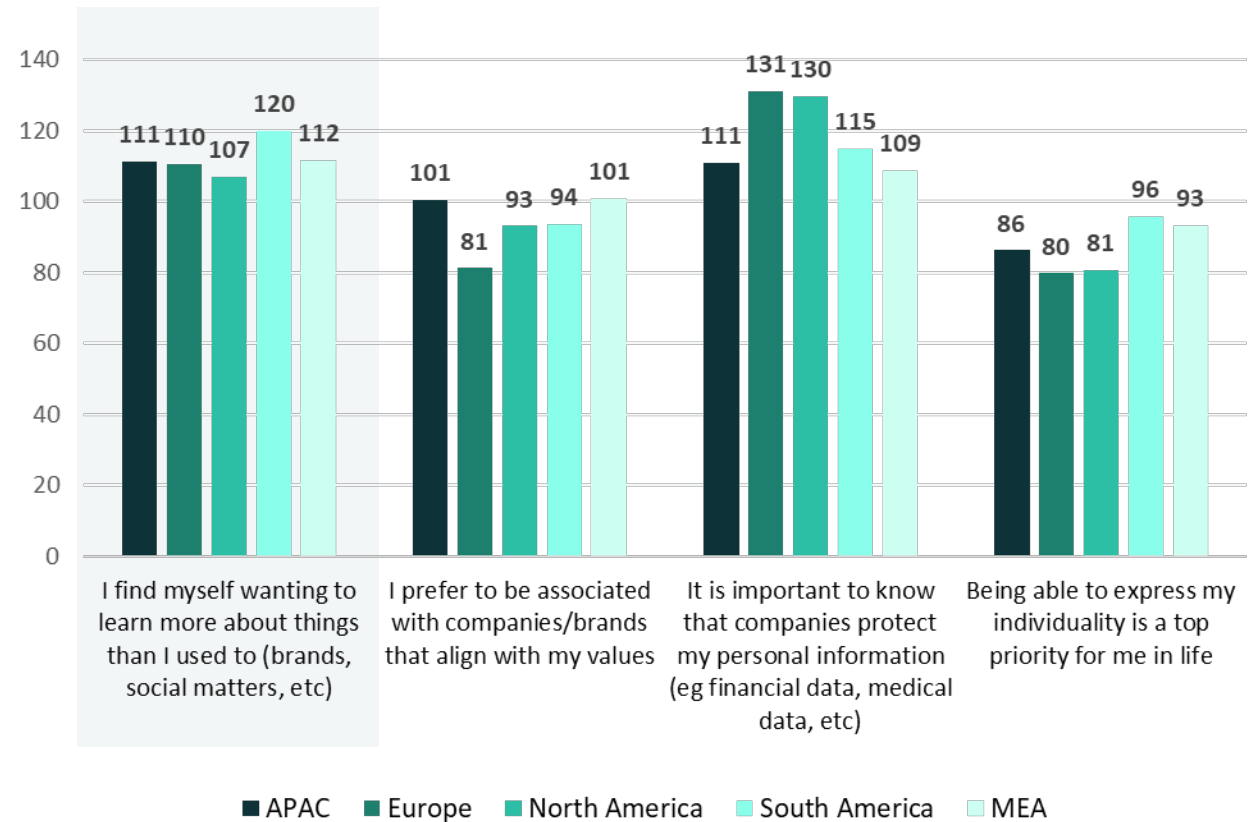


According to Mintel's Sustainability Barometer, disability discrimination was ranked the second most concerning issue to consumers.

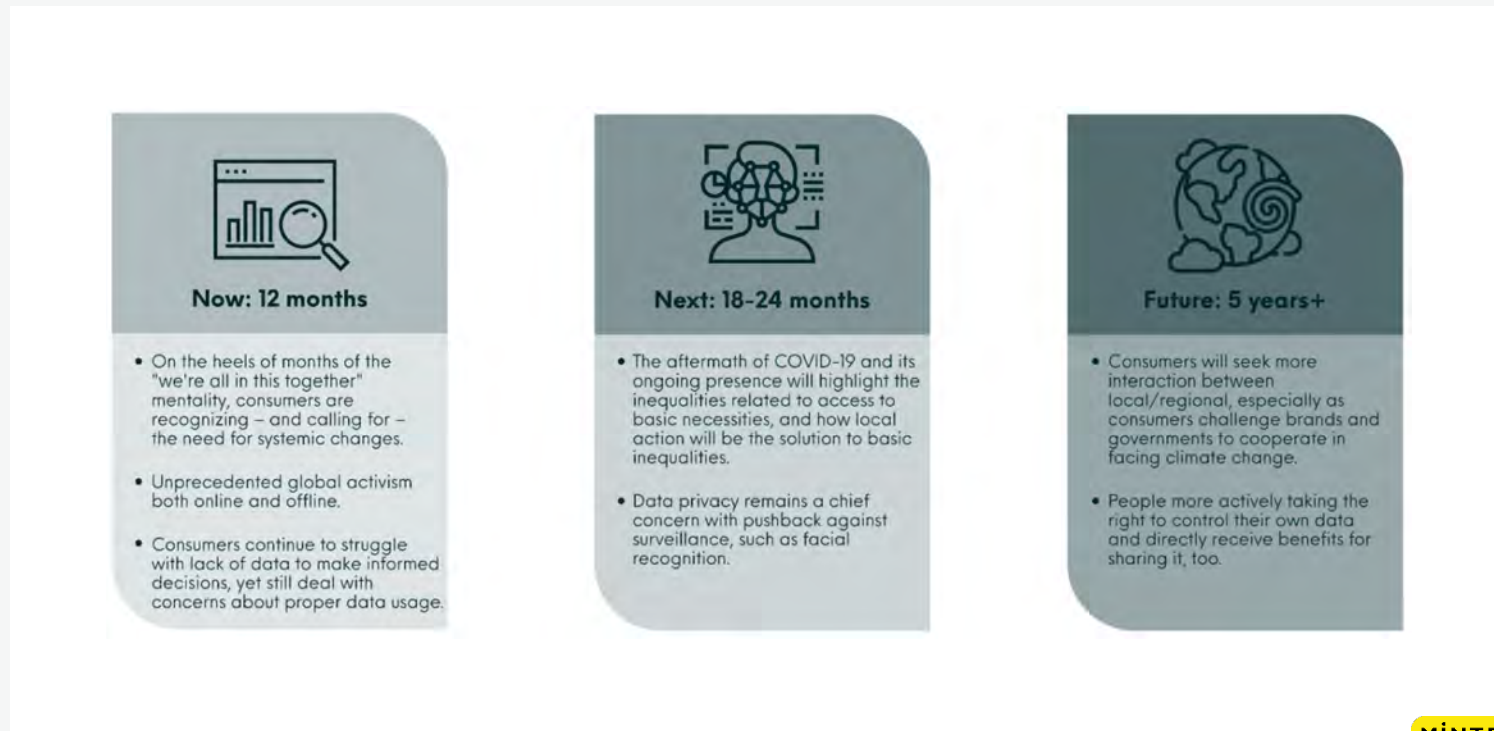
This followed racial discrimination and came alongside gender discrimination. Upset about the lack of data privacy and security, speed of government responsiveness and trust in brands, consumers are speaking up. Consumers are also using technology, especially social media, to form their own virtual communities around ideas and issues they are passionate about, including across borders. These consumer voices aren't always negative – consumers want to support causes and brands they believe in, and activism is on the rise. With consumers wanting to know more about social matters than they used to, the time for change is now.

Source: Mintel G35 Data, 3 months to March 2021, displayed as an index. SproutSocial

Key factors driving consumer behaviour around Rights



Mintel Analysts predict an increase in activism and a demand for privacy online.



While donations can be a part of brand initiatives, they are not an end solution. When issues are brought to the surface, consumers are demanding multifaceted actions that publicly address brands' shortcomings, committing to tangible change. There is growing consensus that brands need to lead by example when it comes to social agendas like disability discrimination. **70%** of consumers believe it's important for brands to take a public stand on social and political issues. Some brands – like Patagonia and Tony's Chocolonely – are also being activists in their own right. For example Patagonia famously ran an ad with one of its garments that said "don't buy this jacket".





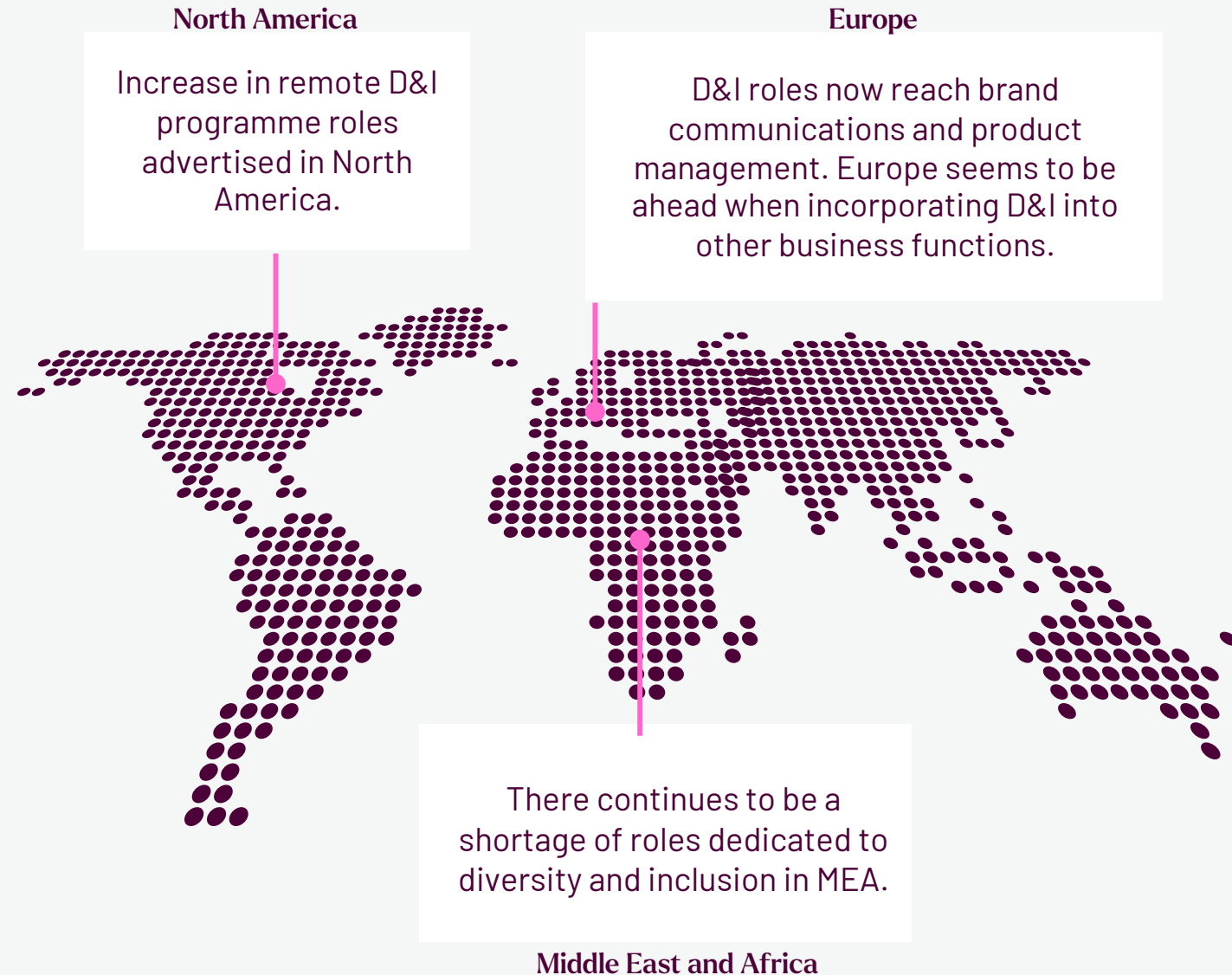
REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

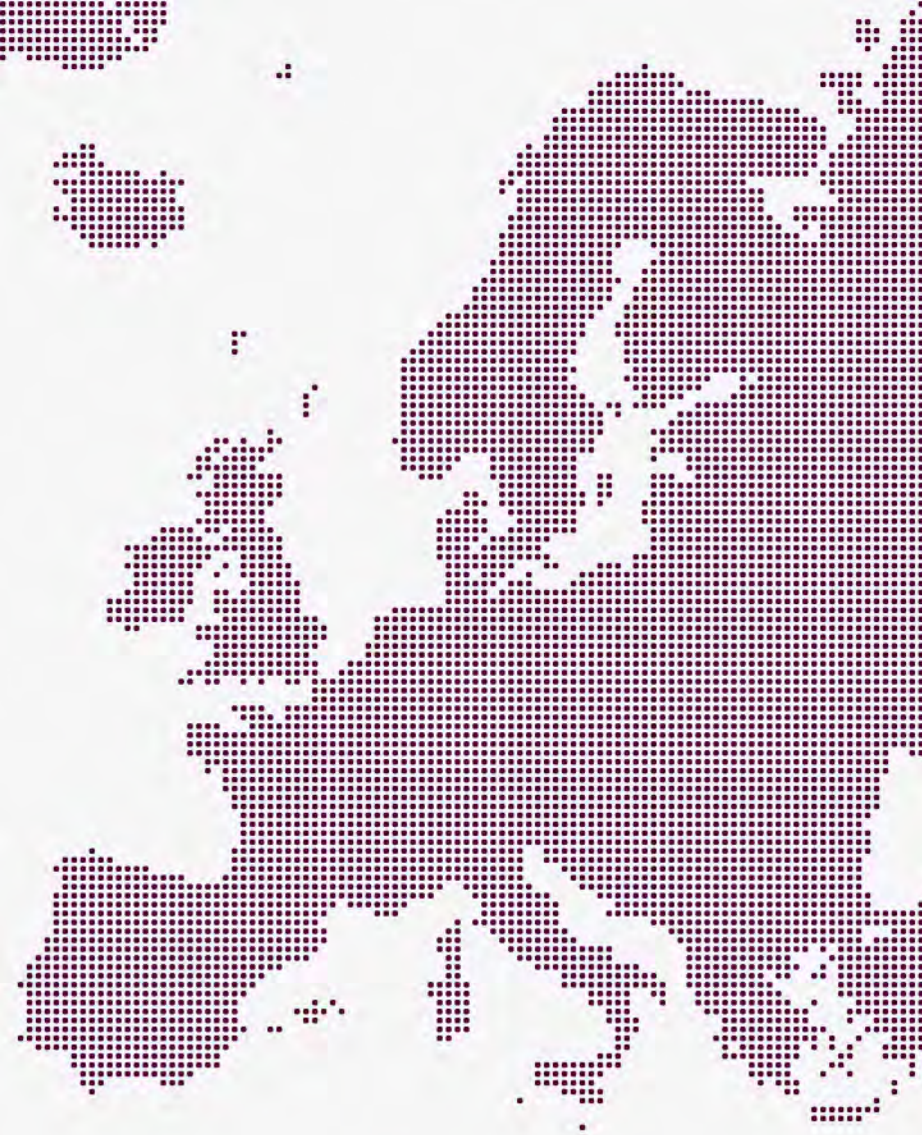
Europe | Asia Pacific | North America
South America | Middle East and Africa



Top 3 regional trends overview

- 01** Governments invest in disability-friendly policies, particularly in Asia and Europe. In the UK, rental policies are striving to make rental homes accessible for people with disabilities, while in Shanghai the government is working on making public spaces 'barrier-free'.
- 02** Europe, Middle East and Asia focus on tech-enabled innovation to solve social problems. For example The Royal National Institute of Blind People, Google and The Guardian are making digital storytelling more accessible for blind people. In India innovators are turning E-waste into medical equipment.
- 03** The Americas focus on the benefits of emotional support amid – and post – the pandemic. A South American company is offering therapy gift cards. Facebook Portal's new advert focuses on the importance of connection, enabled by technology.





Europe



Diversity and Inclusion hiring trends

- There were many job roles focusing on diversity and inclusion advertised in Europe this quarter. There was a continued rise in roles across a range of sectors.
- The UK and France are hiring the most diversity and inclusion roles, particularly at manager level.
- There has been an increase in diversity and inclusion 'project managers' in the last quarter, emphasising the high demand for D&I and project management expertise.

Diversity and Inclusion roles posted on LinkedIn



**Manager, International
Diversity Equity Inclusion**
Posted in Sept 2021(UK)



**Diversity and
Inclusion Manager**
Posted in Sept 2021(UK)

ABInBev

**Diversity & Inclusion, People
Communications &
Employer Brand Manager**
Posted in Sept 2021(FR)

 **zalando**

**Principal Product Manager
Diversity & Inclusion**
Posted in Sept 2021(PL)

opentext™

**Equity, Diversity and
Inclusion Project Manager**
Posted Sept 2021(FR)

UK government to improve accessibility for disabled tenants and homeowners

Nearly half (47%) of disabled respondents reported having at least "some difficulty" getting in and out of where they live.

UK Disability Survey

Landlords will be required to make shared spaces in buildings more accessible to disabled users as part of the government's new National Disability Strategy.

The strategy outlines additional funding to boost the accessibility of homes. The Cabinet Office confirmed it will progress work to require landlords to make "reasonable adjustments to the common parts of leasehold and commonhold homes". However, landlords will be able to get tenants to pay for this work unless they have a low household income or disabled children.

Source: Bumble, Mintel

Separate figures from the English Housing Survey suggest that just **9%** of homes in England currently have the key features required to make a home accessible to disabled occupants. Currently, less than half of local plans for new homes in England include requirements to meet higher accessibility standards.



Safer living requirements (like accessible escape routes) have also been a priority for campaigners since the Grenfell Inquiry revealed that disabled people made up a disproportionate number of those killed in the tower block fire in 2017.

Parcel machine designed for people with disabilities

Polish online marketplace Allegro has launched environmentally friendly parcel machines to support its ecommerce platform.

Allegro consulted urban movements, disability organisations, experts and local government officials to design a network that meets the local needs.

The parcel machines have been installed in the cities of Poznań and Warsaw and will number 1,500 by the end of 2021. The machines are powered by green energy, are integrated with air quality sensors, the results of which will be shared publicly, and are accessible to people with disabilities. Making delivery pick-up services accessible means that people with disabilities are able to fit deliveries conveniently into their daily lives in a frictionless way.



43% of UK consumers use click and collect services.

8% of Polish consumers say they have used click and collect more since the pandemic (August 2021).

Making storytelling accessible for blind people

The Royal National Institute of Blind People, Google and The Guardian newspaper have collaborated to launch Auditorial, an accessible storytelling platform.



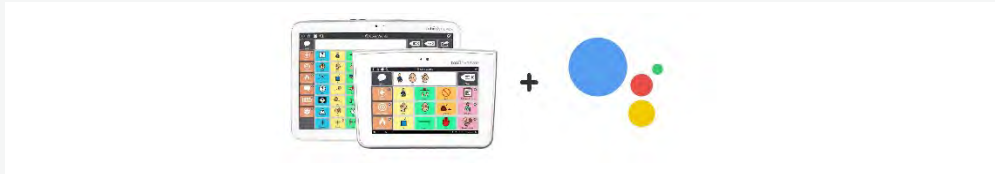
The aim of the site is to make the web more accessible for those with visual impairments and features the story of The Silent Spring, provided by The Guardian.

It enables users to tailor the website to their individual needs as a way to gain information on how to make the web more flexible and accessible to blind and visually impaired people. The story can be experienced in three ways: a fully customisable audio-visual narrated experience, a written article or by reading along with closed captions. These intend to help users have the same seamless and creative experience as sighted people.

Why is this important?

As societies become more reliant on online and digital platforms, boosted by the pandemic, the need to make these channels and devices more accessible to all consumers is vital. Brands are addressing this by rolling out internet connectivity to the most rural or under-served communities and others are working to increase digital literacy. With consumers keen to see brands promoting equality, those that can address any imbalance or lack of access, knowledge or representation will benefit from increased appeal and positive associations.

Voice controlled assistant for people with disabilities



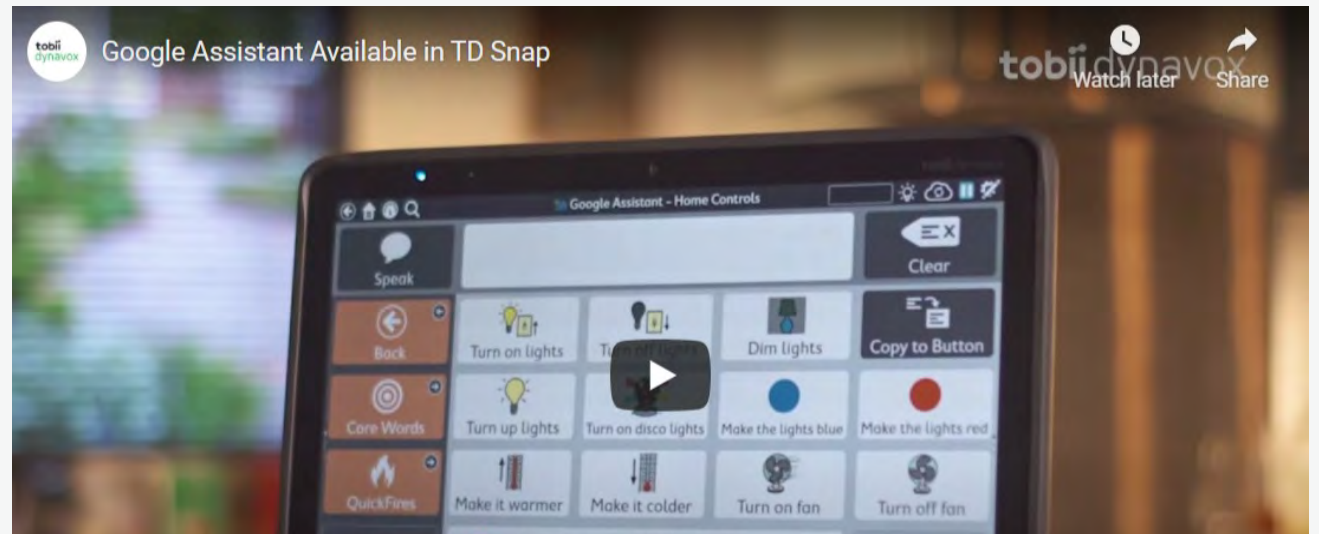
In October 2020, Tobii Dynavox, which makes products and software to support people with disabilities, announced it is now offering Google Assistant on its devices.

An example of Tobii Dynavox's products include its I-Series that is a screen to be used with a wheelchair. Google Assistant has now been integrated into the Snap Core First software on the screens. The software shows various tiles with commands that can be activated with touch or eye gaze and the integration with Google means these tiles can be changed to Google Assistant actions. Users will be able to activate tiles, enabling them to ask for information such as 'what's the weather?', or to control smart home devices. This feature will aid people with conditions such as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), cerebral palsy and autism.

Source: Mintel, Tobii Dynavox

Furthermore, Tobii Dynavox is working with Google to provide Picture Communication Symbols (PCS) for Android phones and tablets. PCS are images that show particular actions that help people to communicate. The partnership means that users will be able to customise their phone's home screen with symbols for calling their parents or watching a TV programme, for example.

The continued development of accessibility services with voice assistants is key, as while the average consumer may use voice assistants for convenience, the disabled community is dependent on functionality like this as part of their daily lives.





ASIA PACIFIC



Diversity in management

- There is consistently a wide range of diversity-focused roles in APAC. The majority of roles continue to be managerial or lead positions. Companies such as Fujitsu are hiring at lead level across the pacific region.
- Large tech corporations lead the way in hiring 'programme' and 'business partner' roles within diversity and inclusion.

Diversity and Inclusion roles posted on LinkedIn



ORACLE

**Diversity Program
Manager**

Posted in August 2021 (IN)



**Gender, Youth, Equity and
Social Inclusion Specialist**

Posted in Sept 2021 (PH)



FUJITSU

**Diversity, Equity and
Inclusion Lead**

Posted in Sept 2021 (AU)



lululemon

**Diversity and Inclusion
Manager**

Posted in August 2021 (CN)



amazon

**Sr. Diversity Equity &
Inclusion Business Partner**

Posted in Sept 2021 (SG)



AB InBev

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Lead**

Posted in Sept 2021 (NZ)

Shanghai is creating a barrier-free environment by improving accessibility of public facilities



48%

of surveyed consumers think actions like helping disadvantaged groups (e.g. disabled people) from a company/brand could improve their impressions of it.

China, March 2020

Shanghai has been working on barrier-free facilities since the 1980s, and the latest regulations aim to promote the development of public services that could meet new demands.

The new regulations clarify the requirements for the construction and maintenance of barrier-free facilities in public spaces, including setting up barrier-free parking spaces and reducing parking rates for disabled people in public parking lots. The government wants to increase the accessibility of information and improve public services for the elderly and the disabled, including providing emergency or public information in the forms of audio and text for them and improving traditional face-to-face services.

People are becoming aware that a city's environment should be designed for all, especially taking into account elderly people and people with disabilities. A study shows that in some countries with a life expectancy of more than 70 years, people spend an average of eight years living with a disability. This means the creation of a barrier-free city will bring convenience to everyone living in the environment. The new regulations by Shanghai, a first-tier city with a large ageing population in China, are echoing the heated discussions around how we can improve accessibility to help people still left on the margins of society.

Malaysians to support local disabled communities through the power of movement

Rexona has launched its #RexonaMoveForGood campaign.

Throughout the month of August, the #RexonaMoveForGood campaign was set to inspire Malaysians to support local disabled communities during these trying times.

Rexona pledges to donate RM10 (Malaysian ringgit) to three selected local NGOs for every workout or dance video uploaded to Facebook or Instagram. The company hopes to spread awareness of the issues faced by the disabled community, and also encourage the community to keep moving. The funds raised will provide them with various items to aid everyday movement such as wheelchairs, special sporting equipment and customised prosthetics.

18%

of global Beauty and Personal Care product launches featured charitable claims.

Why is this important?

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly made lives more difficult for everyone, especially for disabled people where moving around freely is already a difficulty in itself.

The pandemic has shone a brighter light on disadvantaged communities and the barriers they face. Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of these under-represented groups that require more attention during these tough times and are actively seeking ways to help out. It is during these times that brands should provide more support and resources to vulnerable consumer segments. Consumers will be interested in supporting ethically minded businesses that create initiatives that make a real difference in communities, rather than a one-off PR move.

Alibaba Health has begun providing door-to-door nursing services for the elderly and people with disabilities

Alibaba Health has announced the launch of 'Cuncaoxin' (寸草心) services that provide professional door-to-door nursing services for mobility-impaired people such as people with disabilities, the elderly, patients in rehabilitation and terminal patients.

The company cooperates with professional institutions and nurses registered in medical institutions. The range of services includes door-to-door injections and dressing changes, PICC maintenance, stoma care, puerperal care, pressure sore care, etc. Consumers can make an appointment online to book the service they need.



Why is this important?

The Seventh National Population Census conducted by the Chinese National Bureau of Statistics found the proportion of Chinese people aged 60+ grew to **18.7%** in 2020, reflecting the further ageing of the Chinese population. An ageing society creates new product markets and growing market opportunities to cater to the needs of this population. Businesses, together with the government, will have to play an increasingly active role in taking over social responsibility. Care-giving and healthcare solutions in the future should take convenience and accessibility into account. Technology is proving useful in this capacity with tools such as online consultation, monitoring apps and smart wearables that make it easier to track patient health.

E-waste becomes medical equipment for patients with eye diseases

Old Galaxy phones recovered from landfill sites are converted into optical retina cameras; a solution that's good for people and planet.

These devices are used to help detect eye diseases among people in low-income communities. After a successful trial in Vietnam, the programme will be extended to hospitals in need in India, Morocco and Papua New Guinea.

35%

of Vietnamese consumers say they worry most about the environment.

March 2021

Source: Mintel, The Hindu

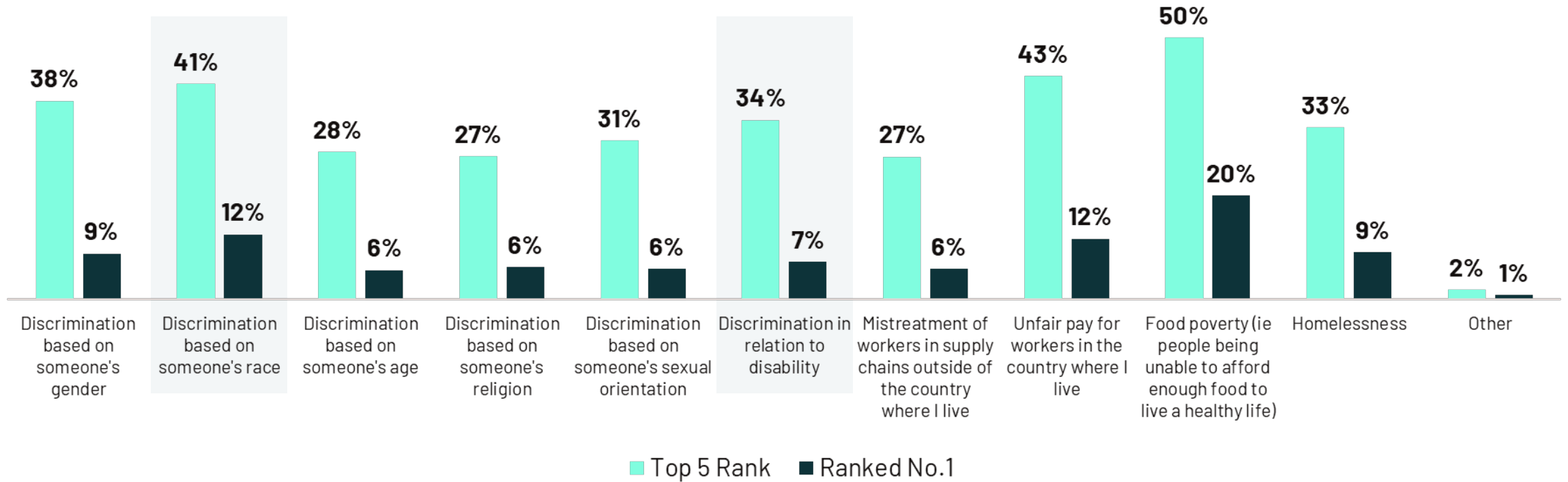


Why is this important?

Many ophthalmic diseases are easily treatable if they are diagnosed at an early stage. However, hospitals in rural and underprivileged areas often do not have the necessary medical equipment and therefore the risk of permanent eye damage is higher. Upcycling discarded phones serves two purposes. It helps to provide much-needed medical devices that can help save people's sight through a quick diagnosis, and reduces the volume of e-waste in a country with a low rate of recycling. After capturing images of a person's entire eye, the repurposed device uses AI to search for signs of an ophthalmic disease. If a diagnosis is made, doctors can connect the phone camera to an app that creates a tailored treatment programme depending on the severity of the condition.

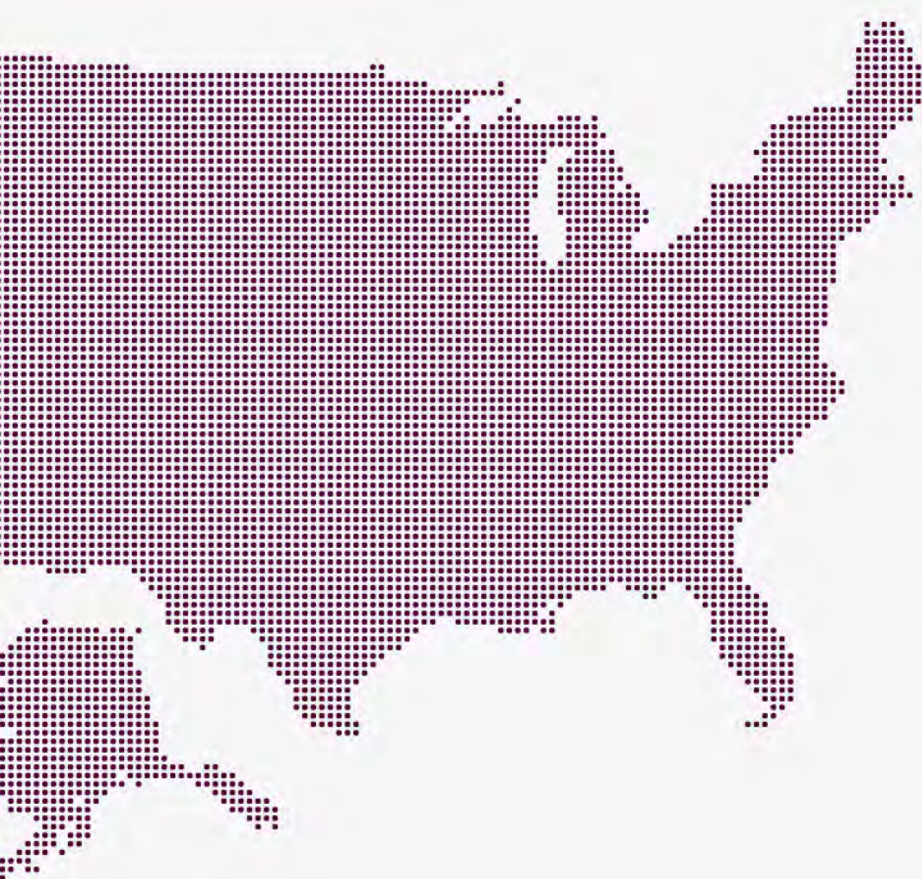
Disability discrimination remains one of the most concerning social issues in the APAC region

What are the most concerning social issues for consumers across Asia Pacific*?



*average of responses from Australia, India, Japan, South Korea and Thailand

Source: Mintel Sustainability Data, March 2021



NORTH AMERICA



Diversity in management

- There was no shortage of diversity and inclusion roles in North America this quarter. There has been an increase in remote roles being advertised in the US.
- This quarter has seen a boom in campus recruitment roles, especially for management consultancy firms like Deloitte. This shows that companies are trying to build out an inclusive pipeline of talent.

Diversity and Inclusion roles posted on LinkedIn



**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
PMO Manager- Multiple
locations across the US**
Posted in Sept 2021



**National Diversity, Equity &
Inclusion Campus Recruiting
Specialist- Across the US**
Posted in Sept 2021



**Diversity, Inclusion and
Belonging, Senior Manager-
Remote/USA**
Posted in Sept 2021



**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Consultant- Toronto, CA**
Posted in Sept 2021



**Diversity Equity & Inclusion
Program Manager-
Remote/USA**
Posted in Sept 2021



**Diversity, Equity, and
Inclusion Program Manager-
Remote/USA**
Posted in Sept 2021

Eliminating wage discrimination for people with disabilities

The US recently passed the House Bill, Competitive Integrated Employment Act.

This aims to eliminate the federal “subminimum wage”. This gives employers the ability to pay workers with significant disabilities below today’s hourly federal wage floor of \$7.25 per hour.



The outdated business model for sheltered workshops was an outgrowth of the Fair Labour Standards Act of 1938 which is a Depression-Era standard that people with disabilities could get compensated pennies an hour to work in a segregated work environment. This 1938 statute, called Section 14(c), has not been amended in over 80 years.

Nancy Doyle

Source: Forbes

Why is this so important?

Today, there are approximately 3.2 million Americans with disabilities who still earn subminimum wages in segregated sheltered workshops. In these workshops, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities perform mostly repetitive manual tasks, and according to the Government Accountability Office, less than 5% of individuals ever leave these workshops or move into competitive integrated employment.

For the first time, US Paralympic athletes will receive equal prize money at the Tokyo Olympics.

The United States Olympic Committee (USOC) adjusted the prize money for Paralympic athletes – as much as a 400% increase – shortly after the 2018 Winter Olympics and back-paid Paralympians the new higher amounts. However, the 2021 Olympics and Paralympics in Tokyo mark the first time they will be paid equally from the start.

Google launches program to hire more people with Autism

The tech company has recently announced a new programme aimed at bringing more people with autism into its cloud workforce and supporting their development better.

The aim is to work with Stanford to train as many as 500 managers and others who are integral in the hiring process to work more effectively with candidates with autism. Stanford will also help to train applicants and provide support once individuals are hired.

In addition, there will be changes made to the interview process on the autism career programme. For example, candidates with autism may get extra interview time and be offered questions in advance or be able to do their interview in writing.

Only 29% of those with autism are in paid employment and those who interview for roles may also be subject to unconscious bias. This means talented individuals are unable to get work and businesses are missing out on valuable talent.

Source: Google/ DisabilityScoop



These accommodations don't give those candidates an unfair advantage. It's just the opposite: they remove an unfair disadvantage so candidates have a fair and equitable chance to compete for the job.

Rob Enslin

Theme parks are prioritising improvement to disability access

Disney has recently announced big changes to make its theme parks more accessible for people with disabilities. The company is making enhancements to its 'Disability Access Service' (DAS).

The Disability Access Service programme allows people with disabilities who have trouble tolerating long waits to obtain a return time for rides and other attractions so that they do not have to physically remain in a line.

Michelle Diamant

To prevent visitors waiting at arrival to seek accommodations, "people will be able to enrol up to 30 days before their arrival through a live video chat with a cast member".

Source: Google/ DisabilityScoop



In addition, the DAS programme will be adapted to allow visitors to get a return time for rides via an app rather than having to travel to each attraction or kiosk.

Disability Representation in Disney Pixar

In the film Luca, the fisherman character, Massimo Marcovaldo, was born without a limb. In the scene depicted here, Pixar's latest film 'takes a rare step of portraying a character with a limb difference – without making it a defining characteristic'. Since being released in June, the internet has applauded the filmmakers.



Target launches accessories for wheelchair users

Product Innovation

Target has been ahead of the curve when it comes to inclusive design. A few years ago, Target released its Adaptive Halloween Costumes which are costumes made to fit people who use wheelchairs.

Now, it has expanded to practical items like backpacks. The bag has adjustable handles and straps, and can be easily mounted onto the wheelchair. It's also easy to access with a gusseted and full-zip opening.



In 2020 the worldwide market for adaptive clothing was valued at **\$250.1 million.**

Market Watch

By 2026 the global value of the adaptive fashion market will reach **\$294.3 million.**

Market Watch

The product also has plenty of zippered interior & exterior pockets, access ports for tubes and cables and a laptop sleeve.

Portal by Facebook advertisement



Marketing Innovation

Portal by Facebook has released a series of inclusive adverts bringing to the forefront the complexity and importance of human connection.

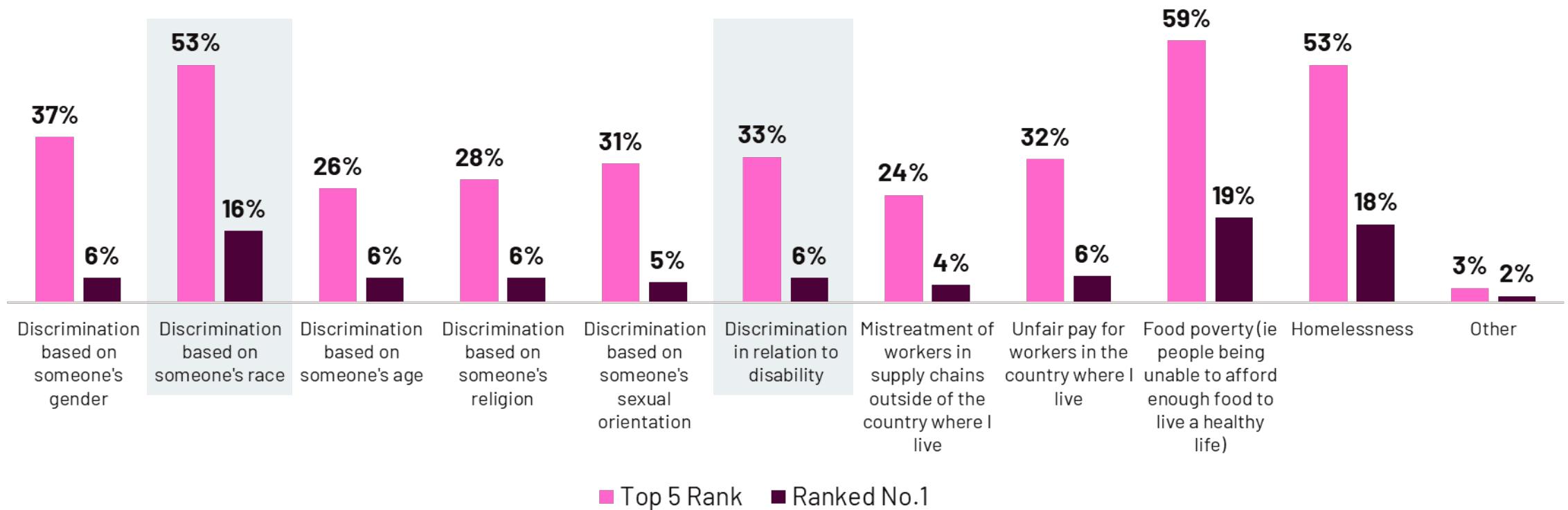
In August, Portal released the advert Sisters, which shows a woman trying on jewellery in preparation for a first date as her sister shares her opinion – all in American Sign Language.

I see human beings in all their rawness sharing their experiences and emotions. Happy moments, bittersweet, cathartic ones and everything in between. Authenticity cannot be manufactured. This concept relied on our ability to create and nurture environments for life to happen and for genuine connection to occur. That's where we find authenticity.

Darius Marder

Intersectionality across different social issues, especially race discrimination, is concerning to North Americans

What are the most concerning social issues for North Americans*?



*average of responses from USA and Canada

Source: Mintel G35 Data, March 2021, Mintel Sustainability Data, March 2021



SOUTH AMERICA



Diversity in management

- As in the previous edition, diversity & inclusion roles were concentrated in São Paulo, Brazil, and many continue to be within large companies like Coca-Cola and Unilever.
- In general, this quarter has seen fewer D&I roles within the region.

Diversity and Inclusion roles posted on LinkedIn



Globant

**Talent & Culture BP Diversity,
Equity & Inclusion- Colombia**
Posted in Sept 2021



Unilever
**Social Sustainability
Manager, LATAM- São
Paulo, Brazil**
Posted in Aug 2021



**Senior Manager Diversity
Equity and Inclusion- São
Paulo, Brazil**
Posted in Sept 2021



**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Program Manager- São
Paulo, Brazil**
Posted in Aug 2021

Home Depot invests in inclusive customer care

At Home Depot, the chain has committed to building a more inclusive Mexico.

For this reason, from May 2021 store members have been following training to obtain an inclusive service certificate. The objective is to welcome and accommodate all clients and 'treat them with dignity'.

Home Depot says it's striving for outstanding service and buying experience for clients with disabilities. The course covers key skills like the basics of Mexican Sign Language and how to correctly assist a person with a disability. They also learn how to use the correct terminology when talking about persons with disabilities.

So far 3,927 employees have completed the course and gained their certificate, and they are working for further stores to join this initiative.

Source: Mintel Trends, Mindy



Why is this important?

Good customer service, amongst other things, has long been attributed to greater brand loyalty and repeat purchasing behaviours. With greater knowledge of the diverse needs of disabled people, now is the time to make sure the services brands provide are inclusive and accessible. After all, it's good for business!

Source: Bens Bargins

Mindy.cl offers the gift of emotional support

With the global pandemic, Mindy.cl (based in Chile) has launched a new product.

The goal of this product is to help consumers facilitate emotional support to their loved ones in these challenging times. The product was positioned as an affordable way to help loved ones who may be struggling with their mental health. The company offers different alternatives that include between one and four therapy sessions carried out by a trained psychologist.



Source: Mintel Trends, Mindy

54% of Chilean consumers worry about their family's stress levels as a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis.

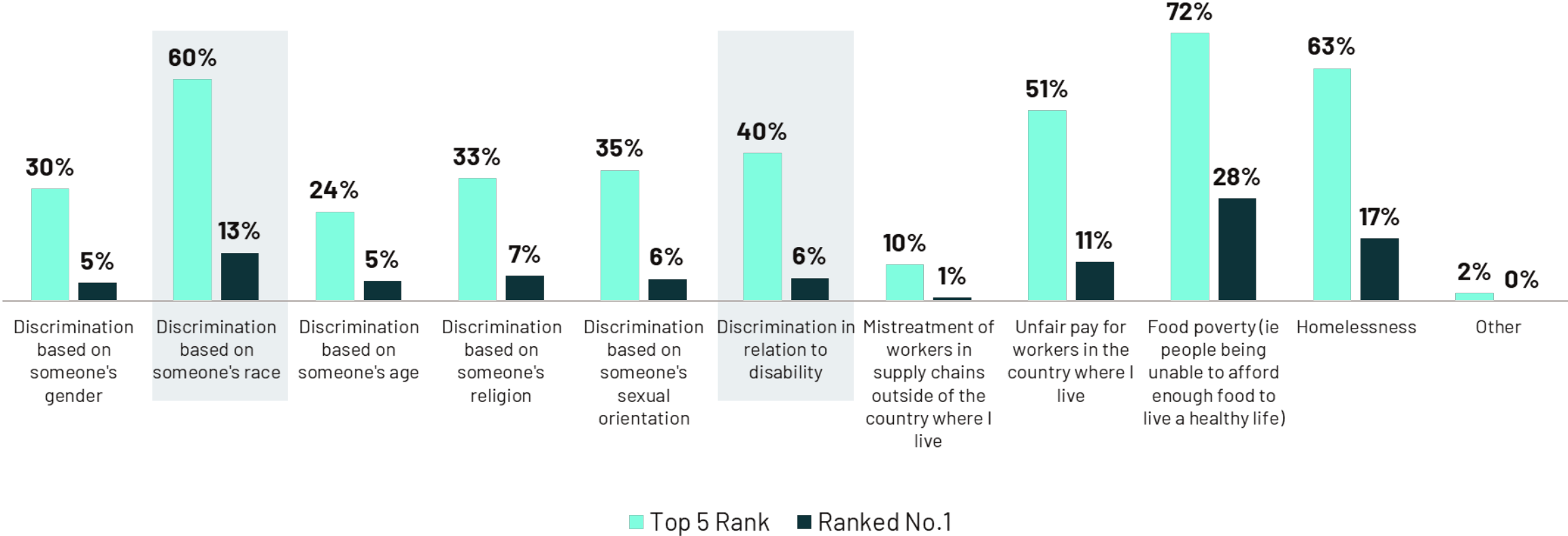
Why is this important?

Mindy created this initiative to spread the benefits of mental healthcare; now consumers will be able to provide emotional support to their loved ones who are having a rough time. The company wants to make sure that people going through economic hardship can also access its services. With disabled people more likely to have been economically hit by the multiple lockdowns, affordability is the number one priority.

In light of this, the gift cards were designed as a solution to tackle this accessibility issue. The company is also seizing the moment as during the pandemic, mental health took centre stage and became a trending topic on social media. With more influencers advocating for transparency around mental health, and the particular impact lockdowns have had on the mental health of disabled people, consumers are adopting a new perspective that allows them to be more open about their emotions and traumas.

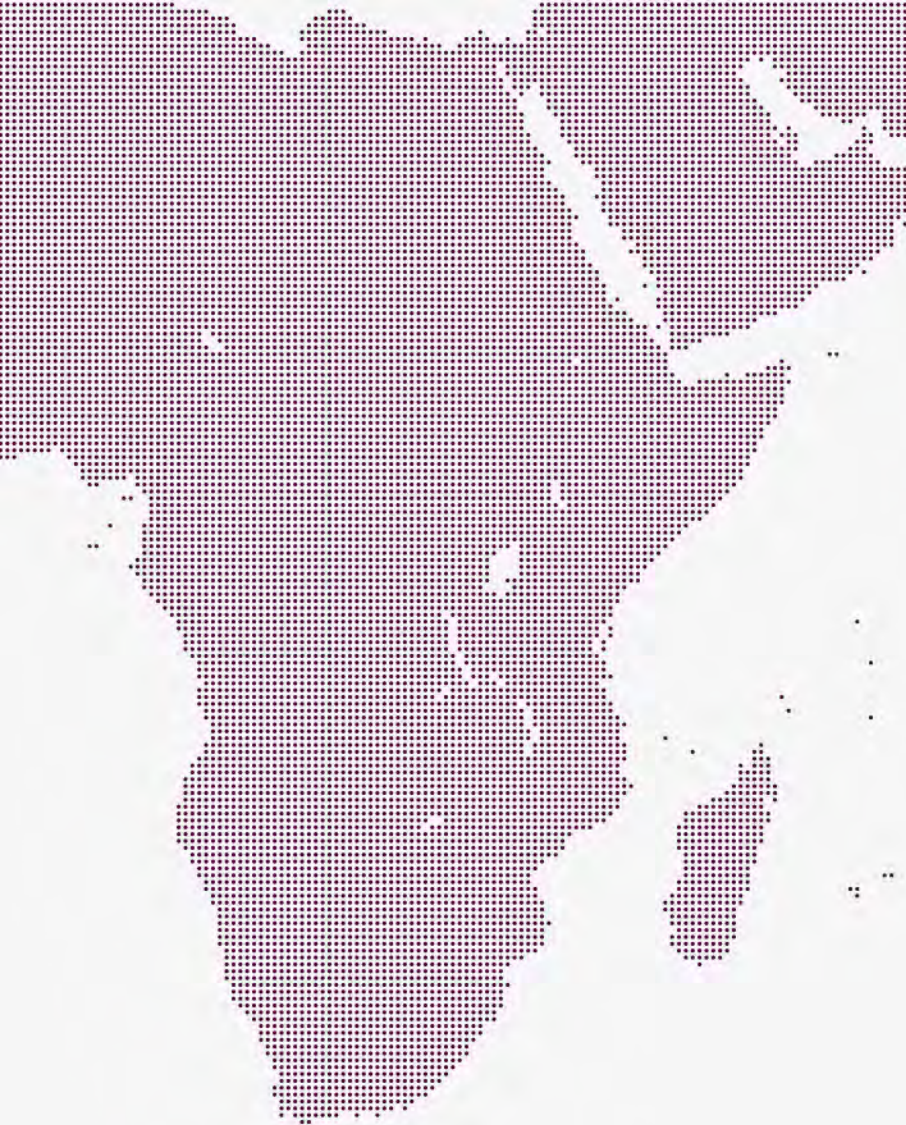
Race and disability discrimination are the most concerning discriminatory issues for Brazilians

What are the most concerning social issues for Brazilians?



Source: Mintel Sustainability Barometer Data, Last 3 months to March 2021





MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA



Diversity in management

- There was a limited amount of roles advertised in this region, however, like last quarter there was a higher number of roles focused on gender and youth inclusion than other regions.
- Predominantly, global companies recruit for D&I roles.

Diversity and Inclusion roles posted on LinkedIn



**Gender and Inclusion
Advisor – Jordan**
Posted in Sept 2021



**Diversity & Youth Programs
Executive – Turkey**
Posted in Sept 2021



**Inclusion and Diversity
Business Partner - UAE**
Posted in Sept 2021



**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Management Leader
- South Africa**
Posted in Sept 2021

Zain prioritises employment of people with disabilities through hiring manager training

Telecommunications company Zain, is training hiring managers to conduct interviews with people with disabilities as part of its efforts to enable easier access to employment. The sessions were designed to highlight the importance of employment of people with disabilities in the private sector, as part of its WE ABLE initiative.

Topics that were discussed during the training included; pre and during interview preparations, types of questions that are appropriate to ask and those that are not, general interview etiquette, the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and market opportunities.

The session also explored the best ways to communicate with applicants, the potential biases and how to remove them from the interview process, and that equal opportunities and qualifications are the only things that should be taken into consideration.



Source: Zain

WE ABLE is the brainchild of Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO, Bader Al-Kharafi, complementing the company's Gender Diversity and Inclusion programme.

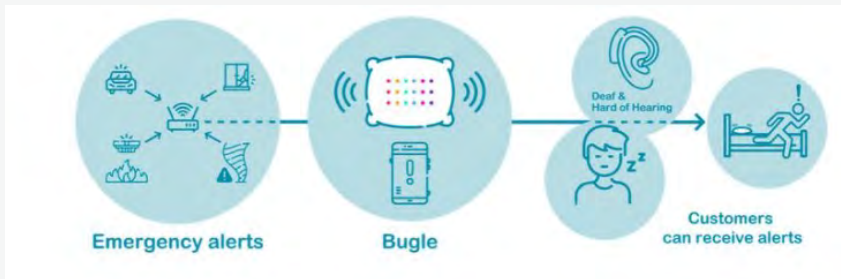
The immediate aim of the Disability Inclusion initiative is to achieve the following:

- Increase the number of people with disabilities within the Zain workforce by 2022
- Ensure all training programmes are Disability Inclusive by 2022
- Guarantee that accessibility across all Zain touchpoints is Disability Inclusive by 2022
- Identify innovative and assistive technologies enabling more people with disabilities to join the company and succeed

Student designs a SmartPillow to help people with hearing loss

A student in Dubai has designed a SmartPillow that connects with smartphones and tablets to provide haptic, non-audio emergency alerts for people with hearing loss.

JayShaud Potter, who was born deaf, designed the SmartPillow to send non-audio alerts to people with hearing loss in case of emergencies whilst they are asleep. The pillow links alarms with alternative sensory alerts such as haptic feedback or lights via IoT to link doorbells, smoke alarms, security systems and baby monitors. Through a standard radio frequency wireless protocol it then signals an emergency with a wake-up prompt on the user's smartphone or tablet app.



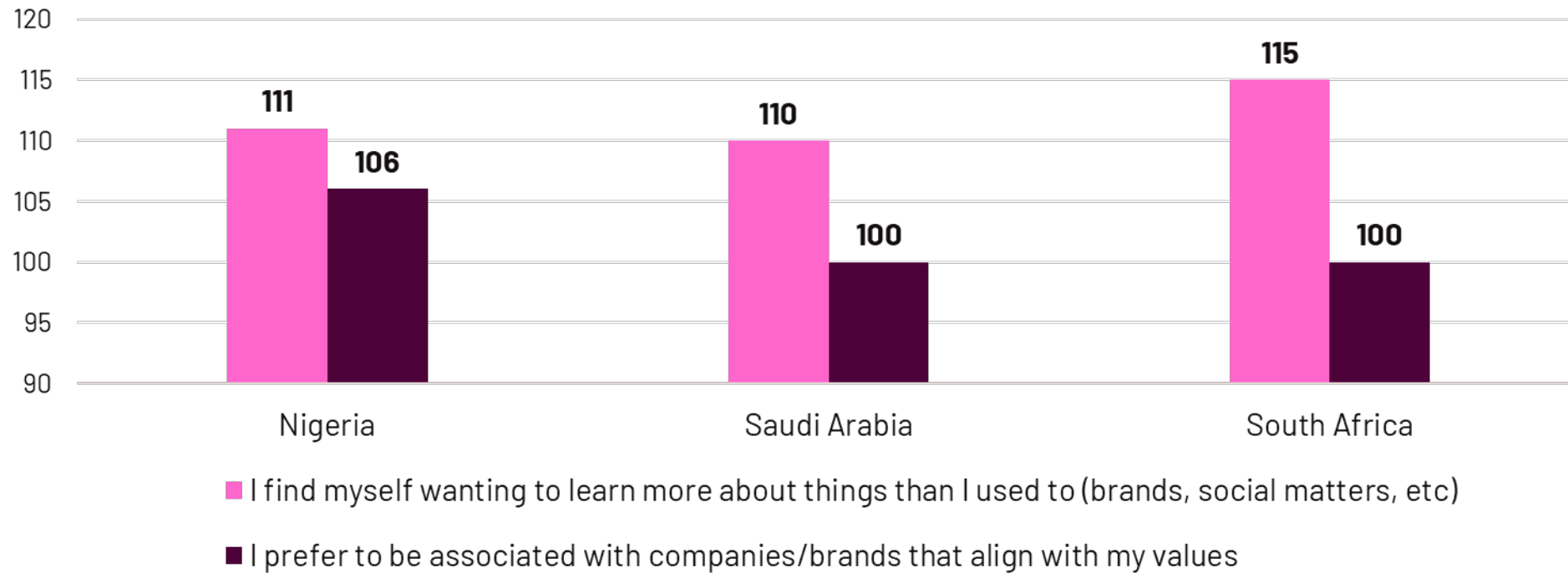
71% of Saudi Arabian adults agree that they like to be amongst the first to try new technologies. The Holistic Consumer – Global, March 2021.

Why is this important?

As technology continues to advance, we are seeing brands use new digital tools to provide solutions for under-served consumer groups. This includes services that can help people with hearing, visual or any other kind of disability enjoy an improved quality of life and ensure their safety in emergencies. By drawing on insights from disabled people, brands can efficiently create solutions that help empower them to overcome physical challenges. It also creates a more inclusive and independent environment for consumers.

Consumers are increasingly seeking out more information

What are consumers more likely to agree with?





CONCLUSION



Customer service is king

For a long time good customer service has been to offer polite, friendly and effective help. While this is still important, there are more nuances and specialist requirements in providing effective help for people with disabilities. Brands that train their customer-facing roles in inclusive customer service will gain and retain more satisfied customers.

Embrace tech-based innovation

It's clear that technology has a role in 'levelling the playing field' for people with disabilities. Be sure to create products and services that solve a problem or assist the disabled community, rather than investing in technology for the sake of technology.

Develop products to enhance emotional wellbeing

Post-pandemic consumers are prioritising their own mental and emotional wellbeing. Brands need to find ways to help customers manage and meet their wellbeing goals and be sensitive to issues that particularly affect people with existing disabilities.

Invest in a Talent Pipeline

Building an inclusive workforce for the future starts with people who aren't yet in employment. Brands have an opportunity to nurture and retain talent by starting early, partnering with universities and schools and developing inclusive recruitment and training programmes.

Incorporate D&I into all business functions and 'ways of working'

D&I isn't just for HR, it can transcend all functions within a business. In fact, for a business to be truly inclusive it must touch all departments. There is a potential to upskill all areas of the business on inclusive practices, whether that be how to design for or sell to under-served communities.

Make spaces for all

Public spaces should be accessible for all of the general public. This sounds obvious, but many places are still not accessible for people with disabilities. Take a look at your own spaces: offices, parks, public transport and get some feedback on how accessible they are for people with a wide range of disabilities. Brands that prioritise accessibility will reap the rewards in new and loyal customers.

DISABILITY
IS OUR
BUSINESS.

 Valuable
500

