



Annex 1

Lists of analysed initiatives and companies:

Table 1: List of public or private initiatives

	country	name in English	name in national language	type
	Austria	Amazona	amaZone	prize
	Austria	Approaches for operational promotion of equal treatment of women and men in Lower Austria – Good practice in enterprises	Ansätze betrieblicher Gleichstellungsförderung in Niederösterreich – Good Practice in Unternehmen	compendium
	Austria	audit “work and family”	Audit “berufundfamilie”	label
	Austria	ebiz e-government award	ebiz e-government award	prize
	Austria	Gender Booklet – Non-university Research	Gender Booklet – Außeruniversitäre Forschung	compendium
	Austria	Bundeswettbewerb “Frauen- und familienfreundlichster Betrieb”	National competition “Women- and family-friendliest business”	prize
	Austria	Special prize “Best workplace for women” in the framework of “Best workplaces in Austria”	Sonderpreis “Bester Arbeitgeber für Frauen” im Rahmen von “Österreichs Beste Arbeitgeber”	prize
	Austria	State Prize for Equal Opportunities in R&D	Staatspreis für Chancengleichheit in F&E	prize
	Austria	TRIGOS – The award for enterprises with responsibility	TRIGOS – Die Auszeichnung für Unternehmen mit Verantwortung	prize
	Austria	WOMAN Award	WOMAN Award	prize
	Belgium	Award Gender Friendly Companies	Award Gendervriendelijke Bedrijven	prize
	Belgium	Database good practices within organisations	Databank goede voorbeelden ondernemingen; Banque de données bonnes pratiques des entreprises	compendium
	Belgium	Diversity Charter of the Walloon Region	Charte de la Diversité de la Région Wallonne	charter
	Belgium	Label Equality Diversity	Label Gelijkheid Diversiteit; Label Egalité Diversité	label
	Bulgaria	<i>no relevant initiatives could be identified</i>		



	country	name in English	name in national language	type
	Cyprus	Channels of Access	Κανάλια Πρόσβασης	label
	Cyprus	New Routes For Women Employment in Cyprus (Gender Equality Awards)	Νέοι Δρόμοι για τη Γυναικεία Απασχόληση στην Κύπρο	prize
	Cyprus	Open Doors	Ανοικτές Πόρτες	compendium
	Cyprus	Price of Social Excellence	Βραβείο Κοινωνικής Αριστείας	prize
	Czech Republic	Company of the Year: Equal Opportunities	Firma roku: rovné příležitosti	prize
	Czech Republic	Company Supporting Family	Podnik podporující rodinu	prize
	Czech Republic	Family Friendly Society	Společnost přátelská rodině	label
	Czech Republic	Gender audits	Genderové audity	label
	Denmark	Equal Pay	Ligeløn	compendium
	Denmark	Charter for more women in management	Charter for flere kvinder i ledelse	charter
	Denmark	Great Place to Work® Special Award: Work Life Balance	Great Place to Work® Specialpris: Work-life balance	prize
	Denmark	The Balance Award	Balanceprisen	prize
	Denmark	The Balance Day	Balancedagen	prize
	Denmark	The Female Leader Focus Award (FLF Award)	Female Leader Focus Prisen (FLF Prisen)	prize
	Denmark	The K2 reward & K2 reproach	K2 prisen & K2 næsen	prize
	Denmark	The MIA Award (Diversity in the Workplace Award)	MIAPRISEN (Mangfoldighed i Arbejdslivet Prisen)	prize
	Denmark	Results with work life balance - Best practice	Resultater med work life balance - Best practice	compendium

	country	name in English	name in national language	type
	Estonia	Equality between Men and Women - Principle and Goal for Effective and Sustainable Enterprises	Meeste ja naiste võrdõiguslikkus - tõhusate ja jätkusuutlike ettevõtete põhimõte ja eesmärk	compendium
	Estonia	Gender equality in your company: the recipes for success	Kasu ja tasakaal: soolise võrdõiguslikkuse edendamise retseptiraamat Eesti ettevõtete juhtidele	compendium
	Estonia	The competition for family- and employee-friendly enterprises	Pere- ja töötajasõbralike firmade konkurss	ranking/prize
	Finland	Gender Equality Plan Prize	Tasa-arvosuunnittelukilpailu	prize
	France	Charter for Parenthood in the workplace	Charte de la Parentalité en Entreprise	charter
	France	Equal Opportunity Employer Label (Equality Label)	Label Egalité Professionnelle (Label Egalité)	label
	France	Gender Equality Prize of the Midi-Pyrénées Region Council	Prix de l'Égalité Professionnelle de la Région Midi-Pyrénées	prize
	France	ORSE web portal on practices of gender equality in companies: www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org	Portail internet ORSE recensant les pratiques d'égalité professionnelle dans les entreprises: www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org	compendium
	France	Regional charters for gender equality and gender-mixed work	Chartes régionales égalité et mixité professionnelles	charter
	France	Yearly Capitalcom Barometer on gender-mixed work	Baromètre annuel Capitalcom sur la mixité	ranking

	country	name in English	name in national language	type
	Germany	Award "Success Factor Family 2008"	Unternehmenswettbewerb "Erfolgsfaktor Familie 2008"	prize
	Germany	Bavarian Prize for the Promotion of Women	Bayerischer Frauenförderpreis	prize
	Germany	Best Companies to Work for in Germany, Special Price for Equal Opportunities	Deutschlands Beste Arbeitgeber, Sonderpreis Chancengleichheit der Geschlechter	prize
	Germany	Charter of Success Factor Family	Gemeinsame Erklärung Erfolgsfaktor Familie	charter
	Germany	Memorandum of the national pact for women in MINT-jobs (MINT = mathematics, informatics, sciences, technology)	Memorandum des Nationalen Paktes für Frauen in MINT-Berufen	charter
	Germany	genderdax - Top Companies for High Qualified Women	genderdax - Top Unternehmen für hochqualifizierte Frauen	ranking
	Germany	SAXplus - Pro Family Top Enterprises	SAXplus - Pro Familie Top Unternehmen	prize
	Germany	State award equal opportunities for women and men in enterprises	Landeswettbewerb Gleiche Chancen für Frauen und Männer im Betrieb	prize
	Germany	Total E-Quality label	Total E-Quality Prädikat	label
	Germany	audit "work and family" / audit "family-friendly university"	Audit "berufundfamilie" / Audit "familiengerechte hochschule"	label
	Germany	work and family index	berufundfamilie-Index	ranking
	Greece	The Top Five in Equal Opportunities	Οι Καλύτερες 5 στις Ίσες Ευκαιρίες	prize
	Hungary	Best workplace for women prize	Legjobb női munkahely díj	prize
	Hungary	Family Friendly Workplace Award	Családbarát munkahely díj	prize
	Hungary	For the receiver and varied workplace - good practices	A befogadó és sokszínű munkahelyért - jó példák	compendium
	Hungary	Women's chances are growing!	Nő az esély!	compendium

	country	name in English	name in national language	type
	Iceland	Kópavogur Equality Award	Jafnréttisviðurkenningar	prize
	Iceland	Icelandic Equality Award	Jafnréttisviðurkenningar	prize
	Iceland	Icelandic Equality Index	Jafnréttiskennitala	ranking
	Ireland	Best Workplaces in Ireland award	Best Workplaces in Ireland award	prize
	Ireland	National Framework Committee for Work Life Balance Policies	National Framework Committee for Work Life Balance Policies	compendium
	Ireland	President's Award for Corporate Social Responsibility	President's Award for Corporate Social Responsibility	prize
	Italy	Earth God	De@terra	prize
	Italy	european work & family audit	Audit "Lavoro & Famiglia"; Audit "berufundfamilie"	label
	Italy	Pink Stamp - S.O.N.O. Same Opportunities New Opportunities	Bollino Rosa – S.O.N.O. Stesse Opportunità Nuove Opportunità	label
	Italy	Vademecum of good practices	Vademecum delle buone pratiche	compendium
	Latvia	The index of gender equality	Dzimumu līdztiesības indekss	ranking
	Latvia	The logo of gender equality	Dzimumu līdztiesības logotips	charter
	Latvia	The status of family-friendly entrepreneur	Ģimenei draudzīga komersanta statuss	label
	Liechtenstein	Equal Opportunities Prize	Chancengleichheitspreis	prize
	Liechtenstein	SME-booklet on Occupation and Family	KMU-Handbuch Beruf und Familie	compendium

	country	name in English	name in national language	type
	Lithuania	National responsible business award - The enterprise of the year	Nacionalinio atsakingo verslo apdovanojimas - Metų darbovietė	prize
	Lithuania	The enterprise which promotes gender equality the most	Lygiausia darbovietė	prize
	Luxembourg	Female Award for Enterprises in Luxembourg	Prix Féminin de l'Entreprise in Luxembourg	prize
	Luxembourg	Positive Actions	Actions Positives	label
	Malta	Unlocking the female potential	Unlocking the female potential	label
	Malta	Voice for All Good Practice Competition	Voice for All Good Practice Competition	prize
	Netherlands	Diversity Award	Diversity Award	prize
	Netherlands	Glass Ceiling Index	Glazen Plafond Index	ranking
	Norway	Equality prize of the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO)	LOs likestillingspris	prize
	Norway	Ministry of Education and Research Gender Equality Award	Kunnskapsdepartementets likestillingspris	prize
	Norway	The Federation of Norwegian Agricultural Co-operatives (FNAC) Gender Equality Prize	Landbrukssamvirkets likestillingspris	prize
	Norway	The Federation of Norwegian Agricultural Co-operatives (FNAC) "Gender index regarding board positions"	Likestillingsbørsen	ranking
	Norway	The Golden Shrovetide Rod	Gullriset	

	country	name in English	name in national language	type
	Poland	Gender Index - Equal Opportunities Firm	Gender Index - Firma Równych Szans	ranking
	Poland	Podkarpacie Equal Opportunities Employer	Podkarpacki Pracodawca Równych Szans	prize
	Portugal	Equality is Quality Prize	Prémio Igualdade é Qualidade	label/prize
	Portugal	Good Practices for Reconciling Work and Family Life - Guide for Companies	Boas Práticas de Conciliação entre Vida Profissional e Vida Familiar. Manual para as Empresas	compendium
	Portugal	The Best Company to Work for Women	Melhor Empresa para Trabalhar para Mulheres	ranking/prize
	Romania	Gender NET	Reteaua GEN	charter
	Romania	Woman VIP - Brasov	Femina VIP - Brasov	prize
	Slovakia	Antidiscrimination Charter	Antidiskriminačná dohoda	charter
	Slovakia	Family and Work - audit for balancing work, family and support of gender equality	Rodina a práca - audit pre zosúladenie práce, rodiny a podpora rodovej rovnosti	label
	Slovakia	Chance for Equality	Sanca na rovnosť	label
	Slovakia	Via Bona Slovakia Award	Via Bona Slovakia	prize
	Slovakia	Family Friendly Employer Award	Zamestnávateľ ústretový k rodine	prize
	Slovakia	Introduction of the certificate for equal opportunities and education support	Zavedenie certifikácie pre rovnosť príležitostí a podporu vzdelávania	label
	Slovenia	Award Flower mogota	Priznanja roža mogota	prize
	Slovenia	Certificate "Family friendly Enterprise"	certifikat "Družini prijazno podjetje"	label
	Slovenia	Women managers friendly company	Managerkam prijazno podjetje	prize

	country	name in English	name in national language	type
	Spain	Alares National Awards	Premios Nacionales Alares	prize
	Spain	Entity collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst Women and Men	Entidad Colaboradora en Igualdad de Oportunidades entre Mujeres y Hombres	label
	Spain	Top 5 of model companies in equality	Top 5 de las empresas modelo de igualdad	ranking
	Sweden	Anna's Equal Opportunities Prize	Annas Jämställdhetspris	prize
	Sweden	Best workplace for women	Bästa arbetsplatsen för kvinnor	ranking/prize
	Sweden	Equal opportunity index, EQUALIX	Jämställdhetsindex JÄMIX®	ranking
	Sweden	EQ-Z-County	EQ-Z-Län	label
	Sweden	Folksam's Equality Index	Folksams Jämställdhetsindex	ranking
	Sweden	The golden pacifier prize	Guldnappen	prize
	United Kingdom	Athena SWAN Charter for Women in Science	Athena SWAN Charter for Women in Science	charter/prize
	United Kingdom	CEO Charter	CEO Charter	charter
	United Kingdom	Employer of the Year Awards	Employer of the Year Awards	prize
	United Kingdom	GCS Women in IT Award	GCS Women in IT Award	prize
	United Kingdom	Investor in WISE award	Investor in WISE award	prize
	United Kingdom	MX Award for Diversity and Inclusion (Manufacturing Excellence Awards)	MX Award for Diversity and Inclusion (Manufacturing Excellence Awards)	prize
	United Kingdom	Opportunity Now	Opportunity Now	prize
	United Kingdom	The Times / Aurora 'Where Women Want to Work TOP 50'	The Times / Aurora 'Where Women Want to Work TOP 50'	ranking
	United Kingdom	The Working Families and UKRC Women in SET Award	The Working Families and UKRC Women in SET Award	prize
	United Kingdom	Top Employers for Working Families	Top Employers for Working Families	compendium
	United Kingdom	UKRC Quality Mark	UKRC Quality Mark	prize

	country	name in English	name in national language	type
	EU wide	Attractive workplace for all: Contributions to the Lisbon strategy at company level	Attractive workplace for all: Contributions to the Lisbon strategy at company level	compendium
	EU wide	Equalabel	Equalabel	label
	EU wide	European Business Awards (EBA)	European Business Awards (EBA)	prize
	EU wide	european work & family audit	european work & family audit	label
	EU wide	The Good Company Ranking	The Good Company Ranking	ranking
	International	Catalyst Award	Catalyst Award	prize
	International	Business Achievement Awards	Business Achievement Awards	prize
	International	Gender Equality and Decent Work	Gender Equality and Decent Work	compendium
	International	List of Best Workplaces	<i>in national language in each country</i>	ranking/prize
	International	NAFE Top Companies for Executive Women	NAFE Top Companies for Executive Women	ranking
	International	Resources for Workplace Practice	Resources for Workplace Practice	compendium
	International	Working Mother 100 Best Companies	Working Mother 100 Best Companies	ranking

Source: Austrian Institute for SME Research and national research partners, 2009

Table 2: List of the 30 selected and analysed companies

name of the company	headquarters/ size (employees world wide)	industry
Accenture Ltd.	Ireland, Dublin approx. 186,000 employees	professional services (consulting, outsourcing, technical support)
Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A.	Italy, Trieste approx. 84,000 employees	finance & insurance
Bulgarian Telecommunication Company (BTC) plc	Bulgaria, Sofia; approx. 7,000 employees	telecommunications (fixed line telephony, internet services, mobile telephony (as Vivatel))
BP International Ltd.	United Kingdom, London; approx. 90,000 employees	oil business (exploring and producing oil, natural gas and alternative fuels; delivering a wide range of energy solutions and petrochemicals; retail)
Deakon Degen GmbH	Austria, Hart; 20 employees	electronics (production of customised cable connections)
Dell Inc.	USA, Round Rock (Texas); approx. 80,000 employees (<i>initiatives in Ireland analysed</i>)	electronics & IT hardware (desktops, servers, notebooks, netbooks, peripherals, printers, televisions)
Deutsche Bank AG	Germany, Frankfurt approx. 79,000 employees	banking & finance
Deutsche Post DHL AG	Germany, Bonn approx. 310,000 employees (DHL); approx. 190,000 employees (Deutsche Post AG)	logistics
Eli Lilly Corp.	USA, Indianapolis; approx. 40,000 employees (global); 7,000 (Europe)	pharmaceuticals
Exodus SA	Greece, Athens; 105 employees	IT

name of the company	headquarters/size	industry
Formastur S.A.	Spain, Oviedo; 30 employees	professional services (consultancy & education)
Henkel AG	Germany, Düsseldorf; approx. 55,000 employees	chemicals, consumer products (detergents, cosmetics and body care, adhesive technologies)
IBM Corporation	USA, Armonk (New York); approx. 386,000 employees <i>(European Women Leadership Councils analysed)</i>	IT & consulting services (computer hardware, computer software)
IKEA	Netherlands, Delft; approx. 120,000 employees	furniture and home products
Intesa San Paolo S.p.A.	Italy, Milano and Turin; approx. 60,000 employees	banking & finance
KPMG LLP UK / KPMG Europe LLP	United Kingdom, London; KPMG Europe LLP: Germany, Frankfurt (partnership with KPMG in Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland and Spain); KPMG Europe LLP: approx. 23,000 employees	professional services (audit, tax & advisory)
L'Oréal SA	France, Paris; approx. 65,000 employees	cosmetics
Manpower Inc.	USA, Milwaukee (Wisconsin); approx. 30,000 employees <i>(initiatives in Sweden analysed)</i>	human resources
Microsoft Corp.	USA, Redmond (Washington); approx. 90,000 employees <i>(initiatives in Austria analysed)</i>	electronics & IT (computer software, consumer electronics)

name of the company	headquarters/size	industry
Motorola Inc.	USA, Schaumburg, Illinois; approx. 60,000 employees (initiatives in Poland analysed)	telecommunications (embedded systems, microprocessors, mobile & satellite phones, two-way radios, networking systems)
Procter & Gamble Corp.	USA, Cincinnati (Ohio); approx. 138,000 employees	production of consumer goods
PSA Peugeot Citroën SA	France, Paris and Sochaux-Montbéliard ; approx. 208,000 employees	automobile and truck manufactory
Polgár-Társak 2000 Kft.	Hungary, Törökszentmiklós; 15 employees	stationary retail (paper & office products)
Royal Dutch Shell plc	Netherlands, The Hague; approx. 102,000 employees	oil & gas (petroleum, natural gas, and other petrochemicals)
PWC LLP	United Kingdom, London; approx. 146,000 employees	professional services (assurance, consulting, financial advisory, tax)
Siemens AG	Germany, Berlin and Munich; approx. 430,000 employees	conglomerates; electronics & IT (development, production and sale of a large variety of goods and services related to electronics and IT)
Sodexo S.A.	France, Issy-Les-Moulineaux approx. 355,000 employees	Food and facilities management services & service vouchers and cards
Stormberg SA	Norway, Kristiansand; 99 employees	retail sales (sportswear)
Toyota Motor Europe NV/SA	Belgium, Brussels; approx. 80,000 employees	automobile and truck manufactory
TUI AG	Germany, Hannover approx. 70,000 employees	travel & tourism

Source: Austrian Institute for SME Research, 2009



Annex 2

Case Studies of Initiatives

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1 Labels

1.1 France: Label Égalité Professionnelle/Label Égalité (Engl. Equality Label)

Background and objectives

The “Label Égalité Professionnelle” was launched in June 2004. In March 2005, the first company was awarded the label.

As few negotiations were set up between social partners on gender equality, the French government decided to create a tool which would enhance good practices from firms. Such an initiative was partly inspired by actions at the EU level, in Germany, in Italy and in Belgium. As a first step, a commission consisting of the French government and social partners wrote the outline of specifications of a label which would sanction good practices of firms related to gender equality. As a second step, AFNOR Certification was asked by the French government to create a label from those specifications and to take part to its publicity. Finally the proposal of AFNOR certification was validated by the French government and social partners.

The label is run by the same actors which contributed to its conception. AFNOR-Certification collects information from applying companies and grants the label. A commission consisting of the French government and social partners (five members of the French government, five representatives of trade unions, five representatives of employer organisations) puts forward an opinion about granting the label to a company.

Publicity about the label is made by the French government, AFAQ-AFNOR and corporate networks. There is no prospecting of potential applicants; companies spontaneously apply for it. Nevertheless AFAQ-AFNOR may mention the existence of the Label Égalité Professionnelle to companies which apply to certifications AFAQ-AFNOR or to the “Label Diversité” (diversity label). Indeed, the Label Égalité Professionnelle is an independent initiative but it can be linked with another public incentive, the Label Diversité, which has been offered by AFNOR Certification since September 2008, with the support of the French government. The diversity label deals with other dimensions of diversity (age, ethnicity, disability etc.) but does not include gender equality; it is supposed to be a complement to the Label Égalité.

Working principles and content

As opposed to other products of AFNOR-Certification, the Label Égalité Professionnelle is not a certification but is a form of recognition of actions taken by companies. The application process and requirements will be executed as follows:

1) AFNOR-Certification collects data from applying corporations and checks whether they meet the following requirements:

- Integrating gender equality into the culture of the organisation: This implies at least informing managers, employees and their representatives about gender equality issues, carrying internal communication, signing an agreement on gender equality with social partners (“Accord sur l'égalité professionnelle entre les femmes et les hommes”).



- Ensuring gender equality in human resources management and general management: This means at least to reinforce equality of access by women and men to training, and to provide an analysis from indicators of working conditions and training for women and men. Organisations with more than 600 employees must take measures towards equal representation of women and men in governing bodies.
- Parenthood must be accommodated with at least two measures: Organising time schedules and working conditions which are congruent with family life as well as conjointly anticipating the departure and return of employees on parent leave. Applicants must fill out reports accounting for their actions and commitments regarding those fields and enclose their “rapport annuel de situation comparée des conditions générales d’emploi et de formation des femmes et des hommes”¹ to their application.

2) A division of the Ministry of Social Affairs (“Bureau égalité professionnelle” du “Service des droits des femmes et de l’égalité”, au Ministère du Travail, des Relations sociales, de la Famille, de la Solidarité et de la Ville) evaluates chances for the company to be awarded the label by the commission. The Bureau égalité professionnelle works in an informal way with one or two representatives of social partners.

3) A commission puts forward an opinion on whether or not the company should be awarded the label. The commission may make recommendations of improvements in certain areas to companies which are granted the label. The commission consists of five representatives of the French government and all representative social partners.

4) AFNOR-Certification decides to grant or not the label to the applicant. When applying for the Label Égalité Professionnelle, applicants are financially charged by AFNOR Certification.

18 months after the first audit, a lighter check-up is applied onto awarded companies by AFNOR Certification. Companies are asked to account for the actions they took to comply with the recommendations the commission made when they were granted the label. Recently, this updating process was simplified: there is less paperwork to do, as companies just have to fill in a table with their updated data.

The label is granted for a period of three years. After three years, companies have to apply for a new labelling process.

In the third step of the application process, the “Service des droits des femmes et de l’égalité” (SDFE) of the Ministry of Social Affairs sometimes asks companies to postpone their application to the Label Egalité. This can happen when events within the company make it difficult to have a clear vision of the situation of the company in terms of gender equality in the period to come.

¹ In France, by law, every company with more than 50 employees must monitor their practices related to gender equality through a yearly report which is produced to social partners. For each category occupation (employee, executive, manager etc.) and on the basis of indicators, this report draws comparisons between the respective situations of male and female employees in terms of hiring, training, career development, qualifications, classification, working conditions and wages. <http://www.travail-solidarite.gouv.fr/dossiers/gestion-ressources-humaines/egalite-professionnelle/rapport-situation-comparee/rapport-situation-comparee.html>.



All private companies, non profit organisations and public administrations can apply for the Label Égalité Professionnelle. The application process may change depending on the size of the company:

- Special incentives are set up for SMEs with less than 50 employees: The application process is easier (less documents to gather) and cheaper.
- Optional measures can be submitted by organisations with more than 250 employees.
- Specific measures are required from organisations with more than 600 employees: They must implement measures towards equal representation of women and men in governing bodies. (It can be noted from the list of companies which were granted the Label Égalité Professionnelle that many of them are large scale corporations very much involved in quality process regarding corporate social responsibility.)

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

On June 23rd, 2009, 46 organisations were granted the label². 715,232 employees are concerned. No proper evaluation has been carried out. Nevertheless, in October 2006, a questionnaire was sent to firms so they could assess the effects of the label. Also, the SDFE receives feedback from companies which come and share their experiences during events related to gender equality (conferences, workshops, etc.)³.

Impact in companies

On the basis of the feedback received via the questionnaire sent in 2006 and through events organised, the SDFE reports several benefits of the label as mentioned by companies:

- Companies receive more job applications from women for technical positions.
- In the context of a merging between companies, applying to the label can be a good way of starting collaborating on an issue on which all parts agree⁴.
- The label has effects on the retaining ratio of employees.
- The label is an efficient communication tool. It gives some recognition for actions which already existed within the company.
- The labelling process has been a guide for taking actions in favour of gender equality in the legal framework: better working conditions, creation of gender-mixed work teams, creating support networks of women.

² There may be some organisations among them that have been granted the label and lost it since then as the label must be renewed after three years.

³ Results of the questionnaire and feedback from companies are summed up in the part "Impact in companies" when dealing with reasons explaining why companies apply or not for the initiative.

⁴ This is a side effect which the SDFE did not expect.



According to managers of companies, benefits of the label for the company are as follows:

1) The Label Égalité Professionnelle reinforces the corporate culture of the company: applying for labels and ISO accreditations is a way for companies to make their commitments towards employees clear. Employees know they can have specific demands on issues which are addressed by public commitments from their company. Such commitments from the company can be used by employees as an argument to support a complaint if they consider that they have not been treated fairly.

2) The label is used by firms as a tool for external communication to enhance the public image of the company. Nevertheless, people who were interviewed are divided regarding the actual effects external communication about the label can have, even though all firms interviewed publicly display the fact they were awarded the label.

Benefits can spring from the communication which is developed about the label itself. Public administrations and the media communicate about the most renowned companies which obtained the label and AFAQ-AFNOR publishes on their website the list of companies which were granted the Label. The CSR manager of one firm considers that the Label Égalité Professionnelle is undoubtedly for the external communication of the firm. The company was the first one in its region to receive the label and it was granted the label in the same session as an international company which means that it benefited from the media coverage of the event. She considers that the visibility of the good practices of the firm makes it more attractive to potential applicants. Nevertheless, it is difficult for the CSR manager to assess the direct effects of the label as the attractiveness of the corporation can be accounted by an arrow of actions that the company has settled.

Some companies develop specific communication tools towards regular customers and suppliers. One company displays the logo of the label in their official mail. They have their suppliers signed up a document in which the latter acknowledge that they have been informed about the engagement of the company. Also, they have communicated their commitments towards recruiting agencies they work with. Nevertheless, the recruitment manager who was interviewed states they cannot say whether the label has effects on the external image of the company: although they have taken part in job fairs since they were granted the label, their commitment in favour of gender equality has not been put forward by applicants in their motivations to enter the company.

3) For some companies, applying for the Label Égalité Professionnelle is part of a much larger process of revision of their HR practices and of communication about it.

One SME was induced to apply for the label as, for the last years, they have carried out a whole process of revision of their HR practices and been involved in SCR clubs. The SCR manager explained they were encouraged to apply for the Label Égalité Professionnelle as the firm was implementing an action plan designed by the non-profit organisation FACE⁵ in order to ensure equal treatment. The last step of the action plan was applying for the Label Égalité Professionnelle. Once granted the Label

⁵ Fondation Agir Contre l'Exclusion (FACE) is a national network of local corporate clubs aiming at fighting against exclusion by offering their skills as economic actors. They work in partnership with decentralised public authorities and non-profit organisations in order to help socially excluded people finding their place back in society and in the workplace, as well as to promote equal opportunity policies in private companies. Among its activities, FACE offers companies diagnostics of their HR practices and suggests tools to be applied in order to ensure equal treatment and/or equal opportunities.



Égalité Professionnelle, that company applied for the Diversity label. Progressively, that SME got involved in a network and a strategy of communication which rely very much on displaying good practices in order to gain social assets and build a positive image.

In the case of another firm applying for the Label Égalité Professionnelle was congruent with commitments in favour of gender equality from their parent company (a large scale international company) which signed the UN Charter. Furthermore, the label echoes actions which have been taken by the branch for the last 15 years. From 1995 onwards, there has been an action of commitment of employees at all levels of the company, an action which benefited to women. Consequently, the label is to be considered as a way to acknowledge actions which already existed in the company. Applying for the label is part of a larger philosophy of the company which seeks for any form of recognition of their good practices, such as ISO accreditations in the fields of environment, food safety, etc, as long as the parent company validates such commitments. The recruitment manager acknowledges that the firm is much less likely to aim at labels or certificates if they do not relate to good practices they already have developed. Therefore, in the case of that company, the label is rather used to enhance existing actions than to create new actions.

The SDFE and firms identify several reasons why other firms do not apply for the label:

1) Lack of human and financial resources: One company which was granted the label considers that applying for the label takes time and that having a diversity manager was of great help to fill in the application. Companies without any diversity manager may have to hire a consultant in order to complete the application process. Also, in order to apply for a social responsibility certificate, some companies prefer to have first an audit of their practices carried out by an external consulting company to make sure they are ready to ask for the certificate: asking for a certificate and not receiving it can be very detrimental to the reputation of a company. The need for human and financial means makes the process of application to the label more difficult for SMEs. The SDFE acknowledges it and deplores the subsequent lack of applications from SMEs. As a matter of fact, a labelled SME highly benefited from the help of the non-profit organisation FACE when they prepared their application to the label.

They also relied on the help of an external consultant who was originally giving them support to settle their future HR management process ("Gestion Prévisionnel des Emplois et des Compétences" or GPEC). Thanks to the support of those two external actors, it took the SME one month and a week to gather all documents needed, present the label and the application of the firm to employees and directors⁶.

2) In order to avoid financial loss as well as bad publicity, firms have to be sure they will be awarded the label when applying for it. If other monitoring processes, as the aforementioned yearly report ("Rapport annuel de situation comparée"), display bad results on their gender equality policy, firms may be deterred from applying to the Label Égalité Professionnelle.

3) There may be misunderstanding on what covers the concept of "gender equality". Some companies may consider that they cannot apply for a gender equality label when they count a majority of female employees. Some companies think that there is no inequity between men and women within a predominantly female company. One company with a predominantly female staff explained that they needed to closely explore the notion of gender equality to acknowledge that they could improve their

⁶ The application process for the label was simplified for SMEs below 50 staff.



practices in terms of recruitment, skill developments, career development, gender mix and work-life balance. They also had to acknowledge that they had to make sure to offer the same working flexibility to men as they do to women.

4) According to the manager of one company, displaying the Label Égalité Professionnelle can be perceived as favouring affirmative action that is reversed discrimination. The manager considers it important to inform employees on how to address such concerns from external people in order not to be considered as “feminist”. Some managers do not want to be compared to/connected with affirmative action or feminism.

Some companies did not renew their label. According to the SDFE, these are companies which met economic troubles, or corporations which have merged since they were granted the label and therefore do not exist anymore.

Development and future perspectives

A club of firms which have been granted the Label Égalité Professionnelle (“Club du label égalité”) has been launched in October 2006 by the non-profit organisation Arborus⁷ and the Ministry of Social Affairs. Approx. 50 enterprises providing in total more than 800,000 jobs are members of this network. Meetings to exchange experiences, share practices and discuss specific topics in HR management regarding gender equality in the workplace are held every four months. Moreover, the members of the club engage in benchmarking on their practices, in creating a common culture of professional equality and in promoting the Label Égalité in France and throughout Europe.

In September 2009, the European Fund for Professional Equality between Women and Men (“Le Fonds de Dotation arborus pour l’Égalité Professionnelle en Europe”) that is based on Arborus outcomes and the European corporate network has been launched. This first European Fund to support professional equality is borne by a network of major corporate partners (labelled enterprises) who wish to launch European and international benchmarking actions in order to achieve a balanced development of their human resource strategies, necessary for economic, organisational and social issues.

Another continuing plan is to broaden the scope of firms applying to the Label Égalité Professionnelle. After having worked on simplifying the application process for SMEs, the SDFE aims at encouraging administrations and, more particularly, decentralised authorities (regions, départements, city authorities) to apply for the Label Égalité Professionnelle.

⁷ <http://www.arborus.org>



1.2 Germany: audit berufundfamilie/audit familiengerechte hochschule (Engl. work and family audit, audit family-friendly university)

Background and objectives

Since 1995, the Hertie Foundation was interested in the question of how to create a work-life balance for the benefit of both employees and employers. At this early stage of the societal discussion, the Hertie Foundation understood the demographic change and the expected shortage of qualified personnel associated with it as an increasingly important management area. With the staff being the most important resource for businesses and rising expectations towards the workforce (e.g. in terms of working hours, workload and performance), aligning the interests of management and employees was and still is perceived as an operational necessity.

Against this background, the berufundfamilie gGmbH was founded in 1998 with the aim to bundle the activities of the Hertie foundation in this area. The main objective of the berufundfamilie gGmbH is to raise the awareness of employers to the benefits of a family-conscious human resource policy and corporate culture. Based on scientific research findings proving the business case of a balanced private and professional life, the berufundfamilie gGmbH offers qualified assistance on a sustainable, family-conscious human resource policy.

The main tools for the direct outreach to employers are the “work and family audit” for private companies (since 1998) and the “audit family-friendly university” targeting universities (since 2001). In general, the two audits entail similar types of activities. Both are strategic management instruments to optimise the diverging aspects of work and family related issues through tailored solutions for a good combination of both.

The audits of the berufundfamilie gGmbH are recommended by the leading German business associations and trade unions: Bundesvereinigung der deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände (BDA), Bundesverband der deutschen Industrie (BDI), Deutscher Industrie- und Handelskammertag (DIHK), Zentralverband des deutschen Handwerks (ZDH) and the Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB) as the umbrella organisation for trade unions in Germany. With the main social partners as promoters, interest for the prevailing issues is awakened and acceptance facilitated in the target group. This leads to a good coverage of the audits throughout the entrepreneurial landscape. High level political support is guaranteed by the patronage taken over by the Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Minister of Economics and Technology in 2004. In terms of funding, the Hertie foundation still is the main donor, supplemented by means from the European Social Fund (ESF).

Working principles and content

The audits of the berufundfamilie gGmbH are designed as a dynamic process leading to sustainable improvements of the work-life balance in the audited company/organisation. If an employer decides to undergo the auditing procedure after a first contact to the berufundfamilie gGmbH, one of 50 accredited auditors can be chosen – all trained and certified by the berufundfamilie gGmbH. The auditing process starts with a strategic workshop with the top management capturing the status-quo. In a second step, the findings are discussed with employee-representatives in a so called auditing workshop. Under consideration of the individual situation in the company/ organisation and the strategic goals of the management, the workshop tries to assess the context-related further potential. The process finally leads to a written agreement signed by the top management, entailing specific activities and measures to further improve the work-life balance.



A comprehensive list of around 150 criteria along the lines of eight main themes is the basis for the discussions in the auditing process. For a positive evaluation, the quantity of the offered measures is not of importance in the first place. Above all, the responsiveness of the management to identified problem areas and the corporate culture within the firm are assessed. The main themes (with examples of the audited measures) are as follows:

- working time: flexible working hours, adaptation of working hours to life stages, service times, sabbaticals;
- work organisation: team work, quality controlling, absence regulations, process controlling;
- work place: teleworking arrangements, jobticket;
- information and communication policy: internal communication policies, contact persons, family day;
- management competences: evaluation principles, coaching, part-time management positions;
- human resource development: individual development plan, support for re-entry after maternity leave or leave for elderly care, maternity leave for fathers;
- wage components and payments in kind: subsidies for child care, consideration of maternity leave;
- services for families: child care, elderly care, child-friendly atmosphere.

An additional aspect, which is only relevant for the audit family-friendly university, are academic studies and further scientific qualification, such as flexible examination and study regulations, part-time studies, virtual studies and financial support for studying parents.

The decision whether the auditing process was completed successfully is made by an advisory board appointed by the berufundfamilie gGmbH. The board meets on a regular basis (every two or three months) and checks the results of the auditing process. In case of a positive evaluation by the board, the employer is awarded a title indicating the participation in the audit. The title is valid for the following three years and visualised by a logo that can be used in online and print publications.

Throughout the three-year period, the implementation of the goals, as defined in the written agreement, is monitored. Therefore, the audited companies/organisations are asked to hand in a report documenting their progress on a yearly basis. After three years, a first re-audit takes place. In a process similar to the first audit the overall improvements are assessed and critically reviewed. The outcome of the re-audit is a new set of goals and activities leading to an updated written agreement, which is reviewed at the end of the second three-year period. Only if the re-audit is completed successfully, the employer is allowed to carry the title for a next period of three years.

In order to support the marketing activities of the participating employers, a formal awarding ceremony is organised once a year. Regularly, the Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Minister for Economics and Technology take part in the awarding event and ceremoniously present the certificates to the audited employers. As the best known initiative of its kind in Germany and with prominent political support, the audits of the berufundfamilie gGmbH get a lot of media coverage and are promoted on the websites of the supporting ministries. Furthermore,



the berufundfamilie gGmbH co-operates to an increasing extent with other organisations when it comes to events or other public relation activities. But at the end, the best promoters are the certified companies and institutions themselves.

Being tailored to the specific circumstances, needs and problems, the audits of the berufundfamilie gGmbH are open to any private company, public institution or university, irrespective of sector or size. When it comes to the beneficiaries of the audit, at first sight, employees with families and more specifically with children and/or relatives in need of care are named. But the reasoning behind the auditing process is to improve the productivity of the company/organisation and the corporate culture for the benefit of all. "A sustainable solution always has to include the needs of the complete workforce. What is beneficial for one group shall not be at the expenses of another. Finding a lasting compromise is therefore an integral part of the auditing process" says Dr. Rüdiger Koch, responsible for the audit at Merz Pharmaceuticals – a pharmaceutical company with more than 2,200 employees worldwide. According to Dr. Koch, the design of the audit could be improved by focusing on two or three themes beginning with the second re-audit. The in-depth analysis of problem areas would increase the benefit for the audited companies/organisations and their employees.

The comprehensive structure of the auditing process makes clear that the audit is not meant as a one-time assessment but aims to start a continuous process. Therefore, the audits are understood as a consulting service, which is charged with a fee. The costs differ regarding the complexity of the company/organisation, e.g. the number of employees, the structure of the workforce, the identified problems and the status-quo of work-life balance related strategies. For the work and family audit, charges can vary between € 5,000 and € 26,000 (re-audit: € 4,000 to € 20,000); for the audit family-conscious university between € 9,000 and € 13,000 (re-audit: € 7,000 to € 10,000). According to Ms. Sabine Schönberger from Schönberger Stahlbau & Metalltechnik – a family-business with 25 employees in the sector of structural engineering – the costs for the audits can be perceived as a deterrent, especially for small or medium-sized enterprises: "Before we first participated in the audit, the additional benefit was not yet clear and we were sceptical about the workload. But once the surprisingly uncomplicated process was completed, it became clear that the cost-benefit ratio is clearly positive." However, financial support is provided in some federal states of Germany and by means from the European Social Fund (up to a maximum of € 1,500).

Assessment

Assessment of the initiative itself

Both initiators and interviewed participants of the audit assess the initiative as successful. Having started in 1998 as a pioneer in the area of a better work-life balance, the audits of the berufundfamilie GmbH became well known in Germany as a sign for a sustainable and family-conscious human resource policy. This is also documented in the participation rate: In 1999, nine participants were awarded the title in the first awarding ceremony. In 2009, 322 participants were awarded, 198 of them completed the audit for the first time. In sum, over 600 companies/organisations were audited in the first ten years of the initiative. Nearly 1.2 million employees and more than 0.9 million students benefited from the audits of the berufundfamilie gGmbH so far. But for the initiators an even greater success is the increasing acceptance of the business case and the rising number of advocates for a good work-life balance.



As success factors, the hands-on approach of the audit and the expertise of the auditors were named. "The possibility to discuss the internal procedures and measures with an independent expert helps to overcome the organisational blindness and gives a new impetus" says Ms. Schönberger. Another success factor, but at the same time also an indicator for the success, is the increasing number of network activities. The activities range from the exchange of good practice to conferences, seminars or publications on work-life balance related topics. The network is perceived as a good source of information by the interviewed companies.

Another area of expertise of the berufundfamilie gGmbH is also being increasingly demanded by the business community and thus considered as a success factor: the scientific documentation of the business case of a good work-life balance. In 2005, the research centre "Forschungszentrum Familienbewusste Personalpolitik" (research centre for family-conscious personnel policy - FFP) was founded on the initiative of the berufundfamilie gGmbH and financially supported ever since. The FFP has the objective to analyse the business case of a family-conscious human resource policy. Research basis is the information gathered in the audits. The audited employers get exclusive access to the findings which are helpful for a cost-benefit analysis of their activities and for controlling and benchmarking procedures within the company/organisation.

The impact of the initiative on gender equality as such is hard to identify. The process-oriented dialogue of management and employees on specific work-life balance related problems within the company/organisation are of importance for a successful completion of the audit. Gender equality does not have to be perceived as an obstacle necessarily, but if so, a tailored solution is debated in the auditing process.

Assessment of the impact in companies

In 2008, the FFP conducted a representative survey on the human resource management in German enterprises (1,000 respondents). The aim was to measure the degree of family-consciousness in German businesses and its influence on the performance in important target areas of human resource management. In order to measure the degree of family-consciousness, the "work and family index" was developed – a management instrument which is unique of its kind. The index value (between 0 and 100) is generated out of the responses to 21 questions around three central themes: level of communication between management and employees, family-conscious measures offered to the staff and the corporate culture on family-consciousness. The results of the survey show that audited companies achieve on average higher degrees of family-consciousness (index value of 76) as non-audited (index value of 62). Due to the good experiences with the practicability in the survey, the index became a central part of the auditing process and is made available for the public online (see below).

In a second step, the influence of the level of family-orientation on the performance in eleven different target areas of human resource management was analysed, including the number of applications per open position (indicating the attractiveness of the employer), accumulation of human capital, staff motivation, staff retention, employee productivity, absenteeism or costs of re-entry after paternal leave. The results are compelling: Comparing the most family-oriented respondents (top 25 %) with the least (low 25 %), the former generated a 15 % higher degree of target achievement on average over all areas.



The biggest advantage of the top 25 % over the low 25 % was measured in the recruitment for key personnel. The audits of the berufundfamilie gGmbH can be of particular importance in the competition for talents as they are not only a sign for the current situation, but indicate a balanced approach towards private and professional aspects also for the next three years. "Being audited raises the attractiveness as an employer. The number of speculative applications rose 28-fold since our company first participated in the audit in 2005. But even more importantly, also the quality of the applications rose. In the competition with large companies, being known for a good work-life balance helps us to find qualified junior staff" says Ms. Schönberger.

The impact documented by the research of FFP is a result of a long process of implementation. This is also perceived as an obstacle for an even wider dissemination of the audits or family-conscious policies in general. Establishing a family-conscious culture and an atmosphere open for dialogue and consensus takes time and quick results are rare. "The audits of the berufundfamilie gGmbH can give the needed impulse to put in practice what was only planned on paper so far. The perspective of the management – dominated by men in the most cases – is opened to problems that are not on their plate every day. When all involved parties contribute to the process with realistic expectations and a long wind, the expected positive results can be achieved" concludes Dr. Koch from Merz Pharmaceuticals.

Development and future perspectives

To ensure the ongoing success of the audits, the berufundfamilie gGmbH sees the continuous adaptation of its products as the main challenge. Developments on the labour markets and sociological and demographic changes have to be monitored in order to stay as close to the market as possible.

In order to ease the access to work-life balance related topics and thus to broaden the outreach to the target group, the work and family index was made available online⁸. Interested parties, regardless of their participation in the audits, can assess their strengths, weaknesses and potential in the field of a family-conscious human resource policy. Based on the self-evaluation, an individual index value is generated for each participant. A detailed description of the results allows for comparison with other companies of the same size or industrial sector. The results of the representative survey of the FFP study in 2008 serve as a benchmark.

As the problems addressed in the audits are not unique to the German context, the berufundfamilie gGmbH developed the European work and family audit. The European version does not include a comprehensive auditing process but assures that the certified employers abide by a defined set of minimum criteria. Foreign organisations, who decide to offer the more comprehensive approach on the basis of the German audits, have the option to get registered as a licensed partner of the berufundfamilie gGmbH. The license allows the conduction of audits adapted to the situation of the individual country. Italy, Austria and Slovenia have licensed partners so far, with more countries being in the development phase. Moreover, a transnational exchange of best-practice takes place on a regular basis.

⁸ <http://www.berufundfamilie-index.de>



In addition to the audits, the berufundfamilie gGmbH is continuously trying to expand its field of activities. Currently, an audit for family-conscious municipalities is tested in three pilot regions together with the Bertelsmann Foundation and the Ministry for Intergenerational Affairs, Family, Women and Integration of the state North Rhine-Westphalia. The focus is not on the administration of the municipalities as such, but on the municipality as a political and societal co-operation of different stakeholders. The goal is to improve the conditions for families in the specific locality. First results of the pilot are expected for 2009. If the pilot is completed successfully, municipalities can hand in applications for the audit starting in 2010.



1.3 Germany: Total E-Quality Prädikat (Engl. Total E-Quality label)

Background and objectives

At the beginning of the 1990s, gender inequality was more and more perceived as an obstacle in Germany – for job or even career oriented women but also for a free and liberal economy as such. The legislative body as well as the private sector were eager to find ways to improve the situation. Against this background TOTAL E-QUALITY Deutschland e.V. was founded in 1996 as a private association with the aim of equal opportunities for men and women. It was initiated by a group of prominent German companies in co-operation with the Federation of German Trade Unions, the Confederation of German Employers, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Technology and the Federal Ministry of Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. Representatives of employees, employers and politics came together in order to find a coordinated approach to promote equal opportunities for men and women in the labour market. For the initiators, equal opportunities are defined as a situation when talents, potential and competences of women are equally recognised and supported.

This goal was and is thought to be reached in the best way by awarding good practices. Therefore, a label for employers of the free economy, the science sector and politics, who abide by the principle of equal opportunities, was developed with the support of the Federal Ministry of Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the European Union. The label is the core activity of TOTAL E-QUALITY Deutschland e.V. and has been continuously improved since its first awarding in 1997.

Working principles and content

The label is tailored to the topic of equal opportunities of both men and women. Thus, it targets all employees, although there is a special focus on women and employees with children. In general, all employers with at least 15 employees can apply for the label. The application is standardised in the form of a self-evaluation via a comprehensive checklist. The checklists differ slightly for private sector companies or organisations from the scientific or public sector. As participants, especially SMEs, articulated difficulties with the high amount of quantitative data demanded in the application, the checklist was recently adapted to ease the process.

As a basis, the application captures the current structure of the workforce and the general attitude of the employer towards equal opportunities. Furthermore, detailed information is gathered in seven fields of activities: gender specific collection of data, recruiting and hiring procedures, further training and human resource development, work-life balance, fostering equal partnership at the workplace, institutionalisation of gender equality and related activities, and the public position of the employer concerning the topic.

Next to the standardised form, the applicants are asked to document their activities with any kind of annexes such as reports, articles, pictures and more. Not all suggested activities or management aspects are applicable in every context. But the comprehensive list of items in each of the seven fields can serve as a pool of ideas for further improving gender equality in the applying company. According to Ms. Marianne Pfister from the Comet Computer GmbH – a medium sized enterprise active in the field of technical documentation based in Munich – the TOTAL E-QUALITY label is the only



initiative in Germany dealing with gender equality as a first priority, whereas family related aspects dominate other initiatives and that is why she is convinced of the success of the initiative.

Once a year, an independent jury consisting of experienced experts checks and verifies the self-evaluations and finally decides about the applications. As the challenges and opportunities differ between the private economy and the scientific sector, two different juries are in place to evaluate the applications coming from the two areas. The assessment procedure, developed by the jury and TOTAL E-QUALITY Deutschland e.V., ensures that the applicants – depending on the size of their enterprise or organisation – ensure the provision of equal opportunities above a benchmark of a defined minimum standard. Based on the structure of the staff and taking the firm-specific level of equal opportunities into consideration, the applicants have to show that their strategies and activities lead to equal opportunities for all employees in a sustainable way. The key for a positive evaluation is a successful and lasting consensus between the interests of the employer and the employees that is incorporated in the human resource policy. In case of a positive evaluation by the jury, the label is granted in an awarding ceremony that takes place once a year with prominent political and scientific participation. The granting of the label is accompanied by the right to use the “TOTAL E-QUALITY” logo. Thus, the label-carrying companies or organisations can visibly promote their policies in print and online publications.

As the principle behind the TOTAL E-QUALITY label is based on the knowledge that equal opportunities are a matter of dynamic processes over time and not of a situation at a certain point, the label is only granted for a period of three years. Through the compulsory renewal process three years after the last certification, the sustainable and ongoing engagement of the label-carrying companies or organisations shall be ensured. The new application has to document a constant performance or even further improvements. Within the Fraport AG – a full-service provider in the airport management field (Frankfurt Airport) – the activities in the area of gender equality are located in nine decentralised teams, coordinated by Ms. Martina Rost. “The members are active in the teams on a voluntary basis – in addition to their normal workload. The award is an incentive for the teams to continuously improve and to show their success to the whole company and to the public every three years”, says Ms. Rost.

Depending on the number of employees, a fee between € 250 and € 2,000 is charged for the first time the label is granted, with a discount for the renewal after three years.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

Since the start of the TOTAL E-QUALITY label in 1997, a total of 299 certificates were awarded to over 150 companies or organisations. The figures show that the participants are convinced of the positive effects of the label as most of them renewed their engagement, in some cases even several times already. “The Comet Computer GmbH received the award for the first time in 1997. Since then we renewed our application already five times. We perceive the award as a good opportunity to document our gender equality policies in a reliable and compact way – internally and externally” says Ms. Pfister, Comet Computer GmbH.



As equal opportunities are a matter of a continuous processes, in the eyes of the TOTAL E-QUALITY association the elements of the label need to be continuously adapted as well. Therefore, the initiative underwent a comprehensive evaluation in 2009, financed by the Federal Ministry of Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. Designed to elaborate the need for adaptations on the methodology of the label, the project included a survey among all companies and institutions that held the label since its start in 1997. The survey was conducted by the independent research institute Sozialforschungsstelle Dortmund of the Technical University Dortmund.

Amongst other topics, the participants of the survey were asked to evaluate the application process and to comment on the methodology of the label. The majority of the participants perceived the self-evaluation as a good application tool and the process as transparent. At the same time, the participants would welcome a more comprehensive feedback, especially on the weak points of the application – a sign that the competence of the TOTAL E-QUALITY association is widely accepted. However, around three quarters of the participants from the private sector and more than 60 % from the science sector prefer the self-evaluation over an auditing process.

Impact in companies

As part of the evaluation survey, the awarded employers were asked to identify the benefits of the label. Although the implementing association admits that from an objective, scientific point of view, it is difficult to attribute specific effects merely to the award and/or the application process, the answers of the surveyed companies clearly indicate a positive impact in various areas.

The majority of the respondents attribute the highest benefit to the effect on image and reputation – not only towards the general public but also towards the current and future staff. As a follow-up to good local press after the awarding ceremony, particularly SMEs report improvements in the regional reputation. Nonetheless, the respondents see room for improvement in the brand awareness of the label – a problem articulated especially by the private sector. This is in line with the perception of the implementing association regarding the media response. Difficulties in convincing journalists of the importance of the topic “gender equality” and the TOTAL E-QUALITY award were mentioned. Most awarded organisations would appreciate it if the public recognition could be further improved.

Besides external effects, the majority of the surveyed employers also mentioned internal effects. The application for the label is used as an opportunity for the management and the employees to reflect on gender-related aspects of the current human resource policy. In 75 % of the participating companies of the private sector the self-evaluation as such lead to direct improvements of the internal processes (science sector: around 60 %). Out of a list of fields of impact, increased job satisfaction – especially for female employees – and higher levels of creativity were mentioned most frequently, at least in private sector companies. “The positive motivational effects can only be generated, if the activities – e.g. flexible working hours – take the individual interest of all team members into account. In this regard, keeping the rules and communicating problems are key.” says Ms. Pfister from the Comet Computer GmbH. Moreover, human resource managers of awarded companies are convinced of a positive effect on the recruitment policy, as the good reputation of the company in gender equality issues attracts qualified female employees.



On the other hand, scientific institutions reported a positive impact in the mentioned fields to a lesser extent. For them, the positive impact is rather given by the documentation of their gender equality policy. Since recently, many organisations that fund research projects request a proof of gender equality measures from the applying universities or research centres. The TOTAL E- QUALITY award is very helpful in the competition for research funding because assessors and evaluators within the funding organisations perceive the label as a reliable und objective proof.

In the view of the implementing association, the positive effects are rather an effect of the companies' policies than of the award itself, as only companies that already show good practice in the area of gender equality are awarded. But the award can be used as a tool to contribute to a constant performance or even further improvements in gender equality. The award raises the reputation of the human resource management or the equal opportunity officer and keeps the topic on the agenda of the management. According to Ms. Rost (Fraport AG), the challenge for sustainable improvements in the area of gender equality is the need for compelling persistency: "The system of a renewing application every three years helps us to keep the topic at the highest management level and thus to make it part of the corporate culture."

The key for improvements in gender equality in general is to argue an increasing number of companies into the positive aspects. According to Ms. Pfister (Comet Computer GmbH), the challenge for TOTAL E-QUALITY and for the whole gender equality community is to get in touch with the "unconverted", the not-yet-convinced companies. Therefore, the evaluation survey also considered companies or institutions that did not renew their application after a three-year period. Although these respondents only form a little group, their answers allow the identification of obstacles in the design of the TOTAL E-QUALITY label that hinder increased participation. One reason to surrender a new application was the low cost-benefit ratio. The costs and time consumed by the application were not perceived to outweigh the benefits of the application process or the label. Also, the direct competition of the label to related initiatives was mentioned, especially with those offering (monetary) prizes for certain projects or policies at no entry costs.

Development and future perspectives

The management of the TOTAL E-QUALITY Association puts a lot of emphasis on the quality of the application process, its content and its assessment. Therefore, as part of the recent evaluation a SWOT-analysis (**S**trengths-**W**eaknesses-**O**pportunities-**T**hreats) was carried out to assess the current status of the award and find new ideas that contribute to the sustainability of the award. The SWOT-analysis showed that the original focus of TOTAL E-QUALITY - the relation between quality management and a policy of equal opportunities – could be further developed. Throughout the last years, many companies implemented sophisticated quality management systems, a development that needs to be incorporated into the self evaluation tool used in the application process. Along these lines, it is planned to build closer co-operations with quality management organisations. This is considered of particular importance for a better outreach to SMEs.

Moreover, the topic of diversity management is becoming more and more prominent in the management floors. Currently the implementing organisation is discussing to adapt the TOTAL E-QUALITY label to the new developments and to include diversity dimensions in the self evaluation of the applicants.



Another key element to strengthen the TOTAL E-QUALITY network and to further increase the number of applications is an improved cooperation with regional bodies (German Länder, regional chambers of commerce or social partner organisations). The implementing bodies aim to intensify the cooperation in the near future.

Next to the described national perspectives, further steps on an international scale are under debate for the coming years. As a first step, a survey amongst the initiators of gender equality awards in 13 European countries was carried out by the TOTAL E-QUALITY Association and Sozialforschungsstelle Dortmund. The results showed that similar topics of gender equality are addressed in the awards throughout Europe. Nevertheless, the evaluation methods and the weighting of the topics differ among the countries because of different legal backgrounds and gender-related cultures. The awarding organisations throughout the surveyed countries, including Germany, have started to build an international network to exchange experience and good practice. As a possible joint-activity, an “add on” European award for those enterprises which previously received a national award is discussed. Especially in the countries of Middle and Eastern Europe, a growing interest in developing gender equality awards was identified. Here, the expertise of the TOTAL E-Quality Association would be appreciated.



1.4 Luxembourg: Actions Positives (Engl. Positive Actions)

Background and objectives

Besides a slow but positive development, the inequalities between women and men still persist in working life. The employment ratio of women in Luxembourg is still below the EU average, the unemployment rate for women is twice the rate for men, one third of the employed women are working part-time while virtually no men do and women earn 86 % (gross wage per hour) of the wage of men. E. g. in the banking industry, already half of the employees are women and it becomes recognised that they are having the same diplomas as men; nevertheless women and men are not equally present in higher positions. So there is a potential of qualified labour that is still not used adequately. Against this background, it is necessary to react and make a strong effort to assure equal conditions for men and women in working life.

The initiative “Positive Actions” (*Actions Positives*) has been elaborated and implemented by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities (*Ministère de l'Egalité des chances*; MEGA) already in 1999 with the objective that equality of women and men in the workplace and within enterprises of the private sector shall become factual reality.

There are the following central targets:

- to promote employment of women;
- to offer equal professional possibilities for women and men;
- to grant equal remuneration for equal work as well as equal treatment.

In the implementation of this initiative, the Ministry for Equal Opportunities offers advice and financial support to the enterprises. A Committee for Positive Actions has been established as jury, to review and approve the elaboration of individual action plans (and the assignment of a ministerial agreement upon their successful implementation) for each participating enterprise. This committee consists of representatives from:

- the Ministry for Equal Opportunities;
- the Ministry of Finance;
- the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training (*Ministère de l'Education nationale et de la Formation professionnelle*);
- the Ministry of Labour and Employment (*Ministère du Travail et de l'Emploi*);
- the Ministry of Economic and Commerce (*Ministère de l'Economie et du Commerce extérieur*);
- the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Accommodation (*Ministère des Classes moyennes, du Tourisme et du Logement*);
- the Chamber of Skilled Trades (*Chambre des métiers*);
- the Chamber of Private-Sector Employees (*Chambre des employés privés*);
- the Chamber of Commerce (*Chambre de commerce*);
- the Chamber of Labour (*Chambre du travail*);
- the Employment Office (Administration de l'emploi; ADEM).



This initiative is operating throughout Luxembourg; it is not part of a broader international initiative.

Working principles and content

Companies can apply for participation in the initiative via the web page, by telephone or personally. The first contact may also be established by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities (e. g. at events) or by one of the collaborating organisations that may invite a company to engage.

Basically, private enterprises of all sectors and sizes are invited to engage in the programme (preconditions are that there are no criminal proceedings against the enterprise are pending, and that the enterprise is adhering to labour regulations and that the enterprise is paying taxes regularly).

When an enterprise is willing to engage in the initiative and implement Positive Actions, there are no specific compliance targets or access criteria. The enterprise has to forward a motivation letter, fill in a short auto-evaluation of its current situation in relation to gender equality, submit a short presentation of the enterprise and confirm compliance with regulations (sample forms can be downloaded from the web site of the Ministry for Equal Opportunities). Then the Committee for Positive Actions is informed, information meetings are held and a Collaboration Convention is signed between the company and the Ministry for Equal Opportunities. In this preparatory phase a working group (including representatives of the enterprise – from management, HR, representatives of the employees, equal opportunity commissioner; of the Ministry for Equal Opportunities as well as an external expert) is established.

To receive the Ministerial Agreement for Positive Actions, the enterprise then needs to undergo an auditing process (that is free of charge for the enterprise).

In the first phase of the project there is an **analysis of the current situation** (*I. phase d'analyse*) within the enterprise. In co-operation with an external expert, the necessary information is collected in meetings with representatives of the Ministry for Equal Opportunities, the company owners, the shop stewards as well as representatives of different groups of employees that are forming a working group. Furthermore, there is a standardised questionnaire that has to be filled in by the management and all employees. External experts that are called upon by the Ministry are conducting the analysis. The results of this analysis are presented to the Ministry for Equal Opportunities, the board of the enterprise, the working group and finally to the whole staff.

The second phase, the elaboration phase (*II. phase d'elaboration*), starts with this presentation of the results of the analysis by the external expert to the enterprise/the working group. Since the programme adaptation in 2008, a Plan of Positive Actions is prepared which has to combine Positive Actions from each of the following three priority spheres of activity:

- equal treatment of men and women (recruitment, training and qualification, equal remuneration, enterprise culture);
- equality of women and men in decision making (professional advancement, continuing professional training, equal participation in decision making);



- work-life balance (work organisation, part-time, reintegration after a work break, balance between management position and private obligations, provision of childcare and concierge services).

The results of the first project phase are already presented in relation to these three priority spheres. Then, the working group elaborates a Plan of Positive Actions (including a set of actions, measures and ways as well as time planning for their implementation) to improve the situation in relation to equal opportunity. Relevant measures that are already in place at the enterprise may also be included in the Plan of Positive Actions.

As the target is equal opportunity, according to the specific needs of the enterprise, the Plan of Positive Actions may include measures that promote women as well as men. The Plan also foresees the dissemination of good practices of persons (men or women) successfully working part-time and assuming liability within the company. Finally, the opinion and the approval of the Committee for Positive Actions have to be obtained.

In the implementation phase (*III. phase de mise en œuvre*), after successful finalisation of this auditing process and the establishment of a plan of positive actions approved by the Committee for Positive Actions, the company receives the Ministerial Agreement for Positive Actions (*Agrément Ministériel du Projet d'Action Positive*) from the Ministry for Equal Opportunities. This label is valid for two years; prolongation is subject to positive evaluation then.

The last phase is the evaluation and follow-up phase (*IV. phase d'évaluation et de suivi*) (that takes place after two or three years), with the possibility of adaptations. In this follow up phase, the analysis of the current situation, as it had been carried out before the audition process, is repeated at the enterprise. The results are then compared and the progress is assessed.

The initiative seeks to promote the implementation of Positive Actions to support gender equality in the workplace and therefore male and female employees are both targeted; in principle, the gender that is aggrieved at the workplace is supported.

Various channels are used to promote the initiative: Information booklets are spread, detailed information is available at the website of the Ministry for Equal Opportunities and advertisements are placed in television and in newspapers/journals. Moreover, Positive Actions is presented at the conferences and seminars on related topics that are organised by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities and the Chamber organisation. Another important means are personal talks/direct contacts with entrepreneurs.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

Until the end of 2008, approx. 40 companies have participated in the implementation of Positive Actions. The number of participants has steadily been growing.



At the beginning, it was challenging to attract the enterprises to engage in this auditing process, but once there are e. g. some large companies who participate and this is reported in the media, then others follow and a certain multiplier effect has been started. Some of the enterprises that want to carry out Positive Actions already have a concrete idea they have taken from another company that has engaged in the initiative.

Now, the initiative can be assessed as successful because the number of enterprises who take action out of their own motivation is rising. Even if not participating in Positive Actions, attitudes are changing and enterprises start to implement programmes to e. g. better combine work and family (in relation to working time, working place, etc.). Positive Actions is supporting this change in attitudes. This change of attitudes comes slowly and may be challenged by the current crisis (especially in the banking system) but it has a sustainable positive impact on gender equality.

There are also enterprises who are already very active and who participate in Positive Actions to valorise the actions they are undertaking.

Besides external expertise and publicity, the networking activities and the exchange of experiences that have emerged among the enterprises due to their participation in Positive Actions (and that are supported facilitated by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities) have also been identified as important **success factor** of the initiative.

Impact in companies

According to the Ministry for Equal Opportunities, nowadays, most companies (especially among larger companies and banks) participate because, it has become necessary (from an economic point of view) to engage in CSR/Diversity activities and this is a way to communicate the strategies pursued. By participating, an external assessment (by the Ministry) is carried out anonymously. Currently, Positive Actions are also used to support and internally promote (female) employees in the current restructuring process in the banking industry. Enterprises may refrain from participation as this is a time consuming and committing process; they may also have implemented their own strategies.

A large bank, that already has participated twice, also stresses the importance to get a positive external image for the engagement of the company. Communicating the results of an external survey to the employees and to the board is equally important (especially as a follow-up survey shows achievements). Participating in Positive Actions also creates a valuable input, e.g. management information that gives directions for further work in the area of gender equality.

For a large provider of integrated services, the motivation to participate was to get a general overview on personnel satisfaction within the enterprise. In relation to gender, participation in Positive Actions has confirmed the approach of the company already in existence.

According to the Ministry for Equal Opportunities and the bank, concerning the challenges or obstacles that may occur upon participation in the initiative, the most important factor is that the management and the working group are committed to this issue. The Ministry for Equal Opportunities sees another crucial factor in the persons of the working group who really need to take the time (or to be given the time) to actively participate. Changes of the persons involved can be a challenge, e. g. when the HR



manager who has initiated the process leaves the company and the successor has other priorities. This may also lead to an interruption of the process.

The provider of integrated services admits that the processes of Positive Actions are rather standardised, which is understandable as the Ministry is able to get comparable results between companies and document that applicants are treated equally.

According to the bank, communication is the core tool to proceed. All employees need to be informed very well and the negotiations in the working group really have to be taken seriously so that everyone can support the measures agreed upon. As there is an external partner, results then also have to be proven, which stresses that the issue is taken seriously.

Benefits for the companies in the field of external marketing and publicity effects are that enterprises can disseminate results which are accredited by the Ministry; according to the Ministry for Equal Opportunities this is enormously important for those who want to communicate their philosophy (e. g. to attract talents or to inform their customers that they are taking-up responsibility). The bank confirms this: as it has become a role model and receives a lot of inquiries from journalists, it is very important to have the results of Positive Actions in order to respond. On the other hand, the services provider represents the exemption, as the company did not put any information on its website despite very good results. They are aware that they may miss publicity but state that this was not the purpose of their participation.

The Minister participates in the signing of the collaboration agreement; a press conference is organised and the enterprise is mentioned in the media. By doing this, enterprises also receive positive publicity.

In the field of internal HR management effects, the Ministry for Equal Opportunities and the bank stress that it is motivating for the employees to see that the company is taking the issue seriously and that an external authority (the Ministry) is confirming e. g. equal payment of men and women.

According to the Ministry for Equal Opportunities, internal mobility is improving and loyalty is rising when employees become aware of their possibilities within the company.

The costs for the initial analysis of the situation as well as for the auditing process are borne by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities. When the action plan is approved the Ministry for Equal Opportunities may also financially support (part of) costs for the implementation of the Positive Actions. The enterprise itself has to invest time.

Especially for the smaller enterprises (such as the library with 60 employees) the participation in Positive Actions is relatively more costly, as e. g. the manager her/himself has to allocate time to the project instead of following the daily business. Nevertheless, in the medium or long term the efforts pay off as resources are used more rational.

The large services provider stresses that it is very positive that the initiative is offered free of charge to the enterprises as this facilitates participation. This company values the general effects of their participation in the initiative.



Structured procedures have to be implemented and results have to be monitored – the bank believes that there will be positive effects in financial terms from taking part in this initiative.

The Ministry for Equal Opportunities reports that internal communication/sensitisation is improving by informing the employees – via an external authority – what the enterprise is doing in relation to gender equality in the workplace. At the beginning of the participation in Positive Actions, the survey among the employees is conducted, and they become aware of what the enterprise is really doing. The bank reports to have implemented awareness raising trainings to prepare managers for participation in Positive Actions.

Among others, participation in Positive Actions has helped the services provider to improve their internal communication (by means of a company newspaper and the installation of an event group to ameliorate the ambience).

Concerning the impacts on gender equality/the benefits for the employees in the participating companies, it can be noted that the Ministry for Equal Opportunities also analyses training possibilities within companies in the course of Positive Actions; as a result, employees shall then benefit from a more equal distribution of training possibilities. Indeed, more women at the bank attend training than before, because a training curriculum that is obligatory for career progress has been implemented.

Participating a second time, the bank sees that its efforts have been fruitful. As in the initial analysis of the situation, men and women are earning equal salaries. There are more women in management positions than three years ago.

Part-time work has risen from 11 % in 2002 to 27 % in 2008 and a new kind of part-time (a certain amount of days that can be used within one year) has been introduced. While classical part-time is still to a large extent used by women, the new mode is also frequently used by men working for the bank.

One of the side effects that have been observed is that the employees at the bank in general benefit from the new habit of meetings being held during the day and not at the end of the afternoon. The bank really notes that there is a change in mentality: traditional households are changing, people want to work fewer hours and they want greater quality of life.

Positive Actions has inspired the bank to extend the working group required for the project and set up a permanent diversity working group composed of women and men in order to identify the difficulties and obstacles women have to face by working for the company. This is regarded as a real commitment to drive the gender equality.

Positive Actions has also led to a kind of networking among the enterprises, as many are interested to learn what others have already done in this area. Some companies have also gone further and have implemented cross-company initiatives; e. g. the bank Dexia awards a prize to a successful business woman each year (*“Woman Business Manager of the Year Award”*).



Development and future perspectives

From the start, Positive Actions has been open to all enterprises from the private sector.

In 2003, the information brochure “Human potential of the enterprise III”⁹ (Potentiel humain de l’entreprise III; available in French and German language) has been issued by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities. It gives details on participating companies and Positive Actions taken and that also describes some winners of the Female Award for Enterprises, thereby serving as a compendium of good practices,.

In 2008, the initiative has been redesigned, participation criteria have been clarified and the implementation of a comprehensive set of Positive Actions in the three predetermined fields became necessary.

The enterprise which is most successful in implementing Positive Actions is awarded with the Female Award for Enterprises in Luxembourg (*Prix Féminin de l’Entreprise in Luxembourg*).

Also from 2008 on, enterprises interested in undertaking the auditing process have to sign the Collaboration Convention before the analysis of the current situation is conducted. This became necessary to guarantee continuation of the project, i. e. that a Plan for Positive Actions Plan is elaborated and implemented.

An intention for the future is to use the data gathered so far to implement a kind of benchmarking for the specific sector.

This initiative does not address problems that are specific for Luxembourg; the principle could be transferred to other countries who are concerned about the standing of companies in relation to equal opportunities of men and women in the workplace.

⁹ http://www.mega.public.lu/actions_projets/actions_positives/publications/index.html



1.5 Spain: Entidad Colaboradora en Igualdad de Oportunidades entre Mujeres y Hombres (Engl. Entity collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst women and men)

Background and objectives

In many cases, the development of positive actions supporting equal opportunities among men and women in the workplace turns out to be complicated, and companies need specialised assessment according to their needs. For this reason, the Spanish Institute of the Woman helps organisations in this field, providing them with many support services aimed at promoting the incorporation, continuance and promotion of women within companies.

Originally, the label “Entity collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst Women and Men” (“Entidad colaboradora en igualdad de oportunidades entre mujeres y hombres”, in Spanish) was created in 1994 by the Institute of the Woman of the Basque Country, Emakunde¹⁰. In 1996, it was extended and implemented throughout of Spain, thanks to the Ministerial Order of the 25th January 1996, passed by the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs¹¹. As the passing of the Spanish Organic Law 3/2007 on the 22nd March 2007 introduced a new regulation affecting gender equality in the Spanish labour market, this initiative is not in force anymore.

In order to support the institutions and companies which were implementing positive actions to achieve gender equality within their organisation, the label “Entity collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst Women and Men” recognised entities collaborating on equal opportunities amongst genders. Therefore, the objective of this label was twofold:

- Recognise the initiatives implemented by the organisations in order to promote equality of opportunities amongst genders.
- Publically disseminate those initiatives.

The main implementing organisation was the Institute of the Woman¹² (“Instituto de la mujer”) which is part of the Spanish Ministry of Equality¹³ (“Ministerio de Igualdad”). The Institutes of the Woman at regional level, managed by Regional Governments, also took part in this initiative. Thus, in most cases, the Institute of the Woman of each region in Spain was responsible for the management of the process, as well as the one offering the awards.

It is also interesting to remark that this initiative was included in the Optima programme¹⁴, implemented by the Institute of the Woman and aimed at promoting gender equality within Spanish companies. The programme Optima was started in 1995, when the Institute of the Woman, and the Institutes of the Woman at regional level within their scope, decided to coordinate their efforts.

¹⁰ <http://www.emakunde.euskadi.net>

¹¹ <http://www.mtas.es>

¹² <http://www.migualdad.es/mujer/>

¹³ <http://www.migualdad.es>

¹⁴ More information about Optima is available on: <http://www.tt.mtas.es/optima/contenido/index.html>



Optima was aimed at supporting and helping companies willing to implement positive actions to promote the role of women amongst their staff members. As well as this, Optima intended to enhance the dissemination of practices and activities developed by companies in the gender equality domain. On the other hand, it must be pinpointed that the programme Optima was supported by the European Social Fund, and it was labelled by the European Union as a good practice in promoting gender equality.

Working principles and content

The companies interested in this label were able to apply for participation by contacting the national or regional Institutes of the Woman. By joining this initiative, they committed themselves to fulfil the objectives of Optima. In order to take part in the programme, it was necessary to fill in an application form¹⁵ which included general information about the company, such as name, legal status, sector, working centres, number of workers, and so on.

As well as this, there were two main requirements:

- First of all, it was necessary to elaborate an analysis or diagnosis on the situation of women and men within the company, in order to find potential inequality or discrimination signs. In this sense, and after submitting the application to take part in the initiative, the Institute of the Woman helped the company with the analysis process, by providing a structured and detailed questionnaire classified by areas (selection, training, promotion, conciliation, salaries, etc.). Furthermore, in order to get qualitative information and clarify the available data, a meeting between the Human Resources Department and representatives of the Institute of the Woman had to be held.
- Secondly, it was necessary to design and commit oneself to implement a “Positive Action Plan”, aimed at introducing changes for the improvement of the organisation. This plan should include:
 - o Training of managers concerning equality of opportunities
 - o Revision of the hiring, selection, promotion and training processes, in order to ensure that the new measures were really put into practice
 - o Labour flexibility of the workers with family responsibilities
 - o Launching of awareness campaigns in order to promote gender equality.

Specifically, the main activities to be taken into account were:

- Facilitate the incorporation of women in those organisations where their presence was lower, in order to reach a balanced presence of women and men amongst employees.
- Facilitate the incorporation of women in medium and high responsibility posts, in order to reach a balanced presence of women and men in the Managing Board.

¹⁵ Application forms are available on <http://www.tt.mtas.es/optima/contenido/archivos/ParticipacNuevo03.pdf>



- Facilitate the incorporation of women in occupations traditionally occupied by men, in order to reach a balanced distribution of women and men in every occupation.
- Implement strategies which allow employees to balance work and private responsibilities.
- Establish effective mechanisms to avoid sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Eliminate any kind of gender non-neutral manifestation, such as language, image or treatment, both within the company or towards its environment.

Positive Action Plans were free and developed at the managers' own initiative. The Institute of the Woman offered all the required support, advice, training and tools so that the companies themselves could design their own plans. Once the plans had been successfully implemented, the Institute of the Woman recognised the effort by awarding them the label "Entity collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst Women and Men". Nonetheless, the achievement of this label should not be considered as the end of the process, but starting point where companies make a commitment to keep on working in favour of gender equality¹⁶.

On the other hand, any medium or large organisation working in Spain could participate in the process to get this label. More specifically, and considering the principles of the initiative, it can be said that it was specially targeting entities (companies, foundations, business associations, etc.) which were developing measures to promote equality amongst men and women within their organisation. In other words, all medium or large companies interested in developing a broad and comprehensive process to promote gender equality were able to apply for this label.

Finally, concerning the promotion of the initiative, it is interesting to mention that detailed information on this initiative can be found in the webs of the Ministry of Work and Immigration (formerly the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs, who initially started this initiative), the Ministry of Equality, and the Institute of the Woman. As well as this, specialised newspapers and websites placed advertisements related to this initiative, and public institutions, such as the Institutes of the Woman of each region in Spain, divulged this initiative through their websites.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

As suggested by the Basque Institute of the Woman (Emakunde), the Basque Government created this label in 1994, which was a pioneering initiative in Spain. Its objective was to recognise companies and entities willing to progress in the field of gender equality within their organisation.

Later on, and as a consequence of the programme Optima, the label "Entidad Colaboradora en Igualdad de Oportunidades entre Mujeres y Hombres" was extended throughout Spain, thanks to the Order published by the Ministry of Social Affairs in January 1996.

¹⁶ More information and details are available on: <http://www.tt.mtas.es/optima/contenido>



After being in force for twelve years, and with the publication of the Organic Law 3/2007 (known as “Equality Law”), Optima was repealed. Indeed, from that moment, Positive Action Plans lost their use.

Broadly speaking, the programme Optima, as well as the label “Entity collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst Women and Men”, were conceived as a springboard to the current Equality Law. Therefore, this programme facilitated the development of accurate conditions in the Spanish Labour market for the implementation of this Law, and, at the same time, all the experiences, methods, tools, etc. included in Optima became the starting point for the regulatory reform.

Thus, based on a supportive approach, the programme Optima helped raising awareness of gender equality policies among Spanish companies. Therefore, the initiative is highly valued by members of the Institute of the Woman, who see it as a very effective measure with satisfactory results.

Impact in companies

As stated by members of the Institute of the Woman, Optima was absolutely free and voluntary. It was conceived as a very simple programme, aimed at facilitating gender equality among companies. Thus, there were no difficulties or challenges to overcome, and all interested businesses could easily get the label.

On the other hand, representatives of the Institute of the Woman consider that there were many benefits for companies that participated in this initiative. First of all, the label meant a public recognition of the effort made, and it validated the excellence of a company in gender equality issues when dealing with subventions, tax reductions, etc. Thus, this initiative was seen as a prestigious certificate which conferred a very positive corporate image. Not surprisingly, the majority of the companies interested in the programme were often large companies and multinationals which wanted to take advantage of the public recognition of the label.

As well as this, the awarding of this label enabled companies to publicise themselves as “entities collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst women and men”. It was possible to use this denomination in all advertisements and publications, even with the logo of Optima. In addition to this, the company received a certificate and a commemorating plaque.

Interestingly also, the company acquired a self-commitment to support equality amongst genders, which had a direct influence on employees’ satisfaction rates. Thus, staff members felt more satisfied with the company policy, so they were more motivated and the productivity and competitiveness of the company grew. As a consequence, work environment got better, whereas absenteeism and stress levels decreased, and employees felt more identified with the company.



Additionally, the participation in this initiative offered many advantages to companies. For instance, and thanks Optima, companies were offered free assessment on the development of Positive Action Plans, which allowed them to broadly know and analyse its own company culture. Moreover, companies could participate in a business network to share experiences and information with other companies, and get a subvention of 75 % of the costs of a Masters in Business Administration at the Autonomous University of Madrid for women employees, aimed at promoting the number of women in management.

Development and future perspectives

Since the publication of the Spanish Organic Law 3/2007 in 2007, the programme Optima and its label “Entity collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst Women and Men” are not in force anymore.

According to the new regulation, companies with more than 250 employees are obliged to implement Equality Plans within their organisations. Equality Plans are obligatory and affect workers directly, so social dialogue is also involved and trade unions must participate in the implementation of the plans. Concerning SMEs, the Ministry of Equality has put in place a subvention or financial aid to help those companies who are interested in applying Equality Plans voluntarily.

At the present time, the Institute of the Woman does not deal with Equality Plans, as they are a compulsory measure directly supervised by the Ministry of Equality.

Finally, and taking into account the main principles of the label “Entity collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst Women and Men”, it could be transferred especially to other countries which have not developed a compulsory regulation concerning gender equality in the labour market. As confirmed by the information gathered, this initiative can be very convenient to develop a positive and open atmosphere where enterprises become familiar with gender equality issues. Of course, it would be necessary to adapt the measure to specific characteristics in each country.

1.6 Switzerland: Equal-salary

Background and objectives

Since 1981, equality between women and men is enshrined in the federal constitution of Switzerland and since 1996, there is also a Federal Law concerning the Equality of Women and Men (“Bundesgesetz über die Gleichstellung von Frau und Mann”).

Despite these considerable legal efforts, inequality between women and men regarding salaries is still a fact both in Switzerland and in Europe. After 1998, the differences continuously decreased, but since 2006 they have hardly changed. According to data from the Federal Office for Statistics (“Bundesamt für Statistik”), female employees in the private sector in the year 2006 earned 19.1 % less than men. However, at the same time, many companies claim to follow a fair wage policy between women and men.

The equal-salary certification has been established due to the conclusion that on one hand, women have to fight for equal salaries while on the other hand, many companies claim not to discriminate between women and men. Equal-salary tries to free women from their victimhood and valorises their work. With the help of the equal-salary certification, companies and organisations can now prove that they have a fair and equitable wage policy. equal-salary provides an easy, practical and recognised analytical tool, which allows companies to promote their fair wage policy while encouraging them to test their equal compensation policies in total confidentiality.

Between 2005 and 2007, the procedures and requirements of the certification have been developed. In 2007, the first equal-salary label was granted. A pilot phase with several candidate companies started in 2008. Once the pilot phase is finished, the commercial phase of equal-salary will start and the certification will be presented to the Swiss Accreditation Service (SAS).

Ms. Véronique Goy Veenhuys is the founder and CEO of equal-salary. The certification methodology is developed in collaboration with Professor Yves Flückiger, director of the Observatoire universitaire de l'emploi of the University of Geneva (OUE), who has developed a statistical method for measuring salary inequalities.

The equal-salary certification is being developed with the support of an executive committee, chaired by Véronique Goy Veenhuys. As well as Professor Flückiger of OUE, the committee's members include HR managers of companies willing to invest in the development of the certification as well as experts in the fields of certification, compensation evaluation and corporate social responsibility. They are convinced that this measure provides a concrete, easy and practical tool for implementing equal wages policies.

Furthermore, there is an advisory board that consists of prominent Swiss women and men who support equality in general and the equal-salary project in particular. Ms. Paola Ghillani of Paola Ghillani & Friends (former CEO of the Max Havelaar Foundation) is the chair of the advisory board.

The Swiss Federal Department of Internal Issues financially supports the project through the Federal Office for Gender Equality (FOGE).



Working principles and content

Evaluation tool

The instrument for the statistical evaluation has been developed by the OUE. Its director, Yves Flückiger, professor of economics, has developed a so-called wage equation. It is based on a regression method. The wage level of each employee can be explained by taking into account each specific characteristic of the employee that are relevant given the company's salary policy such as for example education, experience, seniority, function, etc. If for the same position there is still wage discrimination despite taking in all the relevant variables, it can be concluded that there is a wage discrimination based on sex.

With this methodology, it is not necessary any more to compare two people in the same position – namely a man and a woman – with the same personal characteristics. Each position is linked with a salary level, whether filled by a woman or a man.

The wage equation was developed in the late 1990ies to detect possible abuses of wages connected to free movement of citizens within the framework of bilateral agreements with the EU.

In 2003, the Swiss Federal court retained the wage equation in evaluating a discrimination case brought by a female legal counsellor against her employer who at that time was working at a top management level position within a financial institution.

Certification process

The certification process is divided in two phases:

Phase I: Salary evaluation by OUE – University of Geneva

A statistical analysis of the company's salary data is conducted in order to measure whether the wage policy of the candidate company is fair and equitable.

Subsequently, an "in-depth evaluation" provides the company with specific suggestions to improve its salary structure.

Once the analysis is done, OUE submits a report presenting the results. If the difference between the salary of men and women is smaller than 5 %, the certification process can proceed. If not, based on the report, the company can improve its salary policy in order to apply for the certification at a later stage.

Phase II: Audit on site

The second phase consists of an on-site audit that focalises on the company's management system. This is a qualitative audit on the company's implementation of fair and equitable salary that is carried out on management level, HR policies and through interviews with employees. During the pilot phase, the audit is conducted by SGS (Société Générale de Surveillance), the world's leading certification company.



Salary data and company wage policy

The company submits its salaries data together with a document describing its actual wage policy explaining which variables are relevant.

The detailed certification process and the respective guidelines are included in a handbook that serves as a guide to interested organisations to get ready and organised. The handbook is made available to candidate companies and organisations. Anonymity and confidentiality are fully guaranteed.

Easy statistical checks are run to insure that company data has not been manipulated in order to show good results.

The certification addresses itself to companies and organisations with a minimum of 50 employees and a minimum of ten women. While being developed in Switzerland, the certification aims to be applicable to any organisation around the world.

Monitoring audit and validity of the label

The monitoring audit takes place one and two years after the main audit. Companies request to get certified again before the expiry date of the certificate which is valid three years. If a certified company does not meet the standards anymore, it can lose the equal-salary label. Companies and organisations that do not renew their certification are taken out the register of certified companies and lose the right to carry the label.

Cost of the certification

The cost of the certification process depends of the size of the company, its HR organisation and the number of sites to be audited.

In Switzerland, companies can obtain financial support by the federal government to obtain the certification. This financial is available to companies with less than 500 employees who want to foster gender equality among their staff. The company has however to cover 50 % of the project costs.

Among others, the certification is promoted in the press and via a website¹⁷. Companies that have been awarded the label are presented in conventional and new media. Furthermore, the advisory board of equal-salary is campaigning for the label. Be an equal-salary ambassador groups on various social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, BPW International etc.) are also promoting the equal-salary certification.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

The pilot phase will be finished by the end of 2009. Both public and private organisations have shown interest in receiving the label equal-salary and more than half a dozen are taking part in the pilot phase. Among them, the CSEM (Centre Suisse d'Electronique et de Microtechnique SA) was the first company to receive the equal-salary label in December 2007, followed by the municipal council of Fribourg, the World

¹⁷ <http://www.equal-salary.ch>



Economic Forum (organising the Davos Forum), the protestant church EREN (Eglise réformée évangélique) of the canton Neuchâtel and CORUM Watches. More certifications are in progress.

Once the pilot phase is over, the commercial phase will start. Several companies have already shown interest. For the pilot phase, many companies wanted to participate but only about half a dozen got the chance to apply.

Impact in companies

So far, the impact for companies is difficult to assess, as the label is still “young”. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that for companies it is a strategic decision to have a fair wage policy and equal-salary allows companies to promote it.

The equal-salary certification can clearly have a direct impact on a company’s HR policy: Internally, it fosters communication and has a positive impact on the motivation of both female and male employees. Externally, equal-salary facilitates recruitment of female talent.

The certification has an impact on the economic performance of a company. It contributes to a better integration of women and men within the company. By attracting more female talents, the certification guarantees different and complementary competencies.

According to the initiator, equal-salary certified companies will attract more qualified women and men and better retain knowledge and talent within the organisation. As a result it will lower personnel turn over, induce more innovation due to a broader base of skills and interests and foster a better understanding of the needs of the target groups in the market. It contributes to a better working atmosphere and a progressive image of the company. By employing more women, the company comes closer to its market: worldwide, 80 % of buying decisions are made or supported by female consumers.

According to equal-salary, a certified company gets known for its gender equality policy and is perceived to be progressive, open-minded and innovative. Therefore, the equal-salary label improves the company’s image.

Development and future perspectives

The last certification procedures within the pilot phase will be finished by the end of 2009. The commercial phase will then start through the presentation of the certification to the Swiss Accreditation Service (SAS). Following the first accreditations and once the label proves to be successful; the equal-salary label will be promoted throughout Europe and the rest of the world.



1.7 Belgium: Label Egalité Diversité / Label Gelijkheid Diversiteit (Engl. Label Equality Diversity)¹⁸

The background and objectives

This initiative was inspired by actions at European level and actions in neighbouring countries (such as the Equal Opportunity Employer Label (*Label Egalité Professionnelle*) in France focusing on gender equality). When in 2005 the Belgian Committee on Intercultural Dialogue published a report stating that discrimination existed in the fields of recruitment, salary and promotion, this report was one of the motives for launching the Belgian Equality Diversity Label (*Label Egalité Diversité; Label Gelijkheid Diversiteit*).

The objectives of the label are to help managing and promoting diversity and equality in the workplace. The label combines management and audit concepts and is conceived as a process. Moreover, the label facilitates the development of a corporate culture that fosters sustainable diversity management by focusing on gender, age, colour of skin, and political and religious convictions.

After a pilot phase that started in September 2006, the Minister for Equal Opportunities (*Ministre de l'Egalité des Chances*) and the Minister for Employment (*Ministre de l'Emploi*) attributed the first Equality Diversity labels to enterprises and organisations in March 2007. The initiative is ongoing since then. The Belgian Equality Diversity Label is managed by the Federal Public Service (FPS) Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue (*SPF Emploi, Travail et Concertation Sociale; FOD Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg*) and it is one of the FPS's actions in the field of diversity and equal opportunities. The initiative has been developed with the support of the Diversity Consultants CEDAC, ECORES, FLORA, IN SOCIETY, PAYROLL SERVICES, TRACE! and UNIVERSITE DE LIEGE - Genre et diversité en gestion. The Belgian Equality Diversity Label is not part of a broader initiative but funded by the European Social Fund.

Working principles and content

Organisations can apply for the label at their own initiative. They have to respect legislation in the field of equality and non-discrimination and engage in a labelling process that comprises the following steps:

- developing a diversity policy;
- following a process of analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation of this diversity policy under participation of the employees;
- work on continuous improvement

¹⁸ This case study is entirely based on the analysis of documents.



In total, 11 fields of action are considered in the labelling process, that is accompanied by independent consultants:

- Pro-diversity culture of the enterprise/organisation:
 - o formulate and communicate, internally and externally, the engagement of the organisation to favour diversity and fight against discrimination;
 - o inform all employees about the diversity policy;
 - o implement a sensibilisation programme for the employees
- Pro-diversity in HR management:
 - o elaborate hiring procedures in favour of diversity;
 - o envisage specific reception procedures for new employees;
 - o ensure equal access to training for all employees;
 - o internal mobility: grant same possibilities to all employees, based on professional quality and motivation, focus on diversity in upraising procedures;
 - o adapt working conditions to allow persons of different target groups to perform at their best;
 - o analyse the reasons for voluntary and involuntary quits
- Gender equality:
 - o assure equal pay and equal definitions of functions;
 - o adapt the working conditions to ensure work-life balance

Committed companies are awarded a label when efforts and results are shown. The label is awarded for a three-year period. A committee, composed of representatives of employee and employers organisations, diversity experts and representatives from the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism, evaluates the application and assists in the labelling process. Based on the opinion of this committee, the minister then decides on the assignment of the label that has to be renewed annually.

This labelling process is open to all types of organisations, public and private, small as well as large. Concerning the groups of employees targeted, all women and men in general are touched by this procedure and may benefit from the changes in the organisation they work for.

The Equality Diversity Label is promoted via the web site of the FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue and via information brochures that are spread at events.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

The initiative is continuously monitored. In 2006 the initiative started of with a pilot project involving 15 organisations. No labels were attributed at that time. In 2007, 13 organisations were awarded the actual label. In 2008 the label was awarded to two new organisations and renewed for ten others.



Currently (in mid 2009), among the organisations holding the label are: NMBS (national railways), asbl Boulot, Belgacom, Age d'Or Services, the city of Ghent, OIVO, the city of Leuven, Ethias Verzekeringen, Sodexo, the city of Liège, Randstad and the Federal Police.

Engaging in the labelling process implicates an effective, continuing and consequent investment into all components of an organisation. A success factor of the Belgian Equality Diversity Label is that the process is carried out in several phases that allow for concise planning and adaptations within the course of action where necessary; e. g. when internally communicating the diversity strategy the organisation can in the same time collect feed back and specific points of interest of their employees – a valuable input that can be accounted for in further steps.

On the other hand, the labelling procedure might be considered time consuming by the interested organisations; responsible persons within companies reported to have needed up to one day per week in the pilot phase (that lasted for half a year) to work for the labelling procedure.

Nevertheless, for those committed to the idea, this initiative has a sustainable positive impact on diversity and gender equality. In the pilot phase it has been noticed that cultural attitudes have changed within organisations – the labelling process has helped to reduce prejudices and stereotypes. As the label is only granted for a certain period of time and has to be renewed regularly, it builds on continuous reflection within the enterprises and can be judged as sustainable.

Impact in companies

The reasons why companies participated in the pilot phase of the label are multiple and range from companies reporting that they wanted to have an external view on their already existing diversity approach to companies that want to ameliorate their working climate or have professional assistance in developing their diversity policy. One company reported to have found the checklist very inspiring for elaborating its individual set of measures. Reasons for not participating range from not seeing a necessity in engaging in such a process (e. g. as the company appears to be on the right path already) to not wanting to devote so much time.

The organisations that fulfil the requirements are granted a label. This label is also seen as means of communication and the labelled organisations benefit from being included in information campaigns, in governmental brochures about the label as well as having the opportunity to use the communications channels that are being exploited by the ministries and the FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue in the course of this initiative.

Belgacom (telecommunication sector) for example reports to have never considered obtaining the label as the only target of the process. The company already had a precise vision of diversity and wanted to refine its targets and find the best ways to implement them. Nevertheless, Belgacom expects that with the label it will have a competitive advantage in the labour market. A male employee (aged 39) in customer operations at Belgacom comments on his experiences with gender diversity – that has been promoted in the labelling process: *“In 2006 we had the opportunity to get Ms. X on board in a team that is highly technical. After one year, everybody in the team values the change in mindset she’s introduced, impacting on the overall atmosphere within the team. A few women aboard put balance in a ‘dull’ technical domain.”*



Asbl Boulot (a work integration company in the services sector) has found out that while the results of the analysis carried out on paper in the labelling process were quite good concerning inclusion of personnel of different ethnic origin and gender equality their message obviously did not reach all of their employees. While ethnic diversity is reality at Boulot, there appeared to be still a lot of prejudices e. g. towards women in construction among the male employees. That was a challenge but with the help of the external consultants, the company managed to overcome the difficulties and successfully finalise the labelling process. The action plan of Boulot therefore put an accent on internal communication, as it has become evident that gender equality not only is an issue of the management but of each employee who has to identify him- or herself with that target.

Development and future perspectives

After the pilot-phase from 2005 – 2007 the Belgian Equality Diversity Label has been installed permanently. In principle, the labelling process as such has been kept, but is open to adaptations if necessary.

For further information and references see the brochure “Label Egalité Diversité”, issued by *SPF Emploi, Travail et Concertation Sociale / Direction générale Emploi et marché du travail / Cellule entreprise multiculturelle* in March 2007.





2 Prizes and awards

2.1 Austria: amaZone (Engl. amazone)

Background and objectives

In Austria, vocational training in technical professions is traditionally male. Since the 1970s, the share of girls and young women among apprentices in general is around one third, while in technical professions this share is only a few percent (e.g. cabinetmaking: 6.9 %, mechanical engineering: 3.4 % or electrical installation: 1.0 %).

Established in 2000, the motives to create the amaZone prize are to award enterprises which are training girls in non-traditional professions and to support girls who want to get trained in technical professions. The prize is intended to create a win-win situation both for enterprises and girls. One of the main objectives is to present outstanding firms where female apprentices are trained. One further objective is to convince industrial and technical enterprises that it is a profitable step to train women.

The main implementing organisation is the association “sprungbrett” (Engl. “stepping-stone”). There are several other organisations which are involved in this initiative (e.g. acting as sponsors) including the Vienna Chamber of Labour (AK Wien), the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS), the Austrian Federation of Industry in Vienna and the Economic Chamber of Vienna (WKW). Furthermore, the jury awarding the prize consists of experts from the above mentioned organisations as well as the Vienna municipal department for women concerns (MA 57), the Ombud for Equal Treatment and the daily magazine “Die Presse”, resort “careers”.

The amaZone prize is awarded by the association sprungbrett. sprungbrett was founded in 1987 and is financed by the public employment service Austria (AMS), the Austrian federation and the municipality of Vienna. The main objective of sprungbrett is to support girls during the process of occupational decision in order to broaden the spectrum of career choice. By doing that, sprungbrett helps to reduce the impendence of unemployment and to increase the chance of adequately utilising the girls' qualifications in the labour market. amaZone is an award for enterprises in Vienna and the bordering districts.

Working principles and content

amaZone is a prize which is awarded once a year. After the respective enterprises have filled in the application form, sprungbrett identifies eligible enterprises. Two enterprise consultancies and two training companions are visiting the respective training places and interview both trainers and female apprentices. A female jury consisting of experts in the fields of economy, politics, labour market policy and media is deciding on the ranking, nomination and winners by taking into account interview transcripts with all involved enterprises and persons. The day of awarding the prize is divided into two parts: In the morning, enterprises present their company and interested girls have the possibility to attend workshops. In the afternoon, there is the award ceremony which in 2009 was held in the City Hall of Vienna.



The prize is addressed to SMEs (up to 150 employees), large scale enterprises (150 employees and more) and public enterprises as well as enterprises with a close relationship to public authorities (i.e. enterprises financed or controlled by public funds e.g. educational institutions, municipalities, chambers, ministries). These enterprises have to be situated either in Vienna or in bordering districts and they must train one or more female apprentices in non-traditional girls' professions (according to a list of professions provided by sprungbrett). All in all, the target group comprise 250 enterprises. The prize also addresses female apprentices in professions which do not correspond to traditional vocational career choice of girls. These are professions which have a low share of female apprentices, i.e. lower than 40 %.

In general, firms have to fulfil the promotion and quality of vocational training for girls in technical professions and have to provide an adequate working atmosphere, in particular according to the female apprentices.

The criteria for the amaZone award have been elaborated by the association sprungbrett with the help of the expert jury mentioned above. There is a very accurate interview guideline in order to thoroughly analyse the working realities of girls. The interview protocols are submitted to the jury. sprungbrett is checking the share of female apprentices, the share of the total number of apprentices in relation to the total amount of employees, the share of women in technical and data processing professions and the share of women in leading positions. Activities firms have to fulfil include measures in order to raise the share of female apprentices expressed by gender-neutral internal and external communication, privileging young women in the field of job applications, awareness raising among the trainers, co-operation with girls and women information centres. Furthermore, activities of enterprises also comprise active promotion of equal opportunities during the vocational training such as respectful attitude towards female and male apprentices, gender-neutral work distribution, explicit attitude of the enterprise against sexual harassment, measures to enhance the communication between female and male employees or female contact persons for female apprentices. Also, measures of firms include offering career advancement after finishing the vocational training such as conjoint planning of possible future perspectives within the firm or active promotion of further education through motivation and offering resources.

The amaZone award is promoted via several channels. On the one hand, the award is promoted via public relations of the association sprungbrett, i.e. on their website¹⁹, own releases and concepts as well as sending of programmes. On the other hand the award is promoted with the help of the co-operation partnerships with the Vienna Chamber of Labour (AK Wien), the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS), the Austrian Federation of Industry in Vienna and the Economic Chamber of Vienna (WKW): The Vienna Chamber of Labour sends information to the workers councils of relevant enterprises, the Economic Chamber of Vienna sends information to enterprises in technical fields, the Public Employment Service Austria and the Austrian Federation of Industry in Vienna circulate information in their journals.

Apart from information on the amaZone award, the website of sprungbrett also includes a list of best practices referring to enterprises which are training or have already trained apprentices successfully.

¹⁹ <http://www.sprungbrett.or.at>



Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

In the first year of existence, less than ten enterprises participated in the competition for amaZone. Over the years, the number of participants has been constantly increasing. In 2009, 32 enterprises participated in the competition, which is the highest amount of participants so far and which constitute around 10 % of the whole target group (250 enterprises in technical professions in Vienna and the bordering districts being able to train or already train female apprentices).

There has been no official external evaluation, but there are annual internal reflexions when the awarding process has been finished. These internal reflections deal with the organisational implementation of the initiative, e.g. what was done well, what was done not so well, human resources for visiting participating enterprises (scheduled to last 6 hours each), or time planning for workshops.

The initiator regards the prize as successful in the respect that enterprises are very proud of winning the amaZone award. The award ceremony is taking place in the time-honoured city hall of Vienna. Apart from receiving the award, the enterprises also win public recognition and effectiveness. Furthermore, although the participating/winning enterprises do not get any prize money, they get feedback from the enterprise consultants concerning their progress in terms of gender equality in the workplace. Especially for large scale but also for small and medium sized enterprises human resources are very important and to invest and look ahead in the future.

In the beginning, a big challenge was that a counselling and mentoring centre like sprungbrett implements an economy oriented award without any financial grants. A great deal of convincing had to be done in order to find co-operation partnerships. One important aspect was and still is that quality comes to the fore. Also, it is important to come to an agreement with all involved stakeholders and to define a small and clear target group. The task to win enterprises over to participate in the award is not such a big challenge, however, there is no prize money.

According to both initiators and enterprises, the award definitely leads to sustainable gender equality in the work place. Since the year 2000, amaZone has developed to be a well-established award. The core element of the amaZone which is the enterprise consultancy in the field of female apprentices in non-traditional professions as well as gender quality, would not have gained the same significance without the existence of the award. In this field, amaZone became a role model. As the reputation of the award increases, also the significance of the enterprise consulting increases. Of course, some enterprises might feel offended when consultants are scrutinising the conditions for female apprentices and giving advice how to improve the situation, but in the end, many enterprises are thankful for this offer which is free of cost. In the long run, this enterprise consultancy constitutes a benefit and will also lead to more high qualified (female) employees in the enterprise. Nowadays, enterprises have the heart to be more active in this field and train more girls in non-traditional professions.

One of the winning enterprises assesses amaZone to be a sociopolitical very important award as the income gap between women and men still persists. One reason is that there are still “men professions” (mostly higher remunerated) and “women professions” (mostly lower remunerated part time jobs). This will only change if women – due to their education and qualification – are getting access to the same fields of activity as men.



Through awarding the amaZone prize, this issue is actualised annually and also shows the work of sprungbrett. Due to the rising number of participants, the success of amaZone is already visible. According to the winning enterprise, sprungbrett should invest even more in its public relations in order to be high-profile.

Impact in companies

Enterprises are able to show their engagement and commitment. They get awarded and they receive public credit as an attractive firm where apprentices are trained. Furthermore, they get the amaZone sculpture. sprungbrett is also conducting far-reaching public relations. The enterprises winning the award can be sure of providing actual and high-quality training.

Public relations are the most important factor when participating in the amaZone award. According to the initiator, the most important reason is the recognition for the work of the enterprise, not only in the field of gender equality and bringing more girls in non-traditional professions but also for the overall work.

Furthermore, enterprises participate because of the positive development in their own company. The faith in the enterprise consultancy of sprungbrett has increased and the enterprises have the ambition to be innovative and to push forward development by taking new steps and employ (more) female apprentices. Of course, many enterprises were active in this field even before amaZone came into existence, but winning the prize is an incentive to take further activities in this field.

One winning enterprise stated that since its establishment 50 years ago, they always had an equal personnel policy due to the fact that the managers were both man and women. Furthermore, it stated that they would have had female apprentices in typical male and technical professions since 15 years. The amaZone award is seen to be a confirmation of the enterprise philosophy which encourages girls and women to follow their career choice although not working in a typical female profession. The reason for participating in the amaZone award was to show society the importance of the gender equality issue.

The participating enterprises actualise the theme in the public eye and have the possibility to show their attitude towards female employees. In the end, it is an expression of their enterprise culture and thus, the amaZone award acts as recognition of an enterprise's personnel policy. The participating enterprises want to show society the impact of gender equality.

sprungbrett publishes summaries of the results of the respective amaZone awards of the last years and these are published also in a brochure with all relevant information. More publicity for the award also results in more applicants for amaZone.

The main reasons why enterprises (of the target group) are not participating are that they have no female apprentices or that they have female apprentices but no time or no resources for participation – especially for SMEs this seems to be quite difficult. There are enterprises which do not participate because they do not think that the award changes anything, there are other enterprises which do not want to participate in the assessment and consulting procedure due to the fact that there is no prize money for and thus there is too much effort for the company.



The most important benefit observed by participating/winning enterprises is marketing and public relations free of cost.

Furthermore, according to the initiator, when enterprises are dealing with the issue of female apprentices and gender equality, this has a strong internal impact. The enterprise consulters scrutinize the conditions for female apprentices and the working atmosphere in the enterprise, and this has brought about a change of the mindset. The way which female apprentices/girls/women are treated who work in technical oriented and non-traditional enterprises has changed e.g. there are no pin-up girls anymore and the girls are taken seriously. One enterprise stated that groups where women and men are mixed are more efficient and more successful, another enterprise being in the shoemaker industry stated that women and girls contribute to a more creative working atmosphere.

There are different experiences in terms of internal HR management effects due to participating in the award. There are some enterprises where the participation led to positive internal effects concerning working atmosphere and motivation. Another enterprise stated that they did not observe such changes. It also seems that effects on innovation and creativity in the company and effects in financial terms are not benefits resulting from a participation in the award.

According to the initiator, when observing the development of participating and winning enterprises, the amount of female apprentices has increased over the last years.

Development and future perspectives

As the participation rate has always been increasing, there are considerations to extend the scope of the amaZone award throughout the whole country of Austria. However, a central administration will still be necessary in order to preserve the quality of the procedure to determine the winners and to further identify what enterprises and girls apprentices need.

As the topic of training girls in non-traditional professions is also not exhausted in other countries, hence, the initiative could also be transferred to other European countries. Of course, the award would have to be adapted according to each country's needs, but the system as such could be easily transferred. Nevertheless, it is a question of money, as the assessment of which enterprises are good enough to get the award is time costly and needs lots of work.



2.2 Austria: Bundeswettbewerb “Frauen- und familienfreundlichster Betrieb” (Engl. National competition “Women- and family-friendliest business”)

Background and objectives

In Austria, there is mostly the tradition that women stay at home for the first years after the birth of a child and then work part-time (also due to insufficient affordable child care facilities). The society still attributes childcare responsibilities strongly to women rather than to men. The competition “women- and family-friendliest business” awards enterprises which are implementing women and family friendly measures on their own initiative with recognition from the Austrian government. By doing this, the engagement of these enterprises shall be made publically known and appreciated.

There is both a regional and national competition: Initially, the competition was established in 1991 in Styria as regional competition “women- and family friendliest business”. By and by, other federal provinces followed. In 1999, there was the first national competition, which until 2007 took place every year. The next national competition will be in 2010, then reorganised and upgraded as national award (see section “development and future perspectives” for further details). In 2009, the federal provinces Burgenland, Carinthia, Lower Austria, Vienna and Vorarlberg participated in the regional competition²⁰.

The implementing organisations are:

Association “Taten statt Worte” (Engl. “actions instead of words”): The association was established in 1990 in Styria with the aim to improve the situation of women and men in the workplace by implementing consequent gender equality policy. In 1991, “Taten statt Worte” established the first regional competition “women- and family-friendliest business” in Styria.

“Familie und Beruf Management” GmbH (Engl. “family and work management”): Since 2006, Familie und Beruf Management is organising the national competition. Before 2006, the organisation was done by the respective ministry responsible for family affairs.

Other involved organisations are the governments and/or local initiatives/organisations of the federal provinces which are awarding the regional winners and which are nominating them for the national competition. The Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth is officially awarding the nationwide winners in the framework of the new national award “family-friendliest business” in 2010.

²⁰ Salzburg, Tyrol and Upper Austria are the only three federal provinces of Austria where there “Taten statt Worte” does not organise the regional competitions. Instead, these federal provinces have their own regional competitions organised by other institutions such as the federal states governments (Salzburg, Upper Austria) and the Chamber of Labour (Tyrol). In Salzburg, the regional competition “Family Business Award” takes place every two years since 1998. The next competition will be held in 2010. In Upper Austria, since 2003, there is an annual award called “Familienoskar” which awards municipalities, individuals or enterprises alternately. The last regional competition, where enterprises have been awarded, was held in 2008. In Tyrol, the last regional competition of the “women and family-friendly business” was held in 2003 (until then it was annually), but there are plans to revive the competition in the near future.



Working principles and content

The *regional* competition “women- and family-friendliest business” is based on seven criteria covering all relevant measures referring to more women- and family-friendliness in the enterprise. An expert jury rates the respective supports and benefits offered by the companies.

The seven criteria of the regional competition are:

- Employees/Share of women in leading positions: type of employment of women and men, apprenticeships, elder employees (50+), employees with children under age 15, share of women in leading positions
- Working time arrangements: possibility of part-time and flexitime as well as other flexible working time models, individual scope for working time
- Training: amount of employees participating in training, share of women, content of training measures, absorption of costs, training time allowed to be used as working time
- Maternity/paternity leave, returners: quota of returners, contact possibilities for employees in maternity/paternity leave, support of the enterprise for the return (e.g. training, working times adapted to child care duties), special focus on possible paternity leave
- Family-friendly measures: corporate support of child care duties considering the regional situation of child care facilities in general
- Measures for apprentices / corporate health promotion: special measures for apprentices in the enterprise, possibility of career advancement of apprentices in the enterprise, special health management, special measures for elder employees (50+)
- Issues regarding women and families: specific contact person for women and family issues, measures for the support of women, career planning for employees, equal pay for equal work, development of innovative measures for better arrangements of work and family, position and value of women- and family-friendliness within the enterprise

Each enterprise is eligible to participate in the regional competition, regardless of size and sector. Restrictively, winning enterprises from the last two years are excluded from participation.

In order to provide fair conditions for the participating enterprises, until 2009, the regional competition distinguishes five categories²¹:

- Private enterprises: small-sized enterprises (up to 10 employees)
- Private enterprises: medium-sized enterprises (11 to 50 employees)
- Private enterprises: large-scale enterprises (more than 50 employees)

²¹ In Upper Austria there are only three categories: small-sized enterprises (up to 10 employees), medium-sized enterprises (11-100 employees) and large-scale enterprises (more than 100 employees).

²¹ In 2010, due to the new national award, the terms used may be changed in the national competition.



- Non-profit-organisations
- Public sector organisations

Each enterprise providing women- and family-friendly support has the possibility to win. Not only enterprises with a complete programme are awarded but also enterprises with corporate single measures. The group of employees targeted are women and employees with child care duties (both mothers and fathers). Enterprises/organisations willing to apply for their regional competition have to fill in a questionnaire. The questionnaire and other details for application (contact details etc.) are available online²². An expert jury rates the respective supports and benefits offered by the companies according to school marks (semi-marks are possible).

The winners of the regional competition are getting a special trophy and different recognition awards (depending on the region). The initiative is promoted by the regional governments of the federal provinces and their/the involved agencies. Many enterprises are informed about the award via mail. Moreover, the initiators are placing advertisements in selected newspapers and are organising informational events.

The *national* competition “women- and family friendliest business” is based on the results of the regional competitions (of the federal provinces) until 2009 and only the winners of these regional competitions are eligible for participation in the national competition. This criterion will be changed in 2010 in the framework of the new national award.

The national competition is based on a clear and transparent list of eleven criteria (that in total include 26 indicators) covering all relevant measures referring to more women and family friendliness. Each criterion is assigned with a priority level (I to III) that shall indicate the importance of the criterion for more women- and family friendliness.

The criteria for the national competition are:

- Share of women in leading positions (priority II)
- Participation quota of women in further training within the company (priority I)
- Flexibility of working time (priority I)
- Share of part-time jobs (priority I)
- Flexibility of the workplace (priority II)
- Quota of women returning to work after birth of a child within the enterprise (priority I)
- Preparation of women’s return to work by the enterprise (priority I)
- Measures of the enterprise in the field of child care (priority I)
- Material benefits of the enterprise for families (priority III)
- Contact point for women- and family issues within the enterprise (priority II)
- Position of women and families within the company’s philosophy and personnel policy (priority I)

²² <http://www.familienfreundlichsterbetrieb.at>, <http://www.taten-statt-worte.at/site/wettbewerb/3356/wettbewerb.aspx> and <http://www.familieundberuf.at>



Building upon this objective basis, again, an expert jury rates the respective supports and benefits offered by the companies. There are also employee interviews in order to dispose of the employees' point of view.

Regardless of sector and size, also the national competition distinguishes five categories like in most of the regional competition.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

According to the organisers, the policy strategy and the efforts made to harmonise work and family are successful, as the number of participants in the regional competition has continually been rising over the past years. For the national competition, the amount of participants remains nearly constant, as only the winners of the regional competition are eligible to participate in the national competition. In 2009, there were six regional competitions in five categories. Apart from the award ceremony, the winning enterprises get a certificate, a special cup and are presented in a brochure²³ describing the measures implemented in more detail.

There are regular network meetings of the Taten statt Worte-committee of the federal provinces where measures are discussed with regard to the improvement of the competition. There have been also meetings (albeit not regularly) with Familie und Beruf Management GmbH. One outcome of these discussions was that since 2007, the competition takes place every two years instead of each year.

Both initiators and interviewed enterprises agree that the national competition "women- and family-friendliest business" is a successful initiative in many respects: In Austria, women- and family-friendliness still is unfortunately not a really very important and publicly discussed issue. By arranging the competition, with only little efforts it is possible to put enterprises with women- and family-friendly measures in the limelight and bring the topic to public attention. The initiators of the regional competition make press and PR work in order to popularise the competition and the participating/winning enterprises. The initiators work together with media partners, they organise the award ceremony, they bring the topic to the public and they present the winning enterprises in order to bring forward the discussion of women- and family-friendliness in Austria.

According to a participating enterprise, the content of the questionnaire is excellent, as there are also questions dealing with health issues and apprenticeships and training for women. Furthermore, enterprises state that the competition is very well organised and the outstanding award ceremony makes the winning enterprises very proud of their women- and family-friendliness.

Each of the federal provinces in Austria conducting the regional competition "women- and family-friendliest business" is organising it autonomously. For this reason, for the initiators of the national competition it is a challenge to make an adequate timing for the organisation of the national competition.

²³ The winners of the regional competitions are also presented in respective brochures made by the regional organisers.



For most of the participating/winning companies, there were no challenges and obstacles in fulfilling the criteria of the competition, as they started their measures of women- and family-friendliness before they even participated in the competition.

Especially the regional juries have to assess many different enterprises with regard to their women- and family-friendly measures. According to an interviewed enterprise²⁴, it would be also helpful that the regional jury makes on-site-visits in order to get a clearer picture of the measures for women- and family-friendliness of the respective enterprises running for the prize, especially in SMEs. Another company stated that for SMEs, the effort for filling out the questionnaire would be higher than for large-scale enterprises, because the managing director has to fulfil this task while in other enterprises this would be done by HR representatives or equal opportunity officers.

The initiators are convinced that the competition is a good possibility to bring the issue women- and family-friendliness to the broad public. Additionally, the award and the publicity acts as food for thought for other enterprises and for enterprises which want to follow and also implement measures for women- and family-friendliness.

Impact in companies

Enterprises are taking part in the competition because they want to show which measures of women- and family-friendliness they have already implemented and what is possible in this field. Enterprises want to show that women and family are part of the corporate culture. Also, the participation in the competition means public relations free of cost and being present in the media especially for the highly ranked companies. The publicity that goes along with the prize is beneficial to the enterprises and shall motivate others to follow. Moreover, not only the (female) employees, but also the company as a whole benefits from the implemented women- family friendly measures.

According to an enterprise participating in the competition, gender equality in the workplace or equal opportunities for women and men are still not in all employers minds. However, some enterprises make use of consultancy or theme evenings in order to make efforts with regard to more women- and family-friendliness, and see more challenges in implementing such measures, while other companies are living women- and family-friendliness anyway and have included this in their unwritten or written code of conduct.

The most important benefit for the winning enterprises is a mark of recognition, publicity and increasing public awareness. Other enterprises are becoming aware of the winning enterprises, which may motivate them to follow and to create their own ideas in terms of women- and family-friendliness. One enterprise active in the field of production stated that it got new customers due to its presence in the media, as it was judged as reliable partner.

According to the initiator, by being present in the media, employees of the respective enterprise are more proud to work for the enterprise and thus are more motivated. The employers' point of view confirms this: According to an enterprise, one very important effect in winning the competition (be it regional or national) is a higher motivation among the employees. Furthermore, enterprises observe fewer sick leaves, nearly no

²⁴ Some of the participating or winning enterprises have been asked about their assessment of the initiative.



fluctuation and a welding together of the staff. The social responsibility taken by the employers leads to a positive attitude towards the enterprise.

Some enterprises experienced that winning the prize and getting publicity makes it easier to find employees, because when an enterprise is an attractive employer there are more job applicants.

Another effect for enterprises is that participating/winning the competition entails further development of the enterprise with regard to social responsibility not only in the field of women- and family-friendliness: According to some enterprises, additional measures were implemented such as sports programmes, possibility of regular massage when having a sitting work position and other health issues (e.g. healthy workplace, joint health days).

Development and future perspectives

As regards content, the focus of the regional and national competition did not change over time and will also not change within the near future, as women- and family-friendliness of enterprises still remains an important issue in Austria.

However, the questionnaire for the competition has been extended over the years, at first covering flexible working time arrangements for women with children, training possibilities and child care possibilities, then also including health issues and elder employees. The questionnaire also has been continuously adapted to the latest governmental regulations and law amendments.

Before 2006, the national competition was organised by the respective ministry responsible for family issues but then sourced out to “Familie and Beruf Management GmbH”. Since 2007, the national competition is held every two years instead of each year. One reason is to counteract a devaluation of the competition due to the increasing numbers of prizes and awards in the field of family-friendliness, equal opportunities, CSR etc. in Austria.

One major change in the competition is that in 2010, the national competition (“Bundeswettbewerb”) will be turned into a national award (“Staatspreis”), which means an upgrading and gain in importance. In 2010, not only the winners of the regional competition in 2009 but also all participants of the last regional competition are eligible to run for this new national award for the first time.

According to the initiative’s managers, the basic idea of the prize could also be transferred to other countries and therefore act as role model. With respect to country-specific legal issues in terms of maternity and paternity leaves, the questionnaire would have to be adapted to each country’s needs.



2.3 Czech Republic: Firma roku: rovné příležitosti (Engl. Company of the year: Equal Opportunities)

Background and objectives

The initiative was launched in 2004 as a reaction to the situation at the labour market regarding the equality of opportunities for women and men. Childcare facilities were disappearing since the 1990s and it became common for women to spend many years on maternity leave which until now has had an enormous effect on their professional careers. Until 2001, it was practically impossible for a father to take parental leave.

In 2007, women represented 42 % of economically active people. While their participation rate was 49.8 %, the participation rate of men was 68.3 %. 8.6 % of the women and 2.3 % of the men women worked part-time, the gender pay gap (applied as the difference of the wage median of women and men) was 19.8 %. Women represented 98.7 % of those who provide care (parental leaves, care for other family members etc.).

The initiative was supposed to motivate companies to start implementing equality measures especially targeting work-life balance issues for both parents and the representation of women in management; and on a more general level to influence discourses about women, motherhood and work, since it is still the prevailing opinion that women have to choose either children or career and that a mother has to stay home with her child at least for three years.

The main organiser of the competition is the public beneficiary organisation “Gender Studies” (established in 1991). During the years, various partners supported the initiative. Also for some years, it was possible to include the award into larger projects with maintaining the goal of providing quality services free of charge.

2010: ESF, Prague City Hall

2009: Slovak Czech Women's Fund, *media partners: Czech radio 2 Prague*

2006 – 2008: Citi Foundation

2008: Representation of the EU Commission in the Czech Republic (supported the conference), *media and promotion partners: Czech radio 2 Prague, TopVision, French-Czech Chamber of Commerce*

2005: Zentiva, Ministry of Industry and Trade

2004: EU Phare, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

The website²⁵ of the project presents all necessary information for applicants, results from the past rounds and also additional examples of good practices. Many articles regarding the award are also published in monthly electronic bulletin Equal opportunities to companies²⁶.

²⁵ <http://rovneprilezitosti.ecn.cz/>

²⁶ <http://zpravodaj.feminismus.cz/>



Working principles and content

The open call for applications is announced at the beginning of the year and it gives companies over half a year to consider its participation and to fill in the mandatory questionnaire. Some companies are approached actively by the Gender Studies team and they are offered an on-site presentation on the working principles and possible benefits.

In order to participate, there are no minimum criteria for companies. Of course, poor programmes are excluded later in the process. Anyway, it gives opportunity for every company to try and receive feedback on how they are doing. Also, there is a special award called “good start” which is supposed to motivate companies which recently started with the programmes and their activities. However, few are promising. To state an example, in 2004, the company AirProducts was awarded for a good start and in 2006 they received the main award showing significant growth of the programme during the years.

Evaluated fields:

Company environment (gender audits, statistics, surveys, programmes for women – mentoring etc., targeted recruitment)

- Position of men and women (female/male ratio on different levels)
- Work-life balance strategies and their development over the time
- Marketing
- Corporate Social Responsibility (until 2008)
- Processes of dealing with complaints, fair remuneration, women in management (since 2009)

Cross-cutting themes:

- Innovative character
- Female representation in managerial positions in relation to the total number of all female employees
- Measurability of initiatives in place
- Communication within the company concerning their equality programmes
- Gender diversity
- Transferability to other companies

There are two rounds of assessment taking place – both internal and external:

First round: Companies send their filled questionnaire to Gender Studies, where the team members scrutinise the applications and look if there are additional questions. All information from the questionnaire is verified by preferably in person interviews. If an applicable comparison with a questionnaire from the previous year(s) takes place, companies need to show significant progress. Eventually, applicants are short-listed based on comparing the companies within the annual pool of applications.



Second round: A short list of companies is presented to the jury, which changes every year and consists of representatives of different fields (gender experts, social scientists, PR experts, HR experts). Each member works individually in assigning points to the questionnaires, followed by a common meeting to reflect on the situation and to solve possible problems. Jury members should take into consideration questions such as:

- What is the development regarding equality policies in the company?
- How many measures exceed commitment to current legislation?
- Are equality policies systematic and thorough?
- Are equality policies innovative?
- Are they transferable into other companies?
- How are equality policies communicated inside the company?
- Are results of equality policies and programmes measurable and comparable during the years of their existence?
- What is the level of gender diversity?
- How detailed is the questionnaire filing?

Companies are approached with information throughout the year. Special focus on PR activities is bounded with the announcement of results (usually in November as part of a public conference). Results have rather impressive media coverage both national and professional. It is very important that awarded companies are also active in this sense (e.g. publish press releases) so they can gain more publicity and recognition for themselves and at the same time promote the award in the business world.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

The initiative is evaluated on an annual basis. Usually, members of the team and the jury, but sometimes also invited guests are participating. Discussions lead to constant improvement (e.g. reformulation of questions in questionnaire, changes in guidelines for the jury, but also recent alteration of the name of the competition to better meet the needs of marketing). One of the major challenges for the future is how to target SMEs and generally to approach employers from various pools of sectors. Data about participation are not public, but since large companies apply frequently, targeted employees can be counted in thousands.

The competition can be assessed as successful since it receives substantial media coverage. Annual conferences attract a number of professionals and the organisers are able to secure funding for each year. Companies report that they get valuable opportunity to share experiences and get encouragement for further development of their programmes. Since every year new companies apply, it is possible to say that the competition has an impact on equality on the Czech labour market. It is definitely contributing to attitudes of employers towards understanding gender equality: Nowadays, it is becoming normal to identify discrimination and support equality. This is



a major advancement compared to the late 1990s²⁷ when most companies felt it is none of their concern, since gender blindness was understood as appropriate or inequality as inevitable. It is also important that employees see what some companies can offer and they can ask their (future) employers. Two of the interviewed managers said they successfully used the award for promotion of the company at job fairs, one highlighted that even students ask about their work-life balance opportunities, something no one can imagine still ten years ago.

Impact in companies

There are numerous reasons for participation. One reason is good (and cost-free) PR (both internal and external), but it is important that the awarded company is active, too (publish own press release, post information on website, have people ready to provide interviews for media etc.). One company even reported that they got negative feedback from one of their clients – the publicity was so high that the client thought the company would pay for the promotion and he felt it should invest elsewhere. Anyway, it was not the case that the company was paying for its public relation. The fact that major IT companies and banks apply (and are awarded) means that others from the respective sector are attracted to participate and use the competition as a benchmarking tool. And generally, meeting other companies means a possibility to exchange experiences and to get inspiration for the future development.

For some companies, one of the barriers to participate is that an application is suitable for companies with thorough HR policy as such. A lot of SMEs do not have a proper human resources strategy, lot of decisions are made at individual level or ad hoc, and there are no internal instructions regarding gender equality etc. So it seems to be too difficult for them to fill in the questionnaire. Some companies might feel they can not compete with organisations such as IBM, which has a strong support from the headquarters and whose sector and employees' profile suits better e.g. flexible working patterns. According to the HR manager from a nutrition company, it is pointless for the company to apply since the majority of the employees are working shifts and strict hygienic requirements do not allow much flexibility. This might be a more general problem, as one of the interviewed companies from the banking sector, which eventually received a "good start" award, also stated that it would appreciate more encouragement from the organisers. Also for companies that apply more than once or twice, it could be difficult to come up with something new, show progressive development and receive the award again.

Obviously, for the companies it is important to see business benefits in participating. In some cases it might be difficult to persuade the company's management to support gender equality programmes. Equality teams members often do this voluntarily on the top of their own work, so as one of the interviewed managers said: "We need to be able to make this a businesses case, also to show how much it would cost us if we do not do it". On the other hand, companies usually have only limited data concerning costs and benefits. For example, they know how much it costs to hire and train a new person compared to reintegrating a mother, who already was a qualified employee, so they can argue for arrangements for parents on leave.

²⁷ At this time, gender equality was firstly included in the labour code.



With regard to equality, it is obvious that participation and learning about others brings changes into HR policies. This can be tracked down in questionnaires if the company applies more than once. But sometimes a set back might be identified, for instance when an HR manager who supported the issue leaves and someone new is not able to further develop the programme.

Development and future perspectives

The initiative is better suited for countries with a lower gender equality acknowledgement among employers. In countries where equality policies have longer tradition, or are generally more positively approached, the selection process might lead to an overload of applications (stronger access criteria might need to be specified).

The competition puts an extra focus on work-life balance and family friendly measures since this is an enormously important issue in the Czech Republic. Recently, companies report more interest in promoting women into managerial positions (which was a focus of one of the first rounds) and so this is becoming more important – the annual conference for 2009 will focus on women and leadership and non-traditional occupations. Generally, as mentioned above, the organiser is seeking ways how to attract a rather varying pool of participants and, above all, SMEs.



2.4 Denmark: K2 prisen & K2 næsen (Engl. The K2 reward & K2 reproach)

Background and objectives

The K2 reward and K2 reproach is an integrated part of the K2 network's efforts to increase the number of women managers in the Danish media sector. The K2 network is a network of women in journalist or journalist-like jobs that are or wish to become managers in the media sector. The background for establishing the network in 2006 was the gender gap in management, especially in top management, in the Danish society in general and in the media sector in particular. Moreover, the founders of the K2 network perceived managerial practice in the media sector as outdated and out of sync with the professionalisation of management and focus on managerial skills practiced in other sectors of economy. "In essence, management in the media sector is old-fashioned and has remained to be characterised by a few "great white elephants" that happen to be male", as co-founder of the K2 network, Ms. Nina Frank, puts it.

The name of the network, K2, refers to the name commonly used for the second highest mountain on Earth, symbolising the subordinate position of women aspiring for managerial positions. The K2 reward/reproach is a part of the networks' efforts to promote women in management and set the agenda, spark debate and raise awareness of gender issues among employees and managers in the media sector. Apart from the K2 reward/reproach, network activities include a mentoring scheme, lectures and debate on gender issues, mini-courses and networking.

Initiated by the K2 network, the reward/reproach is run by the K2 network in collaboration with The Danish Union of Journalists (DJ). DJ is involved in the presentation and publicity of the reward/reproach, and, for 2007-2008, in providing a survey on the gender representation in management in media enterprises, which forms part of the basis for awarding specific managers.

Working principles and content

The K2 reward/reproach consists of two awards. The K2 reward is awarded to a person or media enterprise that has put extraordinary efforts into promoting women in top management. The K2 reproach is awarded an enterprise that has done nothing or the opposite of promoting women in management, and/or has taken actions or submitted statements discouraging equal representation.

Candidates for the reward/reproach are suggested by the members of the K2 network. Thus, the background for nomination is experience at first hand by female journalists in Danish media. The candidates suggested and the reasons and arguments for nomination are evaluated by the K2 network steering committee, and the names of the nominated are published in a press release. The process of nomination is an internal network activity and in consideration of the interests of the involved employees nominators stay anonymous.

On this background, the K2 steering committee nominates a total of six candidates, three for each award. The reward is a sculpture and the reproach is a diploma and a placement on the "K2 observation-list".



Candidates are invited to participate in the award ceremony, held in the Cavling Hall owned by the DJ (also commonly known as the place for the annual presentation of the Cavling Award, the most prestigious award for journalists to receive in Denmark). To stress the responsibility of management, the reward/reproach is presented to top managers of media enterprises. Following the presentation of the reward/reproach, the winner/loser is invited to thank/excuse/explain/discuss the granting of the award. This is followed by a debate in plenum on the unequal distribution of gender in management in the media sector.

The award is mainly given publicity and debated in the magazine/journal of the DJ ("Journalisten"), in articles on the reward/reproach itself and in articles debating gender in general. Moreover, the reward/reproach has been mentioned or debated in most national news media.

The reward/reproach is not awarded solely on the basis of strict criteria. According to Ms. Nina Frank, this is mainly due to the incorporation of a strategic element in the award. This strategic element is related to the overall purpose of the K2 network: to have more women in top management in the media sector. Thus, one of the purposes of the reward/reproach is to have a direct or short term impact on the representation of women in management. The strategic element is, of course, especially taken into consideration when K2 presents the reproach. Therefore, in practice, the reward/ reproach is presented according to the criteria mentioned in point one below in combination with a more "soft" qualitative assessment based on the things mentioned in point 2-4.

- 1) The reward/reproach is granted enterprises and top managers that have done the most/least for a more equal representation, have/have not taken action, have created results/have developed in the "wrong" direction, recognise/do not recognise equal representation as important or have submitted statements promoting/discouraging a more equal gender representation in management, especially top management.
- 2) The documentation of the survey conducted by DJ on the gender representation in management of Danish Media enterprises is taken into consideration in nominating candidates.
- 3) The reward/reproach is awarded on the basis of coherent reasoning and arguments.
- 4) The presentation of the reproach takes the importance of the media enterprise into consideration, aims at highlighting possible double standards (whether conscious or unconscious), should spark debate and increase the chances for more women in top management in the short term.

This combination of solid criteria, documentation and strategy implicate that it is not necessarily the enterprises/managers that perform best/worst that are awarded. For example, in 2008 the reproach was awarded to a chief editor at a newspaper that displayed a better performance in equal gender representation than other comparable news media. However, the newspaper (Politiken) has the reputation of being "progressive" and is often found to emphasise the importance of gender equality. Nevertheless, the reproach was awarded Politiken as the newspaper had not improved in regard of equal gender representation, and remained a media with no women in the chief editorial team. According to Ms. Nina Frank, a further reason underlying the decision to present the reproach to Politiken was that it would spark debate, increase awareness of gender among the top managers at Politiken, and thereby increase the possibilities of more women in management.



Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

In theory, all mainstream news media are eligible for nomination to the K2 reward/reproach. In practice, however, nominees are to be found among the 42 news media surveyed by the DJ. These 42 news media are characterised by having 1) 20 or more employees on open-ended contracts in the editorial staff, and 2) one or more employee representative from the DJ at the workplace, and 3) collective agreement bargained by the DJ. This group constitutes all news media of any importance in Denmark and represents a total of 4,315 employees. Due to the fact that participation is not voluntary in the K2 reward/reproach the participation rate does not change over time.

The K2 reward/reproach has not been subject to any kind of formal evaluation. However, the success of the initiative is regularly discussed internally in the K2 network and steering committee. In terms of operating principles, participation, publicity etc., it is the viewpoint of the K2 network that the reward/reproach as a concept is a success. For the K2 network, however, the main factors for success are the impact in companies (see next section) and that the award sparks debate and raises awareness.

As to the latter, the reward/reproach may be viewed as successful. So far, no “winner” of the reproach has rejected participation in the award ceremony. However, in 2007 the fairness of awarding the former chief editor at Nyhedsavisen, Mr. David Trads, was disputed by himself and by many in the editorial staff (also women) at Nyhedsavisen. Mr. Trads and others have called the empirical foundation for the reproach into question, leading Mr. Trads to state that the reproach could be improved by better research and should be supported by facts. This has been rejected by the K2 network. On the other hand, Mr. Tøger Seidenfaden, chief editor at Politiken reproached in 2008, has the opinion that it was reasonably fair (“Yes, a little bit”) that he received the reproach, and, thus, has no suggestions for improving the fairness of the initiative.

Nevertheless, the initiative and the viewpoints expressed by K2 network members have lead to, sometimes heated, debate in the media sector. In 2008, a journalist and chief editor of the web based daily 180Grader, Mr. Ole Birk Olesen, founded a “counter-network” to K2 named K1. Provoked by the K2 reproach, the K1 network drafted a manifest stressing that qualifications and not gender are important in discussions on the issue of appointing managers. Moreover, in an effort to “balance the agenda set by feminists these years”, as formulated by K1 co-founder Mr. Jakob Marschner, the K1 network stated that it would present a Cry-baby-of-the-year award (“Årets skrigeballon”) to the person submitting “the most shrill, not factual, contribution to the debate on men and women in managerial positions in the Danish media sector”. The award, however, was not presented as planned in 2008.

Summing up, the K2 award may indeed be regarded as successful regarding the success criterion formulated by the K2 network: to spark debate. The question of longer-term impact on gender equality in management, however, is difficult to assess. In the view of Ms. Nina Frank, the K2 reward/reproach contributes to both set and justify an agenda of gender equality in management in the media sector, and, thereby, have sustainable impact on gender equality. Mr. David Trads, on the other hand, focuses on the structural aspects of gender equality, and assesses the initiative to have some impact in the short run. In the long run, Mr. Trads claims, gender equality will prevail as the result of structural changes, for example in the patterns of education, labour market participation and women’s’ perception of themselves.



Impact in companies

As the reward/reproach initiative is based on the activity of the K2 network, the functioning of the initiative relies on the engagement of the network members. However, the success of the initiative in media enterprises also relies on the views and practice among managers and the perception of the importance of gender equality in general. According to Ms. Nina Frank, the initiative is not likely to have an impact in enterprises where managers do not acknowledge equal representation as an important issue. In enterprises acknowledging equal representation as important, however, the initiative is found to have had some effect on gender equality in management. On the basis of “common journalistic observation” Ms. Nina Frank finds the effect of the initiative to be evident (“We can see the results” as she puts it). This is supported by Mr. Tøger Seidenfaden, stating that the K2 reproach have had some impact at Politiken (“Yes, a little bit”).

As to benefits/drawbacks for the involved enterprises, the most important factor is the publicity, or reputation, of enterprises. Winners of the reward issue press releases or news articles mentioning the award, and being pro gender equality, as is the case of Mr. Tøger Seidenfaden and Mr. David Trads, it may be somewhat embarrassing to receive the K2 reproach. However, focusing on the national level, this negative publicity is of limited importance. This is due to the fact that the K2 award, although commonly known and important in the media sector, is not well-known outside the media sector. Nevertheless, focusing on the media sector, the K2 reward/reproach may be seen as important. The fact that none of the reproached have rejected to participate in the award ceremony and that both reproached chief editors find it relevant to participate in this study point in this direction.

As the 42 media enterprises eligible for the reward/reproach are attractive workplaces for journalists, it is unlikely that the reward/reproach has any influence on absenteeism, motivation innovation etc. in the enterprises. However, based on the view that gender equality is becoming increasingly important, it is the view of Ms. Nina Frank that media enterprises not adjusting to a more equal representation of gender may be putting long-term financial interests at risk.

Development and future perspectives

Since the reward/reproach was presented for the first time in 2007, no changes have been made to the concept. According to Ms. Nina Frank this is due to what she perceives as the success of the initiative. The initiative has generated debate and has had some impact on gender equality in management in some of the concerned enterprises. Therefore, there are no plans of making changes to the concept. “If it ain’t broken, don’t fix it” as Ms. Nina Frank puts it.

The initiative addresses the problem that women are not represented equally in management, especially in top management. Thus, the initiative could be transferred to countries facing similar conditions (i.e. most countries). However, the reproach may be viewed as more controversial, provocative, indecent etc. in other countries than in Denmark.



2.5 Finland: Tasa-arvosuunnittelukilpailu (Engl. Gender Equality Plan Prize)

Background and objectives

Gender equality matters are a high priority in the Finnish society. Typically women have taken part in the working life for a long time, but modern conversation about gender equality started in Finland in the 1960s. Finland has an extensive legislation regarding gender equality in the workplace. The Act on Equality between Women and Men came into effect in 1987 and its goal is to “prevent discrimination based on gender, to promote equality between women and men, and thus to improve the status of women, particularly in working life”.

The Gender Equality Plan has been part of the law since 1995 with the latest amendments made in 2005. The latest change is that the Gender Equality plan must be done regularly.

A company needs to have a Gender Equality Plan if it employs at least 30 employees. Each year, the employer, in cooperation with the personnel, must draw up a Gender Equality Plan and implement the plan's measures. Even though the Gender Equality Plan is drawn up on an annual basis, it may contain shorter or longer term objectives.

The Gender Equality Plan's content is defined by law. The content of the plan and the implementation of its measures are primarily concerned with pay and other terms of employment. Other terms of employment include working hours and times, leaves, terms of notice and obligations to maintain secrecy. For example, women and men should earn equally and have same terms of employment if they are working in the same duty. The Gender Equality Plan may be incorporated into the company's personnel and training plan or its occupational health and safety action plan. The Plan must include a gender equality assessment, measures for improving the situation, and a review of the results of the previous year's plan. To sum up, the Act has set up strict terms to gender equality planning and companies need to really make an effort in order to meet the requirements.

Despite the Act, not all companies execute the Gender Equality Plan. In 2005, the content of the Act was specified and a conditional fine was imposed for companies failing to execute the Plan. So far, the fine has not been imposed on any company.

The implementing organisations in gender equality matters are public organisations. Equality matters fall within the scope of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland. The Ombudsman for Equality, The Equality Unit, The Council for Equality and The Equality Board are responsible for the practical implementation of equality. The Ombudsman for Equality has the main responsibility and duty to supervise that companies are conforming to the law. They are also co-operating with trade organisations.



Working principles and content

The content of the Gender Equality Plan is defined by law²⁸. In order to promote the Gender Equality Planning and to provide positive publicity to the companies who take it seriously, a Gender Equality Plan Prize has been developed.

In general, all the companies that have completed the Plan are eligible for the Gender Equality Plan Prize. The companies can operate in every line of business and there are not any specific criteria. The Gender Equality Plan Prize is awarded to companies that have invested time in the Gender Equality Plan and are promoting gender equality in the work place. The two main criteria for the Prize are:

- Concreteness on planning and
- Evidence that company has met its targets.

The Gender Equality Plan must be completed on the basis of information about the gender equality situation in the workplace. For example, it can cover the recruitment procedure, the current employment of women and men in different jobs, career progress, working conditions, personnel training, reconciliation of work and family life, attitudes to gender equality, and occupational safety and health. The plan can be drawn up using statistical and qualitative methods and it is also important to include information derived from practical experience. In addition, information can be gathered by analysing other surveys carried out in the workplace (e.g. job-satisfaction surveys) from the gender viewpoint. However, the surveys are not criteria for getting the Prize. Therefore, surveys are voluntary and are just helping companies in gender equality planning.

It is not enough that the company has a good plan on paper. It has to really demonstrate evidence how it has promoted gender equality in the workplace. The Ombudsman for Equality emphasises that a simple and short plan is enough if it provides concrete information about the targets and results of the company. As a whole, the awarded company needs to have enhanced gender equality in a creditable way.

The most recent part in the Gender Equality Plan is the assessment of wages. This involves examination of the pay systems used and the ways they are applied. The survey must give separately details of women and men in different jobs, the grade of jobs performed by women and men, and also the pay for women and men and the differences in pay. The assessment of wages is an issue in which The Ombudsman for Equality pays special attention in evaluating the Gender Equality Plans. Often the companies leave this part out of their Plans.

In general, not all companies are aware of the Gender Equality Plan Prize due to lack of announcements or advertisements about it. The companies can get information about the Prize only from the internet and maybe learn about it from their trade organisations.

²⁸ The Act on Equality between Women and Men in English: <http://www.tasa-arvo.fi/en/publications/act2005>



Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

The initiative is a prize for companies which have successfully completed gender equality plans. All the companies that have a Plan are eligible for the prize. The Minister of Equality and the Ombudsman for Equality are giving out the prize annually. However, it can be awarded to more than one company at a time and during some years the Prize has not been given to any company due to lack of good Gender Equality Plans. The first Prize was granted in 1998. In total, 19 companies have received the prize.

The Ombudsman for Equality decides which company will get the Prize. The Ombudsman for Equality works in co-operation with trade organisations that are also representing companies devoted to gender equality matters. In addition, they receive proposals from employees about companies that have progressed in gender equality matters. The Ombudsman for Equality goes through the Plans continuously.

In 2003, the Ombudsman for Equality clarified how many companies had completed the Gender Equality Plan, mainly in the private sector. Only 27 % of companies had completed the Plan. Almost all the companies with more than 500 employees had the Gender Equality Plan but the smaller companies were not paying enough attention to gender equality matters. This is a challenge for the future; how to get these companies to finalise the Gender Equality Plans. One option might be to toughen up the penalties and supervise companies more closely. However, the recourses are limited.

Impact in companies

The companies that have more than 30 employees and have completed the Gender Equality Plan are automatically involved in the “competition” for the Prize. The Prize may be given both to private and public sector organisations.

Neste Oil Corporation (oil and energy company) received the Gender Equality Plan Prize in 2007. They have been very satisfied with the prize because they have noticed that equal and fair treatment has improved motivation and positive atmosphere in the workplace. They have also found out that gender equality promotes all equality matters in general. However, Neste Oil emphasises that there is still much to be done. For example, they will continue to clarify why men earn more than women at the same job. In the same duties men can earn over 10 % more than women.

Another example of a Gender Equality Plan Prize winner is K-Supermarket Raisio Center (grocery shop). It is also an example of an SME promoting gender equality in the workplace. Promoting gender equality has been emphasised in employment politics, progress in career, access to different levels in organisation, education, payroll system and paternity leaves. K-Supermarket Raisio Center has gained positive reputation on the internet and in local magazines and it is known as an equal employer.

Both companies have focused on gender equality matters also before getting the Prize. The Prize was recognition for their work but it was not just an incentive. Both companies have been active in promoting gender equality for a long time. In general, the benefit for the companies is that they will be recognized for their work on promoting gender equality in the work place. The Ombudsman for Equality uses also the awarded companies as good examples when introducing the purpose of Gender Equality Plan.



Development and future perspectives

In general, it is necessary to remember that the Gender Equality Plan is a plan and to be successful, it needs concrete objectives which need to be observed. However, the authorities do not have resources to monitor the process. It is also a problem that the companies make plans but they may not really realize their plans. The companies bear the responsibility. The Ombudsman for Equality is promoting the Gender Equality Plan all the time and try to get companies to understand why it is important to them. Trade organisations are also co-operating with companies and are emphasising the importance of gender equality planning. However, there are not any plans to raise the awareness of the Prize.

The Ombudsman for Equality emphasises that they do not grant the Prize just for fun. They want to have good Gender Equality Plans completed following the law that have provided results in promoting gender equality. In 2009, the Prize will not be awarded.



2.6 Hungary: Családbarát munkahely díj (Engl. Family Friendly Workplace Award)

Background and objectives

In the socialist regime, female employment was one of the main indicators of women's emancipation. Since the early 1950s, a huge amount of poorly paid women were needed for the labour intensive industries, and until 1990, full-employment was realised also in women's case. Most women in child-rearing age were in the labour market, consequently, family and employment policy together had to set up and formulate the conditions for women to be able to carry the double burden of family and work. For small children not yet school-aged, childcare institutions were set up by the state and the companies, and since 1967, various forms of parental leaves were introduced. The state also initiated the full-time day-care for children in school, and the subsidised meal for them (and also the subsidised meal for employees at the workplace) in order to ease women from household duties.

Shortly after 1990, almost all these social services were terminated in order to lessen the companies' financial burden, and also to put women in their traditional "female place", i.e. back to home and household. Although in socialism it was accepted and required from women to have both full time job and children, this situation has fundamentally changed after the collapse of the old system. Similarly to other post socialist countries, a family-centred attitude and a reorientation to the family became the basic working principle of the public policy. It can be proved by the drastic cutting of budget for child care institutions, mainly for children under the age of three, and the encouragement and incentives for women to stay away from the labour market even longer than before. All these measures made it hard for women to return to the labour market after the childbirth. Parallel, in the early 1990s, the employment level of women and men fell dramatically and unemployment reached its peak in 1993. It became obvious that under the conditions of the market economy the value of family life and child rearing is less prioritised than it was previously, and young mothers' reintegration to the workplace became extremely difficult and complicated.

The government realised that the fulfilment of work-life balance is not simply an individual goal, but also a societal target. From this very point the government had to re-invent family friendly measures that were partly effective previously in socialism. The government intends to promote the reconciliation between work and private life also through the National Competition for "Family Friendly Workplace Award". The competition was announced first time in 2000 by the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs.

Implementing organisations

The main implementing organisation is always the ministry responsible for the equality between women and men. In 2000 it was the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs, later the Governmental Office for Equal Opportunities, and at present it is the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.

In 2000, the representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Hungarian Chamber of Agriculture, and the trade unions participated in the finalisation of the application on the basis of international models.



Since 2006, the working group “Reconciliation of family and work” which is operated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and which consists of NGOs is also actively participating in the evaluation and development of the competition. The working group also initiated investigations connected to the issue of reconciliation.

Working principles and content

Each year, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour publishes the call for application. At the beginning of the competition, the call for application was published in early January, but now it has been moved to June. The call is circulated in on-line and off-line newspapers and press, and it is also available on the ministry’s website. Presently, institutions may apply for the award, and the best ones will be selected by independent experts. Final decision is made by a committee, and since 2008, local monitoring is also part of the decision making process. In 2008, all winners were monitored on-the-spot. Evaluators and also applicants receive a detailed list regarding the evaluation process and dimensions. It is downloadable together with the application form.

In each category three awards are given: gold, silver and bronze award. The winners of the competition are entitled to keep the “Family-friendly workplace” title and award for one year. The aim of the National Competition for “Family Friendly Workplace Award” is to find companies and institutions that are committed to the idea of reconciliation and are promoting the practices of family-work balance for their employees.

In general, all employees are targeted, but the following aspects are very important: gender equality (equal opportunities for women and men), working time (full-time, part-time), marital status, (young) fathers, and mothers returning from parental leave. At the beginning, mainly the family stood in the centre of actions, but in 2008, the competition was re-framed and considerably more attention was paid to gender equality due to the involvement of NGOs into the formulation of call for application, the description of the project and targets.

The intention of this competition is the highlighting and publication of best practices. The extensive application of these examples facilitates many other companies and institutions to increase their role in socially responsible activities and to improve competitiveness through the introduction of family friendly arrangements.

Until 2007, the following fields were evaluated by the experts: working time, training, reintegration (women) after parental leave, subsistence of childcare institutions, the available allowances, and employees’ security. In 2008 the call for application became more comprehensive, and also tackles gender (in)equality.

There is a questionnaire for the applicants regarding the institutions’ family friendly measures in the following areas:

- Employees-related information, policies and practices: distribution by position, marital status, types of work contracts, promotion and wage system, training opportunities, issues related to childcare, opportunities to return from parental leave to work, incentives directly for men to take up parental roles,



- Questions related to equal opportunities at the workplace: rules and practices regarding equal opportunities. This field covers the introduction of affirmative actions, knowledge about equal opportunity regulation, particularly the legal duties of company and institutions, the knowledge and use of affirmative actions, the applied practice, obstacles in the way of gender equality.
- Detailed description of family friendly policies and practices: 1. Flexible organisation of work (identification of the company interest, whether it is a well thought-out plan, obstacles, coherence of the conception, return of flexibility); 2. Measures for creating the work-life balance (fixed company policy or practice, commitment to childrearing duties, encouragement for men to take up parental roles, plans for the future development) – these aspects are elaborated more deeply in the questionnaire and focus also on the motivation, organisational culture, social responsibilities, and measuring the effectiveness.
- The organisational strategy for setting up family friendliness: incorporation of this concept into the organisations' goals in the long run, measurement of culture, permanent family friendly policies, family friendly organisational culture, involvement of employees in shaping the organisational culture, CSR, cooperation with NGOs.
- The appearance of family friendliness in the company communication: issues connected to the equality between men and women, incorporation of the gained award into the company marketing.

The submission of the application is completed by an examination on the spot that entails an interview with the (top) manager of the company or the leader of the organisation, and also interviews with employees.

Almost all companies can take part in the application, except those which did not fulfil their obligations to pay taxes and various social contributions, which did not operate according to fair play, or are under the investigation of the Equal Treatment Authority, etc.

The call for application concentrates on the following categories of companies and institutions:

- Microenterprises (less than 10 employees)
- Small enterprises (10-49 employees)
- Medium-sized companies (50-249 employees)
- Large companies (over 250 employees)
- Public institutions
- Non-profit organisation.

These companies, public institutions and other organisations usually do not have a detailed family friendly company policy. They rather have implemented various crucial measures in order to support employees' reconciliation, to increase the effectiveness of the company, and these measures formed later a coherent policy.



Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

The competition started in 2000. At the beginning, the evaluation and selection process was rather simple. The number of applicants was 49 in 2000, 133 in 2001 and 98 in 2003. (There is no publicly available information about the latest data.) There was a concept to audit the award with being the modifications in 2008 the first important steps in this process. During the 2000s, the national competition “Family friendly workplace” has become known continuously, partly because some companies were already well known in the business community.

The initiative is assessed as successful, and it is widely published in the Hungarian press. According to several attitude surveys, it is closely connected with the family-centred attitude of the Hungarian population.

At the beginning there were initiatives to facilitate the networking of these companies in order to share the good practices. In 2002, there was a “Conference for Winners of the Family-Friendly Award”. From the companies’ side there was a continuous demand to become acquainted with other institutions’ measures and achievements. However, it has not been continued since then. There are conferences focusing on family friendly companies from time to time, but they do not form a consistent concept or mission.

The promotion and evaluation of the family friendly workplace award partly belong to the responsibilities of NGOs which are gathered in the activity of the working group “Reconciliation of family and work” launched by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour after the Hungarian adaptation of the Gender Roadmap in 2006. The working group has regular meetings.

There were also investigations carried out in award winning companies. The Foundation FIONA interviewed both male managers of these companies and male decision makers participating in the formulation of the application. The latter group was representing the employment policy (ministers, heads of departments, etc.). One of the main findings was that large and sometimes multinational companies operating in the capital pay less importance to the award, because their organisational values are stronger, while smaller enterprises’ activity is unsettled in this field. In the latter case managers attach more importance to the appearance in the publications and press. The other finding was that the applicants usually participate in other competitions, too. The main examples are the National Competition for Best Workplace, the National Competition for Healthy Workplace, etc.

Since 2006, several NGOs have been involved into the development and improvement of the award, because the procedure had been rather simple previously and did not exactly measure the real existence of family friendly initiatives. For example there was no on the spot investigation, and the evaluation relied on the information submitted by the companies only.

In the first period, the “Family friendly workplace award” did not mean that gender equality was incorporated into the operation of the enterprise. In many cases, it was rather understood as a tool to support young mothers to return to the labour market by the arrangements of flexible working time or part-time work exclusively for women. It could contribute to women’s integration in the short run; however, it could also preserve the traditional expectations regarding gender roles in the long run.



The other part of the programmes are gender-neutral and comprise many activities which were common in the socialist period, such as going into theatre or for an excursion collectively, and/or with the participation of the family members in such events. Some companies also have a May picnic on the territory of the enterprise and invite spouses and children, too.

It is a rare exception that companies contribute to the reduction of the tensions deriving from the tasks connected to the supervision of children, like maintenance of kindergarten or support during the school holidays.

Impact in companies

Companies and institutions participate in the competition because they need benchmarking in this field. The companies and institutions receive the label “family friendly workplace” for one year. They typically put this slogan on the website, and it definitely contributes to an increase of the companies’ prestige.

This award brings the enterprise into notoriety, and gives public appreciation for the family friendly organisational culture. The most important positive effects for companies are external marketing and publicity.

According to the company managers’ view, this award makes the company more popular among employees who are proud of their workplace. Thus, the award contributes to the strengthening of the organisational culture, and the internal HR management effects are very important.

The award winning companies are more attractive also for job-seekers, who receive the message that these workplaces intend to accept the importance of family in employees’ lives. In some cases, the company became drawing for young mothers, who would hardly have other options to find a job, thus the company employs these women over the national average. Although the effects on innovation and creativity in the company were not emphasised in the managerial interviews, the award might play an indirect result, too.

In the case of multinational companies, this award played an important role in the inter-company recognition, too. In the communication within the company, the event raised the Hungarian affiliated company’s prestige, and earned higher appreciation in international comparison.

There is no evidence that the award had a direct effect in financial terms. Gender equality definitely is not relevant among the effects, as it was not taken into account in the evaluation earlier. It can rather be stated that gender equality in the workplace might increase the possibility of gaining this award.

However, there were some critical remarks on the national competition “Family friendly workplace award” on the part of company managers, who had a wider view on society. This view emphasised that such an award is only a PR-action, unless it is accompanied by real and radical changes in employment and family policy.

Previously, it was another side effect that also companies without crucial family friendly initiatives and measures took part in the competition, and their evaluation based simply on the submitted application form. Due to the reform, on the spot visits and interviews, this dysfunction has been eliminated recently.



Development and future perspectives

In the starting period of this national competition, the focus was on family, even if it worked against gender equality in the workplace. After the expression of many criticisms also the ministry accepted that monitoring and auditing was missing from the system. The incorporation of NGOs into the rethinking of the whole system of competition challenged the previous system, and renewed the award. A basic point was that the evaluation criteria were standardised and made public for the applicants. This way the selection became more objective and unbiased.

Quality assessment was also part of the development of the new initiatives. In 2008, the monitoring of the applicants was promised, and it was also carried out in the case of all winners.

There is an initiative from some NGOs to transform the various awards (Family Friendly Workplace Award, Best Workplace Award, Healthy Workplace Award, etc.) into one *Social Label*, but it has not been finalised yet. There is no univocal acceptance of this suggestion among the NGOs.

At present, the award winning institutions can use the label on their websites only for one year. Maybe it could be also transformed into companies' long-lasting recognition, if they fulfil the preconditions.



2.7 Iceland: Jafnérttisviðurkenningar (Engl. Icelandic Equality Award)

Background and objectives

Iceland shares its culture, including the history of human and women's rights, with the rest of the Scandinavian countries. In 1869, the first women's organisation was founded, but it was only in 1894, when the first real women's rights organisation came into existence, i.e. the Icelandic Women's Association which is an organisation that had the purpose of fighting for women's suffrage. Until then, most women's organisations had the aim of helping the sick and the poor. In the total absence of national health care and very little social help from the municipalities, the women's organisations played a significant role in shaping the welfare state. Their influence was particularly felt in the field of healthcare, such as providing home care for the sick and establishing a health care centre in Reykjavík. The women's organisations redefined social politics and advocated active state involvement in this area.

Married women became voters at the local elections of the capital, Reykjavík, on 1st January 1908, when they also established their own party. The women's suffrage, granted in 1915, contained the limitation that only women older than 40 years had the right to vote. This limitation showed the fear to change, as it was also declared that if all women would have been allowed to vote, then they might obtain the majority of the seats in the parliament, and this was not tolerable at that time.

About one hundred years later, the women's rights progressed gradually, and the women's participation in the labour force increased from 34 % in 1960 to over 80 % today, although acceptable gender equality, especially in the workplace, is still a goal to reach.

In 1980, an important fact happened, when Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, the fourth President of Iceland, was the first woman in the world to be elected a constitutional Head of State. During her four mandates, both the Equality Institute, under the Ministry of Social Affairs, and the Equality Council were established.

In 1992, at the beginning of Mrs. Finnbogadóttirs fourth and last mandate, also the Icelandic Equality Award was established.

Among others, the initiative was created to reduce the cultural resistance which made the laws about gender equality in the workplaces, with very few enforced. The main issues were and in a certain extent still are, the difference of yearly income between men and women; the limited access of women in to the managing and leadership positions and the still persistent gender differentiation among types of occupation.

In the last decade, the income of women has been between 59 % and 70 % of the income of men. The gap increases in the age class between 30 and 50 years, and persists in every economic sector, including the public ones. The difference is higher in the fishing industry and in the financial sector. In reference to the occupation's classes, also in the leadership position women's income is about 70 % of the men's income.

Only in the leading positions in public institutes, women's annual incomes reach 90 % of men's income.



More improvements have been made in reference to women's access to leadership and managing positions. As an example, in 1990, right before the prize was issued, only 22 % of elected representatives on local government councils were women. Ten years later it was 31 % and today it is well above two third. In the private sector, the situation is less equal: about 20 % of managers of limited companies are women, while only 2 % of the companies quoted in the stock exchange market had women in their boards.

The Equality Award was granted in 1992 to the Municipality of Akureyri because it has been the first municipality electing a woman as major. Also the municipality of Reykjavik obtained the prize some years later for the same reason. In 2005, the University of Iceland obtained the prize when it elected its first woman rector. Some years before, also a large aluminium company obtained the prize when a woman was nominated as general manager.

In reference to the persistent gender inequality among different types of occupation, the prize 2008 was given to another aluminium company, newly established in the eastern region of Iceland. The committee recognised that in a non-gender-friendly sector, such as the heavy industry, the company employed 24 % women, which was considered the best result within the other production sites of the same multinational, and being a world record among aluminium smelters.

The objective of the award is to increase the awareness on gender equality issues in the business environment and workplace in general. The Icelandic Gender Equality Council assigns the Icelandic Equality Award to individuals, companies, institutes, schools, municipalities or associations that in a way or another have excelled in gender equality matters, and have been considered to have contributed significantly to improve the equality between men and women.

The purpose of the prize is also to stimulate further practice and initiatives in reference to gender equality and being an example to help others to follow.

The organisations involved in running and managing the initiative are the Centre for Gender Equality and especially the Icelandic Gender Equality Council, formed by eleven members coming from the following institutes: the Icelandic Confederation of Labour, the Association of Public Workers, the Association of University Unions, the Ministry of Finance, the Confederation of Icelandic Employers, the Icelandic Feminist Association, the Icelandic Counselling and Information Centre for Survivors of Sexual Violence, the Shelter Centre for Women and Children Victims of Family Abuses, the Centre for Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Iceland, and the Association of Icelandic Municipalities.

The Gender Equality Council launches the initiative in order to create a positive and constructive discussion on issues related to gender equality in the workplace. This non-legislative initiative has actually the main purpose to incentivise the firms to enforce the laws on gender equality, which are today still very little taken into consideration.



The award was granted to:

1992: The municipality of Akyreyri
 1993: The Icelandic Sport Association
 1994: Hans Petersen (company)
 1995: The Student Council of the University of Iceland
 1996: The Icelandic Aluminium Company
 1997: Margrét Pálá Ólafssdóttir and her kindergarden
 1998: The Municipality of Reykjavík
 1999: Eimskip (cargo company)
 2000: Six women (Auður Eir Vilhjálmsdóttir, Bjarnfríður Leósdóttir, Helga Kress, Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, Svava Jakobsdóttir, Vigdís Finnbogadóttir)
 2001: VR (labour union)
 2002: The Reykjavik Energy Company
 2003: The Association of Women's Rights
 2004: Guðfríður Lilja Grétardóttir (Chess champion)
 2005: The University of Iceland
 2006: SPRON (local savings bank)
 2007: The college of Kópavogur
 2008: Alcoa Fjarðaál (aluminum smelter)

Working principles and content

The initiative does not have a strict assessment protocol for measuring the most prominent efforts in solving gender equality issues. As mentioned before, the Icelandic Gender Equality has not been designed uniquely for enterprises, but also for individuals, associations and public institutes, therefore there are no lists of detailed criteria to attain, but rather a set of rules to follow when assessing the applications.

The main criteria for choosing the prize winner are:

- The company, association or institute has to apply rigorously the laws related to gender equality in the workplace (individual obviously exempted).
- The initiator prefers to award the company which achieves gender equality at all levels, including the management.
- The Award committee gathers the information about the firm from third parties, associations or institutes in order to have a complete and impartial report on the applicant.
- In the auditing process following aspects are also taken into consideration: firm's culture, working time, management culture and services for families.

Once a year, the Icelandic Gender Equality Council advertises the Gender Award. The firms, associations and institutes, as well as individuals, can apply directly or be indirectly suggested by third parties. Individuals are basically been suggested by third parties.

The first committee session is formed by about twenty members, and has the task to go through the first selection of the applications, following the above mentioned criteria.

Then, a more restrict committee meets in the following sessions, often asking for more information to the few applicants still in the competition, and then chooses the one that clearly excels above the others.



These are the formal procedures in reference with the application. The initiator does pursue neither a strict policy nor very demanding criteria with view to the participating companies, but a rather more tolerant policy aiming at attracting a maximum number of companies.

The Award targets all women but also companies, associations and institutes of any size and sector which provide family-friendly working environment.

The companies have to fulfil every law concerning gender equality, including and especially the recently approved one (10/2008) which is called “Jafnréttisáætlun” (the Equality Rights’ Plan).

The initiative is promoted with an advertisement published in the main newspapers, asking for applicants, by email and on the website of the Gender Equality Council.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

The initiative is only partially monitored. It means that for each year it is considered only how many applicants have applied each time and there are neither statistical data on how the participation rate did change over time nor information of how many employees are concerned and their rate over the period from the establishment of the prize until today.

In the interview with the representative of the Icelandic Gender Equality Council it has been stated that the basic evidence about the value of this initiative is that the applications are stable over time and that the applicants show interest and satisfaction in participating to the contest. In average, a dozen of applications are sent in each year.

The reason why statistical data on the number of employees concerned are not collected, is because the prize have been awarded also to individuals.

But if considering only the winning companies and institutes, it is noticeable that large entities, with several hundreds of employees have been concerned, such as the Municipality of Reykjavík, the University of Iceland and the Reykjavík Energy Company, the SPRON saving bank, etc.

In reference to individuals or associations who won the prize, it is possible to claim that their influence on a large group of individuals have been very important. As an example, the award winner Guðríður Lilja Grétarsdóttir, chess champion, had enormous impact in hundreds of young women.

The initiative is considered successful in terms of participation rate, operating principles and it also had positive feedback from the enterprises.



From the viewpoint of the promoters, the success factors are the echo that this initiative has in the media which increases awareness in gender equality issues. The parties involved, and especially the winners, continue to promote these more gender-friendly environments, whether there are in private workplace, public sector, or social spaces, such as sport or other cultural associations.

From the applicants' point of view, the success is twofold. Taking into consideration SPRON bank and the University of Iceland, winning the award meant one more reason for attracting respectively new customers, and new students. At the same time, it positively affected also the quality of the employees work. Secondly, they have acted as honourable example to be followed by other financial companies or universities.

Both representatives from SPRON and the University of Iceland declared that the initiative has a sustainable positive impact on gender equality. The initiative could be improved by attracting companies in which gender inequalities are much higher, such as companies in the fishing sector, especially fish-products factories, but also all those workplaces where the income gap is still high.

Impact in companies

From the initiative's management viewpoint, there are several reasons why companies and public institutes participate to the award contest. Some of them, like SPRON, find it a great opportunity to make an internal policy in reference with gender equality public, and to get a gratification for activities initiated ten years earlier. In fact, the company (a few months ago it has been unfortunately absorbed by another bank due to the financial crisis) began its activity to reduce the income difference between female and male employees already in 1997. In 2006, when it obtained the Gender award, the company's president was a woman, and 21 out of 40 managers were women as well.

Every year, the president of the company's labour union was allowed to obtain information on SPRON's employees' salary with the purpose to enforce equality between salaries of men and women.

For the case of the University of Iceland, it has decided to participate to the Gender Equality award when the first woman rector had been elected. The participation and the following achievement of the prize have been driven by the wish to honour an important historical event. The university society is one of the most important activists in gender equality issues and it has gender equality as guiding line for each and every activity.

Also within the academia, there have been tremendous efforts in reducing the inequality of the incomes, as well as reducing the gender differences among different departments. Today more than 2/3 of university students are women, as well as more than half of the university employees. The campus provides also family-friendly structures such as nursery schools, and a gym course for children whose parents are university students.

There are several reasons why enterprises and institutes do not participate in gender equality contests. The main reason is that they ignore the benefits of having a gender friendly policy. They do not realise the positive impact on the quality and efficiency improvement in the job environment. Some companies do understand these arguments but still do not organise themselves following pragmatically gender friendly policies and at the same time they do not find themselves praiseworthy for the existing gender



equality rate. And of course there are still too many companies that do not think of gender inequality as issue to combat at all.

The main challenge when implementing the participation process is when the initiative for applying to the award has been taken. Sometimes the initiative is taken spontaneously, as was in the case of the University of Iceland, in other situation, like in SPRON, years of gender-friendly policy led to a planned participation to the award contest.

The benefits from the participation for the employer are very important external marketing and publicity effects and important internal human resource management effects. The latter include motivation, affection towards the company and devotion to work, but also less absenteeism. Gender equality has important effects on innovation, creativity, productivity and efficiency. The Gender Award has a good impact on gender equality in the participating companies because the employees gain in awareness of being part of a working community that follows good principles. This good feeling indeed improves work-life balance, and attracts also more customers.

Development and future perspectives

The focus of the initiative did not change over time, but it might change in the future by maybe focusing more on companies rather than other parties such as individuals and associations, although it probably will not change in the near future.

This initiative does not address specific problems of Iceland therefore the initiative it could be transferred to other countries.



2.8 Portugal: Prémio “Igualdade é Qualidade” (Engl. “Equality is Quality” Prize)

The background and objectives

The “Equality is Quality” award has been created in 1999/2000 and aims at distinguishing organisations which have introduced outstanding gender equality initiatives in the labour market or measures designed to balance the work life with the family/personal life. The prize was created to increase the awareness of gender equality issues in Portugal and to encourage organisations, particularly private firms, to develop gender equality policies and measures in the workplace, in the employment procedures and in the vocational training actions.

Since 1979, the Portuguese law implements the constitutional principle of non-discrimination based on sex and promotes gender equality in the workplace, employment and training. In 1982, the parliament has passed legislation establishing equal status to both maternity and paternity. In part due to the advanced nature of the legislation in force, the pace at which the society as a whole was adjusting to these equalitarian principles was generally considered to be slow, particularly as regards the advancement of female participation in some technical professions, traditionally the turf of men's work.

Thus, when developing the first edition of the National Employment Plan²⁹, the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity set out *the promotion of the gender equality of opportunities* as one of the four pillars of the employment policy. After emphasising the existence of “a strong sectoral and vertical segregation of female employment”, tending “to be concentrated in the health and educational sectors³⁰, and in the medium and lower levels of the organisational hierarchy”, the Government decided to bestow “priority to policies concerning equality between men and women, as a means to ensure sustained development, broadening citizenship and strengthening democracy” (MTS, 1999, p. 81)³¹. A new measure was then set out (Measure 20.4): “Awarding of prizes to firms and public services featuring exemplary policies in the equal opportunities area” (MTS, 1999, p. 87).

So, the “Equality is Quality” prize was initiated as (and still is) a measure included in the National Employment Plan. Initially funded exclusively by the Government budget, since 2004 the prize is included in a multi-annual programme for employment, training and social development co-funded by the structural funds of the European Union (European Social Fund). The management of the prize is the responsibility of CITE - Comissão para a Igualdade no Trabalho e no Emprego (*Commission for Equality in*

²⁹ Following the European Employment Strategy (EES) approved at the Luxembourg Jobs Summit in 1997.

³⁰ According to data of the Ministry of Employment, in 2005, the sectors with the largest proportion of women in their workforce were ‘Apparel industry, fur garments sub-sector’ (88.8 %), ‘Health and social services’ (82.2 %), ‘Other services’ (78.2 %) and ‘Education’ (82.2 %). On the other end there were ‘Construction’ (8.7 %), ‘Mining & quarrying’ (10.3 %), ‘Surface transportation’ (11.8 %), ‘Fishing and aquaculture’ (12 %), ‘Oil industry’ (14 %), ‘Machinery’ (15.7 %), ‘Metallurgy’ (17.4 %) and ‘Metalworking industry’ (17.6%). Cited in Casaca, S.F. (2009): “Vantagens Competitivas e Igualdade de Género” (Engl. Competitive Advantages and Gender Equality), Conferência Comemorativa dos 30 anos da CITE (conference), CCB, Lisbon, 3 July

³¹ MTS (1999): Plano Nacional de Emprego 1999 (Engl. National Employment Plan 1999), Ministry of Labour and Solidarity, Lisbon



Labour and Employment), a tripartite body (government, employers, workers) created in 1979.

The prize's main aims are to fight discrimination and to promote equality between women and men in the workplace, as well as employment and training in both the private and the public sectors as set out in the Portuguese Constitution.

CITE is made up of representatives of the government (through the current Ministry for Labour and Social Solidarity) and four social partners:

- “CCP – Confederação de Comércio e Serviços de Portugal” (*Confederation of Portuguese Trade and Services*)
- “CIP – Confederação da Indústria Portuguesa” (*Confederation of the Portuguese Industry*)
- “CGTP – Confederação Geral de Trabalhadores Portugueses” (*General Confederation of Portuguese Workers*)
- “UGT – União Geral de Trabalhadores” (*General Union of Workers*)

The jury of the “Equality is Quality” prize is presided by CITE and includes representatives of about 20 organisations, mostly public agencies and institutions³². The only three representatives of the private sector are the Portuguese Association of Managers of Human Resources (APG), the Portuguese Management Association (APM) and the Portuguese Association of Media and Advertising Enterprises (APAC).

Working principles and content

There is a regulation setting out the procedures, timing and awarding criteria for each edition³³ of the prize. The regulation, submission form and other details for application are available at the CITE website³⁴. The programme is actively promoted at the CITE website and other Portuguese sites dealing with equality issues. It is also promoted through advertising in the media and is frequently mentioned in public appearances of the minister and secretaries of state and senior officers of the labour department and in many conferences and informational events. The managing organisation also carries out direct e-mailing campaigns to companies and other targets.

³² The regional commissions for gender equality from the two autonomous regions of the Madeira and Azores archipelagos, the small business institute (IAPMEI), the national training and employment institute (IEFP), the standardisation and quality institute (IPQ), the authority for working conditions (ACT), the social security institute (ISS), the Directorate-General of Enterprise (DGE), the Directorate-General of Social Security (DGSS), the Directorate-General of Public Administration (DGAP), the Institute for the Co-operative Sector (IASSC), the Consumers Institute (IC), the Ministry of Environment, Urban Planning and Regional Development (MAOTDR), the Institute for Conservation of Nature and Biodiversity (ICNB), the Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (AICEP) and the Regulatory Authority for the Media (ERC).

³³ In a 10-years period, the prize has been awarded seven times: it started with its 1st edition in 2000 and the public awarding ceremony of the 7th edition was held in March 2009. The evaluation of the submissions for 8th edition (dubbed ‘2008/2009 edition’) is still underway, thus lagging behind the annual periodicity set out for the award. See DR (2007): III Plano Nacional para a Igualdade, Cidadania e Género 2007/2010 (Engl. III National Plan for Equality, Citizenship and Gender 2007/2010), Diário da República (Government Official Journal), 1st Series, no. 119, 22 June, p. 3970).

³⁴ <http://www.cite.gov.pt/>



Candidate organisations are categorised in several groups, to each of which may be awarded a specific prize. These groups are organised in the following categories:

- Private and public companies with business activities in Portugal in the three fiscal years preceding the submission year, enjoying a good financial standing and a posture which respects the sustainable development of the economy. These companies are categorised according to its workforce size:
 - o Category A – Micro-enterprises (less than 10 workers)
 - o Category B – Small-enterprises (10 to 49 workers)
 - o Category C – Medium-enterprises (50 to 249 workers)
 - o Category D – Large-enterprises (more than 249 workers)
 - o Category E – Multinational enterprises
- Co-operatives with business activities in Portugal in the three fiscal years preceding the submission year, enjoying a good financial standing and a posture which respects the sustainable development of the economy.
- Associations and other not-for-profit organisations with business activities in Portugal in the three preceding fiscal years before the submission year.

In each annual edition, applicants have to follow a formal submission system using a standard template and attaching a number of documents and statistical data. The general public may suggest organisations to be invited to participate in the contest and the organising commission may take the initiative of inviting entities at its discretion.

The following practices are sought by CITE and are used as criteria for awarding the “Equality is Quality” prize³⁵:

- Quantitative and qualitative analyses of the circumstances of the company’s or organisation’s male and female workers and monitoring of developments;
- Adoption of a human resources management policy that promotes gender equality;
- Adoption of an equality plan to redress any inequality progressively;
- Balanced participation by male and female workers in consultation and/or decision-making processes;
- Guaranteed equal opportunities for men and women in recruitment;
- Guaranteed equal access by women and men to promotion and career advancement;
- Guaranteed equal opportunities in access to vocational training by women and men;
- Guaranteed compliance with the provisions covering maternity and paternity rights and those for reconciling work and family life, equality between women and men and non-discrimination;

³⁵ Regulations available at the CITE’s Web site (http://www.cite.gov.pt/Iguald_Qualid/Regulamento.htm) as translated in (Guerreiro, M.D./Pereira, I., 2007).



- Guaranteed equal opportunities, for male and female workers, to reconcile work and family life, in particular via:
- Flexible forms of work organisation;
- Extended leave periods;
- Career breaks;
- Flexibility to attend to personal and family needs;
- Facilitated access to childcare and family support facilities and services;
- Specific measures to ensure that men are available to exercise their family rights and responsibilities;
- Specific measures that promote the return to the labour market of male and female workers who have interrupted their careers for family reasons;
- Job creation or vocational training in occupational areas in which men or women are underrepresented;
- The adoption of measures that discourage conduct in breach of the obligation to respect the human dignity of men and women in the workplace;
- The adoption of measures that discourage discriminatory conduct;
- Guaranteed actual equal pay for equal work and for work of equal value;
- The use of correct and non-discriminatory language in all the company's or organisation's documents;
- Other measures that are not mentioned but tend to eliminate or attenuate factors that penalise women in the labour market or men in family life.

Submissions are evaluated in a two-phase's process:

In the first phase, a team of technical evaluators³⁶ checks if all required documentation (declarations concerning legal requirements, good tax and social security standing, last corporate tax, and personnel registry, payrolls, working time schedules and social balance, when mandatory) and statistical data (on employment, personnel management policies and practices, training, work conditions, etc.) are included in the submission and if the standard template³⁷ is duly filled-in. If some important piece of information or document is missing, the candidate is excluded from the contest.

CITE also evaluates and grades the submission. The answers to the questionnaire are evaluated and a score is given to each candidate, thus providing a basis to select the candidates that pass to the next phase.

³⁶ Usually a joint team of experts from the staff of CITE and the social sciences research centre (CIES) of a university institute (ISCTE, Lisbon).

³⁷ The template includes a questionnaire aiming at establishing the applicant's basic details, not only as to its legal nature, location and human resources structure but also as to certain indicators on the status of men and women in the organisation and any specific measures taken to promote equality and fight discrimination.



In the second phase, a detailed analysis of the data submitted by the applicants is performed. Whenever deemed necessary, additional information is requested. Concurrently, the evaluators visit the facilities of the candidates and interview the management and the workers' representatives. "This is a key stage, involving direct contact with the reality of the organisation and the opportunity to listen to some employees' opinions. It is also an appropriate moment for clarifying any questions that emerge from the evaluation of the documentation submitted and for comparing statements made in the application form with the organisation's day-to-day life. The importance of this visit for the preparation of the final evaluation should be noted" (Guerreiro, M.D./Pereira, I., 2007, p. 25)³⁸.

The findings of these two phases are all summed up in a report which is delivered to the members of the jury. They may require additional information.

Then, the final decision is made at a jury meeting (that may take one or more sessions) through a voting process, with each member of the jury having the right to cast one vote. The decision is based on the above report and in some specific appraisal exercises conducted by certain members of the jury who have overseeing responsibilities in matters which are relevant to the awarding criteria. These appraisals verify whether and to what extent the candidates fulfil criteria in the area each jury member has overseeing responsibilities (for instance, ACT, the authority for working conditions, assesses the compliance with employment legislation, the Consumer Institute assesses the compliance with the legislation on advertising and consumers' rights, and MAOTDR, the Ministry of Environment, assesses the compliance with environmental legislation).

Besides the main prizes, the jury can also award honourable mentions to organisations that follow non-discriminating practices and use gender equality good practices which deserve public recognition, though not completely fulfilling the awarding criteria.

Prizes and honourable mentions entitle the awardees to use the distinctive logo of the prize on their products, advertising materials, publications and public relations and communications. If some circumstances are met, they may benefit from contributions to specific advertising campaigns.

These distinctions are valid for a three-year period since the date they are awarded, except when CITE decides to abolish the award due to misbehaviour of the awardee (this has never happened to date). After the three-year period, awarded organisations can apply again for a new prize.

³⁸ Guerreiro, M.D. /Pereira, I. (2007): Corporate Social Responsibility, Gender Equality and the Reconciliation of Work and Family Life. A Report on the Experience of the Equality is Quality Award, Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment, Studies no. 5, Lisbon



Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

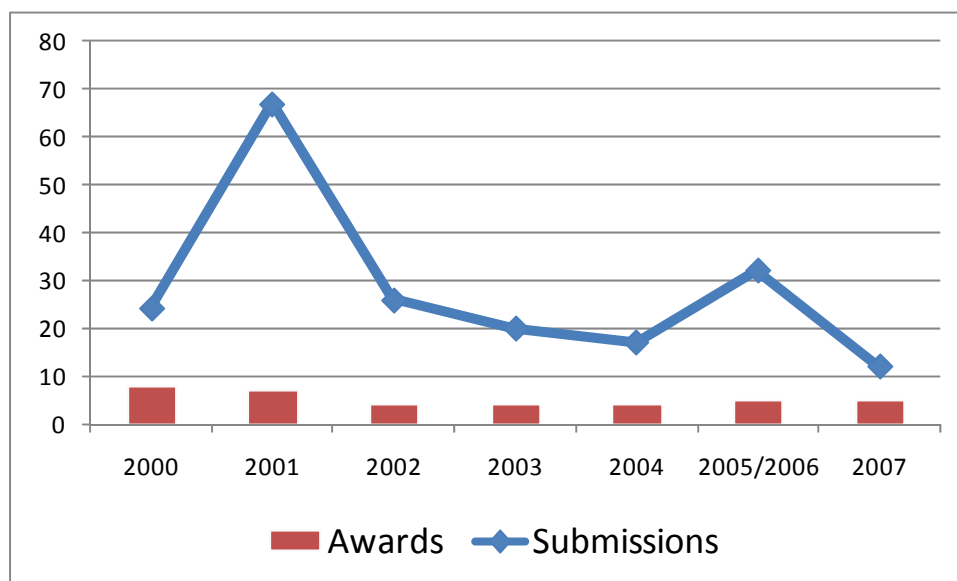
The “Equality is Quality” award, though running since 2000 and having completed seven editions in March 2009, has never been object of an independent evaluation³⁹. CITE considers the award a success, an assessment which is generally shared by the organisations represented in the prize jury⁴⁰, as well as by the awardees. There are also indications that other European organisations have contacted CITE to collect information, indicating that they have a good impression of the programme.

Recently, CITE published a report authored by two researchers of the centre that provides technical assistance to the evaluation and grading of the applications (Guerreiro, M.D./Pereira, I., 2007).

The report does not address the evaluation matter. It aims to “provide an account of the process leading to the allocation of ‘Equality is Quality’ Award [...] in the last five years” (ibid, p.5). The data provided in this research, together with information provided directly by CITE, help to gauge the size and reach of the initiative.

Since the inception the programme (seven editions)⁴¹, a total of 198 applications⁴² were submitted (an average of 28 per edition), 15 of which were awarded the prize and 22 got honourable mentions (Graph 1).

Graph 1 Equality is Quality Award: Number of applicants 2000-2007



Source: Guerreiro, M.D./Pereira, I. (2007)

³⁹ A rather common situation for public programmes in Portugal.

⁴⁰ Jury members are a good sample of public agencies with responsibilities in areas relevant to the gender equality and other CSR issues.

⁴¹ 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006/2007 and 2008.

⁴² Some organisations have submitted applications more than once, so the number of organisations is smaller than the number of applications. Some of the awardees with the prize were awarded before an honourable mention.

From the first editions of the programme some indicators can be highlighted (ibid., pp.30-37):

- Applicant organisations, though being located practically all over the country, are more concentrated in the conurbations of the two largest Portuguese cities, Lisbon (36.5 %) and Porto (17.6 %).
- They are mostly companies, LLCs (46.6 %) and PLCs (30.1 %), the not-for-profit “social sector”, being represented mainly by co-operatives (7.5 %) and associations (6.8 %).
- The most represented industries are the manufacturing industry (24.7 %) and the wholesale trade (21.4 %).
- The persons responsible for the applications were mostly males, 77 % in the case of senior executives and 64 % in the case of persons holding other managerial functions.

There is no available data concerning the number of employees involved. Bearing in mind that candidate companies tend to be larger than the Portuguese average firm, it is possible to infer that a few tens of thousand employees have been reached by this initiative.

There is a declining trend in the number of submissions (Graph 1), which, according to CITE, is a consequence of two main causes:

- the slowdown of the Portuguese economy in the last years, pushing companies to be more focused on short-term competitiveness issues and
- a loss of impetus in the promotion activities of the programme which became more routinely managed than on the first two editions of the programme.

CITE, after realising this negative trend, decided to make some important changes which will be implemented in the current eighth edition and will be mentioned later in this paper.

According to CITE, the main success factors are (a) “the award is a major factor in fighting discrimination in the workplace” and (b) the comprehensive and in-depth approach including the exhaustive assessment of all activity areas of the firm. This assessment allows the independent professional auditing teams to precisely identify where there are elements of discrimination and, subsequently, to define ways to eradicate non-compliant behaviour and to formalise good policies in the organisation. This method provides credibility to the award, thus increasing its positive impact on the public image of the awarded organisations, in terms of corporate social responsibility.

Interviewees and opinions published in the media consider the programme to have a positive impact on gender equality in the workplace in general in Portugal. Though this being a qualitative and impressionistic assessment, it is reasonable to consider that some impact should be attributable to the programme, notably by offering additional opportunities to increase the awareness of the business community to the gender equality issues and to disseminate good practices as well as the relevant legislation that companies have to comply.



There is room for increasing the promotional activities of the award, area where some weaknesses were noted (see below).

Impact in companies

Candidates submitting applications tend to be organisations which have already gender equality policies in place and are among the most advanced in the area in Portugal with well established internal practices covering the range of relevant issues (from equal opportunities in recruiting and pay to providing facilities and systems that help balance work life with personal and family life). Some of them are already SA 8000 certified.

According to the research mentioned before, the motivations that made these organisations to embark in the award are (ibid., p.40):

- “a desire to see public recognition of characteristics [they] considered inherent to the organisation,
- a desire to compare recent changes in this area with the situation in other organisations and with the accumulated knowledge of CITE as an organisation involved in this issue and
- a desire to obtain more information and training on any of the organisation’s weaknesses and strengths.”

From the company side, the main success factors are (a) the impact of the award in the internal marketing of the company (the motivation of personnel was considered to be very important) and to a lesser extent (b) external marketing (impact on CSR image is important). The impact on innovation and on finance is considered to be negligible.

Companies do not consider the evaluation exercise conducted by the CITE appointed teams to create any kind of difficulties and hindrances.

On the contrary, they look at that process as an opportunity to exchange views and learn from the external professionals, to identify possible improvement areas, to formalise practices that were already in place but were not object of a formal recognition, etc. In general, the changes introduced following this analysis create more benefits for the employees more frequently as regards “hidden” discrimination factors tied to long established traditional customs (e.g.: low participation of the male parent in children care activities).

As a side effect, some companies mention that the exposure to other experiences made them aware of other collaboration possibilities, thus having embarked in collective CSR projects with other companies.

Development and future perspectives

As mentioned, the “Equality is Quality” award is going through an organisational change aiming at increasing the awareness for the programme by put forth more energetic promotion activities. From the eighth edition (2008/2009; currently in the evaluation phase), the award will be managed jointly by CITE and CIG – Comissão para a Cidadania e Igualdade de Géneros (*Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality*), a governmental unit reporting to the Prime-Minister.



The focus and the format will be the same. Small adjustments in the regulations are also being considered to capitalise on the experience gained so far.

The “Equality is Quality” initiative is quite general in its objectives and approach and is easily transferable to other countries.



2.9 Portugal: Melhor Empresa para Trabalhar para Mulheres (Engl. The Best Company to Work for Women)

Background and objectives

The “Best Company to work for women” is part of the broader initiative the “Best Workplaces in Portugal”. The latter started in 2000 when the originator of the initiative in the USA decided to extend it to Europe⁴³. Actually, Portugal was the first European country to inaugurate the initiative, followed by Denmark, the UK and Italy in 2001 and the other western countries in the following years.

The original initiative was launched in the USA, “based on the over twenty years of research initiated by Robert Levering and Milton Moskowitz, and first presented in their book “The 100 Best Companies to Work for in America 1984 Edition” (Addison-Wesley 1984).”⁴⁴

In 1991, “The Great Place to Work® Institute, Inc”, was founded by author Robert Levering and consultant Amy Lyman, in collaboration with a team of professional organisation and management consultants. This institute is a private research and management consultancy with international affiliate offices throughout the world.

According to the institute the “[...] underlying concept behind the list and the special prize is that by congratulating and highlighting best practice, other organisations will recognise the benefits of becoming a great workplace, gain an understanding of how to work towards this goal and ultimately be encouraged to follow suit. This in turn will improve the daily lives of employees throughout the country.”⁴⁵

In Portugal, a list of 30 “Best Workplaces” is organised each year. The results of the ninth edition of the programme were made public in March 2009. Since 2006, within the listed companies, a special prize for the “Best Company to Work for Women” is awarded. The special prize has been established due to the actuality of the topic and due to the results of the questionnaire, as many enterprises are very active in promoting gender equality issues in the workplace. Furthermore, the managing organisation felt that there was a commercial interest in providing this additional distinction.

Working principles and content

The main listing “The Great Place to Work®” is open to any organisation, be it privately held, profit or not-for-profit, or any government agency with a minimum of 20 employees in Portugal.

Applicants pay a participation fee, depending on the number of employees of the firm (e.g. small enterprises pay a fee of € 6,000, medium sized enterprises pay a fee of € 7,200) and on whether the participating firm wants more detailed feedback from the institute besides the base research.

⁴³ Currently, besides Europe and North America, “Great Place to Work®” also runs in Latin America and Asia.

⁴⁴ <http://www.greatplacetowork.com/>

⁴⁵ <http://www.greatplacetowork.com/>



The base fee entitles the participants to the following:

- Participation in an online survey⁴⁶ which is to be filled in by all employees;
- A “feed-back report” where the results of the survey are assessed. It includes a summary of the answers organised along the five core dimensions that are specific to the methodology (“Credibility”, “Respect”, “Fairness”, “Pride” and “Camaraderie”), and their statistics broken down by employee demographics (age, gender, job, ethnic groups, years with the firm, etc.). This report aims at providing the management of the participating firm with results concerning the satisfaction/dissatisfaction status of their employees and encompasses a strengths/weaknesses analysis.
- A “comments report” where the comments of the employees on an open question of the base survey are analysed (themes raised, their frequency, implications), emphasising examples and other anecdotal materials submitted by the employees.
- Presentation of the findings, where the conclusions are submitted and discussed in a one-hour oral presentation.

Each year, the process is open to companies and registration is available via internet. The organisations submit their application spontaneously or after being recommended by one of their employees.

Eligibility criteria are checked and registration is formally accepted for a maximum of 100 organisations each year⁴⁷. The selection process is primarily based on the employees’ responses to the survey mentioned above. In addition, support materials submitted by the company are also evaluated, including the company’s response to a management culture audit, as well as information gathered from other reputable sources such as media stories about the company.

The level of trust, pride and camaraderie within the workplace is measured on the basis of the survey tool and a score is given to each companies. This score is used to rank the companies.

Lists are published in the website of the Portuguese affiliate⁴⁸ and is also available on the websites of the other European colleagues (currently there are 17 European affiliates). On these sites, two European rankings are also published (SMEs and Large firms).

The usual information channels, such as press, radio and TV, are also used to publish the ranking list, usually with some editorial content commenting the awards and highlighting some aspects of the programme. There are also conferences and

⁴⁶ The survey uses a tool “Great Place to Work® Trust Index© Questionnaire” designed specifically for the survey, which is common to all countries where this award takes place, as are the other components of the methodology.

⁴⁷ This quota was introduced in 2008 when the managing organisation decided to carry out a more in-depth approach, including direct presentations to all participating companies. This quota was attained both in 2008 and 2009.

⁴⁸ <http://www.greatplacetowork.pt/>



seminars, both domestic and international, dedicated to address employment and HR issues where the programme is frequently mentioned.

There also specifically appointed “media partners” which closely accompany the programme and publish a summary report highlighting the best practices that were identified each year. In 2009, the Portuguese media partners were “TSF” (a radio station) as well as “Diário de Notícias” and “Jornal de Notícias”, two national daily papers with a large circulation in the country.

Introduced in 2006, the “Best Company to work for women” is a by-product of the main process. Within the frame of “Best Workplaces in Portugal”, out of the participating/ranked enterprises, the best company to work for women is awarded, as the survey also includes questions in the field of gender equality. The Great Place to Work® Model© emphasises good organisation and good relations between employers, employees and the respective enterprise as such. “Trust”, “Respect” (e.g. expressed in work-life balance and support) and “Fairness” (non discriminating treatment) are important factors for good workplaces, and thus also for gender equality.

Apart from Portugal, also Austria features the distinction (in Austria it is called “Best workplace for women”). Other European countries, such as Denmark, the UK and the Netherlands also have special awards (e.g.: “Work-life balance”, “Life-long learning”, “Diversity”, “Outstanding achievements”, “Commitment to trust”, “Integrity”, “Involvement of Employees”, “Personal Development”) but there is no “Best company to work for women” award among them.

There are other categories in the Portuguese edition, which usually were introduced after the results of the survey of a certain year have been known and the possibility to create a new distinction became promising. Currently, there are the following distinctions within the main listing: “Women”, “Youngsters”, “Executives”, “CSR”, “Leadership and Training for Sustainability” and “The Best County to Work”.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

The total number of employees concerned in the last edition of the prize was around 22,000. The initiative is monitored by the Great Place to Work® Institute Europe, a subsidiary of the US Institute, to guarantee similar procedures and methods all over Europe, allowing the preparation of the ranking list of “Best Workplaces in Europe”. There are no external evaluation or assessment procedures.

The listing has good visibility in Portugal and is generally considered to be a positive programme by the specialised media. There are other independent signs of the quality and good acceptance of the programme: The Portuguese Minister for Employment and Solidarity attended this year’s public announcement and delivered the awards of the special prizes. The specialist “women channel” of the SIC TV⁴⁹ broadcasted a one-hour feature on the programme. One of the awardees in Portugal in 2009 was selected as best practice to be presented internationally within the “The Great Place to Work” system.

⁴⁹ “SIC Mulher” of the cable network.



Companies engaged in the programme also provide positive feed-back as to its quality and importance as a HR management instrument. There are many companies, mostly multinationals, repeatedly participating in the programme.

Probably, among the factors that contribute for the success of the initiative in Portugal are: its international nature (allowing for extended benchmarking exercises, either among companies or among subsidiaries of the same multinational), the use a proven methodology that has been enhanced through the contribution of many different cultures, and the first-class promotional work carried out by the organisers.

Impact in companies

Many companies engaged in the annual survey are subsidiaries or franchises of multinationals and their participation are determined by policies set up by their mother companies. Local companies participate because they expect benefits in terms enhanced visibility and image in possible candidates for recruitment and employment, improved attractiveness of the job and higher motivation of their workforce. They also value the diagnostic/evaluation of the work atmosphere, the possibility of conducting benchmarking exercises with other companies, and other specific outputs of the programme with direct or indirect implications on HR policies.

Another company source mentioned that though not having any hard data to substantiate their views, they felt that the “Best Company to work for women” distinction has had external positive impact on the public image of the company, in the way it is perceived by their clients and making them more attractive for recruitment purposes, and internally, notably by nurturing the pride of belonging and the team spirit of their staff. According to the reasons given to the programme organiser for not participating in the programme the factors that prevent companies from participating in the programme are

- financial reasons (the participating fee is considered high mostly by the smaller companies and
- own policies which may cover a wide variety of inhibiting motives (e.g. do not want overload their personnel frequently, they have some other motivational programme running and do not want to introduce conflicting approaches, etc.).

As mentioned before, the survey questionnaire has an open question where employees can openly submit issues, make requests, and suggest measures or policies. Many of the suggestions that are submitted through this process and which are approved by the management have a direct impact on the working conditions (e.g. changes on the working schedule, creation of children care facilities, etc.)

Development and future perspectives

The tenth edition of the programme is currently under preparation. No major changes are foreseen in the model and the procedures of the programme. They are perceived to have a good performance und thus do not need any major improvement. The distinction the “Best Company to work for women” has been kept stable since its inception in 2006 and there is no change foreseen.

The programme has no cultural or other traits specific to Portugal. Thus it seems to be easily transferable to other countries.



2.10 Slovenia: Managerkam prijazno podjetje (Engl. Women Manager-Friendly company)

Background and objectives

The first stirrings of the idea to promote women in professional careers date back to the year 1991. The breakthrough process of raising consciousness in women's management as well as its natural growth led to the need for substantially different treatments of gender equality concept issues. The *Manager's Association of Slovenia* registered a need to address this target group specifically as early as the transition period. At that time, *The Section of Women Managers* began to grant recognition to "The Most Women-Friendly Business of the Year". The idea for granting such recognition which was the forerunner of the initiative described herein, came from Germany which had a similar contest. The contest was conducted from 1991 to 2002 by recognising thriving enterprises in which:

- women were in leadership and managerial positions;
- it was cared about tidiness and friendly working conditions for workers; and
- employees were predominantly women.

The one-sided situation was no longer present in business in general, but within the managerial structures. This situation bore the idea of a focus change - from companies as a whole to a narrower segment of companies' management. The shift was made with the introduction of the award "Women Manager-Friendly Company" which replaced the previous award and was first granted in 2003. With such recognition, the initiators wanted to expose those organisations in which female management played a strong role.

The main objective of the initiative is to highlight the importance and role of women leaders and managers, both in the company and in society in general. Due to their role in the company, leading managers contribute significantly to business success and the creation of organisational culture. They also affect the relations between employees in groups within which they work and cooperate.

Implementing organisations:

The described initiative is part of a larger programme of activities carried out by The Managers' Association of Slovenia, which is the preeminent managers' association in Slovenia striving for the protection and progress of the management profession. They have created subgroups, known as "sections", to help meet the special needs of their members and build a more inclusive organisation (e.g. the Section of Women Managers, the Section of Young Managers, and the Section of Foreign Managers). Together with these sections, they organise regular professional meetings, publish professional publications, conduct research, and award prestigious recognitions to those who have done important work for the management profession with the following awards:

- Manager of the Year (awarded since 1991)
- The Most Women-Friendly Business of the Year (awarded from 1991 to 2002)
- Women Manager-Friendly Company (awarded since 2003)
- Young Manager of the Year (awarded since 1999)



- Artemis — Woman Manager of the Year
- The Lifetime Achievement Award

The implementation of the “Women Manager-Friendly Company” award was carried out by The Section of Women Managers which operates within the framework of the Managers’ Association of Slovenia. Its primary aim is to promote women managers so as to better exercise their skills while simultaneously creating the best chance for achieving good results in broader environment.

Working principles and content

Each year, the Section of Women Managers sends out a call for applications in the *MQ Magazine*, the Managers’ Association e-news, and on the Women Managers Section websites. Managers’ Association members who potentially meet the selection criteria are directly asked to participate. Some companies, of course, apply on their own initiative.

A candidate for the award may be any company that falls under the legislation in the group of medium or large enterprises that is doing business in the Republic of Slovenia. Exceptionally, the award may also be given to professional, scientific, educational, or similar institutions that are, through their achievements, contributing to the promotion of women in management positions.

A candidate company must meet the following conditions:

- Employ females for more than one third of its managerial and leadership positions (General Director, Management Board, Executive Director);
- Have at least 50 employees;
- Show a trend of growth over the previous three years;
- Demonstrate successful business results according to indicators used in their financial statements.

After receiving the nomination, the initiators send an extensive questionnaire that consists of both quantitative and qualitative elements of the business assessment to the candidate companies. The quantitative data, in particular, include operating financial results for three years. Qualitative data are mainly based on the description of the career development of three to five females in the managerial and leadership positions in the company. They need to respond to the questionnaire by themselves, describing the development of their professional careers in the respective company. The selection of a company’s candidate is made by the internal criteria of a company that applies for the award. The qualitative part of the questionnaire is set in a manner that identifies potential problem areas of gender inequality (e.g. wage gap). Thus, the company needs to describe how it creates conditions for optimum development of female managers’ careers.

Some companies participate year after year and thereby express a high degree of persistence in their efforts to achieve the award. However, competition is stiff. Once a company receives a prize, it can never apply again. Recognition is granted on the basis of an established situation in the company and cannot be taken away for any reason.



The commission for proposal evaluation consists of six members coming from the Section of Woman Managers as well as from external environment (e.g. directors, managers, educators, consultants). For the assessment process, they receive comparative analyses of the nominations. It is important to stress that the evaluation process is secret; only the commission receives the information, and it is not known which companies are candidates for recognition.

The Governing Board of The Section of Women Managers decides on recipients based on a special commission opinion. The "Women Manager-Friendly Company" is awarded at the spring meeting of the entire Managers' Association to draw attention to those companies who recognise the important role that women managers play. At that time, the winners are presented to wider society and simultaneously serve as a case of good practise for other event participants.

Recognition is awarded to the recipient in the form of a diploma, with a memorial art sculpture of a bronze horse (made by the artist Boštjan Štinet), inscribed with "Woman Manager-Friendly Company" and the year. In addition to the award which is given to the company's general managing director, each individual female candidate (three to five candidates from the winning company) receive their own miniature sculpture. In this way, the recognition exposes the individual, not just the winning company.

Promotion of the initiative takes place at several levels: in the general public media, on the Managers' Association website, in the association's press, at association activities (e.g., "The Association Annual Conference" and the conference "Female Managers Excellence", organised by The Section of Women Managers), in the *MQ Magazine*, in internal newsletters of companies that have received the award, and through the dissemination effects, as the winners of the award host various meetings, round tables, etc. The website⁵⁰ provides detailed (downloadable) information on the award and calls for recognition.

Assessment

Assessment of the initiative itself

The Management Board of The Section of Women Managers monitors the administration of the commission and is simultaneously accountable to the Managers' Association of Slovenia Board of Managers, which is responsible to the members' assembly. Superintendence is ultimately administered by the court of honour.

The participation rate for the competition is stable. The commission receives four to six applications each year. Since all participating companies need to describe three to five female managers' careers, approximately 25 female managers stand as candidates each year. From 2003 to 2009, seven Slovenian companies received the award.

Assessment/evaluation of the initiative is conducted through the reporting about the work. Each year, the commission carries out a self-assessment and correction of the questionnaire for the current year. In this way, the content of the questionnaire is adapted to current developments in management year after year.

⁵⁰ <http://www.zdruzenje-manager.si>



The organisers as well as winners have assessed the initiative as very successful. The effects of such an initiative are of course multi-faceted. At the level of the national economy, they contribute to the enhanced reputation of the managerial profession in general, the presentation of good practices to the wider society, increased awareness of women's assertiveness in order to decide on managerial careers etc.. At the company level, such recognition confirms to leadership members that their work is beneficial and visible and raises the awareness that it is time to give space in managerial positions to women. Winning companies have indicated that success factors also include business results as well as the visibility of a company in the local and wider area.

The implementing organisation faces challenges in engaging as many companies as possible to participate each year. Candidates need to put extensive time and effort into completing the qualitative and quantitative measures and writing the application for the competition. Since Slovenia is a small country, organisers have expressed the potential for an obstacle to occur at some point: namely, having a limited company pool that can participate in such a competition due to the fact that a company can only be awarded once.

According to participating companies, the initiative could be improved to parallel the competition with the importance of such awards and the importance of establishing equal conditions for the advancement of women's work in all areas of public and business sectors. Winning companies also stressed that the initiative should be given greater force and media visibility.

The initiators are convinced that the final purpose of such an award is its sustainable development in terms of achieving gender equality in the area of management, so that having women in it would become a fixture/standard, not the condition for which we should seek. After achieving this goal, granting such recognition would become pointless. The raise in collective consciousness will subsequently be generated in such a way that organisational culture will address women in management as a continuum.

Impact on companies

On the one hand, companies participate in the initiative for many different reasons:

- They are proud of the fact that they employ many female managers and want to highlight this to the broader public; such behaviour could be an important reference for further employment of viable candidates.
- Companies enhance their reputation and brand value.
- The award presents recognition of the leadership of a company, indicating that their personnel policy is successful and simultaneously enhancing membership of workers in a company.
- Companies acquire media attention.
- Some companies simply collect prizes as a way to promote strategic human resource management policies. Such awards namely present positive confirmation of longstanding management efforts to pursue appropriate personnel policy.



On the other hand, some companies have reasons not to participate — especially smaller companies, which often do not dare to enter the competition against larger ones. They sometimes express a fear of failure or simply do not wish to expose themselves. The decision to not participate could also stem from planned internal changes in management that deviate from the criteria of the competition or simply their assessment that they are not good enough to expose the business to commission evaluation.

According to initiators as well as winning companies, the most dominant benefit for participating companies lies in the internal human resource management effects. Employees (winners of a miniature sculpture as well as others) are more motivated, proud, and satisfied with their work life. The manifestation of such a situation can be observed through the rise in innovation and creativity in the workplace. External marketing and publicity effects are also important, as they contribute to the reputation of a winning company.

The benefits for the employees per se can also not be taken for granted. Winning the sculpture raises candidates' recognition in a broader managerial society, strengthens their position in their respective company, may have a career effect in the sense of further advancement, brings the joy of being recognised for their work, and also contributes as a personal element within a narrow family. However, it should be emphasised that, in addition to positive effects, negative effects — namely in the sense of rivalry within an existing company — cannot be overlooked.

Many side effects result from the initiative as well. Managerial occupations are brought into force. The initiative contributes to a general increase in awareness of the importance of the female role in management. The winning business often receives important recognition in its local/regional environment. In this way, managerial work gains appeal among young people — prospective future managers. At the same time, it contributes to maintaining the balance between private and business life.

Development and future perspectives

Only 16 female general managing directors exist among the 200 largest Slovenian companies (Source: *Manager Magazine*, May 2009) which illustrates that being a woman is rather the exception than the rule in Slovenian corporate governance. Furthermore, Slovenia is facing a lack of female managers in the middle generation. For some years, the main focus was to present individuals/managers who have been in the top positions for 15 years already. An evident time lag exists in the development of the female managers' careers, but it is not yet known how to define its real reasons. To this end, the Section of Women Managers introduced the recognition "Artemis", which highlights female role models among Slovenian managers. The emphasis is on the companies' culture, so that being a woman in management should become a "standard" and not something to strive for. Given the initially exposed generational shift in the managerial careers of women, such recognition is also an incentive to younger generations.

The next stage in the development of such an award is to introduce another kind of recognition — perhaps an award for a manager-friendly business irrespective of gender. The shift should be made in the context of the evaluation, where the commission would appraise broader conditions for managers in the respective company. For example, the work-life balance strategy is currently neglected in the world of management. The tendency is to have a balanced alignment within managerial work, which



would harmonise the future site of three business aspects: balancing physical, social, and spiritual components of managers' work life.

The initiative is not country specific and could easily be transferred to other geographic locations. The Slovenian team is also prepared to assist in transferring their practice to potentially interested partners.



2.11 Sweden: Guldnappen (Engl. The golden pacifier prize)

Background and objectives

With equality between sexes in professional life regulated by national legislation (Discrimination Act) and a widespread tradition of collective agreements, Sweden is ahead of many countries in terms of equality of opportunities between men and women in the workplace.

Notwithstanding, in practice, women's careers are affected to a larger extent by having children than men's careers, as society by tradition ascribes childcare liabilities to women. The fact that men still have higher wages than women contributes to this, as who is to be on parental leave is often also a financial issue many times resulting in women staying at home.

Guldnappen was initiated in 2003 by Unionen, a trade union for professionals in the private sector with over 65,000 member companies. Guldnappen came into existence as a reaction to the fact that many of Unionen's members had lost their jobs or had been discriminated in other ways while on parental leave. Employers have a tendency to regard employees with children as an obstacle rather than an asset. This is the reason why the objectives of Guldnappen are to encourage companies that facilitate the combination of parenting and working, to ensure that there are no conflicting interests between work and family and thereby make workplaces family friendly.

One important aspect of the project is to influence the public opinion in this matter, and thereby shift focus so that employers encourage rather than punish parental leave for both men and women. With Guldnappen, Unionen wants to help employers seeing opportunities instead of impediments and support companies to ensure that men and women have equal opportunities.

Working principles and content

Members of Unionen nominate their workplace on the trade union's website where they fill in an application form. Formal requirements for participating are collective agreement and an equality plan, and the companies have to pursue workplace equality audits and annual wage surveys to prevent differences in wage between men and women (which is an obligation of all organisations in Sweden with ten or more employees).

When nomination is closed, a project team of internal experts from Unionen takes a closer look at all companies that fulfil the obligations. The team scrutinises how the equality plan is handled, and how visible and trustworthy the gender equality work is in practice. The team inspects how close the workplace cooperates with the trade union and the support of the management in this matter, and then presents a few potential winners to the management of Unionen who finally appoints first, second and a consolidation prize.

All nominated companies are honoured with a diploma, and nominees that do not have a satisfactory equality plan are contacted by the management with the aim to help them in their work. Thereby, the competition encourages gender equality work at many different levels and winning is only one part of the game.



Every year, Guldnappen has a different theme related to actual issues within the work of Unionen. The theme of 2008 was the role of males in companies; in 2009 the theme was leadership as business managements have much power when it comes to norm-setting in companies. By illustrating good examples in combination parenting and working, managers can set the agenda for the whole company. It is worth mentioning that in 2008 there was no winner due to the fact that the management did not consider any nominee as creditable winner.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

Since 2003, when the initiative started, the amount of nominees has increased steadily. In the year 2009, to attract more companies, Unionen realised a marketing campaign with advertisements in magazines and on the internet which resulted in threefold more nominations (about 30 instead of 10).

As Guldnappen has achieved to stimulate the opinion and get more nominations, Unionen considers it successful according to their evaluations of the project. The initiators of the project state that one reason for the success is that the management of Unionen is very committed to gender equality work. As the members of the management have small children themselves, they are well aware of the difficulties of combining working and parenting, and repeatedly bring the issue to light in different contexts.

According to the initiators, the initiative could be further developed and strengthened by a more local character e.g. break it down to sectors, as it so far has been handled at a central level. However, this would call for more resources, both financial and personnel, something Unionen could need more of already.

The fact that companies are nominated by representatives from the trade union is significant and gives credibility to the gender equality work in the workplaces, as one company mentioned “the trade unions are the toughest judges”.

Even though the number of nominees is increasing, it is still very low considering the number of workplaces that theoretically could be nominated. Therefore, Unionen thinks it is very important to continue working on projects like Guldnappen: if thousands of companies would get nominated, gender equality in workplaces would exist to a much larger extent and the problem would not be as critical as now. The more attention put into the gender issue with projects like Guldnappen, the more impact it will get, and thus a possibility to have a sustainable positive impact on gender equality.

Impact in companies

According to the first and second prize winners of 2009, in times of fast and intense technical development it is important to be a strong competitor. Furthermore, it is essential to have positive attention in matters like gender equality. The first-prize winner of Guldnappen in 2009 is a company in the outsourcing business, well aware of the competition on good labour and the importance of employer branding in the sector. Therefore, the company prioritises a strong gender equality work, as it is important to be an attractive employer in all areas. Being ahead in gender equality is an essential part of publicity effects to attract young people. Since receiving the prize, the company



has been contacted by persons interested to work in the company, which confirms the importance of external marketing.

Apart from the value of publicity effects, the awarded companies think that positive intern effects are the important benefits of working hard on gender equality. A good workplace with satisfied employees has positive effects on motivation and innovation, which at long term will generate financial benefits, both in financial returns and keeping labour within the company.

The keywords of the gender equality work in the winning company are flexibility and mobility, on when and where to work, to facilitate for employees with children. It is a dynamic organisation with a virtual structure that scrutinises all parts of the company to make gender equality work have an effect and thereby refine its trademark and what it can offer its employees.

The companies awarded with first and second prize in 2009 emphasise the importance of long-term thinking and patience in gender issues, as underlying structures are hard to change. In this process, the attitude of the management is essential, as “the tone at the top” sets the agenda for the entire company. The management must act as role models, and the winning company constantly highlights employees who are both managers and on parental leave. No matter how well written it is in policies, it must be clearly accepted at the top to permeate the organisation. The companies stress this as an example of working concrete with the issue. What matters, is not only words but action and to really show that the management gives priority to the issue.

The second prize winner of Guldnappen 2009 is a company in the automotive industry, a field traditionally dominated by males. This winner emphasises the importance of diversity for companies, both in terms of balanced workplaces and using the full capacity of the workforce. There are also commercial aspects, as there is an increasing amount of women that demands the company’s products and so they are also an important group of customers. Furthermore, they regard gender equality as important in terms of branding, as it is a value that attracts young people which is important when considering future labour. In “the war of the future talents” it is important to be ahead in these questions.

As mentioned, there is awareness of the importance of gender equality in companies. At the same time it is often sacrificed for other priorities, especially in times of crisis. With the current crisis in the automotive sector, in competition with everything else that must be done and strong economic pressure, the winner admits it is hard to prioritise gender issues.

One reason could be that it is hard to calculate the direct financial value of gender equality work: there is no doubt there is but attitudes and approaches are hard to measure. The company states it is always more urgent to work on issues when you can find money in it, and in better financial times this issues get more well-deserved attention.



Development and future perspectives

Apart from the different themes, since its start, the focus of Guldnappen has not been changed and there are no direct plans on changes as the initiators are satisfied with the successful development of the programme. They reckon that nominations will increase even more in the future, as companies will see the positive effects and get more motivated to work on the issue.

The companies awarded with the first and second prize in 2009 think that winning the award is very satisfying, but principally an encouragement. They regard it an indicator of being on the right path towards gender equality and an incitement to work ever harder, but as the issue requires long-term work, the prize is mainly a detail.

With an actual legislation that prevents gender discrimination, Sweden has probably pulled ahead of many European countries in gender equality. However, despite jurisdictional regulation, gender equality problems are still a fact why initiatives like Guldnappen exist. As it requires collective agreement and an equality plan, it is not possible to transfer to project to other countries at this instant.



2.12 United Kingdom: Opportunity Now

Background and objectives

“Opportunity Now” was founded in 1991 as “Opportunity 2000”. Its aim was to help promote the business case for creating workplaces which fully tapped into the talents of women. Then, as now, in the UK women faced more barriers and obstacles in the workplace than men, there was a lack of women in senior management, there was much gender segregation in terms of the jobs that women do and the grades they achieved. All these issues still exist in 2009 and there remains a lack of quality part-time work and a persistent pay gap endures. There are now seven categories of Opportunity Now Awards for which organisations can submit an entry and three special awards. Any organisation within the UK can submit an application for the open awards. Those that are successful receive their awards at an annual event and dinner.

The main objectives of the initiative are:

- To reward organisations being are committed to creating more diverse workplaces.
- To generate exposure and profile for organisations doing good work.
- To promote the business benefits of tackling gender issues.
- To inspire other organisations to address gender issues.
- To provide tangible case studies and advice about how to handle gender issues
- To create interest and media attention.
- To encourage further good work and creativity in the field.

The implementing organisations are:

Opportunity Now which is part of “Business in the Community” (one of the *Princes Charities*) was set up to help promote the business case for creating workplaces which fully tapped into the talents of women. Opportunity Now run and organise the awards. Among others, their main responsibilities are to:

- Define best practice and the scoring criteria for the awards.
- Produce entry information and material.
- Publicise the awards and the winners
- Provide help, guidance and support for organisations which are completing an entry.
- Organise the short-listing and judging panels.
- Produce case study materials on all short-listed organisations.
- Distribute details of the winning initiative via their website and hard copy literature.
- Use the shortlisted nominees in events to help share their best practice.

The awards and award ceremony is sponsored by a private sector organisation and two of the awards are made in collaboration. Over the years there have been different sponsors which have tended to be large multi-national or private banks and commercial



banks. The current sponsor is in situ for the second year and will be sponsoring the award again in 2010.

The sponsor provides:

- Financial support via funding of the awards and award ceremony.
- A senior executive to sit on the Opportunity Now board.
- A branded award in collaboration with Opportunity Now.
- Miscellaneous pro bono support in terms of resources and personnel time over the year.

Working principles and content

Participating organisations are required to complete an entry form⁵¹ and email it to Opportunity Now. The form asks them to answer some specific questions about the aspects of their work/programme or initiative. There are some important criteria that employers must note in order to make their entry valid:

- Entrants must be current members of Opportunity Now – there are three levels of members ranging from associate member at £ 1,000 per year to Corporate Champion Member at £ 10,000 per year.
- Each award entry must focus on a programme/work aimed at addressing equality/diversity or inclusion with a particular focus on women.
- Submissions are limited to a maximum of two entries per organisation. However, if an organisation is entering for two awards, they cannot enter the same programme/work or initiative twice.
- Winners of the previous years' awards are eligible to enter providing that the entry concerns a significantly different programme/work or initiative.
- Entries shortlisted in the previous year are eligible to re-enter the next year as long as they are able to demonstrate that the programme/initiative has significantly progressed and there is new evidence of impact.
- If entering a pilot scheme for an award category other than the Innovation award, participants are required to demonstrate how the scheme relates to the broader diversity context within the organisation and that it has solid measured analysis.

⁵¹ Entry forms can be downloaded from <http://www.opportunitynow.org.uk> or obtained by telephoning +44 (0) 20 7566 8715.



A mandatory measure is that organisations are required to have their application endorsed by a senior representative within the business. Organisations are asked not to include their name or brand on the application form as it is important that the judging panel view each submission objectively.

The seven categories of entry are:

- Advancing women in Public Service
- Advancing women in Education
- Advancing women in Business
- Champion Award
- Global Award
- The Santander Award (for 2009 the topic of this was Equality of Opportunity through Education & Learning)
- Innovation Award

There are also three special awards which are not open for general entry:

- The Female FTSE Award
- The FTSE Executive Women Award
- Platinum Employer Award

The applying organisations are required to give some introductory information about themselves and to provide:

- A summary of the programme or initiative – how it works/what actions are taken.
- What the work programme aims to achieve.
- Details of the business case for undertaking the work.
- Examples of how the senior management is committed to the programme.
- Examples of how the work has been mainstreamed/integrated within the organisation.
- How managers are accountable or made responsible for the programme.
- How information on the programme is communicated within the organisation.
- Information on the impact of the programme on the target group and on the organisation as a whole.
- Evidence as to its sustainability and examples of lasting impact.
- Evidence of individual and organisational learning resulting from the programme.

Once the closing date has passed (closing date for 2009 was 21st January), application forms are read (the applying organisation does not include their name, therefore the application forms are all anonymous) by a short-listing panel who mark each entry against set criteria.



Whilst the full criteria are not available in the public domain, the awarding body follows the general outline:

- Clearly defined visions and goals
- Strongly developed business case
- Strong evidence of senior level commitment
- Demonstrable impact of the work or initiative on the business and women in the organisation

The short-listing panel is made up of three independent experts and an adjudicator who analyses and validates the submissions (27 independent judges were used in 2008). The top three entries in each award category are then asked to attend and present to a finalist panel. Here, three different experts for each award and an adjudicator are presented to and have the opportunity to ask questions and interview the organisation on their initiative. The three organisations are again marked against set criteria. Interviewing expert panel members for this study it appears that the debate and discussion about short-listed applicants can be extensive and long lasting as many initiatives are high quality and for individual awards, nominees are often at the top of their game. The winners are announced at a special gala dinner with over 500 attendees. The winners receive an inscribed and dated crystal block which they retain after their year as winner.

The entry criteria are demanding and participating organisations are asked searching questions. New, tougher questions and criteria were introduced several years ago the consequence of which was a decline in applications but an increase in quality. Opportunity Now is particularly good at supporting businesses or organisations in making their applications and provides help and guidance via their Membership Service Managers.

Both public and private sector organisations apply for the awards but the trend is for them to be larger organisations with thousands of employees. The initiatives themselves address all types of employees but popular projects are those with a theme of encouraging more women into less traditional career routes or offering more flexible working across the piece. One organisation was short-listed for encouraging more women graduates into a typically male-dominated public-service career. All sectors of an organisation feature in the applications from recruitment through to retention through to the promotion of women.

Opportunity Now has a number of ways to promote itself and its awards:

- There is an account management team which services its 350 members. All the organisations have signed up to Opportunity Now values and best practice guidelines. Each organisation has an account manager who talks to them individually and there is a high level of one-to-one encouragement. This feature of support and guidance is one of Opportunity Now's unique features.
- A monthly e-update goes out to all people who have signed up to receive it – currently over 2,000. The e-update is distributed more widely than the membership rolecall.



- The website⁵² gets approximately 60,000 hits annually.
- Opportunity Now has been featured on the Personnel Today website.
- The parent company – Business in the Community – has its own website⁵³.
- Opportunity Now publishes the shortlists and winners of the awards.
- Journalists are invited to the awards dinner and provided with a press pack.
- Opportunity Now has from time to time been featured in the national press.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

There is close monitoring of the initiative internally and each year, after the award ceremony, there is a review process of the different categories and criteria to see if they are still relevant and the questions are still challenging. This is done in collaboration by Opportunity Now and their corporate sponsor. As a team, the account managers talk to employers and work through the criteria to ensure it is still accurate and relevant. Industry experts are tapped for their knowledge and expertise on diversity and gender equality issues. As well as very senior individuals who head up and form the short-listing panel, two independent adjudicators also sit in session. There does not exist however, any external and entirely independent monitoring and benchmarking scheme for these kinds of awards within the UK and all the individuals that help Opportunity Now during their internal monitoring are invited by them and known to them.

Approximately 60 organisations per year apply for the awards and over the lifetime of the initiative Opportunity Now indicate that roughly 400 different organisations have applied in all. Applicants range from private to public sector and are more likely to be large organisations employing thousands of people. In terms of the total number of employees who are impacted no true number is known, but the membership organisations of Opportunity Now members total about 4.2 Mio people.

The participation rate has fluctuated over time and as mentioned previously, when the criteria were strengthened four to five years ago, the number of applicants declined though the quality of applications increased. Applications have returned in the recent past to somewhere between 50 to 60 and a representative from the awarding organisation thinks this may be due to the current economic outlook and the desire for some good news stories in terms of promoting some positive aspects within the businesses.

No external evaluation of the awards has been made but the Board and the staff team is involved in an internal evaluation. The Board is made up of approximately twenty very senior business leaders who look at and review the papers submitted and comment on the calibre and quantity of entries. The awards dinner is also a kind of informal evaluation of the award because despite financial restraints over 550 individuals of which many were business leaders attended. Many organisations bring their “next generation” to listen and learn.

⁵² <http://www.opportunitynow.org.uk>

⁵³ <http://www.bitc.org.uk>



In terms of assessing the success of the awards and the initiative generally, Opportunity Now has been running for 14 years and remains a well considered and respected award within the sphere of diversity and gender equality. The organisation measures its own success in terms of sharing best practice (they produce a case-study booklet with a print run of 4,000), the calibre and number of applications for each award category (there appears to be active competition amongst the sectors for the awards), the fact that people want to be involved and to win and there is still an appetite for these sorts of awards and events (though one of the award participants opined that there was “award fatigue”). The participants see it as a success because winning an award helps to raise their profile as an employer-of-choice, going through a competitive process provides some external scrutiny and measurement of the value of what they have done, it helps them to shape their thinking and to analyse their own diversity and gender strategies and practices in a more structured and creative way. Winning a well recognised award helps them in turn when making applications for other awards.

However, Opportunity Now sees the final measurement of success as the point at which they no longer need to highlight gender and equality issues with such fervency. The continuation and popularity of awards such as these suggest that the UK is still a long way from true gender equality despite thirty years elapsing since the Sex Discrimination Act.

The awards have been running for nearly fifteen years and so could be considered to have had a sustainable positive impact on gender equality in terms of continually encouraging its members to assess and measure their own successes. Taking the combined great knowledge and sharing it amongst the wider community helps keep gender issues at the forefront of people’s minds and reduce complacency. It continues to highlight the huge inequalities in the workplace and uses the speeches at the awards dinner as a platform to do that.

One participant considered that after so many years and with many other industry awards for consideration, what had been Opportunity Now’s uniqueness had been slowly eroded away. They considered that it was becoming more difficult to find new initiatives and to find different applicant organisations which were doing new things. There is a tendency, they felt, for the same organisations to appear each year and because they had so much experience in applying for awards and in launching new programmes that they were able to stand out much more easily.

Impact in companies

Accordingly to one interviewed organisation, going through the logistics of making an application and being in competition with others, gave a good opportunity for an external entity to assess their work and give them feedback. They were positive about the recognition it gave them and allowed them to openly advertise the fact that they were making opportunities for women and as a result this improved their recruitment success, particularly in areas which had been largely the domain of the male. It felt satisfied to win an award and provided additional motivation to the diversity and equality teams.

In terms of why companies might not participate, the following notions were mooted:

- The amount of time it took to complete the application form
- Not seeing the broader benefits of entering a competitive process



- Being prepared to put your organisation or yourself up for scrutiny
- Not seeing the gender issue as important
- Having 'award fatigue'
- Going up against accomplished award teams who are far more experienced in knowing how to make a good impactful application
- In terms of the challenges that needed to be overcome within the participating organisations, the following subjects were cited:
 - Cultural opposition
 - Employees (at all levels) being threatened by the process
 - Individuals (at all levels) questioning the motivations for applying for an award
 - A feeling introducing more women would leave the organisation vulnerable
 - Women feeling that it would highlight them as different and they would be seen to be getting special treatment
 - Accusations that organisations were just "chasing awards"

The benefits of participating in the award and having gender and equality initiatives were given as:

Very important benefits:

- Being seen and recognised as an employer of choice for women
- Helping recruit more women in male dominated jobs or career paths
- Opening up the talent pool
- Changing the corporate culture

Important benefits:

- Gaining media exposure at no cost
- New codes of conduct
- Reduced turnover and better retention of female staff
- Easier recruitment
- Opportunities to network and to benefit from best practice

Less benefits were identified in areas such as innovation and creativity in the company more generally and it appeared difficult to provide financial measurement for effects such as increased productivity, cost reduction, increase in efficiencies etc.



By getting more women into the participating business or by changing the way that the organisations operated, participating organisations considered they were more representative of the community and workforce pool as a whole. It was again difficult to get numbers in terms of possible increases but what applying for the award had done was encourage organisations to look more critically at their legacy processes and to try to ensure less gender bias.

Most interviewees saw no negative side-effects and considered the time and effort involved in applying for the award as money well spent for the company or organisation.

Development and future perspectives

The award promoter was founded as Opportunity 2000 and changed to Opportunity Now. The name was changed in order to keep the awards relevant and in line with what companies are doing. Different types of awards have been brought in at different stages to reflect what is going on in the marketplace. The most recent addition was the Global Award which recognises employers that are trying to improve diversity across geographical boundaries (it must be across a minimum of three countries). Every year there is an internal assessment of the awards and an assessment of key issues for employers. Research and benchmarking is done by an internal team who have a good understanding of the kind of things organisations are struggling or grappling with.

The award is not expected to change dramatically. Small changes are made every year and whilst it is still working, Opportunity Now does not see any real reason to change it.

In terms of whether the initiative could be transferred to other countries, the award promoter suggests that it could successfully travel. The unique aspect of the award is the positioning of the employer initiatives as a business imperative. If organisations get their diversity right, Opportunity Now believes it leads to a more competitive and dynamic company that is a better place to work for all employees, not just women.



2.13 United Kingdom: Investor in WISE award

Background and objectives

WISE (Women in Science and Engineering) was founded in 1984 by Baroness Platt of Writtle following a call by the Engineering Council for more girls to consider an engineering career. Founded originally as a one-year project aimed at increasing the number of women in science and engineering, in 2009, WISE celebrated its 25th anniversary. WISE has been successfully challenging and changing traditional views of women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) since its inception. Although WISE had been set up in 1984 and had gone beyond its one year remit, by 1999 the original problem had not significantly eased. It was agreed that something needed to be done to raise the profile of WISE amongst opinion formers and so a royal patron – Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal joined to help create that momentum. The number of female engineering graduates has increased over a period of twenty years from 4 % to 13 % but only a small proportion of those women that graduate today with an engineering degree chose to pursue an active career in the sector and at technical level the proportion is even smaller. Current statistics show that only 7 % of professional engineers are female and only 14 % of SET managers are female. Male engineering professionals earn 25 % more than females. Male technicians earn 45 % more than their female colleagues. WISE believes there is still much to do to encourage more of the huge pool of talented young girls to pursue education and careers in STEM and to address the gender and equality imbalances in workplaces and classrooms.

The aim of WISE is to:

- Promote science, engineering, technology (SET) and construction as suitable career choices for girls and women
- Encourage young women of 19 and under to value and pursue science, engineering, technology, maths or construction related courses in school or college
- Collaborate with government, educators, industry and the armed forces in those objectives
- Focus on outcomes for girls and young women in education and training
- Collaborate with existing schemes to maximise their impact on girls
- Influence the influencers to promote policies that are effective for girls
- Innovate and pilot models, tools and approaches
- Explore and measure the drivers of success

WISE runs and manages the *Investor in Wise Award*. The organisation more broadly is jointly supported in terms of funding, collaboration, promotion and partnership by the following entities:

- CITB/Construction Skills
- EEF (the manufacturers' organisation)
- ETB (the Engineering and Technology Board)
- Royal Academy of Engineering



- SEMTA – the Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies
- STEMNET – the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network

The initiative is part of a set of *three awards* which are:

The Investor in WISE Award – made to a national company or organisation most supportive of WISE and the promotion of women in science, engineering and construction in the UK. Previous winners of the award include BT Openreach and the National Physics Laboratory.

WISE Excellence Award – made to a female engineer, scientist or a female in construction who has demonstrated a high level of commitment to her profession and to the promotion of those careers to girls and young women.

WISE Partnership Award – made to an individual who has embedded the promotion of careers in science, engineering or construction for women in their local region into his/her job.

Working principles and content

The awards are advertised by way of the WISE website⁵⁴, on the bottom of emails originated by the organisation and by word-of-mouth within the industry. Supporters and funders of WISE include it on their own websites. WISE also contacts nearly 100 universities and has built up good contacts there. The award is not advertised within the national or regional media as this is considered cost prohibitive. The initiative is thus promoted via a range of formal and informal routes which also includes the WISE blog⁵⁵ and the Women's Engineering Society⁵⁶.

Applications for each award are available on the website as is a description of the award and its entry qualifications. The invitation to apply runs in a window between April and November. There is a formal application form for each award⁵⁷. The Investor in WISE award has the following questions:

- Give details of activities within your organisation which promote science, engineering and construction to young girls and women generally.
- Give details of activities to encourage women to join your company or organisation.
- Give details of activities specifically supportive of women engineers and scientists you employ i.e. mentoring, networking etc.
- Give details of how you support the WISE campaign (providing role-models, sponsorship, help-in-kind etc).
- If your organisation were to win the Investor Award, how would you publicise it?

⁵⁴ <http://www.wisecampaign.org.uk>

⁵⁵ <http://wisemology.blogspot.com>

⁵⁶ <http://www.wes.org.uk>

⁵⁷ Completed forms are sent to events@wisecampaign.org.uk



The awardee is selected on the strength of the application form. The decision is reached by the Executive Director of WISE in collaboration with a small committee of representatives from companies supporting the awards. These individuals change with each award and each year.

No one is turned away based on the criteria and there is a more tolerant policy for entry. Anyone is encouraged to apply but the organisation admits that those that do not meet the criteria do not tend to do so well as those that do. WISE prefers to have a wide appeal and to attract a maximum number of companies. In 2008, three companies applied for the Investor in WISE award. Approximately twenty applied for the individual award of which six were short-listed and interviewed.

The Investor in WISE award attracts larger companies. The Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force (RAF) were applying in 2009. Large companies are better at raising the profile of WISE and are considered to have more cutting edge initiatives such as the RAF who have developed a residential “taster” course for young women where they get the opportunity to work on the mechanical and electrical systems of aeroplanes⁵⁸.

The initiatives are targeted at young girls and women to encourage them to consider or start a career in a role associated with science, engineering, technology or construction. The initiatives are implemented by the organisational management and diversity teams.

The awards participants are judged on the quality of the bid and the initiative. WISE say that they try to be fair. Even if they are aware of other relevant aspects of the initiative, if it is not mentioned on the application form then it does not get taken into account. At the very core of the criteria is that the organisation must give evidence of providing a positive working environment for women but the activity which acts as a vehicle could be wide ranging.

The awarding jury or panel changes each year. The application is assessed and then the applicant interviewed if necessary. There have been no interviews for the Investor in WISE award since the present incumbent running the awards teams in WISE was appointed. However, individuals applying for awards are interviewed routinely because being a role model is considered to be very much about personality. The exact scoring criteria for each award is not known.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

The WISE awards have no external or independent monitoring.

In 2008, three companies applied for the *Investor in WISE Award*, and the number of applications has remained constant for seven or eight years. The number of applications for the Investor award is expected to rise this year as marketing has expanded and more focus has been put on making the awards known more broadly. The individual awards attract approximately 20 applications of which about six are shortlisted and interviewed. WISE was not able to provide details on the number of

⁵⁸ There is also a Facebook site for the young women who have attended the RAF residential ‘taster’ course.



employees concerned with or exposed to the award initiative within the participating organisations.

An internal evaluation is made of the awards each year and a “lessons learnt” exercise undertaken. A plan is made for improving the experience for everyone involved. Also the project management plan has been improved to handle slippage during the application and selection stages of the process. Plans are in hand to redesign the application form for next year.

WISE see the award initiative as reasonably successful and the winning organisations are keen to promote it via their internal communications routes. It gets quite a high profile amongst opinion formers and is well considered within the industry. The main surge of interest in the award took place in the first 10 – 15 years with the last decade being fairly stagnant in terms of expanding interest. There has been effort to add some dynamism to the awards ceremony by making it bigger and jazzier. The number of girls studying target degrees is bumping along flatly and WISE do not expect the number of girls who apply for these courses to change much and the awards will not necessarily help with that. However, they can be instrumental in changing the long term policies of companies and how girls are attracted to the careers. The government is starting to provide funding for the careers service and a new programme has been set up called STEM careers. There is also greater emphasis on interventions with school children as both WISE and interviewed individuals in their supporting arms consider that decision making and career streaming begins very early and it is in those formative early years at school that hearts and minds need to be captured. One of the key success factors for WISE is extracting best practice examples which they are then able to promulgate and this means that WISE gets a bit more engagement with the companies themselves though in these troubled times of credit crunch engagement doesn't always mean added financial support and like all awards of this kind, funding is imperative to its survival.

Whether the award initiative is successful from the perspective of the participators comes with a qualified yes. The award is seen as prestigious given its royal patron and the fact that winning participants get to meet and receive their awards from the Princess which offers them good PR. WISE is respected for its effort in bringing more women into a traditionally male dominated career path but most employers felt that the awards endorsed and added credibility to a focus on diversity and equality that was already established.

WISE are concerned that their awards do not just become one of many associated with gender initiatives and there is some concern about ‘award fatigue’. Of the participating organisations there remained a sense of interest and a desire to continue putting their gender initiatives forward for reasons such as it looked good on their CSR, it was useful as a benchmark and it allowed them, even if they were a comparatively ‘small’ employer to compete with the best.

WISE considers the initiative to have a sustainable positive impact on gender equality even given the caveats earlier in this paper. It is fairly straight forward to run, it makes a positive impression for applicants in their marketing and it encourages organisations to share their best practices with each other. Girls choosing to work in SET and construction industries no longer need to be seen as “peculiar” or “different” and to be labelled as such by their peers and superiors. There is a slight concern perhaps that the focus on girls is to the detriment of young males coming into the same sector who appear to be starting to suffer from a lack of discipline and a poor work ethic.



To improve the award initiative WISE believes it needs more funding and they are limited by the size of the venue provided by their sponsor which does not allow them to expand their invitation list for the awards ceremony. A bigger marketing budget would allow them to encourage more organisations and individuals to apply.

Impact in companies

WISE believes that companies value the awards both as a measure for their CSR agenda and because it reinforces to women employees their value and importance to the organisation.

Interviewed organisations and businesses who were interviewed cited the following reasons for participation:

- Positive feedback on gender and diversity initiatives undertaken
- The opportunity to benchmark their work against others
- The opportunity to apply for and win an award that was seen as prestigious
- The ability to provide tangible evidence for their diversity programme
- A way in which to encourage young girls and women into non traditional career paths
- A good way to expose girls to science and engineering topics whilst at school and to establish an interest in these areas at a young age
- Good media exposure and PR
- Raising the profile of the organisation within a larger talent pool
- The opportunity to share best practice

Reasons why organisations might not participate were given as:

- Being new to the role and not being aware of the awards
- Not being senior enough to persuade others to make the investment required and not having sufficient influential contacts in the home organisation
- Too much effort to make the application meaningful
- No training on how to approach and make an awards application
- Concern over the opportunity cost in making an application
- A large amount of effort required for a very niche sector of employees
- Doesn't have the exposure and kudos of other awards such as those given by the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development (CIPD)
- Reluctance to make the investment given the current economic climate
- Few tangible effects
- Might not qualify
- Missing the closing date

Challenges and obstacles which have occurred when implementing the measures in the company or in the participation process in general:



- Persuading management to accept that a woman could do as good a job as a man particularly in roles that required physical strength.
- Getting the employee pool fully engaged and involved with the award application and ensuring they were fully aware of the benefits for all areas of the business.
- Encouraging management to allocate solid time, effort and resources to the initiative.
- Communicating it as a credible project within the organisation.

The perceived benefits from participation for the employer:

Very important:

Being able to use the award success in recruiting marketing and literature which leads to more and better quality applications

Using it as tangible evidence of being an equal opportunities employer

Creation a workforce that is more representative of the local communities

Important:

Effects in financial terms (It means you do not lose good people who are expensive to replace. A more inclusive employee population appears to have led to a better culture for most interviewed organisations).

Less important:

A reduction in absenteeism, increase in motivation amongst staff etc. (little or no evidence in any interviewed organisation to show improvement for these types of effects.

Effects on innovation and creativity (some evidence to suggest that it encourages this kind of outlook for the gender initiatives themselves but did not necessarily lead to creativity or innovation amongst the employee population as a whole).

Impacts on gender equality in the participating companies which have been identified:

The interviewing organisations were mixed in their view on this question. Several believed that the awards have not impacted their gender initiatives materially as they were already “trial blazers” or already had a strong track record of diversity policy. However, for others it has made them think about how they promote themselves, especially out into the local community and into local schools. As a result, they are much more aware of how they need to position themselves when promoting their careers to young school girls and boys and how to get the youngsters to think about changing stereotypes. For one employer the number of female coming into apprenticeships is running at 13 % which is a big leap from the 1.2 % of applications five years prior to that.



The benefits for employees:

For one employer working through their gender initiatives in terms of applying for the award since 2005 has led to several positive changes for employees: Part-time work contracts, flexible working, term-time working, home-working and reduced hours.

Applying for the awards strengthens the relations between the participating companies and WISE. This can lead to the symbiotic exchange of contacts and information. For others it has been the awareness that sometimes you need to market the same thing differently to diverse groups within the same talent pool. And for others, winning the WISE award has helped develop credibility and substance in applying for other awards.

Development and future perspectives

The initiative was first set up as WISE 84 – Women into Science and Engineering and intended to run for only twelve months.

The emphasis used to be that investing some funding into WISE meant that you qualified for an award but that has changed and now businesses and organisations need to invest in the WISE values. The Investor in WISE award is part of a set of three awards (the other two are the WISE Excellence Award and the WISE Partnership Award). The portfolio of awards is due to be extended though no further information on what shape this might take is available at this time. The organisers are considering whether they will bring the Investor in WISE award process in line with the other two awards and interview the applicants though the administration and costs involved in doing this are of some concern to them. One of the key concerns for the organisation (other than the perpetual one of sufficient funding for the things they wish to do) is that the media do not really understand who they are or what they do. Their events are covered almost exclusively because the Princess Royal attends. There has been some consideration about tying in with the Institute of Technology and Engineering but they as an organisation are not well known either outside of their sector. There are also some plans in the organisation to conduct research on young women and their values in life but this idea is still in the very earliest stages of formation.

In terms of whether the initiative could be transferred outside of the United Kingdom, WISE believes that some other countries may already do better than the UK in promoting women into careers in science, technology and engineering though they are not aware of any country where numbers are entirely equal. They feel that in order for a similar initiative to succeed elsewhere a very high profile and active patron would be a necessity in order to promote and develop recognition of what the awards represented.



3 Charters

3.1 Denmark: Charter for flere kvinder i ledelse (Engl. Charter for more women in management)

Background and objectives

In Denmark, the gender segregated labour market and the low rates for women in top management have been widely discussed. The fact that women are under-represented in top management has led to a debate on quotas for the share of women in enterprises' boards of directors and management. The demand for quotas has been put forth by feminist interest groups and networks, by prominent debaters and trade unions, and by political parties in opposition to the liberal-conservative government and its parliamentary support. For the time being, quotas for women in boards of directors and management are supported neither by the political majority nor the premier employers' organisation "Confederation of Danish Industry" (DI). However, the overall objective of equal representation is not disputed by any political parties or interest groups of any significance. At present, the political majority tends to favour "voluntary means" ("frivillighedens vej") to increase the share of women in top management.

This background led to the idea and to the formulation of a national "Charter for more women in management", emphasising at the same time the voluntariness and commitment of public and private enterprises.

The idea of a charter for more women in management was issued by the former Minister for Gender Equality Mrs. Eva Kjer Hansen in the end of 2006, and launched by the (also former) Minister for Gender Equality Mrs. Karen Jespersen in March 2008. The charter was drafted by the Department of Gender Equality in collaboration with five public and five private enterprises. These were: Grundfos, Irma, Nykredit, Cowi and SAS (all private); and Danish Medicines Agency, University of Southern Denmark, the Ministry of Employment, the Municipality of Aarhus and the State Employer's Authority (all public).

The enterprises were involved in drafting the seven points of the charter in order to ensure the legitimacy and relevance of the charter to enterprises and to utilise the experiences already gained by enterprises working for more women in management. However, the actual content of the charter was decided by the Minister for Gender Equality. The Department of Gender equality is responsible for running the Charter for more women in management. In addition, to raise awareness and to ensure the effect of the Charter, the Department of Gender Equality has initiated a network for the enterprises that have signed the charter and appointed ambassadors for more women in management among the managers of the charter-enterprises.

Working principles and content

All types of enterprises are encouraged to sign the Charter for more women in management, and apart from setting the signature there are no kind of application process or access criteria involved. However, by signing the charter enterprises commit themselves to bring more women into managerial positions.



Following the formulation on the website of the charter, “The aim of the charter is:

- To ensure that women and men have equal opportunities
- To launch specific, measurable initiatives in companies and organisations to increase the proportion of women at all levels of management
- To make sure that public and private sector enterprises deploy all talents.”

The actual content of the charter is:

“In endorsing this charter we undertake to make concrete efforts to bring more women into management positions. Efforts will be adapted to the particular company’s circumstances – sector conditions, for example – and current percentage of women managers.

We undertake:

- 1) To prepare a plan or strategy to attract more women into management positions or maintain an equal balance and to launch initiatives to this end.
- 2) To develop and set goals and/or target figures for the number of women in management, for the proportion of women at selected executive levels to be achieved within a fixed time period or for the proportion of women in talent pools or in the management pipeline.
- 3) To support a human resources policy that promotes equal career opportunities for women and men.
- 4) To ensure that appointment and recruitment procedures help identify women with leadership potential and thus attract both women and men candidates in internal and external recruitment drives.
- 5) To set a minimum number of women candidates if the companies uses head-hunters for management recruitment.
- 6) To create conditions for women to develop their careers through networks, mentoring programmes and other targeted initiatives.
- 7) To share experience and results of initiatives launched on the basis of the charter, for example, by submitting contributions to the Minister for Gender Equality’s theme page on women and management on the Internet.”⁵⁹

According to the Department of Gender Equality, the background for this formulation of the charter was that the charter should be both flexible and binding for enterprises. The charter should be flexible in order to not exclude any enterprises in advance and in recognising the very different challenges faced by enterprises in different sectors and with different starting points. Furthermore, the charter should be binding in order to achieve the target of more women in management.

⁵⁹ Also available at http://www.kvinderiledelse.dk/charter_paa_engelsk.asp



In practice, this combination of flexibility and obligations is solved by having enterprises setting goals specific for the enterprise. In this process, enterprises are encouraged and sometimes asked directly by the Department of Gender Equality to set targets that are both realistic and ambitious regarding the conditions faced by the enterprise.

Targets and the means to reach these targets (point 1 - 7) are formulated by the enterprise, on occasion in collaboration with the Department of Gender Equality, and described in a baseline-report which is to be submitted by the enterprise within three months from signing the charter. When the baseline-report has been submitted it is assessed by the Department of Gender Equality. If the Department finds that the baseline-report is of low quality or not ambitious enough when it comes to set targets, or the targets set do not improve the share of women in management, the enterprise is asked to revise the report (counselled and supported by the Department). According to the Department of Gender Equality, this is necessary in order to maintain a certain standard for the charter.

Following up on the baseline-report, the enterprise is expected to submit a report on the progress of its activities to have more women in management every second year. None of these reports have been submitted yet, as the charter was launched in March 2008. However, it is the purpose of the reports to assess the progress of enterprises and in the case of no progress, assess the reasons to this and revise the strategy on how to recruit more women to managerial positions. Please note, however, that the details in this process are not known yet.

As to the promotion of the initiative, the initiative has been promoted by the Minister for Gender Equality on the charter website, by the abovementioned newly appointed ambassadors for more women in management and by the Network of charter enterprises facilitated by the Department of Gender Equality. In the network, enterprises arrange meetings, seminars etc. For example, one of the enterprises interviewed for this case study will soon be hosting a seminar open for the participation of non-charter enterprises.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

When the charter was launched in March 2008, a target of 100 participating enterprises by the end of 2010 was set. At present, September 2009, 75 enterprises have already signed the charter. In the sense that this is somewhat higher than expected, the charter may be considered a success. However, the charter has not been evaluated.

Though the Department of Gender Equality encourages all types of enterprises to sign the charter, targets have not been set for the distribution of enterprises on sector, size etc. However, at present there is an overweight of public sector enterprises among the charter enterprises, as around 60 % are public sector enterprises, 25 % are private sector enterprises, 6 % are organisations, trade unions etc., and 8 % are other types of enterprises. Nevertheless, the charter enterprises represent many different trades and sectors of economy.

According to the Department of Gender Equality and the interviewed enterprises, the strength of the charter is that it obliges the participating enterprises to initiate programmes to promote more women in management. This is ensured by a follow-up on the targets set in reports evaluated by the Department of Gender Equality.



Furthermore, if enterprises do not observe the points of the charter they can be sanctioned by being crossed off the list of participating enterprises. It is the estimation of the Department of Gender Equality that this potential risk of negative publicity binds the participating enterprises to the agenda of more women in management.

Regarding potential obstacles for the charter, it seems that the main challenge is to have SMEs signing the charter. From the experience gained so far, the Department of Gender Equality concludes that the charter may have to undergo some changes in order to attract SMEs. Participation in the charter demands resources and expertise to prepare plans and work out reports, and this may present a barrier to smaller enterprises.

Moreover, looking at the list of participating enterprises it appears that there is somewhat an imbalance in the regional distribution of enterprises. This is currently being addressed by the Network of charter enterprises by arranging open seminars in regions with relatively fewer participating enterprises. Such a seminar is planned by one of the enterprises interviewed for this study.

Impact in companies

At present it is not possible to assess the impact of the charter in enterprises by any exact measures.

For one of the interviewed enterprises the charter may have had an effect as two more women recently entered the top management. However, this is not necessarily a result of participating in the charter. Another enterprise estimates that the gender balance in management is currently improving. However, the change in the number of women in management since the drafting of the baseline report is yet to be calculated.

According to all respondents in this study, it will take some time before the impact of the charter is evident. This is mainly due to the fact that managerial positions have a relatively low turnover.

Regarding the reasons for participating in the charter, one of the interviewed enterprises stresses that the charter supports the ongoing activities related to gender equality in the organisation. Moreover, being proactive in promoting gender equality since 1988, this public sector enterprise finds that the charter is an excellent opportunity to promote the agenda and profile of the enterprise. This is important for the enterprise in regard to publicity, and, in particular, in attracting qualified employees. This is also mentioned as important in the case of the private enterprise interviewed. However, this enterprise also stresses the importance of diversity in management. This is closely related to creativity/innovation in and to the economic performance of the enterprise.

Development and future perspectives

There are no current plans of changing the Charter for more women in management. Moreover, there are no apparent reasons indicating that the charter could not be transferred to other countries.



3.2 France: Chartes régionales égalité et mixité professionnelles (Engl. Regional charters for gender equality and gender-mixed work)

Background and objectives

The “Charte égalité et mixité professionnelle” aims at bringing organisations to make a formal commitment in favour of the equality of women and men and gender-mixed working environments. Targeted organisations encompass all those whose actions impact on the integration of women in the labour market.

The Charte égalité et mixité professionnelle is an initiative by a non-profit organisation, Féminin Technique (FETE). FETE was founded in 1991 to promote gender equality on the labour market and in the workplace and to help labour market actors to ensure it. One of the main axis of this objective is the promotion of gender mixity in education, training and job positions. FETE works for a change in representations of women and girls as well as actors of the labour market (corporations, training centres, schools, career advice centres).

FETE was founded to respond to the underprivileged situation of women on the labour market:

- The unemployment rate for women is higher than for men, whatever the economic situation is.
- Women are concentrated in a smaller number of occupational fields.
- The proportion of employed women having fixed-term contracts is higher.
- The proportion of employed women being constrained to work part time is higher.
- There is a pay gap between women and men.

FETE has worked for several years on the reconversion of women who are in a situation of unemployment or career change. One important action is to make them discover job positions which are traditionally associated with male job positions, such as technical positions. Taking part to several European programs in favour of gender equality (program NOW...), FETE was strongly inspired by the policy and philosophical framework developed by the European Commission when tackling gender equality issues. As a matter of fact, FETE decided to create the Charte égalité et mixité professionnelle when they had the opportunity to apply for EQUAL funding in 2002-2005. The Charte égalité et mixité professionnelle was the outcome of an EQUAL project and was launched in May 2005.

FETE considers the charter as an outcome of long-term reflection and actions. The experience FETE developed working with several partners (notably carrying analysis of their practices) explains the decision of the organisation to create a charter: FETE developed a strong position in favour of actions targeting the whole “range of employment actors”, that is all actors taking part in education, training, career advice, employment and career development. They made the choice to involve organisations regardless of their previous actions in favour of gender equality and mixity. FETE considers that any form of initiative in favour of gender equality – including accepting to meet FETE staff – is a start for awareness of the existence of inequalities. Another reason for this absence of selection, one of the goals of FETE was to attract a great number of organisations in order to build a strong network which would look attractive and credible to other organisations (an assessment of actions set up by companies



since they signed the charter started later, from 2007 on – see “assessment of initiative itself”).

Also contextual elements explain the choice of a charter as a tool for changing practices of organisations. As they were about to apply for EQUAL funds, FETE initially wanted to create a label in the framework of quality control. Nonetheless, they were dissuaded from doing so as the government was planning to create an equality label (in June 2004, the government created the “Label égalité professionnelle”).

Working principles and content

FETE feels strong about including all types of organisations which act upon the integration of women in the labour market. FETE considers that private companies cannot be fully blamed for a lack of gender mix within their workforce, as “inequality does not build up only in corporations”. Within the “chain of employment”, corporations are the last link of a much larger building process of gender inequality: Men and women access the labour market with a different training background: Some companies are willing to hire more female employees but cannot find women to fulfil job positions which are traditionally considered as male positions; very few women are trained to those types of jobs. Stereotypes on differences between men and women in the labour sphere are already deeply rooted: Existing inequality is generally not seen as an issue but as natural. Inequalities in terms of work-life balances between members of a family are frequently not being questioned.

Therefore, FETE aims at involving all organisations having an impact on career design and job searching: private corporations, trade unions, schools, universities, job training organisations, career advice or counselling organisations, public job centres, private temp agencies, local government authorities. The charter’s commitment is about gender equality and concerns women and men, staff and/or customers/users and/or partners.

Before an organisation signs the charter, FETE conducts an interview with the person in charge of Human Resources in order to make an account of actions which were settled by the company so far. Commitments taken in the signed charter can be adapted to the signing organisation. A specific model of charter was designed for trade unions in order to address their specific issues. Organisations designed a particular text for their charter with FETE as they were not satisfied with existing models of charters. Some of them suppressed the engagement about work-life balance of employees which was suggested in their model: They considered that work-life balance is not an issue which must be addressed by employers.

FETE reaches out for new organisations in the context of other actions they conduct. For instance, they organise “Techni’Femmes”⁶⁰, an event which targets women looking for a job or wishing to change careers as well as female students. During this event, corporations from industrial sectors open their doors to women so they can discover technical job positions which are traditionally held by men. Techni’Femmes was inspired by “girls’ day” events which are organised in several European countries and promoted by EU institutions. In order to organise Techni’Femmes, FETE relies on a whole network of actors of employment: corporations, Pôle Emploi (French public

⁶⁰ As developed below, “Techni’Femmes” was frequently mentioned as a complement to the charter.



employment agency), training centres, etc., as well as industrial cities which offer a majority of traditionally male job positions (e.g. the city of Le Creusot).

Signing organisations may also conduct their own promotion actions about their signing the charter. For example, the commitment of a city in favour of gender equality through the charter was mentioned in the media as it signed the charter in a public and formal context: the charter was signed at the end of the first Techni'Femmes (see below the section "Development and future perspectives") which took place in the city with other signing organisations.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

First monitoring action: survey of signing organisations

In 2007, a study on the effects of the charter was carried out by a university, the "Institut de Recherche sur l'Education" (IREDU). Researchers carried out an impact study of the charter and perceptions of actors being involved. The IREDU is affiliated with the renowned research centre "Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications" (Céreq) and the national public research network "Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique" (CNRS). This impact study was not an evaluation. It consisted of 60 phone interviews with people being in charge of a charter within their organisation (60 interviews out of 84 people having signed a charter). Results of the research were published in December 2007. People were asked about their opinions on the charter they signed, about changes it triggered, obstacles the organisation met, and expectations they had from the charter, within their company or more broadly speaking within the network.

The main conclusions are as follows:

- In most cases, organisations considered that signing the charter had not really changed practices but officially acknowledged good practices which already existed within the organisation. Two factors can partly explain such statements. First, some organisations which signed a charter knew and had already worked with the operator FETE. Secondly, some interviewees may lack of reflexivity on practices of their organisation: for example some interviewees stated that if the staff consists of a majority of women, the organisation cannot be discriminating against them. Only one interviewee thought that signing the charter had created a deep change as it encouraged her organisation to reflect on their practices and take actions. Others mentioned superficial actions (feminisation of communication materials...).
- A charter is considered as a good way to inform staff and customers on the gender issue. For instance, temp agencies staff said they used the charter to prevent private companies from addressing them discriminatory demands. Training centres use it to encourage women to get training in male-dominated jobs by showing that they pay particular attention to women integration. Also gender equality managers can rely on the charter in order to support their actions within their organisation by reminding managers and staff of the formal commitment of the company to gender equality.
- Networking was mentioned as a strong advantage of signing a charter, especially by public administrations. For instance, it allowed secondary schools to know about a job fair for women and encourage female students to meet women working in



technical jobs. Nevertheless, only a dozen of organisations actually mobilised the network and only 25 took part in an event organised by the network. As a matter of fact, many interviewees claimed they did not know how to use the network and expected more support tools in order to know how to define concrete actions to do so.

- Concerning communication about commitments taken by the organisation, the charter was posted in the organisation buildings in most cases, although less so in private companies. In most cases, communication about the charter was made towards the staff but not as much through external communication (or in an informal way). 29 interviewees thought the charter could be an asset for the organisation image, especially in male-dominated economic sectors. Others were uncertain about it or thought that enhancing company image should not be the goal for signing a charter.
- 19 interviewees claim that their organisations use the compendium of good practices which was given with the charter. For example, they use it when they write about gender issues.
- Several interviewees expressed doubts on the effects of the charter: some of them questioned its real efficiency, especially as organisations have no time to engage in real actions, others considered it a tool which can easily be harnessed by politicians. Also, some interviewees feared negative effects from doing affirmative action in favour of women.
- In terms of results, the charter has a positive but very limited impact, mostly on recruiting and training actions (through the feminisation of announcements for jobs or training) but hardly on the work-life balance issue.

The study concludes that the enforcement of gender equality depends very much on managers' individual opinions and on the easiness of articulating gender equality with the constraints and rationality of each organisation.

Second monitoring action: interviews carried out by FETE with signing companies to account for their actions since they signed the charter

Since 2009, FETE has been meeting with signing organisations in order to carry out a closer monitoring of actions. Objectives of such meetings are to account for actions organisations have set up since they signed the Charte égalité et mixité professionnelle and to assess how they comply with their formal commitment. The aim of this assessment is not about giving a penalty to signing organisations (not complying organisations will not be asked to retrieve from the charter) but to reactivate their commitment and assess whether they need advice from FETE to set up actions.

FETE carries out one-hour interviews with HR managers in organisations. They use an assessment framework: Based on the commitments which appear on the charter that the organisation signed (which can be different from one organisation to another), FETE asks the organisation the following questions:

- What action was made for each engagement taken? (What concrete elements they can give to illustrate the implementation of actions they declare (where is the charter posted within the organisation? What did you do to communicate about the charter towards your employees?)



- What positive impacts of actions can be observed? What improvements can be made?

For each organisation, FETE writes up an account of the assessed situation. By the end of 2009, FETE expected to have conducted interviews with 40 signing organisations. They plan to write an overall synthesis by the end of the year.

Such interviews also turn out to be a good way for FETE to update on new issues firms can meet when trying to ensure gender equality (e.g. at the moment work-life balance and pay equality are hot issues), to assess what support tools need to be developed, and to gather new ideas of actions (see “Development and future perspectives”).

To sum it up, carrying a mere interview with the management board cannot be assimilated to an evaluation: no interview is carried out with employees’ representatives, no audit is made of practices towards suppliers and customers, etc. Assessments which are being carried out by FETE appear as a pass to assess organisations what are their current needs in terms of support to ensure gender equality. The charter is less an instrument of social change in itself than a safe-conduct which legitimates for a external actor such as FETE to make an organisation accountable for its practices and needs. FETE might manage in the future to use the charter as a pretext to question practices of willing firms on a regular basis, and not keep it to a one-shot diagnosis. This would allow FETE to avoid keeping charters to the position of shallow engagements – as signing a charter incurs to be.

Success of the initiative

When considering the objectives set by the initiators of the Charter, it can be said that the initiative is rather successful. It has collected signatures from a great number of corporations of renowned firms which can be a factor of emulation for more corporations.

As for June 2009, 130 organisations had signed the Charte égalité et mixité professionnelle. The initiative seems to have reached the goal of targeting a great range of employment actors: when looking at the list of signing organisations, one can note that there is a large pool of different institutions. One can find almost a dozen of public career advice centres, a dozen of training centres, several dozens of schools and university departments, a dozen of temp agencies, a few chambers of commerce, a dozen of job agencies, an employer organisation, a trade union, several dozens of corporations (corporations branches and SMEs), the Region council of Bourgogne and five city councils.

FETE considers that the Charte égalité et mixité professionnelle has more impact on social change than some national initiatives. FETE is closer from the grassroots and provides signing organisations with support to set concrete actions in order to fulfil commitments taken. This allows avoiding two pitfalls:

A lack of human and financial resources to fulfil commitments taken which, according to FETE, is often the case of SMEs.

A lack of communication regarding the commitment taken by organisations in favour of gender equality towards HR services, branches, and staff as a whole: FETE could observe that some corporations which took a national commitment in favour of gender equality (e.g. label égalité professionnel and even agreements on gender equality) did



not communicate about it to their branches: HR managers in regional branches are not aware of the national commitment of the head office.

Although it is not a benefit which is highlighted by FETE, one can consider that one core direct effects of the charter is setting a lasting relationship connection between companies and gender equality concerns through the support of FETE. Since 2009, FETE developed a new goal which is to inform signing corporations about gender equality issues and question practices on a regular basis. Although FETE has opportunities to meet organisations and raise awareness about gender inequality (Techni'Femmes etc.), the main benefit of the charter is formalise and define a network and make it durable.

Limits of the initiative

Organisations do not necessarily communicate about their commitment towards their partners and their staff. Some informants felt that there is a lack of staff training with respect to what is at stake.

One informant highlighted that signing the charter has little impact if there is not a clear position from the management to support it and give a follow-up to it through staff training, communication to users, etc.

As a matter of fact, commitments on gender equality from organisations are strongly linked with individuals and the personal interest they have in gender equality: changes in the management board has turned out to make it difficult to give a follow-up to commitments taken.

It is difficult to assess direct effects of an initiative like the charter as it is entangled within a whole set of actions and as it is hard to know what suppliers/customers/users/constituency think about it or to what extent they are affected by it. For instance, a career advice centre considered that signing the charter had absolutely no impact on users (students and parents), but could not make any firm statement about it.

Communication about the charter towards users and customers can be insufficient. This may be related to the fear of negative impacts the charter can have on the image of the organisation (see “reasons not to participate/challenges/obstacles”).

One teacher in a high school considered that the charter was not sufficiently enhanced by its institution: the charter could have more impact on female students and their parents, and encourage them in enrolling in technical courses, if only it were better used. According to that teacher, communication on the charter is not sufficiently linked with concrete actions taken by the school (mentoring, discovery day of technical courses for pupils from junior high school etc.).



This shows that the personalisation of the signing of the charter raises other issues:

- The process of writing and signing the charter is conducted between FETE and the management, i.e. either the HR manager or the head manager (or mayor, head of school, etc.), sometimes with an advisory board. Staff representatives are generally not associated with the conception of the charter. This is not part of requirements that FETE puts forward towards signing firms as they consider that making the Involvement of employees' representatives would deter organisations to sign the charter.
- Different models of charters allow organisations to adapt their commitments to particular issues they meet. This is a positive aspect of the charter but it may also be a limit: it allows organisations to keep commitments to a limited scope and benefit from positive impacts of the charter which in any case they can put forward in their communication. Also, such adaptations reinforce some generally accepted ideas such as the perception that there cannot be discriminatory practices with public organisations. Charters which are signed by public or non profit organisations do not address gender equality within organisations and put the matter as only related to the relationship developed between the organisation and the user. When asked about actions they took in favour of gender equality within their staff, one public career centre answered that gender equality was not an issue within their organisation: the majority of the staff consist of women and they benefit from the status of public agents. In many public organisations, gender equality is an issue which only concerns their activity of advice and support towards users of the centre.

Potential improvements

One career advice centre deplored that signing the charter as it is today is a very individual action. It suggested that a common charter was signed by partners on a same territory. It wishes for a stronger networking of signing organisations on a same territory (schools, corporations, public job agencies, etc.) which is not the case at the moment. This is a general concern which FETE is currently trying to address (see "Development and future perspectives").

Impact in companies

Reasons to participate in the initiative / benefits for firms

To formalise and communicate about their previous commitments on gender equality towards their partners: Many organisations which were interviewed highlighted the fact that they had already engaged in action against gender equality for a long time when they signed the charter⁶¹.

It may enhance the image of the organisation towards their partners.

It may be a way for organisations to set an example and encourage their partners to take actions as well in favour of gender equality. For a career advice centre, signing the

⁶¹ CREDOC („Centre de recherche pour l'étude et l'observation des conditions de vie" – it is the French partner institute carrying out the analyses for the French initiatives' case studies) were put in contact with organisations through FETE in order to identify interesting cases in terms of good practices, benefits and obstacles related to the charter. One can assume that FETE put CREDOC in contact with particularly active organisations.



charter is a way to alert schools and teachers about gender equality issues. For a city council, it is a way to encourage corporations in the city to take actions in favour of gender equality (they speak of “a moral stance” towards firms).

For a city council, it is a political tool to communicate about councillors’ commitments towards their constituencies. Nonetheless, the effect is difficult to measure.

The goal is to fully integrate commitments in professional practices and to formalise and communicate commitments about gender equality towards employees. A public career advice centre considered that signing a charter such as the Charte égalité et mixité professionnelle reinforce their commitments towards gender equality, even though it is already part of their assignments as a public organisation.

In order to gain support from an organisation to concretely ensure gender equality: signing the charter is also a way for organisations to set a long-term partnership with FETE and rely on a potential network of signing organisations (although it is not much animated at the moment). Support from FETE encourages organisations to take new actions: for instance, it determined the organisation of a conference related to gender equality in a high school.

Beyond benefits that are spotted by corporations on signing the charter, structural elements can be considered as efficient incentives. The charter is part of a whole range of initiatives set by FETE and is considered by organisations as the logical complement to other commitments they took with FETE. All organisations which were interviewed had taken part to Techni’Femmes before signing the charter. Therefore, signing the charter appeared to them as a “natural” follow-up to it.

Reasons not to participate in the initiative / challenges / obstacles

One interviewed person mentioned that initiatives like signing the Charte égalité et mixité professionnelle could be considered as “feminist”, which can carry a negative connotation. Militancy on gender equality is not necessarily well perceived and the charter can be considered as so.

Development and future perspectives

Following the creation of the charter, FETE is currently setting up territorial projects. While the current charter is an individual commitment from organisations, territorial charters will involve and associate several actors in a same region or a same city on a series of commitments to actions which will be altogether articulated. Such a new action gives concrete expression to needs which were identified. Interactions with signing organisations show that organisations find it difficult to set up actions in favour of gender equality without coordination between partners. Actions of organisations in favour of employment are interlocked: for instance, in order to increase gender mixity, industrial corporations need to find women who were trained and acquired technical skills.

FETE intends to create a support guide so organisations can establish position cards for job positions which are not gender-biased.

As for today, work-life balance is an issue which has been little investigated by FETE. As for now, FETE only provides basic advice: giving the same possibility for men and women to adapt their working hours or to take a leave when children are sick, etc.



Nevertheless, FETE identifies gender equality on work-life balance as one of the main issue on which firms meet difficulties to take actions. In the future, FETE might develop support tools on this issue.

3.3 France: Charte de la parentalité en entreprise (Engl. Charter for parenthood in the workplace)

Background and objectives

The “Charte de la parentalité en entreprise” was launched in April 2008. It aims at changing perceptions and behaviours towards pregnancy and parenthood in the workplace.

The urge for action in favour of parenthood and work-life balance emerged from the following observations which were made by a non-profit organisation, SOS Préma, which gives support to parents of premature children and contributed to the creation of the Charter:

- A stressful working environment is pointed out as a factor of premature births which represent 8 % of total births in France. Public action to reduce premature births is one of the main concerns of the organisation SOS Préma.
- Studies showed that maternity has still a negative impact on career development for women. It is one factor of the pay gap between women and men.

Those facts led SOS Préma to incite companies to take measures in favour of maternity and parenthood.

The mainspring of the initiative itself relies on the individual experiences of two people. The two main actors who initiated the Charte de la parentalité en entreprise are Jérôme Ballarin, an HR consultant, and Charlotte Bouvard, the founder of a non-profit organisation called SOS Préma. They met while they had both personally experienced challenges related to parenthood within their work environment and they had professionally committed in actions relating to issues of work-life balance and premature births. Jérôme Ballarin and Charlotte Bouvard had the idea to create a charter in 2007. It took them a year before launching it. They met with Xavier Bertrand, at the time minister of employment, who promised them political support. The French state acknowledged, launched and still promotes the charter. Other actors helped in the conception of the charter, such as the international corporation l'Oréal which got inspired by the “Diversity Charter”.

As a matter of fact, the choice of a charter as a tool for social change can be explained by the previous creation of the “Charte de la diversité”. The Diversity Charter was launched in France in 2004 and addresses gender, among all motives of discrimination mentioned by the law. Jérôme Ballarin considers that the Diversity Charter had a great impact on French society as he relates the launching of the charter with events which followed such as the antidiscrimination law in 2006, a more diverse government, etc.

Although it got inspired by the action of several actors, the Charte de la parentalité en entreprise is an independent initiative. Its operator is “l'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise”. L'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise offers support to signing firms by providing them with HR tools to implement actions in favour of parenthood.

Working principles and content

All private companies, non profit organisations and public administrations are eligible to sign the Charte de la parentalité en entreprise. Employees being targeted by the initiative are employees with children and child-bearing employees.



The only obligation for signing organisations is to make a public commitment on their intentions by signing the charter. Upon signing, companies are asked through a very short questionnaire (three questions) which actions they have implemented in favour of parenthood and which actions they plan to take.

By signing the charter, organisations make three commitments:

- To change perceptions by informing managers and HR staff on parenthood challenges and by communicating towards employees about the commitment of the organisation;
- To allow work-life balance and ensure adequate working conditions to childbearing employees;
- To ensure the absence of discrimination related to career development in HR and managing practises.

There is no monitoring of commitments stated by companies on their good practices. According to Jérôme Ballarin, the charter relies on emulation and not sanction. Besides, Jérôme Ballarin considers there is a form of self-censorship from companies who will not take a public commitment such as signing the Charte de la parentalité en entreprise if they do not have a family-friendly policy towards their employees. As a matter of fact, 75 % of the companies which are contacted by l'Observatoire de la parentalité decline the offer to sign the charter (see below reasons why some companies will not participate in the initiative in the part "Impact in companies").

From the list of signing companies which is published on the website of l'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise, one can notice that three main types of companies signed the charter:

- Large scale companies, of whom many have already taken public commitments in favour of diversity, non-discrimination, gender equality through the participation in several initiatives;
- HR consultants (large companies as well as SMEs);
- Companies whose activity is connected to parenthood (large companies as well as SMEs).

To sum it up, the initiative raises particular interest from companies which are already engaged in corporate social responsibility actions or whose products are connected with parenthood.

For example, one enterprise which was interviewed mentioned several actions which made them particularly aware of the issue of discrimination before signing the charter: Before signing the Charte de la parentalité en entreprise, it had signed the Charte de la diversité.

- It belonged to a club of firms of the same economic sector which, among other actions, work and publicise about good practices (e.g. against discrimination).
- It trains their employees about discrimination issues in order to advice their business customers but also to know how to deal with customers having discriminatory demands.
- As a recruitment consultancy, it informs businesses it works for and offers them training to help them prevent discriminatory practices.



- On the contrary, nevertheless, another company stated that signing the Charte de la parentalité en entreprise was one of the very first social commitments they had taken.

It is noteworthy that many firms which signed the charter are either big corporations which have financial means to take actions in favour of work-life balance or SMEs whose activity allows – to a certain extent – flexibility by setting up teleworking, flexible working time, etc.

The initiative is promoted by public administrations and by its operator, l'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise. The charter is also being mentioned in the media. One of the signing firms did actually hear about the Charte de la parentalité en entreprise on the television news and contacted l'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise.

L'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise relies on volunteers who contact companies in order to promote the Charte de la parentalité en entreprise. Also, companies mention to the observatory other companies which can be contacted. Nowadays, the charter gained fame through the media; therefore companies spontaneously contact l'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise. At the moment, the observatory is being contacted by two or three companies a week. According to Jérôme Ballarin, the initiative snowballs as 30 companies signed the Charter in April 2008, 40 companies signed it in November 2008 and 50 did so in May 2009 (up until today three sessions have been organised).

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

The initiative is being monitored by its operator, l'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise. Since 7 May 2009, 120 companies have signed the charter. Pools of companies sign the charter within the frame of sessions which are organised about every six months (three first sessions: 11 April 2008, 20 November 2008 and 7 May 2009).

The mission of l'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise is not to carry out an evaluation of actions taken by organisations which signed the charter. Once the charter has been signed, they only have an action of follow-up by keeping track of the number of signatures, and by encouraging signing organisations to share their best practises.

Nonetheless, the observatory decided in 2009 to set up a barometer of employers and employees through a questionnaire which is sent to companies having signed the charter. That barometer is meant to be updated every year. Employers are asked what actions they take in favour of work-life balance. Employees are asked to which extent they consider their needs in terms of work-life balance are being fulfilled by their firms.

The barometer brings into light that many firms which have signed the charter have taken actions towards better work-life balance: mutual insurance in favour of families, access to part-time work without negative consequences on career development, flexible time management to accommodate family events etc. Nevertheless, more efforts must be made in favour of teleworking, financial help for schooling and creation of day nurseries. Mentalities must also be changed through training of managers and information of employees on parenthood challenges in the working environment.



When considering the objectives set by the initiators of the charter, it can be said that the initiative is rather successful:

- It collects signatures from renowned companies, which can be a factor of emulation for smaller firms.
- It enhances commitments from these renowned companies to take actions in favour of parentality, which shows to other firms and the public that they consider they gain benefits from such an engagement.
- The process to sign the charter is rather simple to follow.

Jérôme Ballarin considers that the charter has several benefits in terms of social change:

- Since they signed the charter, a few companies signed collective agreements with trade unions. For example, ALSTOM signed a collective agreement on work-life balance following its commitment through the charter.
- Several companies obtained the Label égalité professionnelle which is granted to firms which show commitment towards gender equality.
- Actions were set up in some companies following the action plan suggested by l'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise and which consists of four main forms of actions:
 - o Services towards parents to make their everyday life easier: setting up day nurseries for several companies, granting spaces in outdoor centres.
 - o Financial support of families (most popular actions from the employees' point of view, according to surveys): vouchers to pay for care services, vouchers to pay for holidays, birth bonus.
 - o Flexible working schedule to adapt to family events (start of the new school year, children calling sick), offering part-time positions without negative impact on career development, avoiding meetings early in the morning or late in the afternoon, teleworking. In Alcatel-Lucent, teleworking is strictly ruled by a collective agreement with trade unions. According to Jérôme Ballarin, French companies are particularly creative in solutions in favour of work-life balance.
 - o Training managers to work-life balance challenges. Jérôme Ballarin considers that training is not well-spread among French companies. It is all the more important that the company must learn how to offer better work-life balance without being too intrusive in employees' personal lives.

Nevertheless, it is rather difficult to evaluate the direct effects of the charter on work-life balance and gender equality. Signing the charter was a means for many companies to validate actions they had already taken. Nevertheless, as Jérôme Ballarin puts it, signing the charter can also be a good start to communicate about parenthood challenges within the firm and reduce stigmatisation of people who do not stay overtime at the office; new actions can emerge with a change in representations.

It is all the more difficult to evaluate the impacts of the charter as there is no indicator to measure progress and therefore no quantitative and qualitative targets indicating in which ways one can consider that the objectives of the charter have been reached.



Jérôme Ballarin suggests that actions by firms in favour of work-life balance should be improved through the training of managers and by raising awareness of employees about the issue. Moreover, HR departments should take more into account people's situations as parents in the decision of geographic mobility of employees, career development, etc.

Impact in companies

One benefit of the charter one can think of is public visibility. Organisations make a public commitment they can communicate about through the media, their own publications, etc. Also, l'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise publishes on its website the list of companies which have already signed the charter. Therefore, the charter gives public visibility to the commitment of organisations. Nevertheless, the impact on customers, suppliers, potential applicants as employees is difficult to assess accurately.

When asked about it, one firm considered that benefits from the charter are more internal than external. It allowed to confirm towards employees the commitment of the board of directors to actions they had previously taken in favour of work-life balance. As an SME, this company did not have financial means to take any further action after signing the charter: as of today, four women out of 15 employees were able to work four days a week, the management avoids setting up meetings early and late in the day, flexible time management can be applied if children are ill. To sum it up, signing the charter was an opportunity for the organisation to formalise and communicate what already existed in its practices. It did not give any new impulse to new actions.

Another firm also signed the charter in order to formalise previous commitments such as avoiding important meetings on Wednesdays. But the charter was also a means of raising awareness about parenthood challenges and allowed to take new actions:

- It was decided not to plan training sessions on Wednesdays.
- A "commission of parentality" was created which meets at least twice a year.

Although that company cannot assess the impact of the charter on recruitment, the administrative manager mentioned that several customers and suppliers have noticed that the firm had signed the charter and had congratulated them about it. Employees could themselves see the impact of the initiative, as they found articles on the internet which valued the commitment taken by their firm.

Some companies make the choice not to sign the charter when they are offered to do so for several reasons:

- Jérôme Ballarin mentions companies which consider "they are not ready": They do not offer a working environment which is friendly enough to work-life balance. Companies are very much aware of how public communication on actions they do not thoroughly address in their daily actions could actually be very detrimental to their image: employees (bloggers on the internet or employees leaving the company) or trade unions can denounce a discrepancy between the communication and the actions of the firm, making bad publicity to the company. For this reason, it is better not to communicate about commitments which are not well-rounded.



- A manager of an SME outlined the fact that taking work-life balance was particularly costly for an SME (for example allowing employees to work only four days a week and therefore leaving means of production out of use one day a week), and is not congruent with the entrepreneur state of mind of managers who expect a full-time commitment from their employees.
- A manager of an SME suggested that some firms could see the charter as a tool which is only designed for large companies which have means needed to invest in day nurseries, maternity/paternity leave, etc., and therefore is unsuitable for constraints experienced by SMEs. Only a closer look with the help of l'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise allowed an SME to realise that several actions it had previously taken could be considered as favouring work-life balance. Signing the charter would be a way of confirming and communicating about those previous commitments.
- Some companies may think that a period of economic crisis is not the right moment to focus on issues which can appear as less crucial than their core activity in the eyes of their employees. Making such commitments at a time when the priority is to maintain activity and jobs could be misunderstood by employees. The manager in an SME considered that, at a time of economic crisis, efforts must focus on the business plan and on maintaining jobs. According to him, in the current period, employees themselves display few demands relating to social responsibility.

Development and future perspectives

From 2010 onwards, l'Observatoire de la parentalité en entreprise will encourage companies to organise a “family day” on the first Wednesday of June, during which employees can bring their children at work. Several benefits are expected by Jérôme Ballarin:

- Organising a family day can be beneficial to relations between colleagues or between managers and employees. Seeing colleagues' children illustrates family challenges they have to meet with; seemingly it can change the image of managers and lessen the stern image attached to their position.
- Also, young generations have little idea of what their parents' working environment is like. The only image they have of work is what they hear from the media is about stress at work, dismissals, suicides, which generates a fearful relation to work. Seeing their parents in their working environment can only have a positive impact on the perception they have of their parents' life outside their homes and, more generally speaking, of work.

The initiative of a charter of parenthood could easily be transferred to other countries as it addresses social representations of parenthood in the work environment, which is an issue experienced in all countries.





4 Rankings and indices

4.1 Spain: “Top 5” de las empresas modelo de igualdad (Engl. “Top 5” of model companies in equality)

Background and objectives

Given the need for gender equality policies in the Spanish labour market, the Spanish Monitor of Labour Equality (“Monitor Español de Igualdad Laboral”, MEIL⁶²) is trying to make this issue widely known, in order to encourage companies to put equality measures into practice. Thereby, the initiative “Top 5 of model companies in equality” (“Top 5 de las empresas modelo de igualdad”) has been conceived as a ranking of best companies supporting gender equality.

The objective of the “Top 5” initiative is to promote equality policies in companies and contribute to the improvement of gender equality in Spain, by collaborating with companies and by publically recognising quality best practices. For this purpose, the MEIL monitor focuses on analysing equality practices in companies located all through the country, in order to obtain a selection of the best companies in gender equality issues.

The main reason why the initiative was created is to promote the implementation of the Spanish Organic Law 3/2007 or “Equality Law”, published on 22 March 2007 and intended to reach effective equality amongst genders. This law promotes the implementation of equality plans amongst all companies in general, although these plans are considered to be compulsory for companies with more than 250 employees. Thereby, the main aim of the project is to evaluate the implementation of the Equality Law amongst Spanish enterprises, as well as studying the main problems that companies find when putting these principles into practice.

The MEIL project, which constitutes the main framework for the list of Top 5 model companies, has a double mission:

- Promote equality policies within organisations: The MEIL aims at contributing to the efficient implementation of gender equality policies in Spanish companies, since gender equality is not just a competitiveness factor, but also a matter related to ethics and corporate responsibility.
- Contribute to the positive valuation of equality: Only valuable factors can become competitive advantages, so the MEIL would like equality plans to be considered as competitiveness sources.

The main implementing organisation of the MEIL is Villafañe & Asociados Consultores⁶³, which is a private consultancy firm specialised in the management and analysis of intangible goods in organisations. As well as this, it must be pinpointed that this initiative is sponsored by Adecco⁶⁴, provider of HR solutions, whereas IE Business

⁶² <http://www.villafane.info/index.php?section=Meil>

⁶³ <http://www.villafane.info/>

⁶⁴ <http://www.adecco.es>



School⁶⁵ has also collaborated as an academic partner. Furthermore, the private research institute Análisis e Investigación⁶⁶ has been the responsible for the field work.

Working principles and content

Regarding working principles, it is worth remarking that this is a new project that has recently come about, so its conditions and formal procedures are not clearly defined yet. In any case, it is possible to comment on the first (and only) report elaborated by the MEIL, which was published in March 2008.

From an operational point of view, this first study consisted of two parts:

- Qualitative study: it consisted of interviews and discussions with experts, lawyers, HR managers, etc., in order to gather information on how the Equality Law is being applied in Spain and get a broad perception of positive and negative aspects concerning this new regulation.
- Quantitative study: it was based on a questionnaire to be filled in by HR Managers of companies with more than 50 employees. This survey was developed between December 2007 and February 2008. More precisely, questionnaires had an on-line format, via web, or they were sent by post, and the duration of the survey was approximately 20 minutes. The company Análisis e Investigación was the responsible for the work field and the treatment and recording of results.

Companies targeted included all Spanish companies in general with more than 50 employees. More precisely, the first study was conducted over a sample of 124 companies working in a wide variety of economic sectors. Specifically, the percentages of participation by company size were the following: 5,000 and more employees (34 %), 1,000 to 5,000 employees (34 %), 250 to 1,000 employees (29 %) and SMEs (19 %).

By means of this process, companies gave their opinion on the situation of women in the labour market and measures implemented to promote gender equality within organisations. To be precise, it must be clarified that this “Top 5” of companies arises from HR Managers’ opinion. More precisely, it is based on the question: “Except for your own company, which company do you think is the best one in Spain concerning the implementation of the Equality Law?”.

As a consequence, this first Top 5 list published by the MEIL is not really based on a comparative study of different variables among companies, but on respondents’ own opinion about which companies they consider exemplary.

Finally, with regard to the promotion of the initiative, the Completion Report, the Executive Summary, the Press Release and even the whole study can be downloaded in the web site of Villafañe & Asociados⁶⁷. As well as this, the whole study can be viewed in the web site of the other contributors: Adecco and IE Business School.

⁶⁵ <http://www.ie.edu>

⁶⁶ <http://www.analiseeninvestigacion.com>

⁶⁷ <http://www.villafane.info/index.php?section=meil>



Furthermore, the MEIL organised numerous dissemination activities, and several events took place in different regions of Spain in order to make the initiative and its results widely known. As a consequence, numerous web sites and specialised newspapers published news related to this project.

Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

In 2008, and thanks to the work developed by the MEIL, the ranking of the Top 5 model companies in equality was published for the first time. Being such a new experience, MEIL members were not sure about how to approach their work, which had to be adapted as the project progressed.

The initial idea was to create a ranking based on specific criteria and variables characterising each studied company. However, this turned out to be a very difficult task, because the publication of the Equality Law was very recent and the conditions of the Spanish labour market were relatively complex.

Indeed, when the study started, the Equality Law had only been active for a short period of time, so there was a great disparity amongst companies concerning the implementation of equality policies and it was very complicated to compare their different situations. Thereby, companies' ignorance on the issue made the work more difficult.

As MEIL representatives stated, their work on the Top 5 list basically meant an initial approach to gender equality issues in the Spanish labour market. At the beginning, MEIL members did not get a positive impression about the situation in Spain, as most companies did not know how to apply the law and fulfil legal requirements. However, all contacted companies were very interested in the issue and replied to the questionnaire, so there was not any problem to gather the required information.

As a consequence, and in general terms, the results of this first study are considered to be very positive, since the effort to elaborate the project gave way to a growing interest in equality policies amongst companies in general. Thus, the complicated initial situation is currently seen as a challenge to overcome, and it is considered that the process will be easier as equality principles are extended amongst all Spanish companies.

Impact in companies

As already stated, by means of this first publication, the best five Spanish companies regarding equality policies were selected. Nonetheless, the report also recognised the practices implemented by another eight companies more, also characterised by an outstanding performance in equality matters.

Thanks to this publication, mentioned companies get public recognition for their effort in implementing equality policies, which let members of the public know about these companies' work to foster gender equality. Not surprisingly, this public recognition affects the corporate image of the company in a very positive way. As a whole, companies benefit both internally (satisfaction rates amongst employees are higher) and externally (vis-à-vis customers).



As well as this, MEIL members recognise that there is a positive impact in the overall Spanish business world. Thanks to the development of this initiative, companies and other related agents are showing a higher interest in equality plans and the Equality Law as a whole. Additionally, the dissemination and promotion activities let this initiative have a great media and social impact.

On the other hand, it is also interesting to remark that many companies saw the questionnaire as a useful guide for applying the Equality Law, and helped them understand its main principles.

Development and future perspectives

The first (and only) report elaborated by the Spanish Monitor of Labour Equality was published in March 2008.

Looking into the future, the main purpose of the Spanish Monitor of Labour Equality is to publish a new ranking in 2010, quantifying the extent to which companies have implemented Equality Plans within their organisation. When the project started, the initial aim was to work on it on a yearly basis, but finally it was decided to do it every two years.

Furthermore, and in the long term, once the prestige and the rigour of the Spanish Monitor of Labour Equality are consolidated, the idea is to create an “equality certification” which, acting as a measurement and evaluation tool, recognises the efforts made by companies to adapt their Human Resource policies.



4.2 Sweden: Bästa arbetsplatsen för kvinnor (Engl. Best workplace for women)

The background and objectives

“Veckans Affärer” (Business of the week) is a business-oriented magazine that has covered private Swedish businesses for the last decade. One important part of the coverage is to highlight the women in these businesses, as gender equality is a central theme in the magazine.

Since 1999, Veckans Affärer annually publishes a list of the most successful business-women in the economy. With this as inspiration, a new initiative for gender equality at workplaces was launched by the magazine in 2009: “Bästa arbetsplatsen för kvinnor”, a list ranking the 100 “Best workplaces for women”. A similar initiative has been driven by the US-American sister-magazine, “Working Mother”, for the last 20 years and proved to be a success.

The reason for the initiative was that the director of this division of Veckans Affärer grew tired of that not much seemed to happen with the gender equality work in companies, despite a growing attention to gender issues. The lack of women in high positions in companies is no longer a question of competence or education; instead, companies are many times marked by internal structures which are the reason for male domination. The director at Veckans Affärer wanted to start a process in companies on how to work better with the gender equality issue, and show that gender equality is not a cost but a gain for everyone.

The two main objectives of the initiative are to show women the opportunities particular employees give them to advance in their career, and at the same time help companies to see in what areas they need to improve in order to create a gender equal workplace and to attract and maintain female talents in their organisation.

Working principles and content

Instead of the traditional focus on women that have dominated the Swedish gender debate, the initiative wants to shift focus by bringing attention to companies with the conception that they need to improve themselves in gender equality issues.

To participate, companies themselves sign up at the website of Veckans Affärer, where they fill in a comprehensive web-survey examining gender policies, the way benefits are divided between men and women, attitudes on parental leave, the inclusion of females networking etc., various indicators of the climate in the company and how much human and financial resources are put into gender equality work. A project team from the magazine then analyses the competitors and makes a list of the 100 best workplaces for women in the country.

The project is so new that the first ranking has not been finished yet. When completing the list, the companies will be listed in alphabetical order to avoid perceptions of winners and losers. The purpose of the ranking is to encourage companies in their gender equality work and not to put focus on whether some companies have lost from one year to another. Another reason for this is that there is no exact way of measuring gender work in companies, as workplaces can be good in different ways for women.



Veckans Affärer also offers a deeper analysis to all listed companies to know more about their position. The idea is to give companies tools on how to continue and improve their gender equality work. All companies in the country can sign up and use the opportunity to get an analysis, although only for-profit companies with more than 200 employees are considered for the list published in the magazine as these companies have different opportunities to change the gender equality work.

Due to the fact that the initiative is new, Veckans Affärer has put much effort into marketing in order to get attention and raise the awareness by using as many channels as possible: advertising on the internet and in magazines, and using companies with impact in the industry as spokespersons for the project.

Assessment

Assessment of the initiative

As the project is only just initialised in Sweden, it is not possible to evaluate it so far. However, looking at the American version, the initiative itself can be assessed as successful. The edition of the American magazine that announces the list is the best-selling edition of the whole year and contributes to 20 % of all advertising revenues.

The project in the USA has attracted so many companies that it is now divided into different lists, such as the “100 best lawyer firms for women”, the “100 best workplaces for coloured women” etc. The Swedish project hopes for a similar success, by having so many nominees that it can compare sector to sector and thereby strengthen the competition among companies and their gender equality work even more.

The aim in Sweden within three years is to have all companies listed on the stock-exchange as participants, because they employ numerous persons, they have an impact on the Swedish economy and a chance to set the tone in the market. If they participate, other companies will join, too.

The first year, approximately 300 companies showed interest in the competition, but only 50 companies completed the survey. This number is not sufficient, as the director has the opinion that a list of the 100 best companies requires at least 200 competitors. It has been a first tough year, but the director counts on more participants next year as an effect of the publicity of the first year.

Veckans Affärer states that the inability to act is very significant in terms of gender issues, where people claim that they want changes but they are reluctant to act. Despite the low number of participants, the director thinks the project has potential to have a sustainable impact on gender equality, and compares it to working for the environment: it is a tough challenge in the beginning, but companies will eventually realise that there is money to make, that there are savings in these matters and will start thinking differently.



Impact in companies

The director of the project is well aware of the importance of marketing and publicity effects for companies in today's economy. This is the reason why the project tries to attract companies to participate from this point of view. This could be an immediate motivator for companies to participate, while there are various long term changes to win with a strong gender equality work, for example changing the underlying structures and implement a new way of regarding these issues.

The two interviewed companies being on the list of 2009 admit the importance of publicity and its positive effects in these matters, and have already been contacted by women with an interest to work in the companies.

Although, they see publicity mostly as a positive side effect and claim that the most important aspect of a good gender equality work is the internal management effects. Companies state that awareness in gender issues illustrates the internal gain due to a good gender equality work. A balanced working environment creates motivation and stimulation which in the end also has positive financial consequences: if female employees feel disregarded they will look for other workplaces, which in the long run means a loss of competence and thus financial effects.

One of the companies on the list underlines the importance of the management's engagement and dedication to gender equality work as the company's own equality work was speeded up a few years ago due to a new director who prioritised gender equality. It is important that the management realises the great value of a diversified workforce, as it creates a balance and a creative working environment. According to the company, the most competent and thereby profitable workers can impossibly be found in only the male part of the population, especially as a multitude of customers need to be reflected by a multitude of staff.

Even though the interviewed companies find it inspiring to be on the list, they see it mainly as a confirmation of good gender equality work that sets a high internal pressure to keep on working in these issues and perform even better in the future.

Development and future perspectives

Since the initiative has just commenced, there are no plans on changing the focus. In the future, Veckans Affärer hopes to get so many nominations that it will be able to make sector-specifications like the initiative in the sister-magazine Working Mother.

As the idea of the project is for companies to compete against themselves and reach better results yearly, the survey must be comparable from year to year which does not open up for any revolutionary changes.

As the project is brand new and just trying to find its feet, this first round has not attracted the amount of participants hoped for but there are great expectations this will change the next years. As the implementation of the project progresses, also with much help from the publicity in the first year, the director counts on more participants.

The gender equality issues addressed by the initiative are not specific for Sweden, why the methodology and initiative very well could be transferred to other countries, as it has already been done in transferring the initiative from the USA to Sweden.





5 Compendium of good practice

5.1 Denmark: Ligeløn (Engl. Equal Pay)

Background and objectives

The “Equal Pay” (“Ligeløn”) theme website⁶⁸ was prepared by the Ministry of Employment in 2006 and was made accessible to the public in January 2007. The overall objective of the Equal pay initiative is to support enterprises’ efforts regarding equal pay for men and women and to advocate for equal pay in general. In 2006, amendments were made to the Consolidation Act on Equal Pay to Men and Women. The amendments, coming into effect the first of January 2007, require enterprises with a minimum of 35 employees to prepare gender-segregated wage statistics for groups of a minimum of ten persons of each sex, calculated on the basis of the 6-digit DISCO codes. However, the requirement to prepare gender-segregated wage statistics lapses if the employer enters into an agreement with the employees to prepare a report on gender equality in wages and take initiatives to reduce gender gaps in wages at least every third year. The requirement to prepare gender-segregated wage statistics is the result of a many years debate on the gender pay gap and has been vividly discussed.

The Equal Pay website contains information on legislation, juridical practice, various publications and guides on equal pay, statistics and information on seminars on equal pay arranged by the Ministry of Employment. Moreover, the website contains a compendium of good practices disseminating the efforts and results of enterprises that have worked for closing the gender pay gap prior to the amendments made to the Act on Equal Pay. The objective of the compendium is to disseminate good practices to enterprises taking action to reduce the gender pay gap.

The implementing and managing organisation is the Danish Ministry of Employment. However, in the initial phase of collecting good practices, the Confederation of Danish Employers (DA) and the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) were involved in drafting reports on gender and wages, and in identifying enterprises eligible to participate in the compendium as examples of good practice for equal pay.

Working principles and content

The examples of good practice are collected by the Ministry of Employment. When the Equal Pay website was published in January 2007, the site contained nine examples of good practice. Since then six examples have been added to the compendium. In establishing contact to the first nine enterprises the Ministry of Employment relied on the expertise and network of the DA and LO. As to the latter six examples, knowledge of and contact to enterprises was obtained via the enterprises identified by the cross ministerial innovation unit, Mindlab, in an Enterprise-guide on the gender segregated labour market (“Virksomhedsguide til det kønsopdelte arbejdsmarked”), prepared on behalf of the Ministry of Employment. Thus, currently there are fifteen good practice cases available on the equal pay website. Moreover, at the Equal Pay website enterprises are encouraged to contact the Ministry of Employment for contributing to the compendium. However, no cases have been added to the compendium in this way.

⁶⁸ <http://www.ligelon.dk/>



The Equal Pay good practices provided by the enterprises were collected by the Ministry of Employment via semi-structured interviews with the relevant persons in the enterprises. For the purpose of the interviews a standard checklist was drafted and used in all interviews. The interviews formed the basis for descriptions of the good practices subsequently published in the compendium at the website. The descriptions of enterprises' good practices are free texts, and no standard template or structure for the texts was observed in the production and publication of the texts. When the good practice is published, enterprises are mentioned by name and company logo. In addition, the enterprises have not been contacted or invited to update the content of the descriptions.

Regarding the criteria for inclusion in the compendium of good practices, the following three have been practiced: the case has to

- display at least one of the aspects related to the overall theme of equal pay,
- have inspirational value for others, and
- be based on some sort of systematic approach of the enterprise.

As to the first criterion, aspects of equal pay refer to the eight target areas identified in the Equal pay guide ("En ligelønsguide til virksomheder, der vil arbejde med at fremme lige løn mellem kvinder og mænd") drafted by the DA, LO, the Department of Gender Equality and the Ministry of Employment. The eight target areas are:

- Mapping pay
- The gender segregated labour market
- Personnel policy
- Working time and flexibility
- Workplace culture
- Recruiting employees
- Supplementary education
- Management and career

Nevertheless, the criteria for inclusion in the compendium may be characterised as very tolerant. The Ministry of Employment emphasise the inspirational value of the cases, and have chosen not to set up strict criteria, such as meeting targets, performing benchmarks etc., in order not to exclude practices potentially inspiring to other enterprises. However, the enterprises are assessed by the persons responsible for the Equal pay initiative in the Ministry of Employment. So far, none of the enterprises contacted by the Ministry of Employment for inclusion in the compendium have been rejected on the basis of the criteria described above.

Due to limited resources the compendium is not promoted in the form of campaigns etc. However, the compendium is promoted indirectly via the other activities related to equal pay organised by the Ministry of Employment, for example at seminars.



Assessment

Assessment of initiative itself

So far, the compendium of good practices contains fifteen cases. As activity on the webpage is not monitored, it is uncertain how many visits that have been made on the pages containing the good practice cases. Moreover, as the initiative has not been evaluated it is even more uncertain whether the compendium of good practices has inspired other enterprises to take action. Though an evaluation of the equal pay initiative will be undertaken by Mindlab at a later stage (not scheduled), the content of the evaluation is not planned yet.

However, the Ministry of Employment stresses the importance of having a compendium of good practices as part of the equal pay website, and finds it necessary in the sense that it provides concrete tools for other enterprises to use. Moreover, it is the view of the Ministry of Employment that awareness of the importance of gender equality in wages is increasing, and that the initiative is well-known among those interested in equal pay. This view is partly based on the fact that the seminars on equal pay arranged by the Ministry of Employment have been well-attended, and the number of participants is increasing. However, no success criteria have been set up for the use of the compendium of good practices.

Regarding the extent to which the compendium is used by enterprises, the success of the initiative is difficult to assess. If the term “Ligeløn” (Equal Pay) is “googled”, the Equal pay website comes up as the first suggestion. This indicates that the webpage is the most visited and, thus, a main source of information on equal pay. However, neither the Ministry of Employment nor the enterprises interviewed for the purpose of this study have been contacted by enterprises that wish to be included in the compendium or learn more about the experiences of the enterprises. This renders it probable that the direct effect of the compendium is limited. Nevertheless, the compendium may contribute to setting an agenda having significant impact in the long run. However, at the present time any assessment of the effect on equal pay on the national level involves great uncertainties.

Regarding the concept and content of the compendium, the interviewed enterprises have some interesting comments and suggestions for improving the compendium. It is the viewpoint of the enterprises that the initiative is a very good idea. The background for this assessment is that the gender-segregated wage statistics or reports on equal pay leads to the question of how to actually improve on inequalities in wages. According to the enterprises, the concept of a good practice compendium well-suited to provide inspiration on *how* to minimise gender gaps in wages and learn from the experience of others. However, the enterprises also have some critical comments and suggestions for improving on the actual content of the compendium:

- The fact that the cases are not dated leads to insecurity regarding the actuality of the good practice descriptions.
- Some of good practices in the compendium seem to lack focus, as some cases focus more on equal opportunities or diversity rather than equal pay, and this may disappoint readers in search of tangible methods and results.
- The form of the texts in the compendium vary, which makes it difficult to overview what could be gained from reading the compendium and seek out information.



Impact in companies

For enterprises that have put efforts in ensuring more equal wages there are no apparent reasons not to participate in the compendium. Enterprises are given publicity and highlighted as examples of good practice. Moreover, the fact that the good practices are collected by the Ministry of Employment by the means of interviews limits the cost of participation for the enterprise to a minimum. There are no obstacles for enterprises to participate.

The private sector enterprise interviewed for this study points out that the main benefit in participating in the compendium is the positive publicity involved. If looking at the initiative alone, it would not damage the image of the enterprise if it was not present in the compendium. However, being mentioned in for example a good practice compendium contributes to the image of the enterprise as a socially responsible enterprise.

In the case of a public sector enterprise interviewed, a municipality, the background for participating in the compendium was the very long tradition of the municipality to work for gender equality. At the time of the drafting of the equal pay website the municipality had a particular focus on equal pay.

As mentioned in the section above, the effect of the compendium for equal pay in Danish enterprises is difficult to assess. However, regarding the enterprises participating in the compendium the compendium may have the effect that enterprises continue to focus on equal pay. According to the Ministry of Employment, it is evident that some of the enterprises participating in the compendium make use of the equal pay website. This is based on the feedback received via the contact to enterprises, at seminars etc. This, however, was not the case of the enterprises interviewed for this study. Nevertheless, these enterprises continue to put efforts in closing the gender pay gap.

Development and future perspectives

There are no concrete plans for making any changes to the compendium. However, it is planned to increase the number of good practice cases in the compendium. Due to the limited resources allocated to the initiative it is uncertain when this will happen.

Furthermore, the initiative addresses a problem relevant to most European countries (the gender gap in wages). There are no indications that the initiative could not be transferred to other countries.





Annex 3

Company Case Studies



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IBM Corporation

The background and objectives

IBM Corporation is a multinational computer technology and IT consulting company headquartered in Armonk, New York, USA. IBM operates in 170 countries and is divided into 6 Operating Teams and/or markets. The headquarters dealing with European Countries are: the North Eastern Integrated Operating Team (NE IOT) headquarter in Zurich, Switzerland (covering Germany, Nordics, UK, Ireland, Austria and Switzerland), the South Western Integrated Operating Team (SW IOT) headquarter in Madrid, Spain (covering Benelux, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Israel) and the headquarter for Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

The company is one of the few information technology companies with a continuous history dating back to the 19th century. IBM manufactures and sells **computer hardware and software** (with a focus on the latter). The key business segments are services (with 62 % of the workforce), software, hardware, research and financing.

At year end 2008 IBM had approx. 398,500 employees plus 107,000 contractors world wide. In USA locations, there were in total 120,227 regular and complementary (various workers hired under temporary, part-time and limited-term contracts) employees; 31 % thereof were women. In Europe IBM females represent 27 % of total staff. Overall in Europe 62 % of IBM's **female executives** are working mothers.

Since 1953, IBM has decided to lead an **equal opportunity policy** in their premises all over the world. The programme that IBM launched was called "Diversity" and concerned a large public: women, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities. The aim was to give equal chances for everyone to work at IBM.

In 1997, seeing that the number of women in the IT industry remained disappointing, the network **European Women Leadership Council (EWLC)** was established by the corporate level and several countries copied the framework locally (establishing National Women Leadership Councils; NWLCs).

The **objective** of the EWLC is to provide a forum through which all IBM women can connect: It creates opportunities to grow and develop through networking. It drives personal development activities and encourages women to take ownership of their career, thus positively impacting IBM's business performance.

The EWLC expects their members to:

- ensure two-way communication between EWLC and local IBM Women Networks and Councils;
- promote IBM as an employer of choice for women both internally and externally;
- give back to the IBM Women community by sharing their personal experiences and insights;
- engage in discussions and actions on how to increase the contribution and numbers of women in IBM.



This case study focuses on the presentation of the Women Leadership Councils and their networking, mentoring and training activities in Europe; besides these the company has implemented a **wide range of initiatives and measures to promote gender equality** in the workplace, including e. g. flexible working (concerning time and place; e. g. 40 % of the employees world wide do not work from a traditional IBM office but remotely).

Part-time is favoured and can be from 90 % to 50 % in agreement with the needs of the business and in regular review with the manager. Relationships are based on trust, respect and reciprocity and need self-discipline; jobs are defined in terms of objectives.

Principles and content

The Women Leadership Councils (WLCs)

Women Leadership Councils (WLCs) are an **interdepartmental network**. Practically all fields within the company are touched by WLCs (e. g. recruiting, training, reconciliation, career opportunities communication etc.). Under the umbrella of the EWLC, the concept has been copied and National Women Leadership Councils have been established in most of the countries where IBM is active. Each country has an EWLC representative. In the countries where there is no National Women Leadership Council, there is at least an IBM Women Network that takes over most of the tasks and responsibilities of the Council.

To achieve its objective, each year the EWLC defines a specific **action plan** where activities and actions are defined. The NWLCs implement action plans adapted to the local situation and labour environment. The different members of the EWLC each hold responsibilities for certain actions and ensure that within their countries (via their National Women Leadership Council) the execution takes place. Furthermore, the EWLC is also informed on national activities by their members.

For 2009, the EWLC focus is to **reach all women in IBM Europe through “communication”**: At the beginning of 2009, the EWLC launched the “IBM Great Women WIKI” where all relevant information on the EWLC, their activities, how women can grow their career within IBM (different tools, networking), etc.. This WIKI is also linked with a blog where every interested woman (or man) within IBM can communicate.

As a concrete example on the WIKI **relay interviews** are featured. This series of relay interviews highlights women that are making a difference to IBM's business and their people. They come from different countries, from all parts of the business and contribute to IBM's success in client facing and technical roles as well as in support functions. The principle of the relay interview is easy: a female “IBMer” answers questions about her career and shares advice. At the end of the interview she chooses another female “IBMer” and relays the interview to her. She in turn answers the questions, selects another female “IBMer” who answers the questions and relays the interview, and so on.

The members of the Women Leadership Councils are also expected to give back in return to the IBM women community by **sharing their personal experiences and insights** which they gained through their career. These women act as mentors for their female colleagues, i. e. they themselves look for mentees (although, of course, interested women may approach them as well).



Through **mentoring** WLC members provide a number of valuable functions within any business group: role model, teacher, listener, coach, and all-around supporter. Besides internal (local and international) mentoring, IBM provides also opportunities for cross-company/cross-sector mentoring through their IBM/Danone mentoring programme. This programme is the result of one of the deliverables of a workgroup with member companies of CSR-Europe on "Women in Leadership positions". After this successful pilot, Danone and IBM decided to continue the programme.

The **WLC and their activities are promoted** among the IBM staff through various WIKIs and web sites, regular newsletters that are being sent out within the corporation, blogs; basically through all available communication channels.

Basically, **all interested women can participate in activities** that are offered by their National Women Leadership Council or by the European Women Leadership Council. Women are directly approached by Council members when the possibility to join a National Council arises (as for this purpose drivers/women who really can make an influence are needed).

The **WLCs also engage externally** with other interested companies or clients sharing IBM's broader diversity policy overall. When attending recruitment events, IBM Benelux e. g. informs members of their different internal network groups (women/persons with disabilities/gay, lesbian, bi-sexual & transgender/cultural/multigenerational, etc.) to join at these events in order for people to be able to engage directly with these role models.

[The Blue Talent Programme](#)

Under the initiative of EWLC the "**Blue Talent Programme**" was launched. Blue Talent is a development programme for high potential women. The programme is aimed at IBM's top cadre of women managers who are recognised by their Senior Leadership Team as having the potential and ability to contribute strongly to the business's future success. The purpose of the programme is to recognise, motivate, develop and promote the company's high potential women, in order to strengthen the pipeline of women leaders moving up through the organisation, develop their skills and capabilities as well as reduce attrition rates.

Blue Talent is a **rotational programme** for a period of 12 to 18 months. It is not prescriptive, but a framework enabling individuals to develop and manage their own career. Activities include:

- professional training;
- Building Relationships & Influencing Course, which uses video analysis, a questionnaire and peer feedback, to assist the women in analysing their own personal influencing style in order to develop as effective leaders;
- Authentic Leadership Programme;
- exposure to, and opportunities to work with senior executives;
- Executive Shadowing (accompanying a senior executive for 3-4 days/half days);
- Group Career Management coaching sessions;
- Personal Coaching Sessions (participants receive a minimum of three individual career coaching sessions with a professional coach, and more if required);



- roundtables with both internal and external speakers including the Country General Manager;
- networking opportunities both within-company and externally
- priority bookings to corporate-sponsored events and conferences targeted at professional women.

As part of the programme, **women build strong personal networks within the group**, leading to additional support and assistance in their day-to-day roles, and also a greater insight and connectivity to other parts of the business. Practically, group sessions are scheduled quarterly, with Coaching and Executive Shadowing sessions being organised at a time most suitable for individuals.

Taking the stage™

Taking the stage is a **training programme** for IBM women around the world. It shows women how to achieve a strong leadership presence when they speak in all situations – board rooms, meeting rooms, conference halls and telephone calls.

Assessment

For years IBM Europe has implemented **scorecards** to monitor progress in the gender area (data are internal). They cover hiring, progression and retention and include the activities of the WLC and of their counterparts in HR, the Diversity leaders. Among the indicators monitored are the shares of women (according to positions and business units).

Since 2006, these (diversity) score cards have become integrated and are **discussed by the leadership team** together with the business results. In the past seven years (since 2002), IBM could continuously raise the share of women in leading positions.

EWLC **sets objectives yearly and monitors** achievement of actions against those objectives which are then communicated to the pan-IOT Diversity & Inclusion Council and up to the Global Women's Council.

An exact figure of how many women are participating in the WLCs throughout Europe can not be given and would also be misleading, as the participation in the **WLC is organised in different ways across countries**, e. g. in Germany each unit/department nominates one delegate and the principle of rotation is employed, whereas Switzerland relies more on voluntary and project-based collaboration.

Ms. Nadia Dupont, who is leading the WLC at IBM in Switzerland, which was re-launched two years ago only started a few years ago, remembers the **challenges** that had to be faced at the very beginning: *“A lot of work had to be done in the first year to gain a certain credibility, and also to make women aware of the benefits they can personally draw from such diversity activities (as, of course, it can not be postulated that women within the enterprise have already thought about this topic and are a priori attracted). Nevertheless, after this first year, more and more women started acting as multipliers and now proudly speak about their activities within the WLC, among their colleagues but also with their management and this lets the community grow. Their support as well as the support of the top management are essential to the overall success of the Swiss WLC.”*



Ms. Isabelle Welton who is also Swiss based and who is leading the EWLC in the NE IOT, in this context stresses that “It is very important to act in line with the culture of the specific country. A crucial success factor of the National Women Leadership Councils is that they are adapted to the national situation.” She agrees with Nadia Dupont, that it is very important to position the WLC in the right way, as “often this is connected with being feminist or against men, which is clearly not the intention behind the WLC. To the contrary, men also have the possibility to engage in the activities of the WLC (e. g. in supporting equality issues or acting as mentors).

Women who participate in the Leadership Councils can draw immediate **benefits** from their engagement. Engaging in the WLC also strengthens their position as they are part of a network. Each woman can draw her individual benefits for her career from participating in mentoring programmes.

Nadia Dupont summarises the benefits she has experienced: “One notices that one is not standing alone; there are common issues – such as career planning or family obligations. The exchange of experiences and solutions is very empowering. Networking – internally as well as externally is very important and enriching and it is good to see a female colleague proceeding in her career.”

Men and women have differences, and their respective qualities are needed in the IT and software consulting industry, and these qualities complete each other. Mixed teams are stronger, enriched by their different members. By caring for mixed teams, **IBM benefits** from a more motivated, productive and relaxed workforce, greater ability to attract prospective employees and increased retention rate, pursuing the general aim of making the IBM business grow.

When considering the effects in the different fields, IBM thinks that **external marketing and publicity effects** are very important, as the company daily receives media requests in relation to their personnel policy (relating to equal opportunities, flexible working, etc.). The topic diversity is of high interest for the media and as IBM wants to be recognised as a top employer, communicating what the company does is essential. Besides media, there are also other companies who are interested in sharing experience in the field of diversity and gender equality; therefore also the exchange of experiences among companies can be very fruitful. Also in relations with clients IBM lives their diversity policy and very consciously decides upon sending a woman or a man to a client.

Concerning **internal HR management effects** (absenteeism, motivation, fluctuation of employees, etc.) it is, of course, difficult to see a direct cause – effect relationship, but it is also clear that there is a difference when a Women Leadership Council exists. The Councils have become part of the company culture and engagement within the Councils is being recognised. The Councils are also **inspiring** for those who are engaged.

At IBM there is a **budget** for gender diversity, including the Women Leadership Councils. For activities that go beyond the budget it is necessary to find a sponsor. Persons engaged in the Women Leadership Councils often contribute voluntarily. Therefore it can be said that there is no real budget barrier when a company intends to establish something similar to IBM's Women Leadership Councils. A kind of “return on investment” for the Women Leadership Councils is not being calculated, but it has to be considered that investors are more sensible in relation to environmental and diversity aspects. Overall, investing in gender diversity pays off.



At the Swiss **WLC**, there are **more and more activities** and they emerge within a group of **dedicated women** (who have been critical before and who are now convinced of the value of their WLC) rather than being elaborated by the leader. Although it is hard to quantify and directly attribute the effects of the WLC to certain results (e. g. a higher number of women in leading positions), qualitative improvements (e. g. in the motivation of the women) can be seen in every day business. In Switzerland, e. g. the number of men who are working part-time has slightly risen (by 3 %) in the past years and so has the number of women returning after maternity leave.

Where possible, **the WLC have contributed to break gender stereotypes** (within the company and in the external relations), in the sense that there are persons who have been rather open from the beginning, then there are persons who have been sceptical but changed their opinion; but there are also those who can not be convinced. An important factor (and also result of the WLCs) is to have women in the teams who are not acting in line with stereotypes – action always convinces more than words. In external relations, **avoiding stereotypes in advertising** is a central concern of IBM.

The **cross-company/cross-sector mentoring programme between IBM and Danone** brings a wealth of **different personal and organisational perspectives**, cultures and attitudes in the relationship between mentors and mentees, which will further enrich and add value to the mentoring experience.

In the **Blue Talent Programme**, the **progress and advancement of the women is monitored** throughout the length of the programme and also tracked once they have departed Blue Talent. At the end of the programme the women form an alumni group in order to continue supporting each other, and also to provide insight and guidance for the new intake of Blue Talent women.

Development and future perspectives

Important tasks of the European Women Leadership Council are to **produce the gender score cards** in collaboration with HR and to elaborate and implement measures to achieve equality. **Good practices** throughout countries are collected and spread to allow for copying these where possible and useful. This will continue.

Selective/more focused **cooperation with organisations from outside IBM** shall be enforced, to promote fruitful exchange and avoid stagnation respectively dealing with the same topics (e. g. gender stereotypes, how to include men) for too long.

As the **culture of a country** is also reflected within a company, it will also in the future be important to adapt programmes accordingly. Progress in gender equality can therefore not only be achieved by the overall company culture of IBM, it is inter-dependent with the developments in national culture.

An **interesting long-term perspective** for the European Women Leadership Councils would be that they become redundant as gender equality has become an integral part of IBM culture throughout Europe and in every day business.

IBM has been awarded several times in relation to their diversity policy; some examples in Europe are: In the UK, the company is included in the “The times: **2009 Where Women Want to Work Top 50**” list. IBM Spain received the **Medalla al Treball President Macià 2009** award in the category “Equal Opportunity & Work Life Integration” for being a pioneer company in the implementation of plans of equal



opportunities; promoting measures and actions of work-life integration as well as developing innovative solutions to promote equal opportunities at work. Since 1938 the President Maciá award supposes recognition of the workers, companies and entities with a strong dedication, daily work and innovative actions to improve the work conditions. Grad Ireland (the official Graduate Careers Website in Ireland) and GTI (the leading graduate careers publisher in Europe), awarded IBM in Ireland the **Diversity Recruitment Award 2009** for their focus on diversity in recruitment practices. The award was judged on initiatives used to attract a diverse workforce, involvement with outreach groups and best practices in recruitment.





KPMG LLP

The background and objectives

KPMG LLP in the UK is a provider of professional services including **audit, tax, financial and risk advisory**. The company in the UK has over 10,000 partners and staff working in 22 offices and is part of a global network of member firms with firms operating in 144 countries. KPMG Europe LLP was formed by the merger of the UK and German firms in 2007. The Swiss and the Spanish firm joined KPMG Europe LLP in 2008 and KPMG in Belgium joined in 2009.

KPMG in the UK is organised around its three service areas (business functions) Audit, Tax and Advisory. The **Central Diversity Team** acts as a specialist advisory centre to all parts of the firm; by treating them as internal clients and creating tailored strategies that are then implemented to suit the local functions.

In the UK and across KPMG Europe LLP, KPMG has a very strong diversity agenda. The agenda is based on the ambition of making KPMG an inclusive firm – where everybody, regardless of their background or gender, can reach their full potential. This agenda covers many strands of diversity, but most work has been done in terms of gender equality so far. Gender also is the common denominator of activity on diversity and inclusion across the European network.

Back in 2005, the then CEO of KPMG in the UK expressed **concern about the drop-off in representation of women after middle management grade**, especially in client-facing roles. In 2005, women made up approx. half of the UK workforce at manager level but only about one third at senior manager level. As research clearly shows that organisations which have women in senior positions are more likely to prosper, this fact did not make good business sense. In the following KPMG's approach to overcome the gender bias in the UK is described.

Principles and content

Given these circumstances, a decision was made to launch the **Retaining Talented Women strategy**. The **objective** was twofold – to understand the reasons behind the observed drop-out in figures of women on the one hand, and to take action in response, on the other hand. To ensure high quality of the outcome, the implementation of this strategy has been **based on extensive research**.

By means of an internal **online survey**, which was completed by men and women (in different management levels), the respondents were asked to identify the main barriers for career progression for women. The **3 top barriers** that were identified thereby were balancing of work and family, the perception of women as less committed due to family commitments as well as a lack of senior or visibly successful role models. Other barriers included lack of access to networks.

The identification of these 3 main barriers provided the basis for a sustained programme of action to address the gender imbalance at senior levels. The Central Diversity Team shared the research outcome with the Heads of Functions (i. e. the Head of Audit, the Head of Tax, the Head of Advisory) and a **Retaining Talented Women Steering Group** was developed to co-ordinate the action plan and provide directions; i. e. to be a centre for co-ordination and implementation across the firm.



Two **national conferences** have been organised in cooperation with the Heads of Functions, in order to gather delegates' views of career progression for women in the firm, to share their experiences, and also for them to suggest, which steps KPMG in the UK could take to enable all women to reach their full potential within the firm and to address the barriers identified.

From the findings of the online survey (providing information on the areas for action) and the national conferences (providing information on how to react), the **3 elements of the Retaining Talented Women strategy** have been designed: "My Family Matters" (dedicated to support people with caring responsibilities); "REACH" (a women's only development programme at the core of the strategy); "KNOW" (a network). Alongside action to support women to progress, the strategy includes action to address the culture of the firm via training for leaders and managers.

My Family Matters

The My Family Matters programme offers **support** not just to **women** with young children, but to **fathers and other carers**. The offer comprises parenting seminars, up to 20 days of subsidised emergency childcare provision, first aid classes, guidance for those going on and returning from parental leave and a newsletter to help them stay in touch while on leave. A **parenting network**, allowing parents to meet and talk together while they are in the firm, is supplementing these seminars.

REACH

The REACH programme has been developed in collaboration with an external provider who has a significant experience of women-only development programmes. To explore if women would actually want a **tailored, gender specific development programme** and to make sure that such a programme would in fact address the perceived barriers to career progression that, KPMG in the UK ran a pilot. So the content, the kind of tone and the form of debate have been designed to best meet with what women actually wanted. In this way, a 2-day programme for a women-only environment has been elaborated.

The **objectives** of REACH are:

- To address the under-representation of women above middle-manager grade and help strengthen the pipeline of women to more senior grades.
- To contribute to the retention and career progression of talented women.
- To send a clear message to women who perceive barriers to their career progression, that the organisation is committed to enabling women as well as men to achieve their full potential.
- To offer a development programme for women that will support them in overcoming some of the barriers to career progression that both women and men perceived existed.

REACH encourages the participants to identify and build on what they are already doing well and think practically on how they could apply their learning pattern to the business. The intention was not to focus too much on the barriers, because that can create a very negative climate and a "them or us" situation between the men and the women. Instead, a very positive, **strength-based and action-oriented approach** has been chosen.



REACH courses consist of **4 main modules** addressing issues of:

- Leadership (How can the essential leadership skills be created? How to lead oneself and the team?)
- Career management and planning (focussing on career aspirations, wishes, goals and work with responsibilities and the particularities of that)
- Networking (how to build networks and make networks successful)
- Profile and impact (creating a unique brand for oneself, branding strengths and passions)

At the end of the course, women create their own **personal career development plan**, so they can form their personal goals and aims and continue working on these with their personal coaches and their line manager (called people management leader; PML) later on, to help ensure that they deliver on their personal development plan.

A crucial part of the programme is to **sustain in learning** after the 2 days, although women might go back to the business and exactly do the same kind of things as before. Therefore, 6 months following the programme, the women are encouraged to work with an internal coach (all of the coaches have been briefed and specially trained on the women's development programme, nevertheless their approaches can be very different in ensuring that the learning is sustained and carried over to the business). Women are encouraged by their coach but also by their PML to help embed the insights they have obtained into their daily working practices. Further **post-REACH** actions are a web site containing information material, action learning groups as well as an alumnae programme.

Although the REACH programme consists of 4 modules these are all very complementary and there is overlap between them; the programme shall be perceived as a whole rather than as a series of separate modules and KPMG in the UK encourages women to **systematically take their learning from exercises** covered in each module and consider how they may apply them to other modules.

This programme is **targeted at women in management positions** (to reach senior level). It is supported by the senior management team, as the persons on the course are managers, getting a senior manager and commitment is important to provide a very influential role in the development and progression of women across the firm, which is where the problem initially laid.

To integrate the REACH programme into the mainstream business, an **extensive communication plan**, which is being carried out to raise awareness of the programme, has been implemented. This comprises e. g. quotes of John Griffith-Jones, the former CEO of KPMG in the UK and now joint chairman of KPMG Europe LLP, who is supporting this programme and who sends a clear message out that KPMG is committed to the development and career progression of women. Updates on Retaining Talented Women and REACH are included in the organisation-wide weekly e-newsletter, detailed information is available on the intranet site and a publication featuring KPMG's work on RTW has been produced and circulated to a wide range of employees.

The strategy is **communicated externally** via the Annual Report that includes a dedicated section on the "retention of talent" featuring REACH; the Annual Report is available to KPMG's people, clients, suppliers, competitors and potential employees. An A5 booklet has been produced for external circulation detailing RTW.



Each business unit nominated **a senior PML who is responsible** for work in relation to the retention of the talented women. They are also responsible for communicating the programme more widely than their business function and to continuously develop the programme further.

KNOW

Finally “KNOW”, which is **a cross-function and cross-grade network for women**, has been created in 2007 in Switzerland. That has also been coupled with strong research, e. g. on networking within the firm.

It had been observed that senior management women tend to be together while junior management women also tend to stay with their group. When joining KPMG after graduation from university, one would start at junior grade and upon progressing in the firm may become senior. The intention was to expose junior women to senior women; where the latter could act as **role models**, but also for the most senior women to be able to **mentor** and learn from the junior women.

The establishment of the KNOW network has been **sponsored by a senior partner** in the audit function.

Assessment

Already from the immediate conferences in the **elaboration phase**, KPMG in the UK was getting good feed-back from women, who finally felt they were listened to, and who underlined the good impact for their motivation and intention to stay with KPMG.

The lasting impact of RTW is evidenced by the following facts: An increase in the representation of women at senior levels; women-only activities are now generally acknowledged as an important contributor to the retention of talent overall; women self-reporting feeling more valued by the organisation (waiting lists already full for attendance at future events) as well as continued support and budget from senior leaders for the continuation of RTW and the REACH programme for the next financial year.

There are **four main senior positions** at KPMG: manager, senior manager, director and partner. A **comparison of the figures of September 2005 and December 2008** shows how the shares of women have risen within these positions at KPMG in the UK:

- Manager level / client-facing roles: The share of women augmented from 38 % to 43 %.
- Senior managers / client-facing roles: The share of women rose from 24 % to 30 %.
- Directors: The share of women rose from 15 % to 17 %.
- Partners: The share of women rose from 11 % to 14 %.

Interestingly the **impact** can not only be seen in the specific area that had been targeted (i. e. the promotion of women from junior manager to senior manager level), but **in all of the senior levels**. KPMG in the UK achieved to build that increased representation of women in all senior levels. Apparently the ameliorated working culture (e. g. due to My Family Matters) and the targeted programme (REACH) as well as the network (KNOW) in combination helped to change the climate.



Moreover, the middle and long term impact is important. By implementing the Retaining Talented Women strategy a **stronger pipeline of women** who run for senior levels has been built. The intention is to take this forward to build a strong pool of women who will then say in the courses that they do not feel the barriers (that strong) and who will then be able to rise to the more senior levels of the firm.

Retention rates for women at manager level are reported to have grown consistently over the years, and in 2008 they were at 89 %. Retention is particularly high among exceptional performers, at 93 % for women in 2008.

In terms of **increased career ownership** the Central Diversity Team feels that the way that they manage the programmes allow business **units to take control of their own developments** and of their women taking active impact and to commit to and own the target. That aspect is very important to make the strategy sustainable.

KPMG in the UK has had women self-reporting that they **feel more valued by the firm** and that is something that they will take to work every day; which is very important in terms of engagement and motivation. KPMG in the UK carries out a **global people survey every year** and in 2008 found that the share of women who think that KPMG in the UK is doing a good job at retaining most of the talented women has risen since 2005.

To succeed, there is a range of **factors inhibiting** progress in gender equality that need to be overcome, such as limited understanding or acceptance of the business case; a tendency to avoid discussion about unconscious beliefs and biases; the labyrinth of factors impacting the career progression of women or the long-term nature of change in this area. Real commitment by the top management and continuous efforts towards establishing an inclusive environment are crucial **success factors** to sustain.

Gender equality at senior levels brings **benefits** in terms of client-centricity, competitive positioning, organisational performance, innovation, reputation, and the recruitment, retention and development of talented people. KPMG's **benefits** from RTW in various fields, e. g.:

- External marketing and publicity effects:
 - o KPMG have won prestigious awards in relation to the work on gender and equality.
 - o RTW and REACH have significantly contributed to KPMG's positive reputation amongst clients and other organisations.
- Internal HR management effects:
 - o Much greater levels of acceptance of the value of women-only development have been noted since RTW and REACH, resulting in sponsorship from senior leaders for projects to extend the work into other relating to gender diversity.
 - o Increased ownership of the retention of talented women by the business, with most business units now active in work to retain their female talent.
- Organisational Learning – Key learning points include:
 - o Targeted activity on gender has a measurable positive impact.
 - o Women-only development is not uncontroversial but can form a useful part of an employee's overall development.
 - o Blended development (involving participants, senior management, their PMLs and coaches) is more effective than one-off interventions.



KPMG strongly believes that the costs that arise from the elaboration, implementation and execution of the strategy will – in the longer run – more than pay-off. The elaboration and implementation phases were the most expensive in terms of personnel, these costs can be reduced as the programme becomes more standardised and the inclusive approach becomes part of the company culture. The costs of RTW already start to pay off, when the rising retention rates are regarded (given that the loss of a talented woman causes costs equivalent her double annual salary).

REACH

KPMG in the UK will be **testing for the lasting impact** of REACH (launched only in May 2008) through regular follow-ups after 6, 12 and 18 months of attendance. The **progress of the careers** of the attendees at the REACH course are being tracked and compared to non-attendees.

KPMG in the UK **regularly collects feedback** (from all parties involved, i. e. PMLs, trainers/coaches and participants) on the REACH courses, as that allows for ensuring the target-orientation and for adapting the course further according to actual needs.

From **the participants** of the courses themselves, KPMG in the UK states to have received very positive feed back, such as:

"Beforehand, whilst I thought it was worth a go, I was somewhat sceptical about the value of a women-only programme. Having been on the course last week, I can honestly say that this was the most inspirational and truly useful course I have ever attended. I already feel so much more empowered and in control, and am following through on actions and learnings", says Jennie Fisk, Head of Corporate Tax Skillset Technology, UK.

This underlines that the REACH programme has really made a difference in individual motivation and engagement of women managers.

The coaches said that it had been an interesting experience to observe a group of women discovering that they could take ownership of their own destiny; rather than having to sit back and coach women who feel lost and feel that they have to be something else. The coaches (male and female) themselves found it very empowering to watch women growing this way.

KPMG in the UK states to also have received very positive feed back from the **PMLs**.

The REACH programme has always been heavily oversubscribed. **Statistics** show that 90 % of female managers said that they would recommend this course to a colleague; 95 % stated that their expectations have been met and 84 % described the women-only environment as positive.

Development and future perspectives

KPMG in the UK is aware that they are making slower **progress at more senior levels**, where representation of women at partner level remains at just under 15 %. Whilst encouraged by the strengthening pipeline, this has been identified as an area for further concerted work.

REACH

There is a central focus of the firm on their clients – i. e. on how to leverage the skills of KPMG in the UK's (female) employees to actually best fit to their clients needs. Therefore, it is the intention to create **regional client networking** whereby the attendees of the REACH course can actually go and network with clients, maybe other women network groups to perhaps form an important client contact for the firm.



Moreover, KPMG is thinking about flexing the REACH programme and considers **linking it to the appraisal and promotion process**. The firm also considers reviewing the criteria for attendees (maybe for exceptional performers or maybe for people who have identified a certain development area).

The idea of **giving similar courses to junior women** also exists, in a way that these women can come back to the class after 6, 12 or 18 months; to really have a structured programme also at the prior level.

Recognition

KPMG in the UK has been recognised for their commitment to making KPMG the best choice for their clients and for their people. KPMG in the UK has in 2009, for the third consecutive year, been voted in the top three in The Sunday Times **“Best Big Companies to Work for”** survey. In addition, the firm has been awarded Three Stars in the **“Best Companies 2007 Accreditation”**, a scheme recognising organisational excellence in the area of employee engagement. Also in 2009, KPMG in the UK has been included in the **“Working Families List of 20 Top Employers”**. The company has also been included in the prestigious list of **“Top 50 Places Where Women Want to Work”** and has been awarded a Gold Standard in the **“Business In the Community Opportunity Now Awards”**. The REACH programme has been awarded **“The Santander Award: Equality of Opportunity through Education and Learning”** in 2009.

Extension of the programmes to other countries

In 2007, KPMG Europe LLP has been formed as the legal entity which controls its operating subsidiaries that have elected to become part of KPMG Europe LLP; KPMG Europe LLP is not an operating entity and does not provide any client services. Structured, country-adapted strategies to retain talented women and approaches to implement REACH programmes are now being elaborated. In July 2009 the ELLP Board reiterated its commitment to diversity as a business imperative.

Pilot REACH courses have just started in Germany and Switzerland and shall be extended throughout the KPMG Europe LLP network. The **KNOW network** shall be rolled out across the firm. Individual functions shall be encouraged to set up their own networking groups and mentoring schemes.





Motorola Inc.

The background and objectives

Motorola Inc. is a US-American (based in Schaumburg, Illinois) **multinational telecommunications company**. Motorola is active in the telecommunications industry and is focused on advancing the way the world connects. Motorola manufactures products ranging from broadband communications infrastructure, enterprise mobility and public safety solutions to high-definition video and mobile devices.

More than 60,000 people worked for Motorola all over the world in 2008; 31 % thereof were women. The company has a global presence and in line with their **Diversity & Inclusion Policy** seeks to employ a workforce that reflects the diversity of the populations served. The company's **Code of Conduct** that clarifies diversity issues is binding to all employees.

Approximately 1,000 persons work at **Motorola Centre in Krakow** (approx. 900 thereof in software engineering) in Poland. Since 1998, software for infrastructure elements of mobile phone networks under CDMA and UMTS standards, for public security systems and for the most recent generation of mobile phones have been designed there.

The management of the Motorola Software Centre in Krakow, in co-operation with the Human Resources Department already in 1999 elaborated the **Diversity Project**. This project is an outstanding approach to challenge the stereotypes and traditional barriers preventing young Polish women from pursuing software engineering or other technical careers.

In Poland, the term "diversity" is used as a synonym for "**gender diversity**" and the Diversity project has been designed as response to the fact that the Krakow Software Centre only received very few applications from well qualified women. The statistics on male and female graduates of relevant technical studies then revealed that indeed less than 2 % of the students in Computer sciences at Krakow's universities were women. As the Krakow Software Centre wants to **provide long-term career opportunities for young women**, the Diversity Project is regarded as the first step **to build a female talent pipeline**.

Besides the Diversity Project, that has been implemented to suit the environment that Motorola found in Poland, and being a multinational company, Motorola **globally** supports a range of initiatives to promote diversity (and gender equality in particular), such as **flexible working** (alternative locations, schedules or job structures) or formal activities to ensure that **job opportunities are being offered gender neutral**. **Promotion and career development** are also not focussing on gender in a negative discriminative way (while positive discrimination of the gender, nationality, etc. that is underrepresented in an organisational unit is supported to increase diversity). Motorola also has established **employees networks**, e. g. the Women's Business Council.

For 2008 as well as for 2009, 3 **diversity and inclusion goals** have been set by Motorola; one of these goals is to increase the percentage of women in senior management globally.



Principles and content

The Diversity Project

When the manager of the Krakow Software Centre realised that despite the clear commitments to a (gender) diverse workforce and to support women in the workplace with careers, they were not able to **recruit** as many **qualified women** as they wanted to, the company sought to go one step further and tries to solve the cause of this lack of women in IT education (i. e. the traditional barriers preventing young Polish women from pursuing software engineering or other technical careers).

The **attractive and flexible working conditions** that are offered by Motorola should appeal to women; a position as software engineer allows for very flexible working modalities that would facilitate balancing work and private life and IT careers also have potential for the future. Motorola in addition believes that training and education play an integral part in the development of (potential) employees.

Therefore, the Krakow Software Centre elaborated and introduced the **Diversity Project**, an educational programme and competition aimed at increasing gender diversity among future software engineers. The project is designed to encourage young people, and girls in particular, to consider pursuing computer studies and to show them the advantages of work in this field.

The Diversity Project is launched on annual basis. Every edition is created, prepared and maintained by Motorola employees (some of them working honorary for this project). The **task of the project is to create a web page**, each year on a different subject (a rather broad subject to allow for different approaches, such as “forgotten worlds” in 2009).

The **project is based on the competition between schools**, actually between teams of pupils. Women have to make up for at least half of the team, but there also has to be at least one man per team. Registration for the Diversity Project starts in January each year; the accepted teams then have 2 months to work on the project (assisted by e-learning and online tutorials) and the awarding ceremony takes place at the Krakow Software Centre in June (the 10 best web pages are presented there). The best projects are awarded according to 3 categories (interface, graphic design and content); a forth award comes from internet voting of all those who have participated.

To make sure that all interested pupils are able to attend **e-learning, online tutorials and support are provided** free of charge. Especially in the beginning of the project this was an important help for the young women and men working on the technical projects, as there were not so many lectures available for free on-line as they are now. Motorola Inc. stresses that it is important to provide free and time flexible training to ensure that everyone and especially those who cannot afford to invest much money in their education or who have other responsibilities besides school (traditionally women) can attend training. The jury also does not reward the utilisation of expensive photography, etc. on the web pages.

Each year the Diversity Project is **promoted** in schools as well as via the Web site (www.diversity.pl) of Motorola Poland's Diversity Project Team. Universities and societies promoting women have been invited to co-operate in the project. They are promoting the project, are in the jury and are holding speeches at the awarding ceremonies. Apart from the Diversity Project that has been explicitly developed to react



to the situation in Poland, Motorola has globally implemented a **range of initiatives that also help to promote women's professional careers**, among them are the following.

Flexible Working

As a global company with a highly distributed workforce, Motorola needs employees to interact and perform across cultures and time zones. Through the **iWork programme**, employees can work how, when and where they perform best by exploring alternate locations (working from an alternate site on a regular or occasional basis); alternate schedules (flexible arrival and departure times, compressed work week) as well as alternative job structures (part-time work or job sharing).

The company uses technology to allow employees to work from any location and have reconfigured workspaces to allow for more collaboration.

Motorola promotes flexible working through their iWork website that includes an online assessment tool which helps employees evaluate their options, identify benefits and overcome barriers to change their current work pattern. Employees then have to gain approval from their managers for flexible working. Managers may attend online training to learn how to work with teams that are globally dispersed, including information on geographic sensitivities, such as cultural norms and working across time zones.

Motorola also supports employees who are going through **life-changing events** through programmes that vary from country to country. Examples include time-off for new parents, education assistance, employee counselling, childcare services, family medical leave and disability programmes.

Flexible working conditions may slightly vary between countries, as they have to **comply with national legislation**.

Women's Business Councils (WBC)

Women appear to pursue different ways than men to make their voices heard; there also appear to be issues that are more important to women. A **network shall strengthen their position within the company**.

The global Women's Business Council **focus areas are**:

- **Strategic Business Impact:** Focuses on improving Motorola's opportunities to sell-through to women and build an intellectual property portfolio that is rich with women generated innovation.
- **Outreach:** Community initiatives with targeted activities that inspire underserved (female) population to pursue science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, etc. as a result that will enhance the Motorola Brand.
- **Networking/Mentoring:** Developing mentoring programmes to expand personal growth and networking opportunities to build stronger relationships.
- **Development:** Provide unique opportunities to WBC members in the form of training, coaching, professional development, and succession planning to enhance the talent pipeline.



- Proactive Communications: Bridge all the sites globally through proactive communication of key events, common messages and WBC themes.

Motorola's Women's Business Councils are networks where **every employee** (men and women) can join and support women not only in their networking activities but also in having a voice within the company and having a formal infrastructure that can be used to make their needs being understood and their voice being heard.

Assessment

Diversity Project

Motorola Poland's Diversity Project is being mostly evaluated from operational perspective; dealing with issues of delivery or publicity. In the course of the project, Motorola is **gathering information**, what kind of studies participants would like to take up after finishing high school. The company also assesses who would fit into their profile, e. g. there are pupils who show an interest in the codes behind the web site, but there are also those who prefer to just apply tools. The company is trying to keep contact with those interested in the subject of programming, as they mostly recruit software engineers.

Starting with 3 local high schools in Krakow in 2000, the Diversity Project has in 2009 been promoted in approx. 1,000 schools throughout Poland. The programme has already contributed to lower gender stereotypes; i. e. to change the public opinion ("software engineer" as a male stereotype) – since the start of this programme, the **share of women who chose technical studies** in Poland has continuously been rising (e. g. the share of women studying computer sciences at Krakow's university rose from below 2 % in 1999 to 9 % in 2006). The Krakow Software Centre's perspectives to recruit well educated female software engineers are thus ameliorating.

Motorola was the **first company** to start such a kind of web site contest in Poland. In the past years, this idea has been adopted by other companies as well and Motorola's successful concept has been copied. Nowadays, there is a range of web site contests that are run in Poland by different companies and organisations on different subjects and with different purposes.

Motorola's Diversity Project is now **promoted in around 1,000 high schools** throughout Poland; there are schools from big cities, but there are also very small schools from small towns.

Approx. 700 pupils are registering for the contest every year approx. 95 % of these are actually carrying out the project. In 2001, 17 teams (120 pupils) have submitted web sites; in 2009, 160 teams (650 pupils) have registered.

Through the Diversity Project, Motorola in Poland is actively engaging in the **establishment of a female talent pipeline** which is the basis for promoting women's careers later on. As a result, in the longer term, the Krakow Software Centre benefits from a more diverse pool of qualified applicants.

Participation in the Diversity Project, gives (female) high school students the **possibility** to get an insight into the profession of software engineers, to learn (and benefit from the online tutorials) and to actively try out applications or create their own coding and to become aware of alternatives to traditional "female" jobs.



“When we have registered for the project we didn't know how great fun it will be. We have divided tasks to make sure that we would have equal responsibilities but also that we would be able to learn new things from each other. But on the award ceremony we have learned one more important thing that if you aim high and work hard you can fulfil your dreams”, says **one of the girls from the finalist team** of Diversity 2009.

From the beginning of the Diversity Project, establishing a good cooperation with the School Boards/the regional governmental school administration bodies was a **crucial factor**. Information on the Diversity Project is put on the web sites of the regional School Boards; they serve as a first point of contact for all the teachers and all the school directors in the region. Motorola managed to establish a good cooperation with the local School Board in Krakow, who became a partner of the project (in the jury) and who supports Motorola very well. The support of the Krakow School Board has especially been helpful in communicating the information that the Diversity project was not a commercial project where Motorola wants to sell products to pupils (high schools would not cooperate in such projects). Thereby, the Krakow School Board has serving as reference for other School Boards which allowed for extending the project throughout the country.

Interestingly, the **success of the teams** to a certain extend also depends on the motivation of the high school teachers. Motorola has made the observation that certain schools are participating in each edition of the Diversity Project. Although the pupils change every year (only few participate twice), the teams of these schools in general achieve better results than the teams of other schools. There are obviously teachers who actively encourage their pupils to participate and who assist them in learning the modes of project work (project work is not very common at Polish high schools yet).

Another big and important success factor are the **employees at the Software Centre in Krakow** who are to a large extent working voluntarily for the Diversity Project; it needs a team to run a project of such a scope. There are 6 engineers (3 women and 3 men) who are absolutely committed; especially the women like their work as engineers and want to promote their life style among young girls.

Motorola **benefits** from a diverse and inclusive workforce as this brings innovation in the products enabling Motorola to better meet the needs of their customers and consumers around the world.

The company wants to be an employer of choice, in general and especially for talented women, therefore **external marketing and publicity effects** are very important. The Diversity Project helps communicate Motorola's CSR policy and to approach the specific target group on the labour market.

When considering **internal HR management effects**, it can be seen that the voluntary cooperation in the Diversity Project creates a special team spirit. In addition to the 6 persons working voluntarily on the implementation of the Diversity Project every year, there are approx. 80 engineers of the Software Centre assisting in the assessment of the handed in projects, i. e. the web sites. There now is a kind of internal diversity movement at the Software Centre, as these persons are getting involved into the subject (being informed on the rationale behind the Diversity Project). These assessors are also donating their time – they perceive this as doing something good to society and like to be part of the project. People are more motivated at work when they feel that they are working for a socially engaged company.



The opportunity for the software engineers to discuss with these young participants appears to have positive **effects on innovation and creativity** in the company. The handed in web sites are in general very good and very creative, new approaches arise, and engineers get something different to their standard tasks at work.

Motorola has a **budget** for the Diversity Project, after the first years of implementation, the company has been able to come down with operational costs, as technical standards have been developed and contacts for the project have become well established. Although because of the good internal publicity, it has become easier to get volunteers to work on the Diversity Project. Some of the employees at the Software Centre have come in touch with Motorola through the project, so returns can be seen in the form that recruiting cost have been saved. Another return can be seen in the fact that universities also want to promote computer sciences among young women (i. e. make computer sciences more visible at high schools) and a good cooperation between Motorola and the technical universities could be established. By having a good reputation at technical universities and the possibility to be present at the computer sciences departments of the universities, Motorola facilitates recruiting (female) talents (lower recruitment cycle time).

Flexible Working

The iWork programme helps Motorola to retain valued employees, attract and recruit talent, increase employee productivity and reduce costs. Enabling such a virtual business environment also allows for greater access to employees with the right skills to solve particular business problems no matter where they are located.

Many Motorola employees are taking advantage of working in a virtual environment. Whereas flexibility in work place and in work time is used by men and women to a similar degree, it is **mostly women who work part-time** and who take longer leave periods due to the birth of a child.

Women's Business Councils

The company via the Diversity Councils, and also the Women's Business Council, benefits from differing points of view that are raised. In 2008, 33 Women's Business Councils were existing world wide.

Development and future perspectives

Since the beginning, the Diversity Projects has been **updated and slightly changed** according to the requirements that occurred in the course of the project; e. g. the number of pupils in a team has been reduced from 6 to 4, as praxis has shown that groups of 6 were too large for every one to really engage into the project. Despite this, common knowledge on web site production had grown among the pupils and the workload has thereby been reduced. The participants are now also asked to deliver a protocol listing the responsibilities/contributions of the different team members. The project is expected to continue in a similar way.

Motorola **forms alliances with global diversity organisations** (in regard to gender, e. g. with "Women in Technology International") to help them stay current on employment best practices, employee engagement techniques and recruitment and retention strategies. These alliances support the company's efforts to attract the best talent, from the entry-level graduate to our most senior executive.



The company was among **Business Ethics magazine's top 10** in annual rankings of Best Corporate Citizens for 2006. The rankings were based on community, governance, diversity, environment and human rights categories. The Motorola Software Centre in Krakow has been awarded “**Equal Opportunities Company**” for supporting the idea of men and women equality in a workplace in the contest managed by United Nations Development Programme. Motorola has been in the task force for DG Information Society to elaborate the “**Code of Best Practices for Women and ICT**” which the company has signed in March 2009.





PSA Peugeot Citroën SA

The background and objectives

PSA Peugeot Citroën SA (PSA) is an European **automobile manufacturer**; the company is the 2nd largest carmaker in Europe, with 13.8 % share of the market. With marketing operations in 150 countries, the group generates approx. two thirds of their sales within and one third outside Western Europe.

As a company with technological, industrial, financial and commercial activities, PSA draws their strength from the two volume brands, Peugeot and Citroën, as well as from the skills of nearly **201,700 employees worldwide** (including approx. 130,000 in the Automobile Division; 66 % thereof working in France), and their stable shareholder base. The Group's history dates back to 1896, when Armand Peugeot set up his own company. Since then, the Peugeot family group has remained the reference shareholder.

At year-end 2008, the **share of women employees** among the group's total employees world wide amounted to 21.6 %; in the Automobile Division (at PCA) in France the share of women was 17.4 %. Given that the automobile sector is traditionally dominated by men, PSA in the previous years managed to attract women and offer them long term career perspectives.

PSA Peugeot Citroën's **social policy** since 2002 has been based on five principles: social dialogue, respect for human rights in the workplace, an efficient organisation with good working conditions, an international employment base, and equal pay. This seven-year period has been marked by a number of key achievements and innovations.

The group's commitments to gender equality were first expressed in the **Agreement on Gender Equality and Employment for Women** (*Accord d'Entreprise Relatif au Développement de l'Emploi Féminin et à l'Égalité Professionnelle entre les Femmes et les Hommes*) of November 12th, 2003. This agreement has been signed by the company together with the 6 French unions; in November 2007 it has been renewed for the period from 2008-2011, demonstrating a commitment to remaining a benchmark in this area and to pursuing the innovations undertaken to support jobs for women.

PSA Peugeot Citroën has opted for this **voluntary cooperation with the unions** to ensure that their policy is agreed upon on a broad basis and also because this is a demanding procedure that leads to very good results. The Agreement on Gender Equality and Employment for Women is embedded into the group's Sustainable Development Approach.

Moreover, in April 2008, PSA Peugeot Citroën signed the French government's **Working Parents Rights Charter**, thereby pledging to create a favourable environment for working parents, especially for pregnant women, to give them a greater voice within the organisation and to apply the principles of non-discrimination with regard to their career development.



Principles and content

Concerning the **Agreement on Gender Equality and Employment for Women**, the objectives that have already been chosen in 2003 can also be found in the 2007 Agreement; they are expressed along **4 axis of progress**:

- reinforce the policy of mixed teams and recruit more women in each business line at all hierarchical levels;
- ensure equal payment and equal development possibilities to men and women;
- support similar professional formation and gender mix in occupations;
- accompany the process of occupying more women by ameliorating working conditions and adapting the structures of professional life.

PSA has elaborated a **range of measures and actions** to achieve these objectives (and is continuously adapting and ameliorating them). In the following, some examples are given.

The group continuously diversifies their employee and skills base further by **pursuing new hiring channels**. These include partnerships with educational systems and government employment services, online hiring initiatives and unsolicited applications. By using all these communication channels it shall be ensured that potential future employees are reached best. To ensure equal opportunity at every stage of the process, **hiring practices** have been made more objective through the deployment of such tools as best practice guides for recruiters, anonymous CVs, simulation-based hiring techniques and training courses designed to help prevent discrimination.

Simulation-based hiring can prove beneficial to female applicants, as it has been noticed that women tend to pursue different professional formation paths than men (i. e. they may not have a technical apprenticeship). Simulation-based hiring rather accounts for actual abilities (e. g. the ability to assemble parts) than for diplomas or experience and thereby allows for a more objective judgement of the aptitude of an applicant. Besides ensuring equal treatment of male and female applicants, this process opens possibilities to those who are able but have less technical formation.

Moreover, for each professional category, the percentage of women hired has to be in line with the percentage of women who applied for a job. The target is to **reflect the actual situation** rather than implementing quota. Moreover, each site has to **define the positions and occupations** where women are still underrepresented (or over-represented) and where additional personnel are needed, in order to achieve mixed teams in future.

The **processes for setting compensation levels** are closely tracked to prevent discrimination; the salaries of men and women are monitored in close co-operation with the unions. Special attention is paid on part-time employees.

Professional advancement is solely based on competences. Nevertheless, it has been noticed that in many cases parenthood obligations are taken up by women, who opt to work part-time. Thereby, their lacking availability for the company may hinder their professional progress. PSA has therefore implemented a range of services to facilitate child-care (also in co-operation with local communities) and is also motivating men to take up family responsibilities or work part-time.



There are 4,100 courses offered in the **employee training catalogue**. Every year, employees have the opportunity to discuss their training needs during one or more reviews with their manager. When a person is returning from parental leave, specific training needs are accounted for.

In the Automobile Division, the priority is to **reduce the number of workstations rated as “heavy.”** Production line workstation ergonomics are being improved using the METEO method. This process, which is being led by multidisciplinary teams of occupational physicians, engineers, safety technicians, ergonomists and managers, is helping to significantly reduce the hardship of certain workstations. Light workstations foster the employability of people with less physical strength (e. g. women, older employees or employees with a number of medical restrictions). Thereby, the number of jobs available to women but also their employability in production is increasing.

To help employees **improve their work-life balance**, requests for part-time work are approved whenever possible with individualised solutions that align employee needs with efficient team performance. These solutions include such measures as working part of a day or half-day, working a reduced number of total hours or working every other week.

A joint labour-management **Gender Equality Commission** has been installed at group level, as well as a number of site Gender Equality Commissions. These Commissions meet at least twice a year.

PSA Citroën’s staff is informed about the activities in relation to gender equality via the intranet and in communications with the HR department. To internally promote diversity (and gender equality as an important issue of this subject), PSA Citroën has introduced a specific **diversity training for managers** (*Formation management de la diversité*). This training is held by specialised external consultants and managers, among others, learn techniques for the neutralisation of stereotypes.

Assessment

In 2008, the group has implemented an **auto-evaluation process**, since then PSA reports on their sustainable development performance on annual basis, following the third generation (G3) Sustainability Reporting Guidelines issued by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) in 2006. Monitoring indicators have been set to assess progress. With regard to the Agreement on Gender Equality and Employment for Women, Progress Reports are submitted to and negotiated with the unions at least twice a year (i. e. each site has to report to the group level before).

Moreover, **employee opinion surveys** are carried out every year in many countries. They gauge employee perception of internal communication, corporate culture, working conditions, professional development, training, compensation and benefits. These surveys are conducted anonymously, but allow for gender specific analysis. Surveys conducted in 2008 attested to employee satisfaction with the different topics covered.

The group’s commitment to gender equality is clearly demonstrated in their **hiring practices**. In 2008, women accounted for 28.8% of the total number of new employees under permanent contracts by the various divisions worldwide, compared with 26.1 % the year before. The share of women hired according to age classes (20-29, 30-39, 40-49 and 50+ years) is rather homogenous, with women accounting for 22 % – 30 % of the persons hired in each age class.



Simulation-based hiring procedures have been used to hire nearly 5,000 people in France since 2004, of which almost 31% have been women. Introduced in France in partnership with the National Employment Agency, the practice has now been extended to Spain, Slovakia and Brazil. In France, of the 2,694 engineers and managers hired from 2005 to 2008, 632 were women (23.5 %).

Internal controls are carried out regularly to ensure that the principle of equal opportunity is applied at every stage of the hiring process and to help define areas for improvement, which are then monitored over time. Internal social audits are systematically performed. Two such controls were conducted in fourth-quarter 2008, one to assess practices used to hire operators on a production site and the other to examine manager hiring practices. External audits are regularly conducted at the group's request, including one by France's anti-discrimination oversight agency, whose testing of the hiring process confirmed that the principles of non-discrimination were effectively applied.

In 2008, to close the gap, the average increase in **compensation** (across-the-board raises, individual raises and promotions and increases in seniority bonuses) was slightly higher for women than men among both, operators and administrative employees/technicians/supervisors (ETAMs), at 3.97 % for women and 3.87 % for men. This was the case in all job categories.

In 2008, for managers, the average monthly and annual **salary** in every job category has basically reached similar levels for men and women with the same grade or job qualification; there is only one category (3C managers) where the gap has contracted compared to 2007.

The average number of hours spent in **training** in 2008 across functions has reached a rather similar level for women and men who work as operators with 20 hours for male and female persons each. Women working as administrative employees, technicians or supervisors (ETAM) spent 28 hours in training, while men in this function on average spent 33 hours. Female managers attended 24 hours of training while male manager spent 23 hours.

The **diversity training for managers** has been attended by approx. 1,100 managers in 2008; and by approx. 500 managers in the first half of 2009.

In the Automobile Division, between 1999 and year-end 2008, the percentage of **workstations rated as "heavy"** declined from 35 % to 11 % of the total, while the percentage of "light" workstations increased from 26% to 49%. At PCA France, in the same period, the share of women employees could be raised from 13.6 % to 17.4 %; the share of women operators augmented from 13.4 % in 2003 to 16.2 % at the year-end 2008 while the share of women in management also rose from 16.0 % to 18.2 % in that period.

The **share of women** in the total workforce worldwide has risen by 25 % from 2002 to 2008. At PCA France, the share of women in the workforce has continuously been rising; from 13.6 % in 1999 to 17.4 % in 2008.

The share of **women managers** in the group reached 18.9 % in 2008 (compared to 15.3 % in 2003). Currently, 29.9 % of managers less than 30 years are women, compared with almost 11.8 % of managers aged 50+.



In general, by expanding the range of skills and enabling a broader exchange of ideas, a gender-balanced workforce is regarded as **beneficial to the group's performance**. Although it is nearly impossible to quantify the impact of mixed-teams, e. g. the effect that more or fewer women have on the financial success of a company, the positive qualitative changes are visible (such as a better working climate, different approaches to solve problems, higher motivation and less absenteeism, etc.). It can be stated that teams that have been dominated by men before and that are mixed now, became more productive and that the working climate has ameliorated. Moreover, in mixed teams the potential for innovation rises.

Despite the positive effects, it has proven a **challenge to attract women**, as there are still too few engaging in technical apprenticeships and studies. PSA seeks to ameliorate the situation by co-operating with politicians, universities and training institutions and jointly implement programmes to attract women to the technical sector.

As a result of an internal validation process that reviewed the ethical quality of the group's advertising and to ensure that corporate social responsibility concerns – such as respect for people, the environment and awareness of the economic issues involved in buying a car – are taken into account in their **public appearance and advertising**, PSA also prepared a Responsible Communications Charter. This Charter, which was deployed in 2008 among the appropriate group and brand teams and their suppliers, covers all mass media communications, including TV commercials, the Internet, print ads, events and point-of-purchase advertising. In particular, article 4, states that “marketing communication should respect human dignity and should not incite or condone any form of discrimination, including that based upon [...], gender, [...]” and gives examples.

Development and future perspectives

While in 2000 (when the company faced problems to attract qualified workforce) the recruitment of more women was at the core of the company's equal opportunities policy; the **focus has switched** to career promotion and ensuring equal salary now. Nevertheless, besides slight switches in priorities, the objectives of the Agreements as signed in 2003 and 2007 remained the same.

In 2008, the company's **Sustainable Development Approach has been reviewed** and PSA defined the ten objectives for 2010-2011 to guide employee actions in each of their areas of responsibility. The priority action “Guarantee gender equality in career development” is expressed within objective 4 “Social responsibility”.

In 2008, by renewing the group's **Equal Opportunity Employer Label (Equality Label)** (*Label Egalité Professionnelle*) (based on their assertive gender equality policies and their compelling results) the French quality standards agency AFAQ/AFNOR Certification recognised that the group's policies had delivered particularly significant gains in such areas as offering job opportunities for women, developing a gender-balanced workforce, ensuring equal pay for equal work and equal career development opportunities and initiatives to improve work/life balance. Examples of the latter include flexible working hours and new employee assistance services, like corporate concierge services, company day-care centres, and financial support from the Works Councils. PSA Peugeot Citroën was the first company to be awarded the label, in 2005. Despite the progress achieved so far, ensuring gender equality is considered as a **continuous process** that will also be taken close care of in the future.





Siemens AG Austria

The background and objectives

Siemens AG is Europe's largest **engineering conglomerate**. Siemens' international headquarters are located in Berlin and Munich, Germany. The company is a conglomerate of three main business sectors: Industry, energy and healthcare and their subsidiaries in 2008 employed approximately 430,000 people in nearly 190 countries; approx. 25 % of the employees are women (there is one woman in the managing board; 7 % of the top management are women; the share of women in management is 14 %).

Siemens is a highly international technical company. This is an area that traditionally attracts men. Attitudes are now slowly changing and Siemens has decided to actively support this change and attract women to qualify for and work in this **technical business**.

When facing the lack of well qualified and specialised personnel and the challenges of the demographic changes, promoting diversity is one of the basic preconditions for the sustainable success of a company. It is the aim to attract and keep qualified and specialised personnel and to **assign the jobs to the most able persons**, regardless of their gender, nationality, age or religion.

In the early 2000s Siemens AG Austria has elaborated and successfully implemented the national **“women ahead!” strategy** that bundles measures and initiatives in various fields promoting an open and gender neutral feed-back culture within the enterprise and that has the objective to raise the share of women within the company at all levels. This programme is administered by the HR department. Besides this Austrian programme, the company also runs or supports other activities that promote gender equality in the workplace; such as the global network GLOW that has the aim to leverage support of women, to expand presence of female talent and to create visibility of their contribution but also provides mentoring and supports the realisation of flexible working conditions. In the following, the components of “women ahead” are described in more detail.

Principles and content

„women ahead!“ is a **comprehensive strategy** that is relevant for all for all business areas; it starts well before recruitment (when the annual “daughter’s day”, where employees can bring their daughters to work to increase their interest in the technical field, is taken into account), considers persons on parental leave and supports individual career promotion of women.

Among the **programmes and activities** that are offered in the framework of “women ahead!” are:

- active promotion of an open, valuating and gender neutral feed-back culture;
- active promotion of an enterprise culture where family issues are understood and persons with family are supported (i. e. employees – men and women – shall not fear to experience a break in their career or a decline in status because they want to take parental leave or have child care responsibilities);



- clear and detailed job descriptions in job advertisements that equally attract men and women;
- participation of assessors of both gender in selection processes (hearings, assessment centres) with to avoid gender biased results and to motivate male as well as female applicants;
- in job placements: when the qualifications of a male and a female candidate are equal, women are supported more to promote to higher functions;
- at the annual potential analysis: specific interest is shown in women when naming “high potentials” and in persons working part-time when delegating for trainings;
- consequent encouragement of women to apply for higher positions (explicitly by enforcing feed-back, lob and recognition);
- wide ranging offer for professional further training and competency development that is open to all employees;
- sensibilisation impulses through adequate framing of gender equality in development programmes (for future managers, project managers);
- equal treatment of both genders and part-timers in the annual pay re-classifications and when bonuses are shared.

Individual personnel development at Siemens is geared to the particular phase of life of the employee. This approach allows for balancing the professional as well as the private sphere. To effectively support all employees and managers, the following measures have been elaborated and implemented:

- flexible working times and the possibility to work part-time;
- possibility to telecommute;
- reduction of overtime to a minimum;
- appreciation of part-time workplaces;
- company-run day-care centres with extended opening hours are available at most of the facilities in Austria;

A **re-entry concept** has been designed to ensure a fast and smooth re-integration for persons who have taken (parental) leave:

- close contact is kept with women who are on maternity protection or with persons on parental leave;
- a personal mentor is nominated to support these employees before, during and after parental leave;
- approx. 1 month before the leave is taken a check up talk is held between the employee, the mentor and the responsible manager (optional with HR); a personal development plan is then elaborated (possible fields of work during parental leave and after re-entry are one of the topics);
- approx. 4 months before the intended re-entry, another check up talk is held to clarify the details of re-entry;



- trainings can be taken during parental leave (many trainings are also offered on e-learning basis) and the utilisation of the “education cheque” (*Bildungsscheck*) is promoted;
- possibility to work some hours during the leave with flexible timing.

Women or men (in higher positions) who are taking parental leave can also attend the so called **OASE workshop**, a 2 day information and networking event that is dealing with their new role in the family and with how to balance job and family. Within this workshop, and as a follow-up 6 months and 1 year later, also a professional and individual supervision can be attended.

Within the company, the **employees are informed** about “women ahead!” and the programmes offered via intranet, but also in personal talks with representatives of the HR Department who are active in all fields of the company to give support and advice on improving job-related competences. When a woman announces pregnancy, the HR department provides all necessary information and arranges for a mentor.

“women ahead!” is **not explicitly promoted outside the company**, as this is not the purpose of the initiative. Nevertheless, at conferences or in panel discussions, the programme might be mentioned, but specific events for the external promotion of “women ahead!” are not held.

Assessment

Each year, an **internal Diversity Report** is published to evaluate the situation and achievements and trace options for amendments. Besides recruiting and human resources development, also developments in the different hierarchical levels and in the management structure are analysed.

Over the past years, the share of **women in management positions** has been continuously growing; the share of women in management nearly doubled compared to 2002. The internal Diversity Report of March 2009 shows that the share of women in management has been rising by 2 % compared to the previous year. The growth rate of women in top management amounted to 8 %; the share of women in the second management level grew by 5 %. 29 % of the top talents in 2009 are female.

According to the Diversity Report, the share of **female applicants** is 28 %. The share of women among those who start working for Siemens is (21 %).

Internal statistics show that women who have children like to **return to their workplace** after parental leave when they feel supported. The share of women returning after parental leave rose by 13 % to 99 %. There are fathers who take parental leave, but still most of the persons on parental leave (or working part-time) are women. For approx. 85 % of all women who are having children, the possibility to work part-time exists.

The **shares of women in training** are as follows: in personnel development programmes women's share is 20 %; women tend to participate in the expert curriculum and in open seminars (shares of women: 31 % respectively 23 %). They account for 13 % of the participants in leadership programmes and their share in the project manager curriculum is 10 %. In the area sales, the share of women who are participating in personnel development programmes is 5 %.



It has to be considered that Siemens AG (and the technical field) has traditionally been dominated by men; throughout all hierarchical levels. When in 2000 Ms. Brigitte Ederer joined the company management, a new area at Siemens AG Austria began. The **commitment and engagement** of Ms. Ederer led to the development of strategies and programmes that focus on gender equality within the company. Some of these programmes even go beyond the company sphere as e. g. the Daughter's Day, tries to make the technical subjects more attractive to young girls (and already reduce gender imbalances at the level of apprentices or students).

A crucial **success factor** for Diversity (and gender equality) strategies and programmes is real commitment by the persons involved, starting from top management. When the commitment is given, communication within the company, to introduce the strategies and programmes to the employees in an appropriate manner is another important issue.

By supporting diversity (and gender equality), Siemens can better fulfil the needs of their customers around the globe. Siemens believes that **diversity strengthens their competitive position** in the market and ensures the future prosperity of the enterprise.

Considering the benefits for the company in the field of **external marketing and publicity effects**, although "women ahead!" is not actively promoted externally, the Diversity & Inclusion Strategy of Siemens is promoted and this is considered as very important. Siemens AG Austria has appointed Diversity Officers and Ambassadors to actively disseminate information on what is done in this field outside the company. Mrs. Ederer has the function of the Diversity Ambassador for the whole Cluster CEE.

In relation to **HR management effects**, engagement in diversity issues in general raises the attractiveness of Siemens as an employer. Employees are more motivated when they feel that they are supported by the company, also concerning different phases and circumstances of live.

Concerning the effects on **innovation and creativity** within the company, although there are no concrete data available, the impression is that the more diverse the employees, the more diverse are also the perspectives, competencies, ways of thinking and impulse giving. Heterogeneous groups tend to be more creative, innovative and successful in solving complex issues. Besides, the Innovation Manager at Siemens AG Austria is a woman.

A direct **cost-benefit** analysis of "women ahead!" has not been carried out and it would be difficult, as there are many aspects that can not be quantified. The company e. g. certainly benefits and saves costs when well qualified employees prefer to return to their workplace after taking parental leave to staying at home with their children. By implementing support structures for such employees, Siemens prevents them from losing human capital.

To give a concrete example on **how employees may benefit** from the strategies pursued in to promote gender equality in the workplace, Siemens AG Austria points at the "education cheque" (*Bildungsscheck*) that finances the cost of participation in selected coaching up to a given amount. Siemens actively promotes this programme. There is a person responsible that can be contacted at the HR department. Especially women at maternity leave appear to benefit from the "education cheque" and the company has received very good feedback.



Development and future perspectives

Throughout the years, „women ahead!“ **has become a well established strategy** with a range programmes and measures. **Adaptations** have been effected when they became necessary, in line with changes within the company.

“women ahead!” is relevant for the whole company and for all fields of business and shall be continued in the future.





Sodexo S.A.

The background and objectives

Sodexo S.A., founded in 1966 by Pierre Bellon, is a French multinational corporation in **Quality of Life services** with a double offer: On Site Service Solutions such as food services, maintenance, asset management or conciergerie; and Motivation Solutions such as service vouchers and cards. Sodexo employs approx. 355,000 persons, representing 130 nationalities and is present on 30,600 sites in 80 countries. For fiscal year 2008 (ending August 2008) revenues by region represented: 37 % in Continental Europe, 37 % in North America, 11 % in the United Kingdom and Ireland and 15 % in the rest of the world.

The **company services many sectors** including private corporations, government agencies, schools from elementary through university, hospitals and clinics, assisted-living facilities, military bases, and correctional facilities.

Since 2002, Sodexo has a **strong commitment to Diversity & Inclusion (D&I)**. Within the company's D&I initiative, the **main priority is on gender** out of the company's four D&I priorities (gender, people with disabilities, generations and ethnic minorities). There is a majority of women (57 % of the workforce) in the company and, while the share of women is 44 % in managing positions globally (with big differences throughout the countries), it is only 18 % within the top 250 executives (figures for 2008).

Especially the low representation of women among the top executives shows that the company obviously uses only a proportion of the talents that would be available. Therefore, for Sodexo, working on gender equality is not only about being fair – it is rather an economic matter of being more efficient and more profitable. The figures on the **representation of women in different hierarchical layers** give a clear view of the current situation and at Sodexo there is a strong commitment to raise the representation of women in middle and higher management; driven by the CEO Mr. Michel Landel, who says that *"... diversity and inclusion ... is a business imperative that drives the company's ability to attract and develop the best talent, create an engaged workforce, and deliver quality of life solutions to the diverse clients and customers"*.

Principles and content

Given the above figures, emphasis at Sodexo is put on **enabling women to pursue a career within the company** rather than on hiring more women (apart from hiring female managers or executives). The culture of the company therefore is to be a "social elevator".

While the representation of women is very high in the areas of communication and human resources management (both departments being led by women – but so is the finance department), it is considerably low in operations. As Sodexo is driven by operations, the issue is to break the barriers for women to develop in this area as well. Therefore, Sodexo has embarked on a very deliberate strategy to increase their gender diversity in senior management **with an emphasis on operations**.



Subsequent to the developments in the USA, a **Diversity & Inclusion Team** for Europe that is reporting directly to the CEO has been established in 2007. The core measures that have been developed and implemented by that team for Europe since then are summarised in the following. A crucial point in the implementation of the measures in Europe is that despite a common corporate view, the different cultures and backgrounds in the various European countries have to be accounted for and strategies as well as measures have to be adopted accordingly to promote gender equality effectively. Therefore, the details of the programmes as well as their status of implementation vary throughout Europe.

There are three **main hierarchical levels** at Sodexo - executive/top executive, middle management and employees; measures to promote women's careers at Sodexo have been elaborated and implemented for each of these levels, with the Sensibilisation/Awareness Education as common starting point.

[Sensibilisation/Awareness Education](#)

Starting from a video with presentations from Sodexo's top leaders (CEO and executive committee members) on diversity issues (including gender equality) a one-day awareness training has been developed. This awareness training is addressed to managers and considered as a first step to **make the topic visible to and understandable by everyone** within the "Spirit of Inclusion" awareness work shop.

[Women Executive Leadership Council](#)

This Council, called SWIFT (Sodexo Women's International Forum for Talent) has been established as a **think tank at the executive level** with the purpose for women to elaborate and validate a strategy themselves. The Council is a working group that consists of 20 top executive female managers from all over the world who are in charge of Sodexo's strategies and programmes concerning gender. The Women executive Leadership Council meets twice a year in different parts of the world to make proposals for directions; the Council is influencing the executive committee and reporting directly to the CEO. The delegates of the Council are also in charge of representing and implementing their own strategy (as proposed by themselves and agreed upon in the Council) in their region of the world.

[Networking](#)

Networking activities are addressed to the **middle management level**; with the issue to open doors for them to grow within the company. Sodexo started with a partnership in the external network European Professional Women's Network (EPWN) which **promotes the professional progress** of women by providing the tools, networks, and support they need to assume leadership positions. This network in 2009 has 70 members in 7 different countries.

Sodexo decided to start networking by participating in an **external network** as the female executives articulated sceptics about the need for and the acceptance of such a network among women managers. The participation in an external network has been considered as a good way to gain experiences.



Reciprocal Mentoring

This programme is also **addressed to managers**. Sodexo's senior leaders and high-potential women thereby participate in a mentoring initiative that provides reciprocal growth and development opportunities. While the women gain professional insight and guidance, senior leaders (approx. 90 % of these executives are men) build their understanding of the challenges women are facing in the workplace.

Reciprocal Mentoring is one of the key components of Sodexo's initiatives in the area of gender equality. There is a CEO for Europe with an **executive committee** with 12 members. Each of these members became **mentor to a woman in middle management** from another place in Europe. This is a one-year programme that is managed by the Human Resources Department with the help of external consultants. Mentors and mentees do not closely work together and in general they are in different countries; they communicate frequently by telephone and e-mail and have meetings once a month.

Gender Speak

This is a one-day training (relating to the awareness training) **offered to managers** to discover what it is to be a man for a women and vice versa.

Skills Training to become Site Manager

This training programme has been developed in France and is **addressed to high-performing women employees in operations** to give them additional skills and prepare them to be promoted to site managers.

The programme is based on the observations that kitchens are to a large extent led by men and that in catering at Sodexo, less than 20 % of the leading employees are women. A reason behind this might be that, in general, catering is very demanding and hardly compatible with private life (due to shift work and working long hours). Nevertheless, at Sodexo work-life balance and working in higher positions in catering can be combined quite well, as work in company restaurants usually takes place between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.

The skills training challenges the **stereotype** that men are cooks and chefs while women work in supporting functions as well as the cultural tradition that one has to have a cook background to become site manager. Sodexo **re-thought job descriptions in operations** and found that there is no clear reason behind such modes. To give the large number of women without (complete) cook education who are working in Sodexo restaurants the possibility to become site manager, clear curricula about the skills of applicants have been formulated. In fact it is important that restaurant managers are close to clients and customers.

For these non- or less-skilled employees (not only for women, but a huge majority of these employees are women) a specific training programme to become site manager has been developed. This **gives women the possibility to reach the first level of management**; and Sodexo will then also be able to help them grow further step by step.

Sodexo continuously works on well **balancing strategies** and sees these programmes as part of a **long-term process** that is still in progress.



To effectively **introduce and align all of Sodexo's employees** to their Diversity & Inclusion initiative, Sodexo created the "I am Sodexo video" which was accompanied by a facilitator's guide in 12 languages and disseminated globally to all managers. Each country then developed a plan to cascade the video as well as a strategy and action plan to implement D&I. Real commitment is a crucial factor in promoting the programmes among the staff; CEO Michel Landel e. g. shows his commitment to the subject by referring to Sodexo's D&I initiatives (and mostly to the gender initiatives) in each of his communications.

The Diversity & Inclusion Team is also very visible, reporting directly to the CEO; and preparing reports that are published **internally and externally** (via the Web page). There also is a lot of exchange of experiences between the USA and the rest of the world on diversity and gender equality topics.

Although Sodexo's initiatives are also visible externally, the main intention is to show what can be done and what has been achieved within the group. Various communication tools are used to **make the vision and the information accessible to every employee**.

Assessment

Sodexo's Diversity & Inclusion initiative is a systematic process of organisational change. Progress is measured by a so called **Global Score Card** that tracks both quantitative and qualitative results that measure efforts to source, develop, and retain a diverse and highly skilled workforce.

This Global Score Card is **focussed on gender** (as this is the only topic that can be measured globally and also because it is the priority within D&I) and is produced for the third time in 2009.

The card measures the following **indicators**: representation of women in the top 300 executives; representation of women in senior management (top 1,200 managers); retention rates (men compared to women); promotions; recruitment.

Every second year a **Global Engagement Survey** is conducted among all employees. The employees are asked about their engagement and there are also specific questions on diversity and gender issues.

The **results** of these evaluation and assessment tools can be compared between years and entities; they serve as basis for the production of specific action plans.

Some of the **highest scores** in Sodexo's 2008 global engagement survey came from questions related to D&I. For example, 79 % of On Site Service Solutions employees and 81 % of Motivation Solutions employees responded favourably when asked if they felt Sodexo values employee diversity.

Women's representation at Sodexo has increased from 16 % to 18 % among the top 300 executives and from 22 % to 23 % in senior management from 2007 to 2009.

The stereotypes that each individual is having in his or her mind are a big issue. The **Sensibilisation/Awareness Education** has been evaluated to make each one rethink their values and (unconscious) prejudices (e. g. of men being rational and women being emotional).



Concerning the **European Professional Women's Network (EPWN)**, in 2008, 70 high potential women from Sodexo were selected to participate in a one-year mentoring, networking, and learning journey.

Although the results of **Reciprocal Mentoring** highly depend on the two persons involved, the experience from the USA shows that in general, persons tend to engage more into this programme than initially expected, with very positive outcome for both sides.

Ms. Christine Norberg-Francille, a director at Sodexo On Site Service Solutions in France, is **one of the mentees** in the *Reciprocal Mentoring Programme* focusing on *Diversity and Inclusion* that started in May 2009. Her mentor is managing several European countries but is based in the same town, which she sees as an advantage as they can meet face to face. When they first met, they started to set up goals, the structure of the meetings and the follow-up and exchanged on what they were expecting of this programme. Ms. Norberg-Francille's most important goals are:

to learn more about the structure of the company;

- to better understand how dash boards and score cards are being piloted on a higher level;
- to open up and strengthen her network within the group (outside the group she already is a member in a professional women's network);
- to benchmark of what can happen in other countries and in other structures of the organisation.

So far, she and her mentor have met 4 times; they have exchanged on their business cases (facility management in France versus facility management in the different countries); discussed specific projects (e. g. the acquisition of a facility management company and the management of this acquisition and integration process), exchanged on dash boards and score cards (where the mentor gave interesting insights about piloting the business in the different countries), as well as communicated on diversity experiences (looking at situations or difficulties from the two gender's point of view).

Ms. Norberg-Francille describes the Reciprocal Mentoring process as "a real valuable exchange on professional business matters within the group. It gives a broader vision of the organisation and teaches me experiences I would not know about otherwise. Also, my mentor challenges me on my own business cases and makes me dig deeper and consider different aspects of the topic. That helps me to think about how I can proceed better and faster." Her expectations have been met so far and she is looking forward the second stage of the Reciprocal Mentoring Programme, when mentor and mentee got to know each other better and they will talk more about career profiles and possible career paths within the company.

In each meeting Ms. Norberg-Francille and her mentor discuss the aspects of Diversity and Inclusion. When exchanging experiences in this field it became clear that it is sometimes difficult to define, what a diversity issue is and what is not. These exchanges cover subjects such as personal/professional life balance, experiences based on different gender behaviours and measures that a company can implement to better retain and capitalise on the female workforce.

For Ms. Norberg-Francille it will also be interesting to compare the outcome of the diversity discussions of all the mentoring pairs by the end of the programme. She is more than willing to become a mentor herself and bring the learning further.



Mrs. Norberg-Francille believes that: “Diversity and Inclusion becomes a focus for more and more companies, but there is still a great gap between “words” and “actions”. Sodexo “proves” their commitments through several initiatives (might it be gender, ethnical background, handicaps and generations), the Reciprocal Mentoring Programme being one of them.”

Mr. Jean-Michel Monnot, **Diversity Director for Europe**, has experienced that there are large differences in culture but also concerning stereotypes between the 25 countries in Europe he is working with; therefore an action plan that worked in one country does not necessarily function in the same way in another. It is very interesting but also time-consuming and costly to elaborate individual solutions that respect a country’s culture.

Although no figure on the **costs** that arose in relation to the gender equality initiatives as set by Sodexo can be given, these costs can be attributed to the work of the Diversity & Inclusion Team and the different programmes. Sodexo is convinced that in the longer run, these costs will more than pay off, as some of the **benefits** from gender equality, that can be rated as very important to the company are that motivation and creativity of the teams rise and that the needs of the diverse clients can be understood and met better. There is a link between diversity and innovativeness. This clearly also has a positive impact on financial results.

Moreover, by working on gender equality the **situation is being improved for everybody** - what is beneficial to women has also proved being beneficial to men, as the task is to work together.

Development and future perspectives

Sodexo is also participating in **Diversity & Inclusion Charters and Labels**, some examples within Europe are:

Germany – In 2008 Sodexo Germany signed the “Charta der Vielfalt” (Diversity Charter). The signing of this charter demonstrated the commitment of top Sodexo management to making D&I a strategic imperative for the organisation.

Spain – In 2009, Sodexo Spain has been one of the first companies to sign the new “Charter de la Diversidad”, which shows the commitment of the two local subsidiaries to D&I.

France - In 2004, Sodexo France became the 21st company to sign the “Charte de la Diversité” (Diversity Charter), a declaration of intention which now includes over 2,000 organisations in France. Two additional agreements regarding people with disabilities and equal opportunities for men and women have been signed.

Belgium - In 2007, Sodexo Belgium was awarded the Label Equity Diversity for a period of three years based on their action plan to embed diversity and inclusion through training and development, recruitment, cultural change, and communication.

There is a **target to further increase the percentage of women** among the top 300 executives at the Group level from 18 % in 2009 to a range of 23 % - 25 % by 2012.



The **Sensibilisation/Awareness Training** has been started in Belgium in 2007 and has been adapted for and implemented in Germany, France, the Netherlands, Finland and the United Kingdom already. It is planned to continue the implementation of awareness trainings throughout Europe.

In 2009, after more than one year of experience with an external network, there now is interest in having an **internal network** as well and that is currently worked on. The plan is to start with France, UK and Belgium. There are successful networks in the USA already, but these shall not be copied.

The **Reciprocal Mentoring** programme is currently being translated from European level to country level.





Stormberg AS

Background and objectives

Stormberg AS is a company in the **retail sales business** (sportswear). It started in 1998 and has had a very positive development both in number of employees and economic numbers. There are about 100 employees, where 45 are women and 55 men. In the board 2 out of 5 are women and in the leader group 3 out of 8 are women.

The programme or initiative which Stormberg has focused on has no formal name, but are a family-oriented initiative (work-life balance) and recruitment.

This **initiative was incorporated when the enterprise started up** in 1998. In the light of Stormberg's visions and ideas of how to create a functional business, and a workplace that makes it possible to combine a demanding work life with a hectic family life, Stormberg's entrepreneur saw these measures as a natural way in how to run the business.

Further, Stormberg is a **fairly young enterprise** with an average age around 30 and a balanced gender distribution. Because of this, many of the employees are parents – often with small children. The enterprise therefore has carried out a range of measures to facilitate for combining job and family life, and to promote gender equality through family oriented measures directed towards both fathers and mothers.

In Norway it has been noted that women often fall behind when it comes to career opportunities when they get pregnant and have small children. The different measures that Stormberg has incorporated in their business culture therefore make Stormberg an attractive workplace for women. The **measures generate gender equality** in the way that they enable and facilitate the combining of work and family life, and facilitate for women to have a career and be a mother at the same time.

Principles and content

It is important to underline that the initiatives that have been implemented to support gender equality at Stormberg are not seen as a strategy or programme by the company, rather as an **incorporated way** in how Stormberg wants to operate as an enterprise. It could be said that the measures are an internalised part of the business culture. The main **fields of intervention** are: reconciliation, career opportunities and recruitment.

Stormberg has implemented several concrete **measures**:

- flexible time arrangements;
- shift arrangements;
- telephonic meetings (to reduce travel time);
- possibility to work from home (home office);
- children are allowed to come to work if day care is closed, etc.;
- recruitment of pregnant women and parents;
- motivate men are to take parental leave.



When it comes to the different **working time arrangements**, Stormberg focuses on the necessity of being a flexible employer. Employees with children are not always in the situation where it is possible to work full time. Stormberg therefore facilitates that their employees can contribute the maximum of their ability. Making it possible for mothers and fathers to easily combine their career with their family life has proven beneficial to achieve gender balance at the enterprise.

The **possibility to work from home** is used by employees with small children. The employees are given the opportunity to work parts of the day from home, fixed days or longer periods if that is needed. For instance is the Design manager a mother of three, and she works from her home office one to two days a week. This shows that it is possible to have management functions when you are working part-time, or parts of the time from home at Stormberg.

Furthermore, **employees are allowed to take their children to work** for a day, or parts of a day, if it is necessary. This makes it for instance possible for employees to attend important meetings on days when their child has no school, and they would otherwise have to take a day off.

Within the **recruitment process**, Stormberg also deliberately recruits pregnant women and people with small children. This is because the company knows that by using these measures it is fully possible to combine family life with a demanding job.

Although these measures first and foremost are directed at employees with children (both mothers and fathers), they are **open to every employee**. There are no specific criteria for taking part in the measures. The philosophy of Stormberg addresses several aspects of gender equality, like balance between work life and family life, but also focusing on women in leader positions and having a gender perspective in recruitment.

The initiatives are **promoted among the staff** through Stormberg's routines and operational standards/procedures. The initiatives are also discussed at the performance appraisal/performance interview. Stormberg also promotes the initiatives through information about Stormberg's values and visions at their web page to clients, other companies and the general public.

The **team leaders are responsible** for informing the employees in their department about the measures, and for implementing them. They are also the ones that monitor and follow up the measures Stormberg has implemented. Stormberg's programme is not part of a broader initiative at supranational level.

Assessment

The initiatives have not yet been evaluated. Stormberg has though an **ongoing assessment** of the value of the measures, both for the employees and for the employer. The company has no exact figures of how many employees benefit from the initiatives, but the target group is all employees. There are for instance quite many who sometimes benefit from the possibility to work from home (home office).

The **results** that have been generated by focusing on family oriented/work-life balanced measures have been solely positive, both from a gender equality perspective and from a more general business perspective. The initiatives and measures are considered as successful from Stormberg's point of view. They have most likely contributed positively to gender equality in the company; they have made Stormberg an attractive workplace for women, and a gender balanced workplace.



Stability among the employees has been achieved and only very few quit their job. The level of absence due to sickness has also been very low (around 5.2 %) the last few years. The enterprise has also created good economic results.

There have been few **organisational obstacles** since the initiatives from the very beginning have been incorporated in the way how Stormberg wants to operate as an enterprise.

The **employees benefit** from the initiatives in several ways. The most important is that the measures facilitate for the employees to contribute at the maximum of their ability, independent of gender and family situation. The benefits for the employees are best understood by the example of one of the employees:

The **Design Manager**, a mother of three, has been in the company since 2003. She tells that the strategy for balancing family and work at Stormberg has been of great significance for her and her family. She has a demanding job and also her husband works 100 %. She works from home one or two days a week. This gives her the possibility to follow up the children, for instance following them to violin education once a week for one hour in the middle of the day. If one has to do something related to family and private life in the middle of the day, it is no problem to take off 1 to 2 hours. She thinks that such a flexible approach gives better balance between family and work since it is possible to some degree to work in the afternoon, evening or whenever it is best for her as employee. It is freedom under responsibility, but it works very well. Moreover, employees can get all the infrastructure and things they need, like laptops, cell phones and access to the server when they work from home.

The Design manager tells further that without the flexibility to combine work and family life, she could not have been working 100 %. She also feels that when working for Stormberg she is able to live a good family life and taking care of her children.

Stormberg underlines that focusing on family oriented/work-life balance measures, has indeed also **benefited the company** in several ways. First, it has created stability among the employees. Second, the level of absence due to sickness has been at around 5.2 % of total working time per year in the last few years, which is very low for companies in the retail business. Third, Stormberg has been an attractive workplace both for men and women. Forth, the enterprise has also created good economic results and this is partly assigned to the good balance between family/work-life.

When considering specifically **external marketing and publicity effects**, Stormberg thinks that the importance of focusing on family oriented/work-life balanced measures is difficult to assess. Surveys show that among consumers Stormberg is foremost known for low prices and high quality, not for their focus on gender equality. However, Stormberg thinks that the measures are very important when it comes to internal HR management effects as for example absenteeism, motivation and stability of workforce.

The initiatives have also been **important for recruitment**. In the booming years from 2003 to beginning 2008, Stormberg has had no problem with recruiting enough people, unlike other similar companies in Norway. Stormberg also believes that the initiative have been important when it comes to effects on innovation and creativity in the company. The experience is that employees also are more innovative when reducing the conflict between work life and family life. One reason maybe that the employees are given a high degree of freedom. They can work from home and take some hours off if they want.



When considering the **effects in financial terms** like productivity of workers and economic figures, Stormberg thinks that the initiatives have been important. They underline especially stability among the employees and low absence due to sickness. Overall, Stormberg sees the focus and measures on family oriented/work-life balance as a comparative business advantage.

There is no evidence of increased **costs**, but at the same time no costs have been reduced except costs related to low absence due to sickness and also costs related to education. The stability among the employees keeps the education costs at a lower level.

Stormberg is an enterprise with **balanced gender distribution** and a **culture for gender equality**. The initiatives have probably helped focusing on gender equality and breaking gender stereotypes within the company. There are many positive feedbacks from the employees. Further, Stormberg also has women both in board positions and in the leader group. More and more men are taking parental leave.

Stormberg is focusing on **promoting gender equality in their public relations**, for instance in advertising. They do not use typical female models, instead they use normal women. Further, they show women in different situations, for example hunting.

Development and future perspectives

Stormberg's focus and objectives on gender equality and balancing work life and family life have been basically the same since the start in 1998. However, Stormberg has **over time been able to implement more and more measures**. Stormberg will continue their focus and measures and will try to incorporate gender equality further into their operations as an enterprise and regard this issue as an internalised part of the business culture.

In 2009 Stormberg was awarded the **prize "Gullriset"**, that recognises employers, public or private, who spearhead family friendly work policies, in order that parents of both sexes may be able to combine family life and good parenting with employment and career promotion.

Stormberg is not formally involved in gender equality initiatives at supra-enterprise level, but the company is though **actively involved in informal networks** with other companies, meetings and lectures. In 2009, Stormberg has given about 50 lectures on corporate social responsibility (CSR), also including themes as gender equality and strategies for balancing work life and family life.

