

Supporting reconciliation of work,  
family and private life

## Good Practices



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# Contents

- 1. Introduction .....4**
- 2. Background ..... 8**
  - 2.1. The participation of women in the labour market.....9
  - 2.2. Care services ..... 10
  - 2.3. Leave arrangements ..... 11
  - 2.4 Working time arrangements ..... 12
  - 2.5. Men and gender equality..... 13
- 3. Methodology: From the collection of approaches with potential to the identification of good practices ..... 14**
- 4. Good practices ..... 20**
- 5. Main gaps and challenges ..... 24**
- 6. Conclusions ..... 26**
- Annex Good practices ..... 31**
- 7. Bibliography ..... 68**

# 1. Introduction



# 1. Introduction

Equality between women and men is a fundamental value of the European Union and a condition for economic growth, competitiveness and sustainable development. Achieving equal economic independence, equal pay for equal work and work of equal value and equality in decision-making are three of the five priorities of the European Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010–15)<sup>(1)</sup>. Fostering reconciliation of work, family and private life is central to all of these goals — just as it is for achieving the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

In December 2013, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) commissioned ÖSB Consulting GmbH to carry out the study ‘Collection of good practices on reconciliation of work, family and private life in EU Member States’. The study also included a policy and literature review in the field of reconciliation at EU and Member State level. For this

purpose, 28 independent experts (one expert from each Member State) collected data on national good practices in the field. From the list of 93 good practices the experts had identified, 26 practices with potential were chosen. In a consultation meeting held in Vilnius in May 2014 involving a broad range of stakeholders, 13 good practices were selected out of the 26 practices with potential. These practices will be included in EIGE’s database.

For the purposes of this study, policies on reconciliation are defined as interventions that promote gender equality through the balancing of work, family and private life. Good practices were collected under three thematic areas, as detailed further below:

- Self-regulation;
- Awareness-raising;
- Benchmarking.

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<sup>(1)</sup> EC (2010) Strategy for equality between women and men (2010-15), available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/strategy\\_equality\\_women\\_men\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/strategy_equality_women_men_en.pdf) (26.01.2015)



## **Gender sensitive self-regulation in public and private organisations**

These employer-based or social partners-based self-regulation measures provide good examples of practices on reconciliation in public and private organisations. They include: employer policies and initiatives designed to promote women's participation in the workforce and retain working parents; innovative forms of work organisation linked to reconciliation measures and flexible working time; gender equality-oriented employer initiatives to promote men's involvement in parental leave and in sharing care responsibilities; company-level agreements between the social partners and individually negotiated arrangements between workers and their managers to facilitate the reconciliation of work, family and private life.

## **Awareness-raising initiatives aiming at promoting reconciliation**

Awareness-raising initiatives and campaigns represent one of the most widely used practices to promote reconciliation of work, family and private life and are recognised to be the most effective means of communicating information, especially to the general public. They can help change attitudes, behaviours and beliefs; and inform employees, employers and decision-makers about the importance and the advantages of reconciliation policies. Awareness-raising initiatives undertaken in the context of reconciliation focus on themes such

as: higher women's access to and participation in the labour market; the wider involvement of men in care and family life; and promoting changes in company culture through work organisation, flexible working hours and reconciliation of work, family and private life in public and private organisations.

## **Benchmarking**

Most often benchmarking is understood as comparison of one organisation's practices against those of others. It seeks to identify standards or good practices to apply in measuring and improving company performance. Benchmarking facilitates comparisons of the differences and similarities across several organisations and promotes a culture of learning from good practices and from peers.

The initiatives/practices that qualified as 'benchmarking in the field of reconciliation' in the context of the present study range from competition between companies/organisations for family-friendly or equal opportunity awards; certification of companies in relation to gender equality and family-friendly measures at the workplace; sustainability index to evaluate, rank and improve the performance of enterprises including gender equality and work-family balance criteria; gender equality audits; and annual contests and awards that recognise outstanding practice in equality and diversity at work, etc.

This report summarises the outcomes of the study and details the methodology applied in the selection of good practices.





## 2. Background



## 2. Background

Reconciliation policies are fundamental for achieving gender equality and are embedded in an EU policy framework that addresses two key challenges in contemporary European societies: (i) the promotion of women's participation in employment and (ii) the involvement of men in family life. European policy and the legislative framework have addressed three main areas of intervention:

- Legislation, policies, strategies and action plans on **care services**. This concerns both childcare services (as defined under the Barcelona targets as accessible, affordable and of good quality) as well as care services for disabled or older family members.
- Legislation, policies and strategies on **parental leave**, including those that promote men's involvement in parental leave schemes. In some countries, there are also leave schemes that provide entitlements to carer's leave, for example, for care of older or disabled family members. It also covers other financial allowances or compensation for working parents.
- Legislation, policies, strategies, action plans and agreements on **flexible working arrangements** that enable parents to balance work, family and private life. These may result from the introduction of policy guidelines, the negotiation of collective agreements and/or the establishment of legal rights for parents to negotiate flexible working time

schedules, e.g. shorter working hours or days, flexible start and finishing times, tele-working, term-time working, or other innovative solutions.

Reconciliation policies also intersect with legislation on gender equality and non-discrimination, including rights to equal pay and equal treatment, parental leave, non-discrimination of part-time workers and regulation of working time. The issue of reconciliation is central for achieving the employment and social goals set under the Europe 2020 strategy, notably to raise the overall employment rate to 75 % and to lift 20 million people out of poverty and social exclusion.

The following sections briefly describe the main policy and social context for reconciliation of work, family and private life.

### 2.1. The participation of women in the labour market

The Europe 2020 strategy<sup>(2)</sup> recognises the importance of increasing the participation of women in the labour market. This is not only important in making best use of talent but also to turn Europe into a 'smart, sustainable and inclusive' society. In this respect, reconciliation measures are essential

<sup>(2)</sup> European Commission, Strategy for equality between women and men 2010–15, Brussels, 21.9.2010 (COM(2010) 91 final), available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index_en.htm)



in promoting women's participation in the labour market in order to reach the target of an overall employment rate of 75 %. Currently, women's employment rate in the EU stands at 63 %, compared to 74 % for men (Eurostat 2014). Although women's employment rates have grown in the last decade across the EU, only Sweden has reached the target for women in employment, even though in Sweden a highly gender segregated labour market still prevails. In Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Finland, employment rates are over 70 %, while in Ireland, Greece, Spain, Italy, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Romania and Slovakia they are still below 60 %<sup>(3)</sup>. Differences in the availability and the high cost of childcare and other care services, workplace cultures, and the unequal distribution of household chores and caring responsibilities may account for such variation in women's employment rates.

Moreover, while more women have entered the labour market in recent years, they are under-represented in senior leadership positions and earn on average 16.4 % less than men<sup>(4)</sup>. Women are also more likely to work part-time; across the EU almost one third of employed women work part-time, compared to only 8 % of men. This also reflects the cultural and social expectation that women have primary responsibility for domestic and caring/family-related activities. Such social representations also explain women's over-concentration in sectors such as health, welfare and education, as well as in administrative occupations (which are often seen as more family-friendly work settings). Some of the Member States with the highest female employment rates also have a high share of part-time employment among women (e.g. Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom). Labour market participation is higher for women without children, than with children; once women

have had children their labour market participation (and working hours) falls<sup>(5)</sup>.

In the context of the economic crisis, there has been a general levelling down of gender gaps in employment, unemployment, wages and poverty, and in some countries it has become harder to implement measures of reconciliation of work, family and private life. However, the reduction in gender gaps in recent years does not reflect progress in gender equality, as it is based on lower rates of employment, higher rates of unemployment and reduced earnings for both men and women<sup>(6)</sup>.

## 2.2. Care services

The ability of Member States to significantly increase the employment rate and decrease gender gaps depends, among other things, on the availability of care services. EU reports highlight that in almost all countries the lack of high quality and affordable care services for children, disabled people and older people form a major barrier to reconciliation. Frequently, care services are inadequate and expensive.

By 2010, only 10 countries had reached the Barcelona target for providing childcare to at least 33 % of children up to 3 years of age. Nine Member States had reached the target of 90 % of formal childcare for children aged between three and the

(3) Eurostat, Gender pay gap statistics, 2014, available at: [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Gender\\_pay\\_gap\\_statistics](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Gender_pay_gap_statistics)

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid. and European Commission, Gender equality in the workforce: Reconciling work, private and family life in Europe, 2014, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/140502\\_gender\\_equality\\_workforce\\_ssr\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/140502_gender_equality_workforce_ssr_en.pdf)

(6) European Commission, The impact of the economic crisis on the situation of women and men and on gender equality policies, Synthesis report, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2013, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130410\\_crisis\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130410_crisis_report_en.pdf) and European Commission, Report on the progress on Equality between women and Men 2010, 2011, available at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meet-docs/2009\\_2014/documents/sec/com\\_sec\(2011\)0193/com\\_sec\(2011\)0193\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meet-docs/2009_2014/documents/sec/com_sec(2011)0193/com_sec(2011)0193_en.pdf)

mandatory school age by then <sup>(7)</sup>. However, it is important to note that for some Member States, even if the targets are met, childcare is frequently part-time and does not cover a full week of work.

Furthermore, a worrying downward trend can be identified since 2010, as the coverage rate for childcare has been decreasing in several countries. In addition to the availability issue, the cost of childcare is seen as a major obstacle to the full-time participation of women in employment (particularly in Ireland, the Netherlands, Romania and the UK) <sup>(8)</sup>. Therefore, affordable and good-quality childcare services are an important precondition for improving the reconciliation of professional, family and personal life, encouraging women's participation in the labour market and promoting gender equality. This also holds true for out-of-school services, which have received less attention from policy makers, but are fundamental for helping parents to balance their professional duties and the school hours of their children.

Moreover, the provision of long-term care for other dependants (sick, disabled people) and care services for older family members needs to be seen as a policy priority at national and European levels. In the current context of demographic changes, increased life expectancy and ageing societies, the tension between work and long-term care may be exacerbated in the future. The need for caring for older relatives may constrain women's availability for remaining in the labour market, as in many European societies they are still widely perceived as the main care providers. Women are also over-represented in the formal care sector. As a result, policies to encourage men's employment in this segment of activity are fundamental for the promotion of gender equal-

ity in the labour market <sup>(9)</sup>. Such policy progress would also have a transformative impact on the norms and experiences of traditional masculinities.

### 2.3. Leave arrangements

Several national and Community law instruments and provisions provide specific legal rights to reconciliation. These include parental and carers leave, entitlements to pay and other entitlements during leave, protection against dismissal in relation to pregnancy, paternity and parental leave. There are two main measures that allow fathers to be involved in the care of their children: paternity leave and parental leave. Paternity leave is generally a short period expressly granted to fathers around the birth of a child. Parental leave is a longer period of leave made available to both parents.

The revised EU parental leave directive (2010/18/EU) grants rights to parental leave in all Member States. An important element of the directive is that 1 month of the leave is non-transferable, thereby encouraging both parents, and particularly men to take leave. However, there is great diversity in the scope and nature of parental leave. Major dimensions of diversity include length of leave, payment (whether paid or unpaid and, if paid, at what level), flexibility in use (especially whether the leave can be taken on a part-time basis, and in several blocks of time) and whether leave is a family or individual entitlement (that is whether the leave can be divided between the parents as they choose, an individual and non-transferable entitlement for each parent, or a mixture of the two approaches).

No minimum standards have yet been established at EU level for paternity leave, which is generally quite minimal. It ranges from 2 days in the Netherlands to 14 days in Poland, and in some exceptions

<sup>(7)</sup> European Commission, Barcelona objectives, The development of childcare facilities for young children in Europe with a view to sustainable and inclusive growth, 2013, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130531\\_barcelona\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130531_barcelona_en.pdf)

<sup>(8)</sup> European Commission, Progress on Equality between women and men in 2012, A Europe 2020 Initiative, 2013.

<sup>(9)</sup> European Commission, The role of men in gender equality, prepared for the European Commission by a consortium led by L&R Social Research, 2013, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/gender\\_pay\\_gap/130424\\_final\\_report\\_role\\_of\\_men\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/gender_pay_gap/130424_final_report_role_of_men_en.pdf)



the period of entitlement is longer (18 weeks in Finland and four weeks in Lithuania) as leave that fathers can take at and around the time of the birth of a child.

Schemes which stimulate the best take-up by fathers seem to be those with a quota of leave reserved for the father, a high earnings replacement rate and flexibility in when and how the leave may be taken. The length of the leave is also important in providing the conditions for nurturing gender-equitable sharing of domestic work after the leave period ends. Furthermore, research indicates a gradual, yet historically remarkable, change in men's participation in family life across parts of Europe, resulting in their growing participation in caring for children at home and in many fields of domestic work <sup>(10)</sup>. Yet, traditional roles are still reproduced at organisational level and men in a care-giving role may also face difficulties in reconciling work and family life, and face disadvantages in their job.

However, leave provisions related to childcare are only one of many policy measures that require attention when it comes to supporting a better balance between work, family and private life.

## 2.4 Working time arrangements

Flexible working time arrangements have become more widespread across Europe. They concern flexibility in the length of working time, such as part-time work, tele-working, term-time working, flexible daily start and finish times, etc. However, statistics show that it is largely women who are involved in such arrangements. While working overtime and long hours are more common in the prime age group, part-time work is most pronounced among female employees. In most countries part-time work is associated with low-paid sectors and fewer opportunities <sup>(11)</sup>.

Large differences can be seen in Europe in terms of flexible working time organisation with at least 60 % of women and men having access to flexible working time schedules in Sweden and Denmark contrasting with low flexibility scores in the southern, central and eastern Member States.

The growing importance of flexible and individualised working hours has led, in some countries, to the introduction of a regulatory framework providing entitlements to flexible working time, as it exists in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. Collective agreements have also become important in setting flexible working time entitlements for working parents at company and sectoral levels. The parental leave directive (2010/18/EU) also introduced the provision that workers should be able to request changes to their working hours when they return from leave and that employers should consider and respond to such requests, taking into account both employers' and workers' needs.

Legislation on working time is, however, not always 'reconciliation sensitive', and can have a large impact on individual working-time schedules. Rights to long-term flexible working time models such as working time accounts, lifecycle regulations or sabbaticals are lacking in many Member States. Only a few countries have elaborated legal provisions on time-credit schemes, which provide entitlements to accumulate days compensating for overtime, rest days, and days granted due to a collective reduction of working time.

It is very important to encourage the involvement of men in flexible work arrangements. Available leave provisions, despite being apparently gender neutral, are mostly taken by women, thereby reproducing gender inequalities in the labour market and in the household. Changing working cultures is an essential part of this, for example through the dissemination of gender equality and family-friendly workplace practices. Workplace culture has been embedded in the traditional model of the male breadwinner/female carer, where there were no expectations that a man had any private and family responsibilities or commitments. The traditional assumption that reconciliation is a 'women's issue', is perpetuated by tradi-

<sup>(10)</sup> Gärtner, M., Puchert, R. and Scambor, E., *The Role of Men in Gender Equality — European Strategies and Insights*, European Commission, 2012.

<sup>(11)</sup> Fagan, C., *Analysis note: Men and Gender Equality — tackling gender-segregated family roles and social care jobs*, European Commission, 2010.

tional gender roles and relations within the family, which are reproduced in the workplace.

However, there is evidence of change in company and workplace culture. Many companies have established a business case for equality, which includes providing employees with arrangements to better reconcile their work, family and private life, in order to recruit and train the best staff. Workplace policies and collective agreements aimed at more effective and gender equal reconciliation measures can also help to attract and retain talent, improve job satisfaction and promote employee well-being, all of which are important to competitiveness, business growth and sustainable development.

## 2.5. Men and gender equality

Recently gender inequalities in Europe have been looked at with a focus on men, and increasingly recognise men's roles as being integral to the advancement of gender equality<sup>(12)</sup>. With regard to reconciliation, the culture and social relations of work represent a fundamental aspect of unequal gender roles and relations. Paid work continues to figure as a central component of men's identity, status and power, and men's expression of 'masculinity'. An understanding of unequal gender roles and relations gives greater visibility to the causes of gender inequalities, and also to the fact that work organisation, working time and management strategies are not always gender neutral.

It is essential that a focus is given at an individual and societal level to enabling and involving men to make the social changes needed to achieve gender equality. This involves tackling gender inequalities and segregation at home as well as at the workplace. As already illustrated in numer-

ous studies, while men work longer employment hours, women have the longer working week when paid and unpaid work are combined<sup>(13)</sup>.

There is evidence of men's increasing desire to participate in childcare and family. Research shows a gradual, yet historically remarkable, change in men's participation in family life across Europe, including participation in caring for children at home, and in many fields of domestic work. Between 2005 and 2010, men's proportion of unpaid work at home continued to grow. In 2010, men's share of weekly unpaid working time varied from 15.5 % in Greece to more than double this figure, reaching 40.3 % in Sweden and 40.2 % in Denmark<sup>(14)</sup>.

A particular concern is the under-representation of men in care work and professions, including nursing, elderly care, and early childhood and primary school teaching. Men have made less movement into female-dominated job areas than women have in men's occupations (15). Supporting and promoting caring masculinities, not only through family policies such as active fatherhood, but also through employment policies such as those for professional carers, may open the door to a transformative impact on the norms and practices of traditional male roles. This might have positive consequences for men as well as for existing gender inequalities.

<sup>(12)</sup> European Commission, The role of men in gender equality, prepared for the European Commission by a consortium led by L&R Social Research, 2013, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/gender\\_pay\\_gap/130424\\_final\\_report\\_role\\_of\\_men\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/gender_pay_gap/130424_final_report_role_of_men_en.pdf)

<sup>(13)</sup> European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Working time and work-life balance in a life course perspective, Executive Summary, 2013.

<sup>(14)</sup> Gärtner, M., Puchert, R. and Scambor, E., The Role of Men in Gender Equality — European Strategies and Insights, European Commission, 2012.

<sup>(15)</sup> Fagan, C., Analysis note: Men and Gender Equality — tackling gender segregated family roles and social care jobs, European Commission, 2010.

### 3. Methodology: From the collection of approaches with potential to the identification of good practices





## 3. Methodology: From the collection of approaches with potential to the identification of good practices

The present study was supported by national experts from all 28 Member States, who collected a total of 93 examples of good practices. A comprehensive screening and assessment process was carried out in order to select 26 'practices with potential' which proved to be innovative and effective. From these examples, 13 practices were chosen in a consultation meeting held in Vilnius in May 2014. Around 40 participants were invited to attend the meeting and to play an active role in validating the methodology and selecting the final good practices to be presented on EIGE's website.

The participants were identified through a previous mapping of relevant stakeholders in all EU Member States. They included: official representatives of ministries, representatives from institutional bodies for the promotion of gender equality and other public institutions, experts from research centres, representatives of trade unions and the business sector, as well as members of NGOs and other relevant institutions in the field of work-life balance and gender equality. The good practices were assessed in three parallel working groups focussing on self-regulation, awareness-raising and benchmarking.

In the selection process of good practices, participants were supported by a comprehensive list of assessment criteria developed by the ÖSB team. Three levels of assessment criteria were applied:

1. General criteria adopted by EIGE to assess tools, methods or practices with potential to positively affect gender equality;
2. Common criteria applicable to all good practices in the field of reconciliation of work, family and private life (cross-cutting through all thematic focus areas: self-regulation, awareness-raising and benchmarking);
3. Specific criteria applicable to a particular thematic focus area.

### General criteria

**1.1.** It has been working well (the practice is finished, or at least shows substantial achievement provided by the practice itself).

This demonstrates that there is a good and solid design and methodology, it has been implemented efficiently and shows some positive outcomes.

**1.2.** The practice/initiative is transferable and can be replicated elsewhere. The issue(s) and actions carried out under the measure are relevant and applicable to other countries or to different regions or sectors within the same country.

**1.3.** It is good for learning how to think and act appropriately.

This shows that the example has significant potential to be a learning tool that can be used to build capacity amongst stakeholders.



**1.4.** It is embedded within a wider gender mainstreaming strategy.

This demonstrates the commitment to embed the practice into a wider gender mainstreaming strategy and is part of a structured approach rather than a one-off isolated initiative.

**1.5.** It demonstrates effective achievement in terms of advancement of gender equality and/or reduction of gender inequalities.

This highlights the importance of the practice being grounded in the broad objective of achieving gender equality, and which addresses some of the structural factors that lead to gender inequalities.

## Common criteria

**2.1.** There is substantive information on the practice available and there is evidence of its success. This should be evidenced by context analysis, research and data analysis setting out the problem to be addressed and the monitoring and evaluation of the practice/initiative; evidence of leadership is also shown.

**2.2.** Innovative elements in the design or in the implementation of the measure are present.

There is evidence that the practice is innovative and new, is testing new thinking and approaches how to address the problem identified, that it is grounded in substantive planning that establishes clear goals, actions and indicators for monitoring and evaluation.

**2.3.** The practice/initiative is grounded in a well thought out communications strategy.

This shows evidence of efforts to disseminate information and results about the initiative/practice.

**2.4.** The objectives and purpose of the practice/measure are clear and there is linking of these objectives to gender equality/gender mainstreaming.

There is evidence that the initiative on reconciliation of work, family and private life is deeply connected to gender equality and gender mainstreaming objectives, targets and outcomes.

**2.5.** The practice/measure is well-designed, based on a clear and coherent methodology, with concrete and clear actions for implementation.

Clear evidence is shown of a coherent and strategic approach to planning, methodological design and project management.

**2.6.** There is evidence of positive effects on work–life balance and gender equality.

Evidence is provided of monitoring and evaluation of outcomes in relation to reconciliation of work, family and private life and that this had a direct impact on gender equality outcomes.

**2.7.** All relevant stakeholders were involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the practice.

Where relevant this should include employers, employees, trade unions, NGOs (such as women's organisations and family organisations), and government departments/agencies.

**2.8.** The practice/measure promotes (directly or indirectly) men's involvement and participation in reconciliation of work, family and private life.

There is evidence that a focus has been given to men's involvement and participation and that gender equality outcomes are documented.

**2.9.** As an additional beneficial criterion: the practice/measure can be implemented in an economic crisis/austerity setting where financial means are scarce.

The initiative takes account of the impact of the economic crisis on gender equality, and demonstrates gender-sensitive and cost-effective responses.

## Specific criteria

### A. Gender sensitive self-regulation in public and private organisations

**A.1.** The initiative is set in the context of a broader goal to promote gender equality and in the case of companies it is a 'business case' for equality.

Equality is integral to the initiative and there is evidence that it is integrated into corporate/business strategies and/or diversity programmes.

**A.2.** The initiative/measure was developed on the basis of prior assessment, research or analysis (employee survey, gender analysis/gender impact assessment, existing studies that have identified specific challenges or problems, etc.).

A clear evidence base and gender analysis is made setting out the problem/challenge to be tackled at workplace, company or other level (also drawing on national/international evidence).

**A.3.** The elaboration of the measure was carried out in consultation with employees/ relevant stakeholders, for example, through an employee survey, employee discussion groups.

Effective systems for employee/stakeholder consultation and participation are put in place.

**A.4.** There are binding provisions for the parties/ organisation(s) participating in the measure/agreement

**A.5.** There is a permanent structure (body/committee) in place that ensures and monitors implementation, including reporting on the outcomes of the initiative.

**A.6.** Sufficient technical and human resources are allocated/available to support the implementation and are effectively deployed.

**A.7.** The managing authority/company management is committed to actively implement the measure and has developed coherent objectives and actions for implementation.

Senior level commitment and leadership is given to setting objectives and implementing the initiative

**A.8.** There is some evidence that the target groups/ employees (significant number of employees) benefit from the introduction of the measure.

If this has not been possible because it has been too early to capture the evidence, there are some clear indicators of what the anticipated benefits will be.

**A.9.** There is evidence of continuity and sustainability.

There are measures put in place to ensure that the self-regulation initiative has a plan and resourc-

es for continuity and sustainability. The example should have the potential to be independent of public funding.

## **B. Awareness-raising initiatives aiming at promoting the development of work-life balance practices**

**B.1.** The initiative/campaign is well focused, has clear goals and is well planned.

**B.2.** The initiative/campaign has clear messages that grasp the attention of multiple audiences.

**B.3.** The initiative/campaign is built on a good understanding of the prevailing culture and views and of gender equality principles.

**B.4.** The awareness raising initiative/campaign has a clearly defined target group/audience.

**B.5.** The initiative/campaign employs a range of effective approaches and techniques to ensure that the messages are received and understood by a diverse audience.

**B.6.** The implementation and communication strategy is tailored to the main objectives.

The awareness raising initiative/campaign has a clear communication strategy and meets the objectives that have been set out.

**B.7.** The initiative/campaign uses a combination of tools and methods that support and reinforce each other (educational, training, social media, information, etc.).

There is a coordinated and complementary use of different communication tools and methods.

**B.8.** The scope and design of the initiative/campaign ensures the desired ideas and messages to be moved forward.

**B.9.** The initiative/campaign helps to overcome traditional stereotypes of gender roles, and has a clearly defined objective to change gender relations and promote gender equality.

**B.10.** There is evidence that the initiative/campaign is positively influencing the attitudes, behaviours and beliefs of the target groups.



Although it may be difficult to capture the impact of information campaigns on attitudes and behaviour, a solid attempt has been made to measure and evaluate it.

### C. Benchmarking

**C.1.** The benchmarking exercise is grounded in gender equality and non-discrimination principles.

The goal is to promote and implement these principles through benchmarking.

**C.2.** There is a clear plan and timetable set for executing benchmarking.

**C.3.** The partners for carrying out the benchmarking are well identified and involved.

All relevant stakeholders are involved and participate in the process, including relevant accreditation bodies, employee representatives, NGOs, equality bodies, etc.

**C.4.** Qualified independent experts and evaluators are involved.

Recognised independent experts with knowledge and understanding of gender equality carry out the benchmarking.

**C.5.** The tools for data collection are well-developed and introduced.

A systematic approach is taken to the collection of evidence to support the benchmarking as the availability of data is essential to evaluate the impact of long-standing practices and their value for beneficiaries.

**C.6.** A self-assessment report/document is prepared by participating organisation(s).

**C.7.** An action plan for improvement was prepared (for instance, 'work-life balance plan' as part of a wider gender equality action plan, etc.) and there is evidence of implementation.

The outcomes of the benchmarking exercise lead to an improvement plan and relevant implementation of areas for development.

**C.8.** There is clear evidence that the lessons learnt from the benchmarking exercise were taken on board and facilitated improvements in policy and practice on reconciliation.

**C.9.** The organisation and the involved key partners and stakeholders are committed to the process and to gender equality.

**C.10.** The good practices identified via benchmarking are well advertised and disseminated according to a clear communications strategy.

Good practice outcomes are communicated effectively and clearly to a variety of audiences and stakeholders.

**C.11.** The project has an identified potential to grow or being used by others.

It can be carried out in a wider context in public or private sectors, in different economic sectors, in other regions, by smaller companies, etc.



## 4. Good practices



## 4. Good practices

On the basis of the presented criteria each potential good practice was assessed in terms of its main achievements and strengths and its potential to reduce the existing gender gaps. Table 1 shows the **13 practices** that were identified in each of the three parallel working groups of the consultation meeting. A comprehensive discussion and the rationale underpinning the choices clearly highlighted the strong points that allowed the practices to make a step forward in reducing the gaps and in meeting the challenges in the field of reconciliation of work, family and private life.

A number of measures were given priority as they were successful in promoting **men's involvement in care** and other unpaid family-related work. This is one of the main current challenges which will be described in the following section. Among those practices specifically aimed at men/fathers are: the Austrian campaign 'Four Walls, Four Hands'; the Danish programme 'A Hug from Daddy'; the Polish campaign 'Occupation Dad — I like it!' and the 'Parental leave company workshops' in Austria.

Other examples were praised for **increasing awareness of reconciliation** policies and for effective treatment of **gender stereotypes** which present serious obstacles to gender equality. The German initiatives 'Managing Reconciliation of Work and Family' and 'Mind-set Organisation Executives (Project More)' demonstrate a high potential of changing attitudes and behaviours. The same applies to the Maltese campaign 'NISTA', the Estonian

'Family-Friendly Company Competition' and the Italian 'Family-Audit Certification' which stimulated significant changes in organisational cultures.

Success of the good practices in mobilising multiple stakeholders and social partners was also relevant for their final selection. The **lack of involvement of stakeholders** in reconciliation policies is one of the current deficits. Large and diversified networks of stakeholders supporting the Polish campaign 'Occupation Dad — I like it!', as well as the multi-stakeholder approach chosen by the Maltese 'NISTA' and the Italian 'Family Audit Certification' programme were assessed as major strengths of those good practices. Led by the social partners (large trade union confederation), the German programme on 'Reconciliation of Work and Family' and the '24-hour Childcare' initiative in Denmark are also based on a close partnership between social partners, businesses and local authorities. They both demonstrate the benefits of such a fruitful coordination.

A number of chosen practices provided excellent examples of how to ensure that **flexible working arrangements** generate positive outcomes in terms of reconciliation and equality. The family-friendly measures of the Slovenian 'Halcom enterprise'; the '24-hour Service Childcare' in the Danish municipality of Aalborg as well as the 'Think, Act, Report' programme in the UK were appreciated for this aspect.



**Involving SMEs** in reconciliation policies proves to be a challenging task. Thus the Austrian 'Parental Leave Workshops' and the Polish 'Occupation Dad — I like it' aimed specifically at this type of companies were considered valuable examples in reaching and engaging SMEs.

**Table 1 — Good practices by country identified in the parallel working groups**

<b>Self-regulation</b>	
Austria	Parental leave company workshops
Germany	Project More
Denmark	24-hour Service Childcare
Slovenia	Halcom Family-friendly Enterprise
<b>Awareness-raising</b>	
Austria	'Four Walls, Four Hands', Campaign
Germany	Managing Reconciliation of Work and Family
Denmark	A Hug from Daddy
Malta	Sharing Work-life Responsibilities (NISTA)
Poland	Occupation Dad — I like it
<b>Benchmarking</b>	
Estonia	Family/Employee-Friendly Company Competition
Italy	Family Audit Certification
Malta	Equality Mark
United Kingdom	Think Act Report





# 5. Main gaps and challenges



## 5. Main gaps and challenges

As far as European and national policy frameworks are concerned, the main policy challenges identified in the context of this study include:

- advancing the availability, affordability and quality of childcare and other care services/facilities even in the current context of financial constraints (faced by various EU Member States);
- designing policies and strategies to challenge traditional gender stereotypes, as they continue to act as barriers to gender equality in the labour market, the household and society in general;
- involving men in care and other unpaid work, with scope for improving EU regulations governing paternity leave and in extending the rights of fathers;
- ensuring that the economic crisis does not compromise the progress made in women's participation in the labour market, the trend towards the dual-earner model and of men's involvement in family/care responsibilities;
- increasing awareness and implementation of reconciliation measures in national and EU policy levels;
- ensuring that flexible working arrangements generate positive outcomes in terms of reconciliation and gender equality;
- increasing the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the implementation of reconciliation policies;
- encouraging the dissemination of good practices on reconciliation across different national contexts, and promoting change in traditional working cultures with a greater focus on family-friendly and gender equality workplaces.

As far as good practices on reconciliation are concerned, the following aspects seem to be vital:

- The **relevance of social partners and multiple stakeholders**, which is important for an effective implementation, and for the potential positive multiplier effect.
- The importance of **promoting public and private networking** and ensuring its effective coordination, partnership and continuity (even when the project ends).
- The importance of involving and **targeting SMEs** in reconciliation projects.
- The need to improve the **availability of public resources** and to build self-financing wherever possible.
- The need to invest in effective, innovative and **well-targeted awareness-raising initiatives**.
- The need to improve **monitoring and evaluation**, including building indicators and data collection in all programmes and approaches.
- The importance of carrying out **time use studies** and updating them regularly.
- The relevance of **learning from good experiences** and transferring practices to change working culture.
- The importance of **investing in training, counselling and coaching** to strengthen the potential for change in traditional assumptions, attitudes and behaviours.
- The **need to target men** in all reconciliation projects and initiatives, as part of a strategic orientation towards gender equality.

# 6. Conclusions



## 6. Conclusions

The issue of reconciliation of work, family and private life is at the core of the relationship between employment, care and gender.

EU arguments in favour of reconciliation refer to:

- increasing the employment participation of women and reaching the overall target of 75 % employment rate for men and women;
- deriving from this, the necessity for men to share care and household responsibilities and tasks more equally;
- the opportunity to rethink the flexibility of working time arrangements needed to increase the competitiveness of companies in Europe;
- demographic arguments and the need to encourage fertility rates;
- and being a main condition for a more gender-equal society and specifically for increasing women's economic independence.

Reconciliation is therefore a way to offset the disadvantage faced by women with regard to access to and participation in the labour market and the disadvantage faced by men with regard to participating in family life. However, this demands changes in pre-determined social models inherent in family and labour market policies, in the family and at the workplace.

The social norms that perpetuate women roles in relation to unpaid care work and men's economic roles are slowly changing:

- Men are increasingly showing a preference for working time arrangements that fit with family re-

sponsibilities, confirming that men do care, and are increasingly caring for their children and also other family members.

- Women's share as breadwinners is increasing and they are not the sole employment buffers in economic crisis and recession periods.
- The gap between employment levels has shrunk and working patterns of men and women are changing. For example, even though women of working age are the main part-time workers, part-time jobs are also used to manage active ageing for women and men.

However, there is still a great deal to be done to ensure that women and men equally participate in and benefit from reconciliation measures. This requires a commitment to cultural change in the family and in the workplace amongst governments, the social partners and employers. Research shows that gender is now seen as a legitimate organisational issue, although this has principally concerned women. This points to the need for a greater commitment to men's involvement in wider social change, in relation to fatherhood and care roles in the family, and of men's roles in the labour market as professional carers.

Collective agreements and workplace regulations that involve fathers in reconciliation measures have been shown to have an impact in enabling individualised arrangements to promote changes in family life.

EU policy and legislation has had an increasing important influence in social policy formulation in set-



ting minimum standards for maternity and parental leave. This forms the basis upon which Member States further develop arrangements to promote reconciliation, as is in evidence from the diversity of modalities in terms of length, payment, flexibility, and whether leave is a family or individual entitlement. As a result EU initiatives and regulations have helped to create a normative climate that raises new social expectations and a 'sense of entitlement' regarding work and family support.

In a time of economic hardship, it is essential to consider reconciliation from a gender perspective and to place it at the core of reforms. If the crisis is used to reduce welfare provision and affordable services and to extend working time, there is a danger that this will lead to a polarisation in the working hours of men and women, and the various goals associated with reconciliation policies will not be achieved.



# Annex

## Good practices





# Annex

## Good practices

The good practices were assessed in a consultation meeting, in September 2012, in Vilnius.

The meeting gathered experts and stakeholders from EU Member States working on gender-based violence.

The selected good practices, chosen among 30 practices with potential, do not intend to repre-

sent the whole range of experiences in all Member States but they are supposed to present effective approaches adopted in the EU to tackle and eradicate domestic violence, with specific focus on awareness-raising initiatives, training and support services.

### Self-regulation

<b>Austria</b>	<b>abz*austria</b>
<b>Slovenia</b>	<b>Halcom d.d. — holder of 'Family-friendly enterprise certificate' (certifikat Družini prijazno podjetje)</b>
<b>Germany</b>	<b>MORE — Mind-set Organisation Executives</b>
<b>Denmark</b>	<b>24-hour childcare</b>

### Awareness-raising

<b>Austria</b>	<b>Four Walls — Four Hands</b>
<b>Malta</b>	<b>NISTA</b>
<b>Poland</b>	<b>Full-time Dad — I Like It! (Etat Tata. Lubię to!)</b>
<b>Germany</b>	<b>Managing the Reconciliation of Work and Family (Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Familie Gestalten!)</b>
<b>Denmark</b>	<b>A Hug from Daddy (Fars Kram)</b>

### Benchmarking

<b>Italy</b>	<b>Family audit certification in Trento</b>
<b>Estonia</b>	<b>The most family- and employee-friendly company competition (Pere- ja Töötajasõbralike firmade konkurss)</b>
<b>United kingdom</b>	<b>Think, Act, Report</b>
<b>Malta</b>	<b>Equality Mark</b>



# abz\*austria paternal leave company workshops, Austria 2011–12

## Encouraging SMEs to give fathers time off with their kids

### Summary

The Austrian paternal leave company workshops were designed and carried out by the non-profit organisation abz\*austria and funded by the Federal Ministry for Women and Civil Service, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, the social partners and the Federation of Austrian Industries. They provide an interesting example of a concerted initiative to raise awareness and change company culture about parental leave as a goal of gender equality. They are also a good example of cooperation with employers and trade unions.

The workshops were held in 2011 and 2012 in the context of wider efforts by the Austrian government to promote men's take-up of parental leave and through this to support the careers of working mothers. They aimed to develop a new company culture that enables and encourages men to take parental leave. Targeted at human resources managers, staff and works councils in SMEs, the workshops were conducted in all nine Austrian provinces and were free of charge for the companies taking part. The workshops included inputs from **abz\*austria** on tools to manage paternal leave as well as contributions from external experts on legal frameworks. This opened up opportunities for networking, group work, making links, working on company strategies, presenting case studies and discussing solutions.

### Changing the culture of SMEs

Although Austria's legal framework allows and encourages fathers to take parental leave, the share of men taking up this option and claiming the childcare allowance is low, and is only growing slowly. Therefore, the Federal Minister for Women and Civil Service made an effort to promote men's use of parental leave. In cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection as well as all social partners



and the Federation of Austrian Industries, it launched awareness-raising campaigns and introduced a new, income-based childcare allowance scheme.

Austria's economic landscape is characterised by a majority of SMEs, therefore in 2011 and 2012 it also commissioned the non-profit organisation abz\*austria to design and implement paternal leave company workshops for SME representatives. Their objective was to make SMEs aware of the importance of encouraging men to take up paternal leave, which would also support the careers of working mothers. The aim was to develop a new company culture that enables and encourages men to take parental leave — and as abz\*austria concluded, to do this it is vital to involve men more actively in the process of creating gender equality. Twelve workshops were conducted, each attended by between 7 and 18 participants (on average 12.5). The workshops were conducted in all nine Austrian provinces.

### Tools to manage parental leave

abz\*austria used concrete management tools such as RoadMap\*KarenzManagement® (an internal information and communication platform for companies and their employees on leave) and Toolbox\*KarenzManagement (an instrument for strategic activities in the preparation and design of the leave). It also brought in external experts to give information on parental leave and legal frameworks. This opened up opportunities for networking, group work, making links, presenting case studies and discussing solutions.

The main target groups were small and medium-sized companies across the different Austrian provinces. Management staff was regarded as important stakeholders, since once they are aware of the facts they can spread the message further. At the same time, male participants were involved in the workshops, particularly those who were interested in finding out about the possibilities for paternal leave and in fostering positive attitudes towards fatherhood. Participants included managers and employees in human resources divisions, works council representatives, accountants, managers, project managers, and others.

According to the feedback forms, the main reasons participants attended the workshops were associat-

ed with being prepared for the issue, because there had already been requests for paternal leave in the company, and to improve their image as employer.

The participants said that the main benefits of the workshops were that they gained important information about legal frameworks, the fields in which companies could act and where to turn for further information. More generally they were given food for thought, new knowledge, perspectives and ideas, examples of how other companies deal with the topic, external and expert perspectives, networking and exchange opportunities, encouragement and higher awareness. They ended with a more positive view of paternal leave and a greater awareness of the importance of a supportive management.



The workshops provided targeted information, awareness-raising and a discussion platform. It was not a general campaign but was tailored to the needs of one specific group, namely SME decision-makers and employees, who were enabled to address the topic in a focussed way. Overall, the evaluation and feedback forms reported a high degree of satisfaction by participants and confirm the usefulness of the measure for SME employees in management, human resources and other positions. The way the workshops were organised, namely through working in small groups, providing in-depth information and involving well-informed experts, was also appreciated.

Analysing the feedback forms, it can furthermore be concluded that there have been two main outcomes on gender equality. Firstly the workshops provided the participants with helpful practical and legal information enabling them to be better prepared for implementing paternal leave. Secondly, they appear to have managed to change some participants' per-

spectives on paternal leave thus making a positive change in raising awareness.

The focus on SMEs was certainly appropriate in the Austrian context with its large share of SMEs. Moreover, in SMEs, company culture and personal commitment are particularly relevant, which is why the focus on these aspects appears particularly fruitful. It can furthermore be assumed that the distribution of the workshops across Austria allowed for increased participation and dissemination. This was also relevant as the workshops were embedded in the concurrent wider campaigns and activities that took place.

### Changes are needed on all sides

Overall, participants saw the workshops and the information provided as very helpful. Their feedback revealed that in the eyes of SMEs many changes need to be made if paternity leave is to be taken up more enthusiastically.

Within companies, managers need to create a company culture which is open to this issue, and send out clear signals by giving their proactive support. Taking parental leave should not only be feasible but also economically attractive. On the practical level, they should introduce flexible working hours and part-time schemes, and ensure that staff on leave is replaced. Parents should be allowed to work part-time during parental leave. Companies must realise that they have to devote resources to this issue, for instance by boosting the number of staff in human resources departments. These changes need support from experts, promotion through public relations work, and the creation of checklists for SMEs.

Social partners need to be more sensitive to the issue, and co-workers need to show flexibility. Fathers themselves have to have willingness and courage to take leave.

More broadly there are society-wide issues. The economic situation of women needs to be improved, and social acceptance needs to be built by giving publicity to role models. In addition legal frameworks need to be less strict — for instance parents who work part-time should not suffer reduced protection from dismissal.

An important lesson the organisers learnt was that the political focus on the topic, accompanied by more coverage in the media, led to an increased interest in the issue and participation in the programme by com-



panies. The organisers therefore conclude that PR and role models (companies and fathers who provide positive examples) are particularly important.

The good practice is relevant for all countries that see a low or only slowly increasing number of men taking parental leave – a situation that applies, albeit to different extents, to all countries of the EU.

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**Further information:**

Leave management tool: <http://www.abzaustria.at/angebote-projekte/auszeiten-und-karenzmanagement>  
Government parental leave campaign: <http://www.maennerinkarenz.at/kampagne.html>

## Halcom d.d. — holder of ‘Family-friendly enterprise certificate’ (certifikat Družini prijazno podjetje), Slovenia 2009–14

### Measures for a family-friendly firm

#### Summary

The company Halcom D.D. has a long-standing commitment to reconciliation policies. Information is disseminated to employees through various channels, opinion surveys are carried out and quarterly meetings are held. The company has a crèche and kindergarten close to the premises. The company also provides care for elementary school children during holidays and a child-related time bonus is given for parents for leave for the first school day. Employees can take up to 30 days (instead of 10 days) unpaid leave each year. In some circumstances employees can work from home. The company has a person who coordinates reconciliation activities as part of a team that implements the ‘family friendly enterprise’ certificate and related activities. Auditing takes place through the Audit Council and there is a strong company commitment to implementing the provision under the ‘family friendly enterprise’ certification. Overall the focus is on reconciliation measures for families, rather than women or men.

### Promoting equality through EQUAL

Slovenia launched a family-friendly enterprise certification scheme — certifikat Družini prijazno podjetje — in 2007, in partnership with the non-profit Ekvilib Institute. More than 130 companies, employing some 50 000 workers (7 % of the workforce) have now been certified. The scheme is based on the European family audit system developed by Berufundfamilie in Germany, and is also used in Austria, Italy and Hungary

Halcom D.D., a firm that provides electronic payments systems, took part in the Young Mother/Friendly Employment project, a development partnership funded through the EU’s EQUAL Community Initiative Programme. Through this experience, it introduced a set of measures to increase its family friendliness, which were designed with the help of an external

consultant in human resource management nominated by the Ekvilib Institute, which is the certifying institution for the certification scheme. Halcom was subsequently awarded the ‘Family-Friendly Enterprise’ basic certificate in May 2009, and gained the full certificate in November 2012.



Petra Hartman of the Ekvilib Institute says: ‘Halcom stands out mostly thanks to its wide range of benefits offered to its employees, its organisational culture, including the care for employees, and the management’s commitments, which are more than just a dead letter.’

### Measures to create a high quality working life

Since its establishment in 1992, the company’s strategy has been to create conditions for a satisfying work/family balance for its employees. This has been realised through relevant measures, with a stress on internal communication. Selected measures implemented at company level include:

- some flexibility in office hours;
- taking into account school holidays and the partner’s annual leave when planning employees’ annual leave;
- reconciliation measures being communicated and disseminated through the company’s intranet, company review, notice board and a leaflet;
- opinion surveys among employees gathering information on their satisfaction, suggestions for improvements and changes, and wishes regarding reconciling work and family obligations;
- quarterly meetings of all employees where reconciliation of work and family life is a permanent item on the agenda;
- a reference person for the issue of work–family reconciliation;



- the company's own nursery and kindergarten close to the company's premises since 2010;
- care of elementary school children during school holidays while parents are at work;
- child-related time bonus, providing an additional paid day of leave on the first school day for parents with children in the first three classes of elementary school (age 6–8), and an additional paid day of leave for parents with children in the 9th class of elementary school (on the information day organised by the upper secondary schools);
- the option to take 30 (instead of 10) working days of unpaid leave a year;
- the possibility to work from home if exceptional circumstances require care of family members;
- Christmas gifts for children of ages between 0 and 10;
- a family picnic which is held once a year for all employees (including Halcom Serbia and Halcom Bosnia and Herzegovina);
- Halcom giving a certain amount of money for each new-born child.

All employees are engaged and included. A person is assigned to coordinate reconciliation activities. This person is a member of a team consisting of seven employees that is in charge of implementing the Family-Friendly Enterprise certificate and coordinating activities. The group meets regularly.

The objectives of the measures implemented include a good quality of life for employees, easier reconciliation of work and family responsibilities, flexibility, and satisfied employees.

The focus of reconciliation measures is on families rather than on female or male employees. However, the reconciliation measures implemented in the company undoubtedly reduce the difference between female and male employees and contribute to their more equal position, satisfaction and work/family balance.

Among the success factors of the project are the support it receives from management, a high level of motivation, a good and detailed implementation methodology, the participation of all employees, and regularly seeking and evaluating feedback from employees.

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# MORE — Mind-set Organisation Executives, Germany 2011–14

## Family friendliness as part of a diversity culture at Bosch

### Summary

The Bosch is an engineering and electronics multinational company established near Stuttgart, it employs 280 000 people in 50 countries across the world. It promotes diversity as a driver for innovation, and promotes new approaches to leadership based on results, rather than being present in the workplace.

It has developed a range of policies and awareness-raising activities on the reconciliation for work and family life, which are embedded in a strong culture of equality and diversity. These include a website, a press release, a supplement to the annual report and guidelines on a flexible and family-friendly working culture. The company has received certification and awards for being a family-friendly company, and Charters on Diversity and Family-Friendly Working have been agreed. 'Family time' periods can be used as a basis for career development and promotion.

A specific emphasis is given to executives taking family-friendly working hours, so that they can act as disseminators and role models. For a period of 3 months executives can try out working flexibly from home or part-time — which helps to create a cultural change in the organisation and leadership around flexible working. After the trial period, executives are free to go back to their full-time posts, but in practice 80 % of them decide to continue to work flexibly.

The scheme particularly targets executives from research and development departments, as this type of work is less bound to specific locations, and relies on creativity. When the MORE scheme was introduced in 2011, it was enthusiastically received. Over 300 employees applied to take part, so a second round for 650 participants was launched.

The company predominantly employs men and there has been a good take-up of the initiative amongst them. However Bosch also promotes equal opportunities for women, and provides mentoring programmes, the Business Women's Programme (a programme for further training), a women's network ([women@bosch](mailto:women@bosch)), as well as an annual Girls' Day and Girls' Campus. Its aim is to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions worldwide from 11.2 % (in 2012) to 20 % (in 2020).

## Germany's most family-friendly enterprise

Robert Bosch GmbH is a multinational engineering and electronics company, with annual sales of EUR 46 billion. It is a world leader in the production of car parts such as brakes, starter motors and radios, and also makes industrial control systems, household appliances, power tools and security systems. The company's headquarters are based near Stuttgart in Germany, but it employs some 280 000 people in 50 countries.

Bosch has long-term experience of implementing flexible working time models. It has been certified by the German Beruf und Familie (Work and Family) audit and received the Total E-Quality award for family-friendliness and equal opportunities. A Diversity Charter was signed in 2007, and this was followed by a Charter on Family-Friendly Working Hours in 2011. In 2012 Bosch was awarded the title of Germany's 'Most family-friendly enterprise' in the category of large enterprises, and received the Award for Excellence in recognition of its efforts to reconcile career and family from the Japanese Ministry for Health, Labour and Welfare. In 2012 the company also developed its Guidelines for a flexible and family-friendly working culture, which constitute a self-commitment by the company. Since 2012, employees can invoke 'family time' (periods of time spent on care tasks) as a building block for their career with a view to promotion. In addition, there are numerous internal networks ([papas@bosch](mailto:papas@bosch), [women@bosch](mailto:women@bosch), [family@bosch](mailto:family@bosch)) which allow employees to support each other and exchange experiences.

## Leadership based on results

The MORE (Mind-set Organisation Executives) project is managed by the company's Central Department for Diversity Management. Flexible working time models have been in place since the mid-1990s with the objective of improving the reconciliation of work and care responsibilities. To date, several hundred part-time models exist at all levels of the company's hierarchy. The aim of the MORE scheme is to achieve a sustainable change in the working and management culture at Bosch and to promote a wider use of flexible working amongst



## Flexibel arbeiten Persönliche Freiräume schaffen



Sie wollen sich fortbilden? Sich privat engagieren? Oder brauchen Zeit für Ihre Familie? Darüber können wir jederzeit reden. Wir bieten viele Möglichkeiten, Arbeitszeit flexibler zu gestalten. Standardvarianten gibt es dabei nicht. Wir schneiden gemeinsam mit Ihnen eine Lösung, die zu Ihnen und auch zu uns passt.

executives (working from home or part-time) over a period of 3 months. The purpose of the scheme is to demonstrate the advantages of flexible working time models by enabling executives try them out and act as role models and disseminators for other employees, thus advancing the development of a more flexible and family-conscious working culture at Bosch. In this way, widespread assumptions are questioned, e.g. the assumption that both achievement and leadership are only possible when the person in charge is present over and above the actual working hours. In the process, the scheme promotes new approaches to leadership based on results, rather than being present in the workplace.

### Diversity drives innovation

The scheme is embedded in a company-wide diversity strategy which views diversity as a driving force of innovation. Along with the dimensions of gender, generations and internationality, family-friendliness/work-life balance constitutes a central building block of this strategy. At Bosch, each of these elements has a clearly defined profile with corresponding measures and instruments. To promote equal opportunities for women, there are, for example, mentoring programmes (internal management level and cross-company), the Business Women's Programme (a programme for further training), a women's network (women@bosch), as well as annual Girls' Day and Girls' Campus. Within

the key area of gender equality, implemented at Bosch since 1994, the aim is to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions worldwide from 11.2 % (in 2012) to 20 % (in 2020). At present, one in four female executives works part-time.

The scheme particularly targets executives from research and development departments, as this type of work is less bound to specific locations compared to production departments. The executives concerned gain important experiences which allow them to better assess their own situation and that of their employees and, ultimately, to become better leaders. Functioning as role models they also act as important disseminators in creating a family-conscious working and organisational culture.

The scheme particularly targets executives from research and development departments, as this type of work is less bound to specific locations compared to production departments. The executives concerned gain important experiences which allow them to better assess their own situation and that of their employees and, ultimately, to become better leaders. Functioning as role models they also act as important disseminators in creating a family-conscious working and organisational culture.

### Enthusiastic take-up

Originally MORE was planned for 125 executives in 2011; however more than 300 women and men applied to take part. In the first round of MORE 150 employees participated in the initiative, mostly from Germany. After the 3-month period trying out flexible working hours, around 80 % of participants decided to continue their flexible working time model (home office, part-time, etc.) even where this resulted in a reduction in income. Due to the positive impact and following great interest from employees, MORE commenced a second round with 650 executives worldwide. MORE addresses leading executives irrespective of gender. Given that 78 % of employees are male, more men than women are included in the scheme. The examples published in the company 2012 report are exclusively reports of men describing their experiences.

The scheme shows how it is possible to reduce the associations between 'work — maleness — leadership — being present — performance', which had



been firmly entrenched in people's minds. Changing company culture and shifting mindsets presupposes that performance has little to do with being at the office; instead the aim is to focus on results and to achieve a better reconciliation of work and life. In this way, care responsibilities not only become a natural part of corporate culture but also of an individual's working culture — and in the case of Bosch, that of male executives in particular. Thus the scheme contributes substantially to achieving greater gender equality.

One of the success factors of the scheme is the fact that the entire corporate culture of Bosch is oriented towards the reconciliation of work and care. This is firmly established in the company's overall mission statement and also in the Guidelines for a flexible and family-friendly working culture, which the company views as a form of self-commitment. These are signals that the scheme and its objectives are supported and appreciated by senior management. This has not only enhanced the acceptance of the scheme but may also explain the willingness of many executives to participate.

This good practice can be adopted by companies in all sectors, especially by large enterprises.

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### Further information:

- Bosch page on work-life balance:  
[http://your.bosch-career.com/en/web/de/de/arbeiten\\_bosch/work\\_life\\_balance/work-life-balance](http://your.bosch-career.com/en/web/de/de/arbeiten_bosch/work_life_balance/work-life-balance)
- Bosch page on flexible work:  
[https://your.bosch-career.com/de/web/de/de/arbeiten\\_bosch/work\\_life\\_balance/flexibles\\_arbeiten/flexibles-arbeiten](https://your.bosch-career.com/de/web/de/de/arbeiten_bosch/work_life_balance/flexibles_arbeiten/flexibles-arbeiten)
- Guidelines for a flexible and family-friendly working culture:  
[https://c-career-bosch-de.resource.bosch.com/media/en/public/de/documents/arbeiten\\_bosch/work\\_life\\_balance/beruf\\_familie/poster\\_guidelines\\_en.pdf](https://c-career-bosch-de.resource.bosch.com/media/en/public/de/documents/arbeiten_bosch/work_life_balance/beruf_familie/poster_guidelines_en.pdf)
- Press release Bosch adds to its family-friendly working culture of 11 March 2013:  
[http://www.bosch-presse.de/presseforum/details.htm?txtID=6154&tk\\_id=107](http://www.bosch-presse.de/presseforum/details.htm?txtID=6154&tk_id=107)
- Press release of 6 June 2013:  
[http://www.bosch-presse.de/presseforum/details.htm?txtID=6289&tk\\_id=191](http://www.bosch-presse.de/presseforum/details.htm?txtID=6289&tk_id=191)
- Press release of the trade union IG-Metall of 18 July 2013:  
<http://www.igmetall.de/praxisbeispiel-bosch-flexibilisierungsmodelle-in-der-erprobung-11880.htm>



## 24-hour childcare, Denmark 1994–2014

### Round-the-clock childcare suits flexible workers

#### Summary

Project Børnepasning (The Childcare Project), a community of interest between trade unions, employers and businesses, aims to exchange experiences across companies, in order to persuade municipalities to provide childcare outside standard working times, so that parents can work flexible hours. This is much needed, since the Danish flexicurity model promotes flexible working hours, and services such as hospitals and transport cannot function without them. Exacerbating the problem, shop opening hours in Denmark were liberalised in 2012, making flexibility a precondition for a job in retail.

The project conducts annual surveys of nursery opening hours, which show the need for round-the-clock childcare, particularly in response to the looser shop opening hours. They also reveal that many parents working flexible working hours want to change jobs because of the lack of out-of-hours childcare. Examples such as Børnehuset in Aalborg show how to provide effective evening and weekend childcare: for example, parents can put their children to bed or wake them up to fit in with their working schedules. This makes it possible for lone mothers and fathers to work flexibly without calling on their families.

### The downside of flexible hours

Denmark is renowned for its flexicurity model. However, research has shown difficulties in matching employers' objectives on the organisation of working time with those of employees. In some cases, parents of young children and single



parents have insufficient flexible time in their family life due to the time structuring of childcare. The liberalisation of shop opening hours in 2012 has made life even more difficult for the great majority of families with small children working in the retail trade. A typical Danish day-care unit opens from 06:30 till 17:00 on Monday to Thursday and till 16:30 on Friday (although some open at 05:00 and some close at 17:30 or later). The lack of flexible childcare leads to unsafe working conditions, especially for lone parents, who find it difficult to be flexible.

As flexibility has become a new qualification in the labour market, parents, and especially lone parents, will be less attractive to employers. Taking into consideration that 30 % of all 30–49 year-olds in Denmark are single, and that almost half of single women aged 30–49 have children living with them — for single women aged 30–34 it is almost two thirds — it is not surprising that a high percentage of the population have difficulties in working flexible hours.

Yet a survey of 2 048 nurseries in 59 municipalities across Denmark in 2013 found that just 11 of them are open after 18:00 and only five provide care for parents who work at night.

### Aalborg hospital opens a 24-hour nursery

The initiative to provide childcare round the clock was taken by Aalborg Hospital and the municipality of Aalborg, to meet the needs of nurses and doctors working at the hospital. The institution opened a nursery in 1994 as one of the first 24-hour childcare facilities in Denmark, and since 1998 it has been open at weekends. This institution, which was established before the liberalisation of opening hours, is a good example of meeting the childcare needs of parents working flexible hours. Children can bring their older siblings (up to the age of 10) in the evening and night, and parents can put their own children to bed — or wake them if it fits in their working schedule. This childcare arrangement is used by nurses and doctors, among others. The liberalisation of shop opening hours means that having access to a similar institution is a precondition for working in retail.

## The Childcare project

The Børnepasning (Childcare) project is an informal group formed by trade unions, employers' associations and businesses such as the Danish Railways and the Danish Post. It aims to influence municipalities to make childcare available for those parents who, because of their work schedules, need childcare at unsocial hours and during weekends. It helps parents and business entities to make local authorities aware of the need for longer opening hours, and exchanges experiences that affect employees and management in companies, so as to better reconcile working and family life.

The project drafts annual reports on opening hours, and the latest report shows that although the law on liberalisation of opening hours was adopted in October 2012, actual changes to the opening hours of childcare institutions as a result of this liberalisation are not yet visible in the figures. There are only five institutions in Denmark where children are cared for after 23:00 or on Saturdays and Sundays, although the vast majority of grocery stores are open until 21:00 or 22:00 as well as on Saturday and Sunday. Within the last 2 years, two private childcare institutions have been established which are also open at weekends, perhaps reflecting a new trend in solving childcare problems outside so-called 'normal' opening hours.

Project Børnepasning has made it possible for lone mothers and fathers to have a job, a career and children — without having to rely on their families to care for their children.

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## Further information:

Website: <http://www.projektboernepasning.dk>  
Projekt Børnepasning (2013): Åbningstidsundersøgelse 2013 (Opening hours study 2013)

<http://www.projektboernepasning.dk/filer/213undersoegelse2013.pdf>

Projekt Børnepasning (2005): Natpasning eller ej? (Night care or not?)

<http://www.projektboernepasning.dk/filer/natpasning.pdf>

Dansk erhverv: Lukkelov (Shops Act): <http://www.danskerhverv.dk/Nyheder/Sider/Ny-lukkelov.aspx>

Nyt for Danmarks Statistik No 89: parenthood statistics 20 February 2014:

<http://www.dst.dk/pukora/epub/Nyt/2014/NR089.pdf>



## Four Walls — Four Hands, Austria 2012–13

### Using social media to campaign on domestic work

#### Summary

The 'Four Walls — Four Hands' awareness-raising campaign represents a very good example of a campaign to change perception about women's and men's roles in the family. The campaign used electronic and social media to raise awareness about the unequal distribution of domestic work and to highlight and stimulate debate about the unequal sharing of care work. It includes tools for couples to monitor and compare their contribution to domestic work.

The website <http://www.4waende4haende.at> was launched with videos, plans for sharing domestic work and childcare-related work to be printed and filled in by couples. It was accompanied with a Facebook page and a survey. A smartphone application for monitoring domestic chores on the individual level was provided too. The campaign was accompanied by advertisements and free cards.

The campaign 'Four walls — Four Hands' was presented to the Austrian public on the city's Equal Pay Day, 19 October 2012, on the basis that the unequal distribution of domestic work impacts on the gender pay gap. The campaign ran between October 2012 and October 2013.



Women's Department in the city of Vienna initiated and carried out the campaign. The primary data for the campaign were based on a survey of domestic work and drew on the results from a time budget survey in 2008/2009. The practical design and launch of the campaign was carried out by the agency Modul4.

'Even in the 21st century women do two thirds of unpaid family and domestic work. Women are solving the problems that society has ignored. The more unpaid work is done, the less time there is for work and leisure. Participating in society requires free time. The division of domestic and care work is not purely a private matter, but a matter for society as a whole,' said Martina Wurzer, speaker of the Vienna Greens, at the campaign launch.

The campaign focused on electronic and social media. It included tools that enable couples to monitor and compare the contribution they make to domestic work. The project created the website <http://www.4waende4haende.at>, which contained videos, plans for sharing domestic and childcare-related work which couples could print and fill in, a Facebook application and a survey. A smartphone app to allow individuals to monitor their domestic chores was offered and a Facebook page was created.

At the times of highest use, there were 156 651 users per week and 488 users discussed the campaign regularly. The Facebook site has over 2 500 likes. 65 % of the users were female and 34 % were male; 34 % were in the age group 25–34 and 21 % in the age group 25–44. A significant number of users downloaded the app (1 086 IOS downloads, Android 1 018). The 8 707 users of the microsite <http://www.4waende4haende.at> accounted for 33 266 page visits. The campaign was accompanied by advertisements and free cards. Although the campaign was launched by the Viennese authorities, it was also used in other provinces across Austria.

An innovative element is the multimedia design combining apps, a website, printed material and social media. Furthermore, the social media tools could not only be watched or read, they could be

actively used as was the case with the household plans to be filled in by couples.

### Numerous benefits

The objectives of the campaign were:

- to stimulate discussion and reflection on fairness regarding the division of paid and unpaid work between the genders and the consequences of current inequalities;
- to increase the visibility of existing disadvantages with regard to distributive justice;
- to support autonomous lifestyles independent of narrow role expectations;
- to support diverse and positive role models for children and young adults, and
- to communicate the advantages of a fairer distribution of care work for both genders.

Other objectives were higher satisfaction, better health, more leisure time, and fair distribution of time with children, strengthening the emotional bonds between parents and children, better work-life balance and, as a future perspective, children growing up in an equal and fair society.

The campaign was designed in a humorous, playful way with games and tools, and social media was an important factor in reaching young people. For transferability, household chores listed in the tools would have to be adapted to other cultural contexts.

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Website: <http://www.4waende4haende.at>

Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/4waende4haende>

Press release:  
<http://www.wien.gv.at/rk/msg/2012/10/19012.html>  
MA 57 (Frauenabteilung der Stadt Wien — Magistratsabteilung 57): Kampagne '4 Wände 4 Hände' für Verteilungsgerechtigkeit Magistrat der Stadt Wien:  
<http://www.wien.gv.at/menschen/frauen/themen/arbeitswelt/4waende-4haende>

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Zeitverwendung 2008/09, Ein Überblick über geschlechtsspezifische Unterschiede, Endbericht der Bundesanstalt Statistik Österreich an die Bundesministerin für Frauen und Öffentlichen Dienst (GZ: BKA-F140.300/0003-II/1/2008)



## NISTA, Malta 2010–12

### Using the media to encourage women to work

#### Summary

In Maltese, 'nista' means 'I can'. It was the name of a EUR 1.3 million media awareness-raising campaign run in 2010–12 to promote women's participation in the labour market, which remains at a very low level in Malta. It was initiated by the Gender Unit of the national Employment and Training Corporation and was embedded in national policy on gender equality, with funding from the European Social Fund (ESF). The campaign aimed to challenge traditional stereotypes, reduce the care gap and promote men's active role in the family, with a view to enhancing women's employment participation. It was carried out through pre- and post-campaign research, sharing of experiences from other countries, radio and TV adverts, a 13-week television series, a poster campaign and an information booklet.

The project was implemented in four phases, which first raised awareness of the issue across society, then challenged stereotypes, promoted men's roles in the family, and finally encouraged employers to improve work–life balance by highlighting best practice and the benefits of reconciliation. The campaign had a noticeable impact on women's employment participation and better awareness about family care. The initiative has been evaluated.

NISTA provides a solid example of a wide-ranging approach to addressing reconciliation by challenging traditional gender stereotypes, which is very relevant in the Maltese context. Eurostat statistics from 2013 show, that there was a notable increase in female employment participation during and after the media campaign. The example has good transferability prospects, particularly for countries where traditional roles of women and men prevail.

#### I can

Malta has a low female employment participation rate and the highest female inactivity rate within the EU. There is a deeply ingrained culture that emphasises the traditional roles of the male breadwinner and the female homemaker and mother; and few parents use outside childcare. Furthermore Malta has



a decreasing fertility rate which has economic and demographic implications. The Maltese government has acknowledged the need for reconciliation policies in order to engage the unused female resource for economic growth, which has resulted in the introduction of reconciliation policies and support to parents. Lobbying and pressure for more gender awareness has been forthcoming from women's groups such as the Malta Confederation of Women's Organisations (MCWO).

A media publicity campaign was therefore initiated by the Gender Unit at the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC), a public body which falls under the remit of the Ministry of Education and Employment and which helps jobseekers to enter the labour market or improve their career prospects. The following stakeholders were involved in designing the campaign: experts and researchers from the media industry, experts in gender issues and those specialising in the labour market and gender in the media. This campaign followed a previous one by the Gender Unit to promote high quality childcare in Malta. NISTA became one of the largest and longest-term awareness-raising projects with a broad involvement from the media.

The scope and context for the project is set within the strategic objectives of the Maltese government on gender equality, enshrined in the Constitution of Malta (1964), the ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1991, and specific laws enacted to promote gender equality and prohibit discrimination, such as the Equality for Men and Women Act of 2003, Chapter 456.

#### A multi-disciplinary consortium

NISTA was developed by a multi-disciplinary consortium of experienced professionals, including the

ETC and other key experts in research, media buying, public relations, television and radio production, outdoor marketing, and gender and the media.

The campaign targeted women, including inactive young women, inactive older women, lone mothers, men and fathers, employers, and society at large.

Firstly, it aimed to challenge the existing traditional stereotypes about women's and men's roles in the family and work, thus encouraging men to take a more active role in the family and reducing the care gap through the sharing of unpaid work at home. Secondly, it aimed to increase the number of women engaged in paid work. Part of this involved changing the workplace mentality by convincing employers of the benefits and win-win solutions that can be achieved through the introduction of various work–life reconciliation measures. The other side of the coin involved putting forward the benefits of formal employment and self-employment in terms of making women financially independent, raising families' standard of living by bringing in a second income, and combating the feminisation of poverty and women's financial dependence on the state and/or their spouse/partner.

### Research, advertising, a 13-week TV series and a booklet

To achieve these objectives, NISTA carried out several activities.

- It started by designing a pre- and post-campaign research exercise, which comprised a qualitative research study using a computer assisted telephone interview (CATI). This was carried out to gain a better understanding of people's views on sharing work/life responsibilities. It was backed up with focus group sessions and a Delphi meeting (November 2010), pre-campaign quantitative research (December 2010), a qualitative research study on employers' perceptions (June 2012), highlights of research findings regarding private individuals and employers (2012), a qualitative research study on employers' perceptions (September 2012), and post-campaign quantitative research (September 2012).
- It produced and aired a number of radio and television spots with a common underlying message of challenging traditional gender roles. The TV clips were aired on the national TV stations TVM and TVM2 twice a week back to back and at prime time

on Sunday, attracting high audiences. It was an innovative approach to use the media for creating real-life scenarios that people could relate to. Various time bands were selected to reach the highest possible number of listeners through the radio.

- It designed a set of billboards, which were strategically placed so as to ensure the widest possible audience was reached. The billboard campaign portrayed the messages for different groups targeted in the four phases of the campaign.
- It produced and aired a 13-week television programme. Different themes related to work–life balance issues and which emerged during the different campaign phases were chosen for each programme. The programmes were fast-paced and included packets of information, a regular feature on women and human rights through legislation, stories of women and men who are taking on non-stereotypical roles and making a success of it, and stories of ordinary women who do exceptional things in their life. Best practices regarding flexible working solutions (telework, job sharing, extended parental leave and reduced hours) which permit employees to better balance their work and their life were included, together with practical tips on how to choose high quality childcare, women and pensions, women and financial literacy, women and cooperatives, women and unions, etc.
- It published an information booklet for women wishing to go back to work called 'Thinking of going back to work?.'
- In addition, a meeting was held with the project partner from Belgium to discuss and share ideas about similar projects, and a logo was developed for the project. The project's name, as well as meaning 'I can' in Maltese, echoes the word feminist.

### A four-phase campaign

The campaign went through four phases (each of them lasted about 4–5 months):

#### Phase One: Generating awareness in society in general

This phase was aimed at society in general and at raising awareness about the project and the subject of work–life balance.

#### Phase Two: Challenging traditional roles for women

The second phase was aimed at inactive young women, inactive older women and lone mothers, to promote the importance of paid employment



and financial independence for women, as opposed to either inactivity or dependency on social benefits. It consisted of television adverts depicting testimonials, radio adverts and billboards, amongst other things.

### **Phase Three: Promoting men in the family sphere**

This phase focused on challenging traditional gender roles and more specifically men's roles within the family, which are often limited to their bread-winning role. This part of the campaign targeted and promoted men's involvement in family life through a number of television adverts and testimonials, radio adverts and billboards.

### **Phase Four: Employers for work-life balance**

Employers were targeted through television spots and articles in specific employer-focused magazines. This element of the campaign aimed to highlight best practice employers who have implemented measures favouring better work-life reconciliation for their employees, and demonstrated the benefits that work-life reconciliation measures have for businesses, thus creating a win-win solution for all involved.

### **A measurable impact**

The NISTA campaign was monitored and evaluated, and research was carried out during and after the campaign. Eurostat statistics (Employment Rate by Sex, 2013) show that there was a notable increase in female participation during and after the media campaign: 2009 – 39.8 %, 2010 – 41.5 %, 2011 – 43.4 %, 2012 – 46.8 %. There was also an increase in take-up of childcare places. There were also a number of online comments in social media and online papers by people commenting on the TV and radio clips which showed another element of awareness-raising and discussion.

Monitoring and post-campaign research demonstrates that the general public became more aware of stereotypes about working fathers and stay-at-home mums, and also about the need to share caring responsibilities for a better work-life balance. The public also became aware of the benefits that a second in-

come can have on the family's quality of life. Employers also could see that offering best practices in reconciliation policies brings a better solution for everyone.

The post-campaign research exercise revealed that 88 % of respondents believed that it was possible for partners to balance their work and family responsibilities if there is an agreement between both partners to share family responsibilities, and depending on the working hours and flexibility offered by employers. 81 % of respondents also stated that the marketing campaign message was clear enough and they also agreed with it. The survey led to recommendations for more awareness-raising on the availability of childcare facilities, and better promotion of incentives and facilities which allow women or caring parents to join the workforce.

The results of the practice could be enhanced by launching another similar media campaign and giving much greater prominence to the wider public relations function, especially by using social media networks and platforms that exist apart from the traditional 'above the line' broadcasting media such as television and radio.

The project can be easily replicated in other countries looking to encourage inactive mothers to enter the labour market, mothers to consider retaining their jobs, fathers to shoulder more caring responsibilities within the domestic sphere, and employers to change attitudes towards female workers.

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NISTA website:  
<http://etc.gov.mt/Category/4/94/nista.aspx>  
Pre-campaign survey report:  
<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B7zx0yMFH-BoWOTc0OGYyN2MtYWJiYi00YzdiLWlyZmQtNTBmNDExMTJmMTYy/edit>



## Full-time Dad — I Like It! (Etat Tata. Lubię to!), Poland 2012–13

### A multi-pronged national campaign on the father's role

#### Summary

Launched in Poland in 2012, *Etat Tata. Lubię to!* (Full-time Dad – I Like It!) was a multi-pronged national awareness-raising campaign targeted at SMEs and employed parents. The main theme was fatherhood and active fathering, and the campaign aimed to encourage men to participate in childcare. Research and data show that the unequal division of care responsibilities is a key issue for reconciliation of work and family life. The campaign promoted reconciliation and tried to convince employers that parents of young children are equal and valuable workers, and through this to address stigmatisation and stereotyping. The initiative also had a strong focus on raising the awareness of fathers, promoting new reconciliation models in the workplace and enabling women to work by developing fathers' awareness and skills. Activities included a database of examples of good practices, the 'Day with a child at work' campaign, a competition on employers' good practices, workshops for fathers, radio and TV programmes and information leaflets.

The initiative, launched by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MPIPS) and co-financed by the ESF Human Capital Operational Programme, addressed relatively new issues in Poland and was very innovative in the Polish context. It has been strengthened by training activities and is a joint effort of several organisations and stakeholders. The campaign's evaluation found evidence of changed attitudes towards the equal sharing of work and family life.

### A new focus on active fathering

*The Etat Tata. Lubię to!* (Full-time Dad — I Like It!) initiative was developed in a context of growing recognition that gender inequalities in Poland's labour market are in part due to the unequal division of care responsibilities. Men's participation in the care of children and other dependents is increasingly recognised as important for the reconciliation of work and family life, as it not only improves women's position in the labour market but also helps men to develop their role as parents. The main rationale for the campaign was to support equal opportunities for parents returning to work after childbirth or childcare leave. The guiding principle was that work and family responsibilities should be shared by both parents. Through sharing good practices, the project aimed to encourage men to play a more active role in parenting and to take parental leave in order to do so.

The campaign was part of the ESF Human Capital Operational Programme and was launched as a result of a competition initiated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in 2012 to promote solutions for reconciling work and family life. The focus on fathers and active fathering is relatively new, and follows recent changes in policy on paternity and parental leave. Although the issue has attracted some public attention, the scope and scale of the campaign was unprecedented. It fits within efforts to improve women's labour force participation as well as respond to the challenges of demographic change.

The campaign was a nationwide awareness-raising initiative. It had two target groups: on the one hand employed parents of children aged 0–7 years, with a particular focus on the participation of fathers in family life; and on the other hand – micro, small





and medium-sized businesses which implement or would like to implement good practices in the employment of parents with small children.

The main aims of the campaign were to promote the idea of effectively combining employment with parenting, to convince employers that mothers and fathers of small children are equal and valuable employees, and to identify and reduce the stigma and negative stereotypes that arise when the parents of young children go to work. In particular it aimed:

- to strengthen the awareness of fathers as men who have children (while this is obvious conceptually, the point here is to highlight men's role in fathering);
- to build a model of equal parenting among employees and employers;
- to promote women's economic activity through increased involvement of fathers in childcare;
- to promote the development of fathering skills and attitudes;
- to promote forms of employment which allow work–family reconciliation.

The campaign also aimed to show and strengthen examples of career men who are actively involved in childcare, how to prevent discrimination against mothers through the activation of fathers and how to create parent–friendly employment conditions.

### **TV and radio programmes, a competition, discount cards and workshops**

The campaign encompassed numerous awareness-raising and dissemination activities:

1. The creation of a database with examples of good practices for work–family reconciliation for parents of young children;
2. The campaign 'Day with a child at work' (Dzień z Dzieckiem w Pracy);
3. Discount cards for child-related products and services provided to employers, who distributed them to parents, with the aim of bringing parents and employers together. Distribution via employers made them aware how many parents with small children they employed, and the discount card improved parents' access to goods and services;

4. A competition on employers' good practices;
5. Various workshops organised specifically for fathers (advice and workshops were also provided for both parents);
6. TV and radio programmes raising the issue of work–family reconciliation, good practice in equal labour market opportunities among parents and active fathering;
7. The distribution of information in printed form and online.

The main methods of awareness-raising were through the involvement of media (national and regional radio and TV stations, magazines), the production and dissemination of publicity materials, documentary films, conferences, festivals and online facilities (website), the use of social media (Facebook, Forum), engagement with social partners and workshops conducted by employers for parents.

### **We changed how Poles think**

Surveys were carried out at the onset and at the end of the campaign to evaluate its effects. Data collected at the end of the project illustrated some change in attitudes among respondents with regard to fathers' and mothers' roles in childcare and child-raising and the division of housework and childcare between parents. The campaign was evaluated by researchers at the University of Warsaw (<http://www.etattata.pl/aktualnosci/nid,61>).

'I think we have achieved our goal, and the action we organised has changed how Poles think about how to educate their children, and allows for the full development of both professional mothers and fathers,' said Jolanta Bylica, a spokes-person for the project.

The wide range of activities and partners involved, as well as the specific focus on fathers, were innovative for Poland. The campaign brought the issue of active fathering to the attention of the public and employers and it highlighted the importance of work–family reconciliation for fathers.

## Publicity for good employers

The campaign contributes to gender equality by promoting a model of equal sharing of unpaid and paid work. One of the main aims of the campaign was to promote women's economic activity and prevent women's discrimination in the labour market through the activation and involvement of fathers. Moreover, its contribution to reducing gender inequality is through making employers aware that work–family reconciliation is important for male employees. The end-of-campaign survey demonstrated some positive attitudinal changes among men and women with regard to sharing childcare and domestic work. However, this change should be interpreted as a continuous process in which attitudinal and behavioural changes interact with a changing policy environment and opportunity structure.

A number of factors made the campaign a real success. These include the scope of the campaign which was designed as a nationwide initiative, its multi-pronged strategy (a wide range of activities and methods), the wide involvement of employers, the publicity given to companies that implement good practices, qualitative and quantitative pre- and post-campaign surveys on men's and women's family roles, the clarification of legal provisions in specific cases by experts and the dissemination of this information online.

At the same time there are aspects that require further consideration. Corporate social responsibility is voluntary, and the kind of firms and organisations willing and in the position to champion active fathering is likely to be small. The participation of employers is important, but a more concerted and coordinated approach (top-down and bottom-up) is needed for a significant change to take place. Another potential problem is that active fathering is seen instrumentally — as a tool to improve the

productivity and loyalty of valuable workers. Where such a link cannot be made, the issue of fathers' involvement in childcare is unlikely to be promoted. Fatherhood and active fathering should be seen as a stand-alone social and policy objective.

The assessment of the campaign concludes that creating reconciliation measures is worthwhile, and that the information gathered will contribute to changing attitudes and the wider adoption of good practices, especially among employers. Another conclusion is the role of media in creating a pro-family media climate supportive of 'investment in the family'. The focus on fathers was intentional, since the organisers noted that the role of active fathering is generally undervalued. Nevertheless the organisers were satisfied with the level of engagement of fathers in the campaign's activities. Improvements could include additional efforts to overcome employers' reluctance to accommodate fathers' needs, broadening the scope and rationale of the practice, and strengthening the legal underpinning of active fathering.

The initiative is relevant to the majority of EU Member States. The division of paid and unpaid work between men and women remains unequal in most EU countries and the issue of work–family reconciliation, particularly at the company level, is still perceived as concerning mostly female employees.

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# Managing reconciliation of work and family (Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Familie Gestalten), Germany 2008–14

## Trade unions play their role in the family alliance

### Summary

The campaign 'Managing reconciliation of work and family' is a DGB trade union awareness-raising and information initiative. It is a partner project of the company programme 'Success factor family' — with a focus on changing union and company culture on work–family life balance, particularly regarding the involvement of men.

Reconciling work and family life is a core element of the DGB's gender policy. The focus is on raising awareness about reconciliation through training provided by trade unions (workshops, seminars, specialist conferences), and thus enabling works councils to develop solutions to enhance reconciliation through company agreements. Issues covered include family-conscious working hours and working hours appropriate to different phases of life. Tools include information leaflets and flyers, counselling for companies (provided to some 35 companies), checklists, company agreements and a newsletter. Since 2013, coaching has been introduced for works councils with limited experience of reconciliation. Brochures produced include guidelines on good counselling practices, 'Men at work' which aims to raise awareness about men's work–life balance; and training modules and measures to sensitise unions and employers in 'Men's task: reconciliation'.

### Training for works councils

The German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, with the support of the ESF, promotes family-friendly employment practices through a programme for companies called Erfolgsfaktor Familie (Success factor family). The Verein-



barkeit von Beruf und Familie Gestalten! (Managing reconciliation of work and family) project, run by DGB, the German Trade Union Confederation, complements it from the point of view of trade unions and the employees they represent.

The DGB developed the project as part of its role as the representative of social partners in the Impulse Group of the Allianz für Familie (Alliance for family).

The project introduces the issue of reconciling work and family life into training provided by trade unions. It runs courses for works councils and staff councils to raise awareness of reconciliation, identify needs, develop solutions and specify rules and policies in collaboration with employers (e.g. in company agreements). The main target groups consist of trade unionists, works councils and staff councils, companies and administrations.

To date the education and training has covered the following topics:

- Reconciliation of work and family: an introduction to the issue as part of the unions' educational work, to sensitise the organisation's members. Key topics covered were parental leave, childcare, care and men;
- Family-conscious working hours: the main topics were trends in working time, care-conscious working hours, shift work, close-to-full-time work, life-phase oriented working hours, time options and possibilities;
- Life-phase oriented working hours: the key topics were the reconciliation of family and work for young university scientists starting work, appropriate working hours in the family phase (particularly fathers' use of parental supplement and its long-term effects on company and partnership), and time options through working life. Topics such as leaving work and returning to it, working close to full-time, reconciliation of paid work, and care and self-care in later adult life were also covered.

Tools used include examples of good practices, workshops, seminars and conferences, practice-related recommendations on the key topics, counselling

for enterprises and administrations, checklists, company and workplace agreements, and a newsletter.

### Counselling for companies

The counselling service for companies has been especially effective. Since 2011, some 35 enterprises have been advised, free of charge and in a company-specific way, how to develop tailor-made solutions in areas such as care-conscious working hours, shift work and difficult working conditions, part-time work and life-phase oriented working hours. The counselling process (up to 6 days of counselling) is systematic and adapted to conditions in the company, and includes the following steps:

- Assessing status quo and requirements;
- Developing joint objectives;
- Developing corresponding practical approaches and strategies;
- Monitoring implementation of measures;
- Providing support during evaluation.

Since 2013, a strategy has been in place for coaching staff councils and works councils with little experience of the reconciliation of family and work. The coaching process (up to 4 days of coaching free of charge) consists of three phases: identification of objectives, raising awareness of family-conscious working time, and analysis of existing resources within the council.

The combination of knowledge transfer with individually tailored counselling and coaching for staff councils, works councils and enterprises constitutes an innovation.

### Reconciliation contact points

Furthermore, Reconciliation and work for men constitutes a specific field of action. In this context representatives of corporate interest groups are supported to function as competent points of contact for men. Two brochures on the topic were

published. *Männer bei der Arbeit* (Men at work) describes current developments in society and motivates readers to deal with the topic of men's work-life balance, while *Männersache Vereinbarkeit* (Men's task: reconciliation) describes a 10-hour training course of nine modules including measures to sensitise the representative bodies.

The project acknowledges and addresses the fact that a company's culture is of primary importance in improving the reconciliation of family and work life, and hence improving gender equality. Works councils and staff councils with an awareness of equal opportunities and family issues can actively steer companies in the right direction — if they have the necessary training and commitment. This good practice is particularly relevant for countries with a strong trade union movement.

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Project flyer:  
<http://familie.dgb.de/++co++192d55a2-5eb1-11e0-625f-00188b4dc422>

*Männersache Vereinbarkeit* and *Männer bei der Arbeit* brochures:  
<http://familie.dgb.de/handlungsfelder/maenner-und-vereinbarkeit>

ESF project outline:  
[http://www.esf.de/portal/generator/9590/programm\\_\\_vereinbarkeit\\_\\_familie\\_\\_beruf.html](http://www.esf.de/portal/generator/9590/programm__vereinbarkeit__familie__beruf.html)



## A hug from daddy (Fars Kram), Denmark 2012–14

### Hands-on fathers make better employees

#### Summary

The company TDC, which is the largest telephone, broadband, and television company in Denmark, has had a generous leave policy for parents since 2002 — but only a few fathers took up the leave. The company campaign 'A hug from daddy' aimed to raise awareness amongst fathers and has led to a large increase in fathers taking leave. Fathers get up to 10 weeks of paid parental leave, in addition to 2 weeks leave after a child is born, brought home from hospital, or adopted. When the campaign was launched one of the aims was to show that taking leave would not interrupt career progression. Information was provided on a website and leaflets, new fathers received a package containing a bib, rucksack, etc., and a letter with information about the parental leave policy. In 2009 the company was awarded the Female Leader Focus equality award. Due to their reconciliation measures the company has received a great deal of media and public interest. Campaign activities were discontinued after a few years, as the idea of fathers taking parental leave has now become ingrained in the company culture.

### Few fathers take paternity leave

In Denmark there is a strong focus on balancing work, family and private lives in general. The policy context regarding parental leave (the act of 2002, amended in 2009) is that all parents enjoy leave rights in relation to pregnancy, birth and adoption. Yet, even in Denmark the take-up of leave is distributed unequally. According to statistics based on figures from 2010, mothers take on average 92.3 % of the total leave and fathers take only 7.7 % (Nordic Statistical Yearbook, 2012).

TDC is Denmark's largest company in the telephone, broadband, and television sector, which employs around 9 000 people in Denmark. Since 2002, TDC has had generous leave policies making it possible for both female and male employees to take up to 12 weeks of leave with full pay follow-

ing the birth or adoption of a child. 'We believe that an employee who has taken up the challenge and cared for infants will become a better employee. He will certainly feel the value of balance,' said Henning Dyremose, TDC's CEO at the time.

However, only a few fathers have made use of this possibility, which led the company to discuss whether male employees were just not interested in taking leave or whether they were unaware of their rights. Thus, in 2004 the company launched the campaign 'A hug from daddy' (Fars Kram) with the purpose of raising awareness. Since the launch of the campaign, the number of men working for TDC taking parental leave has increased significantly. Throughout the years the campaign has increased the public interest and in 2009 TDC was awarded the Female Leader Focus equality award for its initiative.

TDC formulated its policy on parental leave in order to promote a balance between work, family and private life for its employees. In particular the company wanted its male staff to take advantage of the company's policy on parental leave, which is more generous than Danish legalisation prescribes. The campaign was meant to signal that taking parental leave does not have to conflict with one's career, and that men may even become better employees by taking their share of the parental leave.

Employees receive information about the possibility to take leave at their workplace. They have direct access to a website with detailed and clear information and the official rules on parental leave.

Since the launch of the campaign, the number of men taking parental leave within TDC has increased significantly. In 2002, 13 % of men took leave, while following the introduction of the campaign close to 100 % took leave in 2013 (138 men by November 2013), with more than 80 % (108 men) taking longer than 2 weeks in connection with a child being born or brought into the home (up to 9 weeks is allowed). What is more, male employees at TDC not only take leave more often, they also take longer periods of leave. In 2013, the male employees in TDC took 9 weeks of leave, which is considerably longer than the national average among Danish men.

## Raising awareness is vital

One important lesson from the initiative is that raising awareness is vital. Although the company had already implemented a generous policy on parental leave, few men made use of it before the campaign. 'When we became aware of the fact that most fathers actually did not make use of the leave they had a right to, we formulated two hypotheses. Either the fathers are not interested in taking leave, or they were not aware of their rights at TDC. We chose to believe the latter option, which has proven to be the right one,' said Alexander Jaffe, legal adviser to TDC.

Another lesson learned was that it is important to signal to the male employees that taking up to 10 weeks of leave would not affect their career within the company.

TDC's campaign and the changes that it has facilitated show that in order to increase the use of paternal leave it is efficient to provide full pay during leave and it is important to make it acceptable and praise-worthy within the firm.

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[http://om.tdc.dk/publish.php?dogtag=o\\_profil\\_csr\\_med\\_far](http://om.tdc.dk/publish.php?dogtag=o_profil_csr_med_far)

Leaflet from the Central Organisation of Industrial Employees in Denmark:  
<http://www.co-industri.dk/Lists/Pjecer/Attachments/235/familieliv.pdf>

Press articles:  
<http://www.information.dk/137236>  
<http://politiken.dk/oekonomi/ECE143064/tdc-sender-faedre-paa-barselsorlov>  
<http://www.business.dk/diverse/tdc-giver-pension-under-hele-barselsorloven>  
[http://www.ugebreveta4.dk/boernefamilien-er-den-perfekte-traeningslejr-for-karr\\_17162.aspx](http://www.ugebreveta4.dk/boernefamilien-er-den-perfekte-traeningslejr-for-karr_17162.aspx)



## Family audit certification in Trento, Italy 2008–14

### Productivity and well-being through family audit

#### Summary

The Family Audit Certification was initiated in 2008 by the Italian province of Trento through its Agency for Family, Birth and Youth Policies. The regional project commenced in 2012, and followed a national trial.

The family audit is based on a well-developed methodology. A working group is set up with the organisation, which is advised by an external consultant. After carrying out an audit, each organisation develops a 3-year family work–life balance plan listing actions that the organisation plans to take in six areas (work organisation, work–family balance culture, communication, fringe benefits and services, family district, new technologies). Its implementation is monitored by an external evaluator.

So far 111 organisations have been involved in the family audit process (44 public, 67 private), and 88 have been awarded the Family Audit Certificate, benefitting 35 000 workers. It has led to a network of stakeholders (unions, employers, family and social organisations, research organisations, etc.) helping to promote awareness. The certificated organisations are listed on the family audit website.

The entire family audit process is monitored for a relatively long period of time. A study of the impact of work–life balance plans on a sample of 18 organisations showed the tangible benefits of carrying out family audits; another study showed the positive impact of reconciliation of work and family life within the organisation and across the region. The two most notable benefits are better employee well-being and increased productivity. Family audit certification also benefits companies by opening up access to tenders for public contracts, and is a tool for organisational improvement.

The practice is transferable, but its costs might be an issue in a time of an economic crisis.

### Friends of the family



The policy context for the family audit process can be found in the Family Policy Intervention Plan, approved in 2004, and the White Paper on Family and Birth (2011) both of which aim to make the Trentino region a family-friendly territory which is attentive to the interests and needs of its citizens. The family policy adopted by the Autonomous Province of Trento includes many interventions promoting not only social aid but also the well-being of families, and relies on cooperation between government and local councils, as well as networking between all social actors, profit and non-profit associations.

The community becomes a 'friend of the family' thanks to the Family in Trentino brand name, which is granted to private and public organisations (such as municipalities, museums, restaurants and hotels) that launch services for resident and transient families. The brand is awarded by a committee formed by the provincial executive body and according to standard criteria specific per sector. The organisations that have been awarded the brand are listed on the websites <http://www.trentinofamiglia.it> and <http://www.familyintrentino.it>.

The family audit certification was launched in 2008 at the local level in Trentino, a frontier province that lies in the heart of the Alps, midway between two of the most highly developed areas in Europe: the Po valley and Bavaria. The province includes about half a million inhabitants, less than 1 % of the Italian population. It is led by the province's Department of Family Policies. In 2012, the process was rolled out nationwide by the Autonomous Province of Trento under a national trial approved by the Presidency of the Council of Ministries (Department for Family Policies of the Ministry for International Cooperation and Integration). The Italian government is considering funding a second national trial.



The Family Audit drew on the experience of the 'Audit Beruf und Familie' introduced in Germany in 1995, and similar experiences in Austria and the Italian Autonomous Province of Bolzano. The methodology was adapted to the characteristics of the local territory.

### Benefits at three levels

The measure targets both public institutions and private companies and aims to improve human resources policies for work–life balance, paying particular attention to the time devoted to work and family life. The specific objectives are:

- (a) For the employee: to be able to choose to work in an organisation which opts for work–life balance policies that result in a positive working environment, and on a human resources level the employee's motivation and satisfaction is increased creating more productive and supportive work relationships;
- (b) For the company, public institution, association, group or any other organisation that implements the family audit certification: increasing the quality of the relationship between personal life and work is fundamental to raising the quality of employees' work performance, to increasing productivity, to reducing absenteeism and labour turnover, and to decreasing gender differences related to family responsibilities;
- (c) For the territory: improving the sense of community and cooperation in order to provide a better basis for social responsibility as this helps the community, workers and their families to overcome daily difficulties.

### A three-and-a-half year process of change

The process of certification is a management tool that promotes cultural and organisational change within commercial or public sector organisations through the adoption of human resources policies which improve the well-being of employees and their families while furthering the organisational mission. The process lasts 3 and a half years: 6 months for auditing and 3 years for the adoption of the internal work–life balance plan. Once the process is complete and the certification obtained, the entity is allowed

to use the Family Audit brand and furthermore can decide to extend the programme for 3 years.

The entire audit process is monitored by two external certified professionals, a consultant and an evaluator, who are both certificated by the Autonomous Province of Trento and listed in the Public Consultant or Evaluator Family Audit Register. The consultant supports the implementation of the audit process, specifically designing the internal survey and the work–life balance plan. The evaluator verifies whether the organisation is implementing the family audit according to the guidelines. The method and the implementation of the family audit standard are illustrated in the guidelines <sup>(1)</sup>.

### The audit process

The process starts with an analysis of the workers' needs and expectations. The organisation appoints a family audit representative and a working group, initially supported by the external consultant. Workers' care obligations are surveyed. A progress evaluation is carried out by the external evaluator. Finally the Family Audit Advisory Board evaluates the quality of the work, issues the certificate and authorises the use of the brand.

The advisory board is composed of representatives from the institutional, academic and economic sectors, associations for the protection of collective interests and family associations, and the Presidency of Italy's Council of Ministries (Department for Family Policies of the Minister for International Cooperation).

An annually updated human resources data survey is used to generate a picture of the composition of each employee's status within the organisation. This analysis yields indicators such as gender, qualifications and position, and also information on how human resources are managed, i.e. type of contract, average age, care needs, absence, leave, career progression, flexibility, turnover, training courses, etc.

The certification body, the Autonomous Province of Trento, extracts a synthesis and elaborates the data according to work–family balance indicators. The synthesis is published on the family audit platform <sup>(2)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> Provincial Law no 1/2011 and guidelines approved by the Provincial Council of Trento, resolution no 1364/2010: <http://www.familyaudit.org/?q=node/23>

<sup>(2)</sup> [http://www.familyaudit.org/?q=banca\\_dati](http://www.familyaudit.org/?q=banca_dati)



The other tool that each organisation develops is called internal work–life balance plan. The plan contains actions that the organisation intends to take during the second 3-year-long period. In order to finalise the plan, an internal survey within the organisation is conducted through workshops with the support of the external consultant.

## 11 topics weighed in the balance

The work–life balance plan is arranged under six headings divided into 11 topics:

1. Work organisation:
  - 1.a.1. time scheduling,
  - 1.a.2. work process,
  - 1.a.3. workplace: telecommuting, decentralised work, etc.
2. Work–family balanced culture:
  - 2.a.1. expertise of management,
  - 2.a.2. development of the human resources managing the work–family balance policy, e.g. equal opportunities, parental leave.
3. Communication
  - 3.a.1. finding new tools for internal and external communication.
4. Fringe benefits and services:
  - 4.a.1 financial aid: bonus schemes, insurance, etc.,
  - 4.a.2 family services: medical health support, counselling, family support during school breaks, canteen, use of company's equipment, time-saving services, parental support, etc.
5. Family district:
  - 5.a.1. reorientation of organisation's services according to the Family District <sup>(3)</sup> objectives,
  - 5.a.2. corporate social responsibility.
6. New technologies:
  - 6.a.1 orientation to ITC services: using new technologies to optimise working time both for the employees and the organisation.

<sup>(3)</sup> Family Districts are areas where family services are piloted: <http://www.trentinofamiglia.it/Provincial-Agency-for-the-family-parenting-and-youth-policy>

## Taking each employee's needs into account

The main achievements of the tool are described below.

For the certification body:

- To date, 111 organisations have taken part in the family audit process, 44 of which are public and 67 private. 88 of these have obtained the family audit certificate, including organisations involved in the local and national trials. Over 35 000 workers have benefited <sup>(4)</sup>.
- As a consequence, a network has been developed among social actors, public, institutional and private bodies, family, social and trade associations, trade unions, research centres and other organisations.

For the organisation:

- Active participation of employees in the internal analysis is fundamental to the systemic evaluation carried out by the family audit process;
- Active participation of employees in the internal analysis is fundamental to the systemic evaluation carried out by the family audit process;
- The systemic analysis during the process results in management and cultural changes and a greater management engagement with the life of employees;
- Monitoring of the data during the process stimulates managers to be more conscious of the values underpinning their organisation;
- Employee satisfaction has risen;
- The family audit has led to a notable decrease in sick leave and an increase in general employee well-being.

The efficiency of the Family Audit initiative is confirmed by local research <sup>(5)</sup> and by a study conducted by the University of Bologna, published in the book 'Family Audit: la certificazione familiare aziendale' <sup>(6)</sup> The study examined the impact of the work–life balance plans on a sample of 18 organisations and the repercussions on the work, family and private life of thousands of workers and their families. It concludes that the family audit process takes the needs of each employee into account, promotes gender and diver-

<sup>(4)</sup> The list of certified organisations is at: <http://www.familyaudit.org/?q=elenco-organizzazioni>

<sup>(5)</sup> <http://www.familyaudit.org/?q=node/532>

<sup>(6)</sup> <http://www.trentinofamiglia.it/Menu/Pubblicazioni/Altre-pubblicazioni>

sity, and applies solutions such as flexible working hours, telecommuting, part-time work, use of inclusive language in business documents, time banks and customised work schedules.

The family audit is continuously evaluated over its 3.5-year course. An annual evaluation of all the documents and a visit to the organisation are made by the evaluator. Evaluators are experienced professionals who are accredited by the Family Audit Advisory Board and are listed on the public register of evaluators. Overall, the Advisory Board checks on the progress made in carrying out the measures contained in the work–life balance plan.

For the national trial, an additional analysis tool is a biannual report provided to the Board of the Department for Family Policies of the Minister for International Cooperation and Integration.

The certification body also provides a monthly report that monitors the development of the audit process among all the organisations, broken down between the public and private sectors and the many company categories. The certification body has a staff of eight within the Agency for Family, Birth and Youth Policies and is supported by the advisory board.

### **Increased well-being and productivity**

The family audit initiative has a number of innovative aspects: it introduces family-friendly measures in line with the needs and expectations of employees and thus represents a bottom-up rather than a top-down approach; the work–life balance plan and its continuous monitoring stimulate quick changes within organisations, and a common information platform makes the data available in open-source format.

The main successes of the measure are that family audit certification benefits employees — both, men

and women — as well as organisations. The two most notable benefits are better employee well-being and increased productivity. Family audit certification also benefits companies by opening up access to tenders for public contracts, and is a tool for organisational improvement.

The family audit initiative is transferable because of its adaptability to different regional contexts. The Italian example demonstrates good governance and knowledge of the local environment and a broad cooperation network. It shows that a competent certification body plays a crucial role in its success. Despite that cultural resistance is still present within some organisations and represents one of the main challenges.

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Guidelines:

<http://www.familyaudit.org/?q=linee-guida>

Publications:

<http://www.familyaudit.org/?q=node/23>

Video (English):

<http://www.familyaudit.org/?q=node/289>



# The most family- and employee-friendly company competition (Pere- ja Töötajasõbralike firmade konkurss), Estonia 2001–14

## Contest for family-friendly enterprises

### Summary

Since 2001, two Estonian publishers have organised a competition to find the family-friendliest enterprise in the country, and since 2009 the government has given financial support under its action plan to improve the reconciliation of work and family life (2011–15).

The competition raises awareness of family-friendly corporate culture, and gives welcome publicity to the winners. Companies are evaluated both by their management and their employees through a company employee survey and a report from the company. Three awards are given each year to the overall winner, the family-friendliest company and the employee-friendliest company. The initiative has had an impact by promoting good practices in companies and in public places like museums, cafés and events. With 90 companies competing in 2013, the initiative has grown in popularity and the government is planning to take a further step by introducing a family-friendly company certificate in 2014. The competition appears to be more attractive to large companies which have resources and human resources policies in this area.

The measure is transferable to any country — competitions can contribute to raising the profile and visibility of corporate culture. It is innovative in the sense that it was initiated and funded by two media outlets and later funded by the government. The development of a new certificate could become one of the ways of extending the initiative to smaller companies.

### A private initiative changes national policy

Since 2001, the Bonnier Group daily business newspaper Business Daily (Äripäev) and the magazine Family and Home (Pere ja Kodu) have organised The most family and employee-friendly company competition (Pere- ja Töötajasõbralike firmade konkurss) in Estonia. Until 2008, the two media organisations financed the

competition, but since 2009, the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs has taken this over, with a budget of approximately EUR 4 000 per year. The aim of the contest has been to raise the profile of companies that value a family-friendly corporate culture. The companies are evaluated both by their management and by their employees. The winner of the competition is the company that achieves the highest score in three broad areas: family-friendliness, working environment and support for employee development. The winners of the competition gain media attention in Business Daily (Pere ja Kodu) and Family and Home (Äripäev), and also via other channels. The media attention promotes the company's public image, and the winners are honoured during a public ceremony. 'I can't say that Estonian society was child- or family-friendly in 2000. Ten years ago the issue of family-friendly companies was very rarely, if ever, raised in Estonia,' says Tiia Kõnnusaar, Family and Home's (Pere ja Kodu) editor-in-chief.

The initiative was developed in a wider policy context for gender equality under the government's Action Programme 2011–15, which aims to improve the opportunities for reconciling family and working life as well as to promote family friendliness in society, and the Strategy for Children and Families (2012–20) which also has the objective of providing equal opportunities for men and women by reconciling working and family life.

### Three annual awards

In order to assess the family friendliness of companies taking part, two separate surveys are carried out among their management and employees. They cover family friendliness, the working environment and support for employees' development. The final result is compiled from the weighted assessments of the employees and managers, with employees' opinions being given 60 % of the weight. The employees assess their satisfaction in five domains: aspects of working life, working arrangements, wages, training options and family and work reconciliation options. They can also assess how well a company deals with conflict, if there is bullying or harassment, overtime, the option

of part-time work, and support for people with caring responsibilities. The surveys include questions about promoting men's involvement in reconciling work and family life: e.g. there is a question as to whether the company promotes fathers' use of parental leave. The company also gets a chance to report on their policies, whether they provide time off, organise family events, pay benefits and bonuses in case of birth, etc.

Each year three companies are presented with awards for the overall winner, the family-friendliest and the employee-friendliest company. Additionally in recent years awards have been made to a family-friendly museum, a family-friendly cafeteria and a family-friendly event. The contest has gained popularity and more companies have been taking part: in 2013, 90 companies participated, about 1 % of all companies in the country).

In 2001, when the contest was initiated, the topic of family friendliness among companies was very new and the initiative was indeed innovative in the Estonian context. In recent years the winning companies have gained a lot of media attention, and are often welcomed at conferences and seminars on human resources development. The contest has increased the awareness of employers as to their responsibility and role in supporting family and work reconciliation. This has proved to be a good way to increase awareness of the role of employer in the family and work reconciliation process, especially in countries like Estonia where the social responsibility and awareness of the role of employers is low.

### **Certification to be introduced**

One of the actions in the government action programme stipulates that family-friendly companies will be nationally recognised and in order to do this a certification scheme is to be introduced. The government is currently developing the methodology and certification will be introduced during 2014. Thus the contest may have led to the acknowledgement of the significance of this kind of award.

The contest motivates companies to provide and develop family-friendly measures. However, due to the fact that it follows the 'beauty contest' model (i.e. only a few of the best contenders get the title), it may not motivate small companies with limited resources. These do not have the resources to develop official reconciliation policies or provide services to make the

working environment family-friendly. This is illustrated by the fact that the winners are relatively large companies (in 2013 the winner was Microsoft Estonia). In Estonia, however, the majority of companies are very small (94 % of companies have 10 employees or fewer). Therefore the forthcoming certification system is significant in that it will open up the possibility for all companies to qualify and will promote a wider interest in the reconciliation of work and family life.

The Ministry of Social Affairs is currently developing the certificate for family-friendly companies, drawing on examples of the content and implementation of certification systems in France, Germany, Austria and Slovenia. The success of certification will, however, depend on the conditions companies will have to meet, and whether it will be open to small companies, which often have different needs and possibilities from large companies. In 2013, the certificate was piloted to assess the readiness and capacity of Estonian companies to analyse their family and employee-friendliness. Six companies took part in the pilot project, which discussed the criteria and methodology of the certificate with employers and employees.

The success of the contest demonstrates that a small-scale initiative of a private company (a newspaper in this case) can draw attention to the need to reward companies for their efforts in being family friendly, and can lead to the development of nationwide policy. It clearly suggests that small and regular awareness-raising activities can have a wider influence.

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# Think, Act, Report, United Kingdom 2011

## Transparency drives cultural change

### Summary

**Think, Act, Report** is a voluntary initiative which was launched in 2011 by the UK's Government Equalities Office (GEO), part of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DfCMS). It provides a simple step-by-step framework to help companies think about gender equality in their workforces, particularly in relation to recruitment, retention, promotion and pay. The initiative is embedded in government equality policies and the 2010 Equality Strategy.

The initiative targets companies employing over 150 people, and 230 of them have signed up so far, representing some 6.7 % of the workforce. It aims simply to encourage companies to:

- think: identify any issues around gender equality;
- act: take action to fix those issues;
- report: on how the business ensures gender equality.

The result has been publicity for a wide range of practices ranging from equal pay audits to flexible working hours, programmes for returning parents, mentoring, role models, diversity forums and leadership programmes for women.

Think, Act, Report aims to drive greater transparency about women in the workplace. Countries that have limited options for supporting work-family reconciliation would benefit from the flexible working and career support initiatives that have been adopted as part of the Think, Act, Report initiative, in order to support women returners and promote gender equality more generally.

## Encouraging good practice among larger companies

The Think, Act, Report initiative is part of the 'Creating a Fair and More Equal Society' policy embedded in British government's 2010 Equality Strategy. This policy aims to prevent discrimination, whether based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

It also aims to support and protect the rights of women by helping them to reach their potential in the workplace and helping businesses get the full economic benefit of women's skills. The government envisages this as partly achievable through the Think, Act, Report initiative, which was designed by the Government Equalities Office and brought about following the 2010 Equality Act. Numerous organisations and stakeholders are involved in the initiative including the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), Confederation of British Industry (CBI), British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF), Arbitration and Conciliation Advisory Service (ACAS), National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), Trades Union Congress (TUC), Unite, Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).

Think, Act, Report targets medium and large private sector organisations (of over 150 employees). Based on a step-by-step framework, the initiative has been designed to encourage companies to think about gender equality in their workforces, particularly in relation to recruitment, retention, promotion and pay. The aim of the initiative is to encourage companies to:

- think: identify any issues around gender equality;
- act: take action to fix those issues;
- report: on how the business ensures gender equality.

It is expected that by adopting this framework, companies will become more transparent about workforce issues and engage in dissemination of best practice.

## A wide range of activities revealed

The main activities that some companies have undertaken as part of the Think, Act, Report initiative have been:

- equal pay audits;
- establishing an equal pay policy statement;
- equality impact assessing all employment policies;
- showcasing flexible working throughout the business;

- holding open discussions with returners from parental leave to ensure they are able to balance their work and family life;
- implementing a 'Parental Transitions Programme' to ensure successful returns from maternity and paternity leave, which includes a range of support from a buddy system for new parents through to career coaching;
- training related to dealing with unconscious bias;
- exposing women to inspirational leaders from a range of business sectors;



- launching a female mentoring scheme;
- introducing senior management gender and BME (black and minority ethnic) appointment targets;
- establishing a representative diversity forum to ensure business ownership of the diversity agenda;
- implementing a 'Women in Leadership' programme to retain, develop and increase the number of women senior managers in the firm.

The following are case study examples of some of the methods and tools that have been used.

1. Npower is a leading UK energy company that employs over 9 000 staff. It has set gender tar-

gets for staff involved in recruitment to make sure they highlight the benefits of the company's working culture and environment, such as flexible working policies, inclusive practices and corporate responsibility and thus they attract diverse candidates. Hiring managers' toolkit provides guidance tools and where feasible ensures a woman is on the interview panel for all senior roles. It has also set a target of 25 % of executive roles to be filled by women by 2018 (GEO, 2013).

2. B3 Living (formerly Broxbourne Housing Association) has introduced a flexible working policy to improve work-life balance in the organisation. This includes holding open discussions with returners from maternity leave to ensure they are able to balance their work and family lives. Thirty-one of the company's 169 staff are now working part-time (GEO, 2012).
3. Nomura International plc introduced the Parental Transitions Programme to ensure successful returns from maternity and paternity leave. This programme is tailored to individual requirements, and covers a range of support from a buddy system for new parents through to career coaching. Their emergency child and elder care support services make Nomura an industry leader for holistic back-up care. The programme has been running for over 6 months. It has had universally excellent feedback and led to higher rates of staff retention (GEO, 2012).

### Better gender strategies and measurement

The Think, Act, Report initiative demonstrates good achievements. Some 230 companies have signed up to the campaign since it was launched in 2011. This means the scheme covers 2.1 million employees across the UK. Two thirds of the companies that have signed up have confirmed they are doing more to encourage female talent within their company such as introducing mentoring and sponsorship schemes, putting in place targeted development programmes, and encouraging women to take high-profile jobs. Of these, 80 % are gathering more data on gender equality in the workplace; 60 % have developed a planned approach to promoting gender equality and 63 % are measuring the impact of internal policies and procedures on the gender balance of



their workforce. Nearly half (48 %) had completed an equal-pay audit in the last year.

The two progress reports published by the GEO (2012, 2013) state that the Think, Act Report initiative encourages organisations to think about their own circumstances, draw on the experiences of others, take steps to encourage the recruitment, retention and progression of talented women, and then report their progress widely. The emphasis is on encouraging transparency, which the government argues helps to drive cultural change in order to improve women's position in the labour market. It gives businesses an opportunity to learn from one another about what works by sharing best practice, and helps to publicise their success and promote informed debate about the role of women in the workplace.

The government publishes an annual progress report to monitor the success of the initiative with some case study examples of what measures have been implemented and how successful they have been. (GEO 2012, 2013).

Deloitte identified the phenomenon of 'losing' women employees at assistant manager levels, particularly the women between the ages of 26 and 30. Consequently, in order to stimulate their retention it introduced 'Transition Coaching' to help women plan their departure and then their return to the workplace. It also launched a 'Women in Leadership' programme to retain, develop and increase the number of women senior managers in the firm. As a result, retention rates in 2011/12 increased from 82 % to 93 % for women returning from maternity leave, and Deloitte has been recognised as one of The Times newspaper's Top 50 companies where women want to work.

### **Scheme covers 6.7 % of workforce**

The Think, Act, Report initiative has helped to raise awareness of gender equality in pay, recruitment, retention and progression as well as the low number of women in senior positions.

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At the same time it should be noted that there continues to be a high degree of occupational segregation within the UK labour market, which perpetuates the gender pay gap and the undervaluation of women's work. Further efforts should be made to promote the initiative and encourage more companies to sign up and adopt the Think, Act, Report principles (conduct equal pay audits, etc.); particularly given that only 230 private sector companies across the UK have so far signed up. The government states, that 2 million employees in the UK are covered by the scheme, but this only represents 6.7 % of the workforce (in 2013, 30 million people aged 16+ were in employment in the UK). The scheme excludes public sector bodies as well as small business and start-up companies.

Small business, start-up companies and public bodies should be encouraged to sign up to the scheme and adopt some of the good practices, for example in recruitment, training and implementing support networks. The scheme could include more initiatives to encourage men to make use of leave and family-related working time adjustments, thus reforming the organisational culture and norms so that reconciliation and care responsibilities are seen as a gender-neutral joint rather than a female-only responsibility. Further monitoring and evaluation of the initiative could be carried out by stakeholders and the signed-up companies themselves.

It is important to continue monitoring take-up and gender equality outcomes. Good practice workplace examples and sharing best practice is a positive tool for change. Softer measures, such as monitoring gender equality, diversity training for recruitment staff, unconscious bias training and flexible working are more likely to be introduced by companies than harder measures such as equal pay.

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Though many companies are reluctant to discuss the results of their equality audits in public, a private roundtable is planned to enable them to debate the issue confidentially. The government intends to continue encouraging companies to sign up to the scheme in order to build up a culture where opening up, promoting and reporting on equality for men and women in the workplace becomes the norm for all businesses.

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### Further information:

1. Website: <https://www.gov.uk/think-act-report>
2. Two annual progress reports since the launch of the initiative in 2011:
  - Government Equalities Office (2012): Think, Act, Report: One year on, London: GEO: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/128778/think-act-report-annual-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/128778/think-act-report-annual-report.pdf)
  - Government Equalities Office (2013): Think, Act, Report: Two years on, London: GEO: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/262867/Think\\_Act\\_Report\\_2013.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/262867/Think_Act_Report_2013.pdf)
3. Case study reports, which demonstrate how the initiative has been implemented in particular companies:
  - Government Equalities Office and Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2013): Think, Act, Report: supporting women in technology: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/262867/Think\\_Act\\_Report\\_2013.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/262867/Think_Act_Report_2013.pdf)

[www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/fdm-group-encouraging-and-supporting-women-in-it](https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/fdm-group-encouraging-and-supporting-women-in-it)  
 This describes how FDM Group, a leading IT services provider, launched 'Women in IT', a global campaign to encourage more women into IT.

- Government Equalities Office (2013): Think, Act, Report: Marks and Spencer: <https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/marks-spencer-recruiting-women-from-different-backgrounds>  
 This describes how retailer Marks and Spencer has improved the gender balance in the company.
  - Government Equalities Office (2012): Think, Act, Report case study: Royal Bank of Scotland Group: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/royal-bank-of-scotland-group-rbs-focused-womens-network>  
 This reports on how the Royal Bank of Scotland has improved the gender balance in the company.
4. The GEO has also released an annex document describing the framework to be adopted in order to comply with the initiative:

Government Equalities Office (undated): Addressing Gender Equality: Think, Act, Report: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/85569/think-act-report-framework.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85569/think-act-report-framework.pdf)

5. Department for Media, Culture and Sport and the Government Equalities Office (2013), Creating a Fairer and More Equal Society: <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/creating-a-fairer-and-more-equal-society/supporting-pages/think-act-report>
6. HM Government (2011): The Equality Strategy: Building a fairer Britain, GEO: London: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/85299/equality-strategy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85299/equality-strategy.pdf)



## Equality Mark, Malta 2010–14

### Equality mark promotes equal opportunity employers

#### Summary

The Maltese Equality Mark is a national gender equality initiative aimed at increasing women's participation in employment (the women's employment rate in Malta is low), by promoting practices amongst employers that facilitate the reconciliation of work and care roles. The initiative is led by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) which launched the Equality Mark in 2010. The initiative established a standard for 'gender equality employers' and runs a certification scheme for public and private bodies which show that they implement gender equality in employment, including family-friendly measures, and also in the way they provide goods and services.

The methodology includes an audit and a questionnaire to employees. Award of the Equality Mark is based on assessment of minimum criteria that entities need to fulfil. It has provided a standard and a brand, and helps employers to develop their policies.

The mark's launch was accompanied by an effective media campaign which ran until the end of 2012. So far 55 employers employing some 16 000 people have qualified for the mark.

The initiative is innovative in the Maltese context, and could be replicated in other countries. As the programme was considered a success, NCPE decided to continue with its promotion after 2012, when the EU co-funded project which was financing the initiative came to an end.

### Too few women work in Malta

Malta's female labour force participation rate is the lowest in the EU: Eurostat puts the 2012 figure at 46.8 % for women aged 20–64 <sup>(7)</sup>. Women who are already in employment still face situations which

make it difficult for them to stay in their job or make progress in their career

The Maltese government therefore decided to promote the advantages of equal opportunity employment policies by launching a certification scheme for employers.



The aim was to increase female participation in the labour market by providing indirect incentives for women to remain at or return to work. The scheme therefore seeks to make employers and managers more aware about gender equality, and to encourage them to recognise and promote

the potential of all employees irrespective of their gender and caring responsibilities.

The measure was designed and implemented by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) in the framework of an EU co-funded project which ran between 2010 and 2012 (under the Cohesion Policy 2007–13, Operational Programme II, Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life, European Social Fund, Investing in Your Future). From 2013 until the present, the measure has been run and funded solely by NCPE. The activity is in line with government policy on national gender mainstreaming as declared in various documents, the most recent being OPM Circular 15/2012.

### Going beyond the legal minimum

The initiative aimed to create a standard for gender 'equal opportunities employers' and to certify public and private companies, bodies and departments which go over and above the minimum level required by the law in relation to gender equality, family-friendly measures and gender equality in access to and provision of goods and services. The Equality Mark is awarded for a period of 2 years, at which point a recertification process is carried out.

<sup>(7)</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/31\\_labour\\_market\\_participation\\_of\\_women.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/31_labour_market_participation_of_women.pdf)

During recertification, NCPE reassesses the criteria, provides training and evaluates the company, through a questionnaire to a sample of employees on the outcomes in relation to gender equality and the Equality Mark.

The main activity of the Equality Mark is certifying private and public employers by assessing their policies and practices regarding gender equality and family-friendly measures in the workplace and in access to and provision of goods and services. It is a full-scale certification process, and employers who apply for and achieve the standard required are awarded the certificate. The certification process is outlined on the NCPE website <sup>(8)</sup>.

An Equality Mark committee, formed of NCPE members, assesses and decides whether the employer has fulfilled the requirements for certification. The methodology and tools used include a gender audit of policies and practices, an in-house audit and training. As for the training component, the certification process requires that at least one representative from every company undergo a training session on equality and the Equality Mark. At the 2-year recertification, a percentage of all staff is also required to undergo a training session and a re-evaluation is carried out.

The Equality Mark assesses the following areas to ensure that the equality measures go over and above the minimum required by law:

- policies and initiatives;
- recruitment and employment;
- equality representative or committee;
- equality in career and personal development opportunities;
- family-friendly measures for men and women with caring responsibilities;
- gender equality in the access to and supply of goods and services.

### Top management commitment

NCPE lays great stress on the need for top management to be fully committed to gender equality and to lead by example. Therefore, if they are to be awarded the mark, employers are expected to:

- inform all employees that they intend to apply for the Equality Mark to make the process transparent;
- formalise agreements and explicitly endorse official policies;
- support equality representatives in charge of the implementation of relevant policies;
- ensure direct involvement of employees whenever possible;
- support data collection in relation to gender equality monitoring and assessment;
- encourage an organisational culture that is capable of maintaining the Equality Mark standards;
- make a corporate commitment to become a leading organisation in equality best practices;
- earmark specific resources to improving equality practices in every sector of the organisation.

### Benefits of accreditation

Accreditation is free of charge. Certificates are officially presented at a ceremony presided over by the minister responsible for equality, giving maximum exposure to companies. It is accompanied by an effective media campaign, and a list of successful applicants is presented on the website <sup>(9)</sup>.

The NCPE points out the advantages employers can reap from becoming certified: they can access the full pool of talent, boost profitability through diversity, be an ‘employer of choice’ in the modern labour market, cut costs by retaining staff, understand and meet customers’ needs better and reduce the risk of litigation.

Rita Schembri, Director-General of IAID, the Internal Audit and Investigations Department, the first government department to qualify for the mark, testifies:

*‘It is very difficult to attract the best talent from the audit profession and hence flexitime and reduced hours are offered to BOTH women AND men — since we practice what we preach in terms of equality — and in today’s day and age, when the young male professionals we’re employing want to contribute at home and in the upbringing of their children, such availability helps to attract the right professionals to our Department which promotes a healthy work–life balance to ensure that we obtain the best performance from our auditors.’*

<sup>(8)</sup> [http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Documents/Home/Welcome/equality\\_mark\\_info\\_doc\\_and\\_data\\_protection\\_form.pdf](http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Documents/Home/Welcome/equality_mark_info_doc_and_data_protection_form.pdf)

<sup>(9)</sup> <http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Documents/Home/Welcome/Certified%20Gender%20Equal%20Opportunities%20Employers.pdf>



Fifty-five employers employing some 16 000 people and ranging from the Medicines Authority and the Labour Party to Burger King and Pizza Hut, have so far been awarded the mark.

### **Employers want to enhance their brand**

At the end of the project in 2012, the Equality Mark was evaluated by an external evaluator who highlighted the strengths of the certification as well as areas for further development. The mark has increased awareness of equality issues among employees and employers, increased awareness and understanding of family-friendly measures amongst employees, and improved equality perspectives in customer services.

The evaluation investigated what attracted employers to apply for the mark. Reasons cited included obtaining formal recognition of the existing work culture, enhancing the company's brand, and the effective media campaign. At the same time it concluded that the Equality Mark could be improved by stimulating employers to move beyond the initial administrative exercise. The recertification process represents a step in this direction as the de facto work environment and work practices are discussed with the employees and NCPE delivers training to staff on the Equality Mark and gender equality. Further training to more staff members in each company could improve the practice.

For Malta the idea of an equality certification promoting family-friendly measures was innovative in itself, as this was the first time it had been carried out in Malta. Owing to the success of the initiative NCPE decided to continue with the Equality Mark certification even after the project funding ended in 2012.

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### **Further information:**

Further information:  
<http://www.equality.gov.mt>  
Certification process:  
[http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Documents/Home/Welcome/equality\\_mark\\_info\\_doc\\_and\\_data\\_protection\\_form.pdf](http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Documents/Home/Welcome/equality_mark_info_doc_and_data_protection_form.pdf)  
List of mark holders:  
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