

**IMPLEMENTING GENDER EQUALITY  
IN ENTERPRISES**

**REPORT ON BEST PRACTICES AND TOOLS IN  
EUROPE**

**TWINNING PROJECT**

*Equality between Men and Women -  
Principle and Goal for Sustainable and Effective Enterprises*

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## INTRODUCTION

This report has been compiled by French gender equality experts as the essential first step in the context of the Twinning project between France and Estonia: “Equality between Men and Women – Principle and Goal for Effective and Sustainable Enterprises” (EE/06/IB/SO/01) in 2007-2008.

In order to improve gender equality in society, the private sector is a key vector for change. Actors from the private sector – company executives and managers, human resources staff, trade unions, employers’ organisations – all have a key role to play in this field.

However, the difficulties in implementing gender equality policies and practices in private companies and amongst other stakeholders in the private sector are common to all EU Member States. Equality and non-discrimination policies are rarely a priority for enterprises or their representatives. Even trade unions tend to concentrate their activities on other issues such as wages and working conditions, and do not always have the necessary expertise in the field of promoting gender equality. Gender experts are rarely familiar with the private sector, and do not always feel qualified to act in this field.

Faced with this challenge, the different Member States and the main actors have developed a variety of different strategies, tools, policies and practices with the goal of integrating gender equality into the private sector.

This report presents some of the best practices identified and tested across the European Union in this field. Many of them have been created within the framework of the different policies, laws and measures introduced by the European Union itself, which is a very important lever for change in this field.

Its aim is to enable Estonian actors to learn about the successful experiences carried out in other Member States or at European level, in order to consider the implementation of new approaches and strategies in their own country. Although tailored to the Estonian context, the authors consider that the content can be of interest to actors working to promote gender equality in the private sector in any Member State.

### **How were the best practices selected?**

In order to select the most appropriate best practices from across Europe, we firstly brought together and reviewed an extensive selection of practices and policies for promoting gender equality in the private sector. These were collected based on our own knowledge of experiences across the European Union, and those supplied by our contacts in other Member States or presented in various publications.

Next, we selected the experiences based on the following aims:

- To present examples from the widest possible range of ways (or “Action Steps”) available to promote gender equality in the private sector (awareness-raising, analyses and indicators, training, company policies, trade union action, etc.);
- To find a diversified range of types of tools and methods;
- To select practices which could be suitable for, and adaptable to, the Estonian context;
- To choose initiatives proven to be successful in their own Member State;
- To highlight the most innovative examples;
- To propose experiences from the widest possible panel of Member States, in order to benefit from the different approaches used.

The initial selection of good practices was presented to the Estonian partners, and adapted according to their comments. The final selection was validated by them at a meeting in August 2007.

It is important to highlight that there were three main limits to this exercise.

Firstly, we did not aim to create an exhaustive directory of all European practices in this field. Our goal was to most significant experiences based on the criteria above.

Secondly, due to the fact that this report has been drawn up within the context of a twinning programme between France and Estonia, there is necessarily an over-representation of French examples: approximately one third.

Finally, despite our best efforts to find examples from the new EU Member States (those having joined since 2004), only one such initiative was found which could be presented in this report.

### **How is the report structured?**

This final report contains 50 best practice fiches, representing examples from 15 European countries and 2 international organisations.

The report is structured into chapters based on the different ways to promote gender equality in the private sector: we refer to these as the “Action Steps”. The eight Action Steps identified are the following:

- Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises;
- Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors;
- Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality;
- Company practices for promoting gender equality;
- Trade union practices for promoting gender equality;
- Negotiating on gender issues;
- Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality;
- External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies.

Within each Action Step, we present a series of best practice fiches. Each fiche consists of: the main objective of the good practice, its context (why the practice was developed in this country), a description of the practice, and an analysis of the practice: its key points of interest (why we considered it a best practice) and its potential limitations and necessary adaptations for potential transfer to Estonia (or elsewhere). At the end of each fiche, we have indicated the website where the good practice can be found, the language(s) in which it is available and, where relevant, other websites for further information.

Finally, at the end of the report, a bibliography and a webography of useful websites provide information on the sources used for compiling this report, but also on other tools and information resources which could not be included here.

## **Acknowledgements**

Finally, we would like in particular to thank Alain Laferté and Ursula Toomri, the Twinning team based in Estonia, for all their help and support in compiling this report.

We would also like to thank Kadi Viik, Ülle-Marike Papp and Käthlin Sander from the Gender Equality Department in the Estonia Ministry of Social Affairs for all their suggestions concerning the structure of the document and proposals of existing good practices.

*Vicki Donlevy & Rachel Silvera,  
November 2007*

**LIST OF BEST PRACTICES AND TOOLS**

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	<b>2</b> Statistical Report on the Comparative Situation of Women and Men in Enterprises	France	13
	<b>3</b> Assessment of the current situation of gender equality in an enterprise: example from the Finnish method of equality planning in the workplace	Finland	15
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	<b>5</b> Directory of Good Practices in Enterprises	France	22
	<b>6</b> Framework for Action and Assessment of Actions to Prevent Discrimination and Promote Equality	France	24
	<b>7</b> Cartoon: Enterprises and Work-Life Balance	France	26
	<b>8</b> Compendium of Good Practices on Gender Equality in Enterprises	France	28
	<b>9</b> Action for Change: How employers can break down gender segregation in vocational training and employment	UK	30
	<b>10</b> Equal Pay Campaign: "Frauen verdienen mehr" & "La discriminación no es un juego..."	Spain and Austria	32
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## **I. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises**

Before implementing any policy to promote gender equality in a given context (enterprise, sector...), it is essential to gain a clear picture of the current situation. This involves gathering relevant data and indicators to highlight the gender inequalities, and then analysing it to identify the reasons (obstacles, roles of key actors and institutions). Armed with this information, it is possible to design an appropriate strategy to combat existing weaknesses and develop a gender mainstreaming approach.

On a macro-economic level (national, regional, economic sector...), relevant data which could be gathered includes sex-segregated statistics and analysis on: employment and unemployment rates, part-time work, horizontal and vertical labour market segregation, stereotypes, wages, work-life balance (childcare services, flexible working...). Public authorities can compile and make available this information to private sector actors.

At enterprise level, relevant information would include sex-specific information on for example: numbers of employees, categories of employment, duration of employment contracts, proportions of part-time workers, wage levels, types of jobs, proportions in management positions, take-up of family leave policies, access to training. This information can be gathered by the company managers or the human resource department. Once the 'raw' information is gathered, it must of course be analysed in order to draw conclusions on the findings.

In this chapter, we present initiatives taken in three Member States in this field. One initiative from the UK is an example of how national authorities can publish information on gender equality (general figures, but with a focus on gender equality in the workplace) which can raise awareness and encourage the private sector to take initiatives in this field. The other two examples, from France and Finland, show ways of gathering data or indicators on gender equality in different enterprises, with the aim of using the findings to implement gender equality policies. In both countries, this is a legal obligatory for enterprises employing over a certain number of staff.

## Completing the Revolution: The Leading Indicators (Gender Equality Index)

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	<b>&gt; 1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises</b>
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) (since 01/10/2007 part of the Equality and Human Rights Commission)

**Country:** United Kingdom

**Date of Implementation:** 2007

**Type of Best Practice:** Indicators

### Main objective

To demonstrate the health of the nation in terms of gender equality across all areas of life, including in work, and to highlight the areas on which efforts need to be focused in the coming years.

### Context

Before closing its doors to become part of the Equal and Human Rights Commission (Oct 2007), the EOC decided to launch a campaign to highlight the “unfinished social revolution” concerning gender equality in the UK. The basis for this campaign, called the “Gender Agenda” (see fiche 11), was the compilation of an index comprising all the leading indicators of gender equality.

### Description

The Gender Equality Index has been compiled with indicators grouped into five categories: Income, Family, Policy and Services, Justice and Safety and Power. In each category, there are four or five indicators:

- Income: gender pay gap (full and part-time), flexible jobs, retirement income, segregated occupations
- Family: pregnancy discrimination, use of flexible work, chores gap, parents’ care for children, carers
- Policy and Services: children per childcare place, GCSE (age 16 exam) gender gap, subject choice at A-level (age 18 exam), GP (doctor) consultations
- Justice and Safety: women experiencing abuse from their partner, fear of going out alone after dark, violent crime, rape conviction rate
- Power: MPs (Members of Parliament), FTSE 100 directors, high court and more senior judges, council leaders

For each indicator, the following information is given: the latest statistics (percentages rounded to the nearest 1%), the recent trend for the statistic (“improving”, “worsening”, “no clear trend”, or “no change”) and the number of years which it will take to reach equality (to the nearest five years).

The Gender Equality Index is available for downloading on the EOC's website, and can be obtained free of charge in printed format. It is also possible to join the EOC's mailing list to receive regular updates on figures by e-mail.

The index shows that in some instances, the UK is heading in the right direction - the situation is improving. But more often progress has been painfully slow and there is much more that could be done to speed up the pace of change, otherwise the children's children will still be grappling with many of the same challenges. In other areas, the index suggests the agenda has stalled, or worse yet the UK is actually going backwards. The index also shows the gaps between the way people want to live their lives and how things really are: for example, their research has shown that new fathers want to spend more time with their children and the home, but their long hours and inflexible workplaces make this very difficult.

The index ends with a call for action stating that: "Unless further action is taken, nothing will ever change".

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The index helps to show the links and overlaps between gender equality in enterprises and in society in general (family issues and working life, policy and working life, positions of power and working life...)</li> <li>➤ The tool concentrates on issues (indicators) which are easily understandable by all, and which affect the lives of many people.</li> <li>➤ The tool is simple and the key messages can be understood very quickly. The "recent trend" column ("improving" etc.) allows readers to understand the situation immediately. The "number of years to reach equality" column has a very strong impact: for example, it will take 195 years for there to be equality in Members of Parliament!</li> <li>➤ It also highlights areas in which men are at a disadvantage to women (less visits to the doctor, lower educational achievements...).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The index is not specific to gender equality in enterprises. It is not suitable for an in-depth study of indicators in enterprises, but rather for very wide dissemination of key messages concerning the reality of gender equality, and the progress that needs to be made.</li> <li>➤ The section on Justice and Safety has less links to gender equality in enterprises, and so is less interesting when concentrating on this issue.</li> <li>➤ It would be interesting to have comparisons with other European Member States.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

<http://www.gender-agenda.co.uk/gei.aspx>

**Language(s) available:**

English

**Other sources of relevant information:**

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/pages/eocdrccre.aspx>

(Website of the new Equality and Human Rights Commission)

<http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/index.html>

(archive website of the EOC)

**Statistical report on the comparative situation of women and men in enterprises**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	<b>&gt; 1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises</b>
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of the Structure:** Ministère de la parité et de l'égalité professionnelle (French Ministry of Parity and Gender Equality in the Workplace).

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** From 2001

**Type of Best Practice:** Report

**Main Objective**

Identifying gender inequalities in individual enterprises in order to define actions in favour of gender equality and to reinforce the information provided to members of works councils and to employees.

**Context**

French law of the 9th May 2001 stipulates that each enterprise with more than 50 employees must provide a "report on the comparative situation of women and men" on the basis of relevant common indicators.

**Description**

Presented as statistical data by gender and professional category, these indicators allow the establishment of a precise, statistical diagnosis. They constitute a means of presentation, common to all enterprises, made up of statistics expressed in percentages. 20 relevant indicators have been elaborated in the different fields of human resources: employee numbers; length and organisation of work; holidays; recruitment and departures; employment levels, promotions; pay; training and working conditions. For each theme, the enterprise must provide statistics segregated by gender. For example, in the field of promotion, the enterprise must stipulate "the gender division of promotions with regard to the numbers of employees of each sex in the professional category or the number of promotions following training". In the field of pay, 3 indicators are obligatory: range of salary by sex and according to job categories (based on the classification or occupational grid); average monthly salary by sex; number of women among the 10 highest wage-earners.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These indicators give precise information for all actors and particularly allow social dialogue on the theme of gender equality by underlining the areas with the most important inequalities in each enterprise. They constitute therefore the basis of collective bargaining on gender equality in the enterprise.</li> <li>■ The indicators are harmonised and constitute a common point of comparison for all enterprises, made up of statistics simplified into percentages.</li> <li>■ Based on this quantitative data, the diagnosis must result in concrete (quantitative or qualitative) action strategies with the aim of reducing inequalities between men and women.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This measure does not concern enterprises with more than 50 employees. But the majority of women are employed in SMEs. The indicators should therefore be applied, in a simplified form, in SMEs.</li> <li>■ On the other hand, certain indicators need to be more detailed for large enterprises. For example, as far as wages are concerned, the comparison of average wages by category can be insufficient for really identifying the pay gaps. In this case, it is necessary to correlate the wage gap with the proportion of women in each type of job in order to ascertain if women are over-represented in the lower qualified and less prestigious jobs (such as assistant or “support” jobs) and under-represented in the better paid jobs.</li> <li>■ In an evaluation carried out in 2004-2005, only 43% of enterprises who were obliged to produce the statistical report on the comparative situation of women and men in enterprises had fulfilled this obligation. There can therefore be a problem with enforcing this type of obligation. However, since the date of this evaluation, it is believed that the proportion of enterprises producing the report has increased.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[http://www.femmes-egalite.gouv.fr/grands\\_dossiers/dossiers/egalite\\_en\\_entreprise/demarches\\_outils\\_diagnostic.htm](http://www.femmes-egalite.gouv.fr/grands_dossiers/dossiers/egalite_en_entreprise/demarches_outils_diagnostic.htm)

**Language(s) available:**

French

**Other sources of relevant information:**

Ministère de l'emploi et de la solidarité, Service des droits des femmes et de l'égalité, *Agir pour l'égalité professionnelle entre les femmes et les hommes : Guide d'appui à la négociation au sein des entreprises et des branches* (2001)

(available for purchase at

[http://www.femmes-egalite.gouv.fr/se\\_documenter/operations\\_de\\_communication/agir/index.htm](http://www.femmes-egalite.gouv.fr/se_documenter/operations_de_communication/agir/index.htm))

Ministère de l'emploi et de la solidarité, Service des droits des femmes et de l'égalité, *Guide et repères pour la négociation* (2006)

(available for purchase at [http://www.librairie-liaisons.com/?page=fiche\\_detaillee&ref=80677](http://www.librairie-liaisons.com/?page=fiche_detaillee&ref=80677))

**Assessment of the current situation of gender equality in an enterprise:  
example from the Finnish method of equality planning in the workplace**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	<b>&gt; 1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises</b>
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of the Structure:** Office of the Ombudsman for Equality, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health

**Country:** Finland

**Date of Implementation:** From 2000

**Type of Best Practice:** Guidebooks

**Main Objective**

To assess the current situation of gender equality in enterprises.

**Context**

Since 1995, employers in Finland with 30 or more regular workers have been obliged to include measures to promote equality in annual staff and training programmes or in labour protection programmes. The Finnish Act on Equality between Women and Men, passed in 2005, obliges companies and organisations employing over 30 people to produce an annual gender equality plan in consultation with staff representatives.

In order to implement effective gender equality plans, an essential first step is to assess the current gender situation in the enterprise considered. The Finnish Office of the Ombudsman for Equality, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health, has produced two sets of guidelines (in 2000 and 2005) which give concrete advice (among others) on how to carry out this step.

## Description

The 2000 and 2005 guidebooks provide a list of indicators which should be used for measuring gender equality in an enterprise (“preliminary charting”) before implementing a gender equality plan. For each indicator, the enterprise is advised to measure the current situation, and set targets for the future. The indicators (all sex-segregated) include the following (some differences occur between the 2 guidebooks):

- Structure of personnel: number of men and women employed by the company, nature of the contract of each employee, duration of the employment contract, level of education;
- Recruitment policy: persons who applied for vacancies, persons selected for vacancies;
- Organisation and task structure of the workplace: placement of men and women in various jobs and positions: blue/white collar workers, senior staff members, supervisors, middle management, and top management. Proportion of men and women in different job descriptions; male and female-dominated positions;
- Wages and the wage structure: average wages of men and women in different wage groups, share of men and women in different wage groups. Effects of various bonuses, overtime compensation, payment by results, holiday benefit...;
- Personnel training and occupational advancement: participation in training, differences in occupational advancement...;
- Use of family leave policies: use of parental leave, child home care leave...;
- Working conditions and the working environment: physical working conditions, number and reasons for absence, night shifts, amount of overtime, shift work or flexible working, opportunity for distance working, occurrence of harassment in the workplace and measures taken...;

The assessments and surveys that have been made must then be analysed. The employer discusses with staff representatives what measures are needed to promote gender equality and to implement equal pay. Ultimately, it is up to the employer to decide on the possible measures to be taken. If an assessment or survey discloses drawbacks, ways to correct them have to be put forward, together with proposals on how the implementation of the measures is to be monitored.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These guidebooks provide a very useful and straightforward method to help enterprises assess their current level of gender equality. The fact that they highlight the need to spend time on this assessment stage is important, and innovative: enterprises tend to want to move quickly in proposing solutions without having fully analysed the existing situation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Even though the guidelines are clear, there is a significant amount of work involved in preparing this gender equality assessment.</li> <li>■ After the initial assessment stage (providing statistics and relevant data), the analysis stage is essential. Enterprises may be tempted to spend less time on this essential stage. They may also be ill-equipped to carry out this analysis alone, and would require the input of external experts in order for the analysis to be meaningful. This however would require either public provision of expertise, or extra expenditure on behalf of the enterprise.</li> <li>■ These measures do not include enterprises of less than 30 employees. There is therefore a risk of these SMEs not conducting any form of gender equality assessment.</li> </ul>

**Sources of relevant information:**

*Gender Equality Planning at Workplaces: Why, what, how?*

<http://www.stm.fi/Resource.phx/publishing/store/2005/12/aa1138626291669/passthru.pdf>

<http://www.tasa-arvo.fi/Resource.phx/tasa-arvo/english/authorities/ombudsman/tasks.htx>

<http://www.genderequality.fi/Resource.phx/eng/subjt/gendr/index.htx>

## II. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors

In order to encourage action to promote gender equality in the private sector, it is essential for the relevant authorities to disseminate information as widely as possible and carry out activities to raise awareness on this issue. Actors in the private sector must be convinced of the need to address gender inequalities, and of the business benefits, such as reducing absenteeism, finding suitable candidates for recruitment, attracting candidates with high-potential, reducing turnover, and creating a better work environment.

It is essential to find innovative ways of raising awareness on gender issues and inequalities and present factual information, in order to convince even the most sceptical: useful strategies can include humour, cartoons, and new media forms. In order to act effectively, practitioners also require practical tools such as guidebooks with, where possible, illustrations of real-life examples of good practice which can provide inspiration and show that action is possible, and beneficial. Equal opportunities “champion” enterprises can inspire their peers to follow suit.

In this chapter, we present examples from seven Member States and one ILO (International Labour Office) initiative. These include guidelines and guidebooks for action in promoting gender equality in the workplace from Ireland and France: some of these include examples of real-life good practices, others use humorous cartoons to underline their message, and others again use simplified presentations in grid format. One guidebook from Austria aims to provide information to employees and their representatives on their rights concerning gender equality at the workplace. We also present published or on-line compendiums of best practices in this field from France and the UK.

This section also presents innovative, and often amusing, communication campaigns involving gender equality issues in the workplace carried out in Austria, Spain, UK and the Netherlands, which have met with great success, both in their own Member State and, for many, beyond.

## Guidelines for Employment Equality Policies in Enterprises

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	<b>› 2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors</b>
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** The Equality Authority

**Country:** Ireland

**Date of implementation:** 2001 (approximately: document not dated)

**Type of action:** Guidelines

### Main objective

To provide a practical step-by-step "how to" guide to establishing an employment equality policy in enterprises, in order to help enterprises and trade unions to comply with Irish legislation concerning equality in the workplace.

### Context

A national Framework Committee was established in Ireland to promote equality at the level of the enterprise. The Framework Committee brings together Congress, IBEC (Irish Business and Employers Confederation), Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Department of Finance, the Health Service Employers Agency, the Equal Opportunities Network and the Local Government Management Services Board. It is chaired and supported by the Equality Authority. It seeks to assist employers and trade unions to respond to the challenges arising from implementation of Irish legislation to promote equality in the workplace.

The Employment Equality Act came into force in October 1999, and was reinforced by the Equal Status Acts in 2000 and 2004. They prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and educational establishments. They cover the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion and membership of the Traveller community.

These guidelines form part of a wider package of guidance developed by the Framework Committee and by the Equality Authority to support planned and systematic approaches to workplace equality. This package includes "Guidelines for Equality and Diversity Training in Enterprises", "Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work" and "Guidelines for Equal Status Policies in Enterprises".

## Description

The guidelines provide a practical tool for enterprises and trade unions for designing and implementing Employment Equality Policies.

After opening chapters devoted to the “Ten Steps to Equality” and examples of text which could be included in an Employment Equality Policy, the guide focuses on practical ways in which equality can be ensured in the enterprise, organised into different chapters, as follows:

- Organising for equality within the enterprise: why an Employment Equality Policy is important and how to prepare it, creating an equality committee and appointing an equality officer, training for equality...
- Equal opportunities in recruitment and job advertisements: advertisements, application forms, recruitment agencies, communicating job opportunities to all...
- Equal opportunities in the interview process: interviews and interview boards, guidance for interviews, conducting interviews, diversifying interview boards, monitoring the process, positive actions, medical tests...
- Equal opportunities in job orientation and induction: job orientation, introducing non-discrimination and equality awareness, involving supervisors...
- Equal opportunities in career promotion and progression: creating a chance for all, maintaining records and reviewing files, training, the family-friendly workplace and work-life balance, job appraisal, equal pay, redundancies and dismissal...

The guidelines stress the importance of putting these commitments onto paper in the form a written policy.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The guidelines deal in a practical, down-to-earth way with areas of company policy into which it is possible to introduce commitments to equality. They are well-adapted to the needs of employers.</li> <li>■ They ensure compliance with all current Irish equality legislation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The guidelines are not specific to gender equality, but provide a general approach to avoiding all forms of discrimination. There is therefore some risk that the specifics of gender equality are dissolved by this focus on all forms of discrimination. Gender inequalities are transversal to all other inequalities (disability, age, origin...) and should not be considered as a “separate” form of discrimination.</li> <li>■ The guidelines focus strongly on ensuring compliance with Irish legislation in this field: it can be argued that they do not sufficiently seek to change employers’ mindset about equality, but simply to ensure that they do not face legal difficulties.</li> <li>■ Due to the focus on all forms of discrimination, the content of each section is sometimes rather limited, particularly when seeking solutions on one particular form of equality (in this case, gender equality). Certain sections should be further developed in order to provide comprehensive solutions and options to enterprises in this field.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

<http://www.equality.ie/index.asp?locID=109&docID=98>

**Language(s) available:**

English

**Other sources of relevant information:**

The Equality Authority of Ireland

<http://www.equality.ie/>

Guidelines for Equal Status Policies in Enterprises

<http://www.equality.ie/index.asp?locID=109&docID=506>

Guidelines for Equality and Diversity Training in Enterprises

<http://www.equality.ie/index.asp?locID=109&docID=101>

Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work

<http://www.equality.ie/index.asp?locID=108&docID=-1>

## French Directory of Good Practices in Enterprises

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	<b>› 2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors</b>
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** ORSE - Observatoire sur la Responsabilité Sociétale des Entreprises (Observatory of Corporate Social Responsibility)

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** March 2005 (updated in December 2006)

**Type of Best Practice:** Guide

### Main objective

To give examples of innovative good practices and tools for monitoring and evaluation of gender equality for all actors in enterprises: company directors, human resources managers, employee and trade union representatives.

### Context

In order to encourage the social partners to adopt in-house equality programmes, in application of the law of the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2001 (see fiche 2), the ORSE, which is an umbrella organisation uniting the large enterprises involved in social responsibility, was given the task, by the Ministry of Equal Opportunities, of creating tools for the social partners. This guidebook has therefore been created within the framework of corporate social responsibility, which obliges enterprises to declare the environmental and social impact of their activities. Investors in these large enterprises call in specialised agencies which assess all non-financial aspects of the companies. Among the social criteria, equality is one of the important aspects. This is even more developed for enterprises listed on the stock market, for which this process is obligatory since 2001.

This guidebook, which has been published both as paper fiches and on-line, was put together by multi-party working groups (trade unions, company representatives, members of the Women's Rights Department and the Ministry for Equality, experts...). It is disseminated to different actors during conferences and meetings, and provides both practical and legal support.

## Description

Firstly, the guide specifies the three principal phases to adopt concerning gender equality: consider the feasibility of implementation; carry out an analysis of the existing situation; implement a monitoring process and an assessment at each stage, with new activities. In order to achieve this, six conditions are necessary:

- Commitment at the highest level of company management;
- Willingness to involve all the actors in the project;
- Defining human, organisation and financial resources;
- Establishing priority objectives according to the strategic context of the enterprise;
- Willingness to ensure monitoring in the long-term.

In order to carry out this process, the guidebook is made up of 11 fiches:

Actors and actresses of equality; tools; awareness-raising; recruitment; pay; working time, organisation and conditions; skills and training; geographical mobility; professional career; employee services; directors and high-flyers.

Each fiche has the same structure: references to the legal framework; content of the theme; proposed monitoring indicators; examples of good practices and extracts of enterprise agreements; bibliographical references and contacts. An update was carried out in 2006 in order to integrate the new elements of the French law on Equal Pay of the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2006 (reinforcement of the pay elements, new advantages for SMEs, ...).

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ This guide truly achieves its role of accompanying the implementation of a gender equality policy in a practical way.</li><li>➤ It gives many examples which actors can use as inspiration.</li><li>➤ It targets all actors, both management and trade unions. It is indeed used both in trade union training sessions and in-house training in companies. It was elaborated in agreement with the social partners.</li><li>➤ There is an on-line version of the guidebook and real monitoring of innovations in the field (regular updates)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ There is no English version of this guidebook, thus limiting its transferability.</li><li>➤ It targets all enterprises, whatever their size or sector of activity. But, in reality, the law on social notation (Corporate Social Responsibility Law of 2001) mainly targets enterprises listed on the stockmarket, which are therefore more involved and encouraged to implement such processes. In the update, assistance for providing advice to enterprises with less than 300 employees is specified, but is this enough to incite SMEs to teach themselves about this theme, particularly if there is no trade union organisation?</li></ul>

**Available online at:**

[www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org](http://www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org)

**Language(s) available:**

French

## Framework for Action and Assessment of Actions to Prevent Discrimination and Promote Equality

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	<b>› 2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors</b>
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** HALDE - Haute autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l'égalité (French Anti-Discrimination and Equality High Authority)

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** 2006

**Type of Best Practice:** Framework for action

Main objective	Context
<p>To provide a framework for action which can be taken by enterprises to prevent discrimination and promote equality, or to assess measures already implemented.</p>	<p>Some enterprises expressed their need to the HALDE for a tool to help them assess the measures implemented in favour of equality and to give them a guideline for action in this field. The HALDE therefore brought together a working group, comprising human resource managers, and large enterprises already carrying out anti-discrimination policies and experts, in order to draw up a framework for action comprising qualitative indicators. Based on the activities already being carried out by the enterprises, the Framework for Action was created.</p>

### Description

The Framework for Action is a simple two-page tool, published in grid form in the HALDE's Guidebook for Enterprises for Promoting Equality and Preventing Discrimination. It presents the outline of an equality policy in enterprises which can be used either to give ideas for actions which can be implemented, or to assess whether an enterprise has used all available tools to implement a successful anti-discrimination or equality policy. It is also used by the HALDE to identify and monitor, in a simple manner, all the activities implemented by different enterprises.

The Framework for Action proposes activities in 12 fields:

- Formal commitment from top management on equality/non-discrimination: adoption of an in-house/public charter, elaboration of an equality policy, inscription of the issue on meetings of management boards...
- Social dialogue: negotiation of collective agreements on equality, creation of a monitoring committee on this issue...

- Organisation of the policy: designation of dedicated personnel or committees, existence of an evaluation of the policy...
- Diagnosis/Audit/Testing: qualitative and quantitative audits, internal or external audits of HR (human resource) policies, testing of HR policies, adaptation of existing procedures following audits...
- Awareness-raising/Training: of HR managers, directors, other managers, employees...
- HR processes: integration of non-discrimination policies into HR processes (recruitment, promotion...), use of objective tools for recruitment and job evaluation (anonymous CVs, diverse recruitment sources...), communication on processes implemented...
- Communication: elaboration of internal communication materials (intranet site, brochures...), evaluation of communication strategy on staff (number, degree of awareness...)
- Management: integration of non-discrimination criteria in management evaluations...
- Internal complaints procedures: existence of a committee to deal with internal complaints, analysis tool for registered complaints...
- Partnerships: with educational establishments/authorities, public authorities and institutions (employment agencies, local authorities...), NGOs, others...
- Suppliers/sub-contractors: existence of a contractual clause concerning non-discrimination, communication of the equality policy to suppliers and sub-contractors...
- Employees' opinion: regular polls on the employees' perception of the equality policy.

For each, indicators are proposed (yes/no, number of actions, number of people involved in training, hours of training...).

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The grid is a simple tool which does not require a lot of time to understand.</li> <li>■ It sets out, in a very summarized form, the outline of an equality policy for an enterprise and can give ideas to, and raise awareness in, enterprises who do not know where to start.</li> <li>■ It is an interesting assessment tool for both Equality Authorities and enterprises themselves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Although the grid is simple, effective implementation of all these measures is not so simple without substantial expertise in this area. More help would be required by enterprises to actually implement these policies (in-house or external expertise, more detailed guidebook, examples from other employers...).</li> <li>■ Some of the indicators are very simple (yes/no), however others are much more complicated (employee opinion polls...).</li> <li>■ The grid is clearly more suitable for large enterprises than for SMEs.</li> <li>■ The framework concerns all forms of discrimination, not only gender equality.</li> <li>■ The grid exists only in French, however a translation would be very simple (few words).</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[http://www.halde.fr/IMG/pdf/Guide\\_entreprise\\_HALDE.pdf](http://www.halde.fr/IMG/pdf/Guide_entreprise_HALDE.pdf) (p.52)

**Language(s) available:**

French

## Cartoon: Enterprises and Work-Life Balance

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	› 2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** CFE-CGC (General Trade Union Confederation for Executives); ANDCP (National Association of Personnel Directors and Executives); CJD (Centre of Young Directors).

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** April 2002

**Type of Best Practice:** Cartoon

### Main objective

To inform and communicate with employers in order to give them the means to help employees find a better work-life balance, and to get fathers more involved in these issues.

### Context

The work-life balance issue is often seen by employers as a matter concerning employees' private lives. However, more and more employees with children are facing difficulties in managing their working time and the organisation of their family life. These difficulties have an impact on their lives, particularly at work. Due to the rise in the number of couples in which both work and to the increasingly complex organisation of working time (rise in atypical working hours, unpredictable hours...), organising children's lives, whether permanently or in exceptional circumstances (illness...) has become a real "headache" for many parents.

This guidebook seeks, using humour, to convince decision-makers that this theme is a useful investment for their enterprise, which should try, directly or indirectly, to favour a better work-life balance. This investment is linked to corporate social responsibility, but also results in employees who are less stressed, less absent and, at the end of the day, more "available" for the employer.

### Description

The guidebook is a cartoon presented as a series of fiches corresponding to issues which employers must face: working time arrangements; maternity and paternity leave; parental leave; professional mobility; access to training; work organisation... or indeed services for employees (childcare, company crèches, involvement of the works council, management of unforeseen circumstances...).

Using a cartoon format aims to make concrete situations funny, and to show with humour how these issues can be dealt with differently. For example, concerning maternity leave, two opposite situations are shown: firstly, we are shown a human resources manager, Mr Berthier, who reacts badly to a female employee's announcement that she is pregnant, does not plan for her leave, does not keep in contact with her and who recruits someone to replace her at the last minute; and secondly, we are shown an enterprise where "everything works well".

Another example concerns parents getting ready to go to work who discover, at the last minute, that their son is ill. The mother (who seems to be a very dynamic executive) goes to work, leaving the father to manage the situation (rather a rare case!). The father tries all the possible solutions in vain (the crèche refuses to take the sick child, and his boss is expecting him for a very important meeting). In the end, he decides to go to the meeting with his baby in his arms: but the entire management committee ends up covered in a rash... As a result, the boss becomes convinced of the need to invest in "social innovation" by participating in the funding of childcare for sick children at home.

For each measure, we find sections such as: advantages for the employers; advantages for the employee; legislation; elements for negotiation; real-life experiences; good practices...

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The format of this document is essential for getting the message across: each cartoon is very funny and could convince all actors, particularly men (all of which are slightly made fun of: the trade unionist, the employee representative, the HR manager, the colleagues, the father...)</li> <li>■ The measures proposed concern all types of enterprises, including SMEs</li> <li>■ The aim of the guidebook is not only to criticise certain behaviours, but also to propose practical solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This document was published in 2002 (only in printed version) and, since, different measures and policies have changed (some measures no longer exist, others have been transformed). The guidebook has not been updated. This would be possible if it was in electronic format.</li> <li>■ Due to the fact that it exists only in printed version, it is not widely known, despite the fact that, each time that it has been presented, it has been very successful.</li> <li>■ On a deeper level, questions can be asked about the limit between the employer's fields of competency, and respecting employees' private lives. Similarly, with the supposed aim of helping families, these measures can sometimes be seen as means of making employees even more "flexible" and gaining more control on their lives outside work. These risks must be integrated into any such process...</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

CFE-CGC, ANDCP, CJD; *Entreprises et articulation des temps familiaux et professionnels: guide pratique* (2002)

<http://gendercheck.net/doc/fr/pdf/GuidePratiqueEntreprises.pdf>

**Language(s) available :**

French

## Compendium of good practices on gender equality in enterprises

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	<b>› 2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors</b>
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** H. A.L.D.E – Haute Autorité de Lutte contre les Discriminations et pour l’Egalité  
(High Authority for the Fight against Discrimination and in favour of Equality)

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** From 2005

**Type of Best Practice:** On-line guide

### Main objective

To collect and disseminate information about the existing initiatives in enterprises fighting against gender-based discrimination and promoting gender equality.

### Context

The HALDE is an independent body created in 2004 in order to fight against all kinds of discrimination to be in line with the Directive 2002/73 of the European Parliament and of the Council, regarding equality bodies. This institution provides information to the public, investigates cases of supposed discrimination and then makes recommendations, can take legal action against organisations accused of discrimination, carries out studies and research, and can propose legal changes to Parliament and to the Government to improve the legal framework in this field. The compendium realized is not entirely focused on gender equality but deals with equal opportunities in general (disability, age, origin...), covering examples in 5 main fields: employment, accommodation, services, education, and health.

### Description

The HALDE has gathered 84 good practices in the field of equal opportunities at work, among which 63 are connected with gender equality. Many of the good practices are carried out by enterprises and are sorted by theme: for example, recruitment, training, promotion, work-life balance, and job evaluation. Each good practice is presented in the frame of a standard fiche, containing the main elements to be pointed out (project holder; objective; target ; context; date of implementation; description; financial, human and organizational means; partners; key points for success; difficulties; ways of assessment). For instance, some good practices implemented within enterprises which have been awarded the “gender equality label” are presented on-line (PSA Peugeot Citroen, Eau de Paris, Cetelem, Axa, Dexia...).

Considering that each fiche focuses on one specific point, the most active enterprises acting at different levels (recruitment and work-life balance for instance) can be quoted several times. The very first good practices have been directly collected by the HALDE through a specific investigation. Now, web visitors can spontaneously submit some good practices through internet. Then, the HALDE contacts them in order to collect more detailed information, before making a fiche and diffusing it – or not.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Dissemination through internet makes it possible to ensure an effective and dynamic transfer of good practice from enterprise to enterprise. Any enterprise that is looking for good ideas can simply go onto the website and consult all the good practices which are featured. Internet also allows this information to be disseminated to a wider audience, especially people who usually do not have access to this kind of information.</li> <li>■ Anybody can submit “good practices” to be disseminated on-line. It is a good way for the HALDE to have access to more information, and to get in touch with the initiatives taken outside the usual and well-known “networks”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The process of selection of the “good practices” should be done very seriously, in order to avoid making publicity and providing legitimacy to practices which do not deserve it. All the information diffused should be first-hand, verified and thoroughly evaluated information.</li> <li>■ The HALDE is an independent body in charge of making investigations and recommendations when a company is accused of discrimination. Thus, the HALDE could be in a difficult position if they have to deliberate upon a case involving a company whose practice has been identified and disseminated by the HALDE as a “good practice”.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

<http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/repertoire-87/>

**Language(s) available:**

French

**Action for Change: how employers can break down gender segregation  
in vocational training and employment**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	<b>› 2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors</b>
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)

**Country:** United Kingdom

**Date of Implementation:** March 2005

**Type of Best Practice:** Compendium of good practice

**Main objective**

To provide practical guidance, based on examples of action undertaken by employers, to open up non-traditional opportunities for women and men.

**Context**

Helping women and men to access sectors where they are currently under-represented, and to succeed in acquiring skills and qualifications in those sectors, is a major challenge. Employers have a key role to play in – and much to gain from – reducing occupational segregation in the workforce. This is not just an equality issue, it is a business and productivity issue too. In order to convince employers of the importance of the role that they can play, and of the business advantages, the EOC decided to produce a guidebook based on the good practices implemented by employers themselves, and on interviews carried out with them. This is one example of many good practice guides or databases about actions carried out by employers which are available on, or via, the EOC website. These tools are generally organised by theme: gender segregation, work-life balance, flexible working...

## Description

This document uses policies and practices already being adopted by employers across England to show how employers can benefit from increasing the diversity of their workforce, and suggests practical steps which they can take to help break down gender segregation in apprenticeships, vocational training and employment.

The guide is divided into three sections:

- How employers can benefit from having a more diverse workforce.
- Ways in which employers can increase their recruitment and retention of atypical trainees and employees through: promotion, recruitment and working practices, support mechanisms for trainees and employees, changing their organisational culture and working practices, and working in partnership with other organisations.
- Organisations and resources that can help employers to challenge occupational segregation.

For example, in order to show how childcare providers can attract more male staff, the guidebook gives the example of a nursery provider called Puffins of Exeter which had found that boys attending careers fairs were rarely interested in childcare opportunities. To change this, they started bringing two young men to careers fairs and events who had recently completed their apprenticeship, and featured them in a brochure.

In order to demonstrate some of the business advantages, the document describes the case of Leicester City Council's Housing Department, which employed an Asian woman plumber. Thanks to the fact that she spoke five languages, she enabled the service to work more smoothly across a range of communities where a lack of good communication skills can often hamper the repair process.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The use of real-life examples from enterprises can be a source of inspiration to other enterprises who “talk the same language”.</li> <li>■ The focus on examples in one particular thematic area (gender segregation) allows in-depth discussion of all the different types of solution to this problem.</li> <li>■ The practical examples provide illustrations for the guidelines, which might make them easier to understand and implement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The EOC does not appear to have a general compendium of good practice by enterprises in the field of gender equality, but rather several databases and publications featuring good practices, focusing on different thematic areas. While this allows strong focus in the thematic areas covered, it does not allow an overview of all the different types of action which employers can implement, and may therefore be less suitable for employers who are being confronted with the issue for the first time.</li> </ul>

### Available online at:

<http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/Defaultebd0.html?page=17333>

### Language(s) available:

English

### Other sources of relevant information:

Examples of other compendiums of best practice by employers in the field of gender equality in the UK include:  
[http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/asp/awards/a\\_casestudies.asp](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/asp/awards/a_casestudies.asp)  
 (work-life balance: see fiche 32)

[http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/PDF/ToW\\_Tsquad\\_comic.pdf?page=20384](http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/PDF/ToW_Tsquad_comic.pdf?page=20384)  
 (new ways of working / flexible working)

**Equal Pay Campaign:  
“Frauen verdienen mehr” & “La discriminación no es un juego...”**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	› 2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Klara (AT) and Noray (ESP) EQUAL Development Partnerships

**Country:** Austria, Spain

**Date of Implementation:** 2005-2007

**Type of Best Practice:** Publicity campaign

**Main objective**

Creating public awareness on the gender pay gap.

**Context**

One of the many interrelated causes of the gender pay gap is the insufficient awareness of the public on this topic. Information and awareness-raising campaigns reaching out to decision-makers in the political arena, in social partner organisations, enterprises, relevant groups of the civil society and to every woman and man are an important element in the mix of policies and practices required to bring about change in terms of equal pay.

**Description**

In the framework of a joint approach developed in an EQUAL project, awareness-raising campaigns on the gender pay gap were created and run at national level, in Austria and the Spanish Canary Islands.

This jointly developed concept for national equal pay campaigns contains several elements: posters, free cards, TV spots and a movie. These ingredients always incorporate the same slogans, key messages and eye catching images carrying information on income differences between women and men.

It was necessary to elaborate messages and put them into words and images that would "sell" in each country.

For instance, the slogan of the Austrian campaign, "Frauen verdienen mehr", is based on word play. It can be read as "women earn more" but also as "women deserve more," as the German verb "verdienen" has both meanings. So, the various spots and free cards bear the alarming message that women deserve more than they are actually paid and they are intended to encourage key players and the women themselves to work together for a future in which they will finally earn more and pay equity will be established.

In Spain, the partners chose a slogan that plays with the proverbial sameness of certain things: "Test

your perception... Can you find the difference between the two... breads or flower pots." There is, of course no visible difference. But the caption informs about the fact that "the woman who produced the bread or flower pot on the right side sees the difference every month on her pay check. She earns 27% less than the man who made the products on the other side: "Pay discrimination is no game."

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The campaigns are simple and eye-catching, using humour and word-play, which can therefore appeal to (and be understandable for) a wide audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ It is necessary to adapt the campaigns to the national context and culture. Humour, and even images, do not necessarily translate from country to country in the same way. Something which is amusing in one country can be insulting in another...</li> <li>■ The cost: publicity campaigns are often very expensive, so it will be necessary to ensure sufficient funding.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

Austrian campaign:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/products/sup/pro-082-at.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/products/sup/pro-082-at.pdf)

Spanish campaign:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/products/sup/pro-082-es.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/products/sup/pro-082-es.pdf)

**Language(s) available:**

German, Spanish

**Other sources of relevant information:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/products/prod082\\_en.cfm?query=-01-02&list=-prod064\\_en.cfm-prod030\\_en.cfm-prod046\\_en.cfm-prod068\\_en.cfm-prod120\\_en.cfm-prod075\\_en.cfm-prod029\\_en.cfm-prod058\\_en.cfm-prod114\\_en.cfm-prod088\\_en.cfm-prod085\\_en.cfm-prod039\\_en.cfm-prod091\\_en.cfm-prod065\\_en.cfm-prod111\\_en.cfm-prod033\\_en.cfm-prod061\\_en.cfm-prod082\\_en.cfm-prod084\\_en.cfm-prod127\\_en.cfm-prod005\\_en.cfm-prod028\\_en.cfm-prod040\\_en.cfm-prod112\\_en.cfm-prod119\\_en.cfm-prod126\\_en.cfm-prod066\\_en.cfm-prod043\\_en.cfm-prod125](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/products/prod082_en.cfm?query=-01-02&list=-prod064_en.cfm-prod030_en.cfm-prod046_en.cfm-prod068_en.cfm-prod120_en.cfm-prod075_en.cfm-prod029_en.cfm-prod058_en.cfm-prod114_en.cfm-prod088_en.cfm-prod085_en.cfm-prod039_en.cfm-prod091_en.cfm-prod065_en.cfm-prod111_en.cfm-prod033_en.cfm-prod061_en.cfm-prod082_en.cfm-prod084_en.cfm-prod127_en.cfm-prod005_en.cfm-prod028_en.cfm-prod040_en.cfm-prod112_en.cfm-prod119_en.cfm-prod126_en.cfm-prod066_en.cfm-prod043_en.cfm-prod125)

Klara project:

<http://www.netzwerk-frauenberatung.at/klara/>

Ariadna project:

[http://www.equalariadna.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=14&Itemid=70&lang=en](http://www.equalariadna.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=14&Itemid=70&lang=en)

## Communication campaign on gender equality

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	› 2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)

**Country:** UK

**Date of Implementation:** 2007

**Type of Best Practice:** Printed and electronic materials (posters, postcards, screensavers and web buttons)

### Main objective

To inform people about the EOC's positions and aims regarding gender equality in the UK (Gender Agenda)

### Context

Public unawareness regarding sex discrimination is still one of the underlying causes of the gender inequality in the today's society.

The EOC has produced, over the years, a vast number of effective and innovative campaigns in favour of gender equality. This campaign is the latest in the series.

As a basis for the campaign, the EOC put together a gender equality index (see fiche 1), which demonstrates the health of the nation in terms of gender equality across all areas of life. The index shows that in some areas progress is extremely slow and needs to be boosted if the society as whole wants the next generations to lead better lives.

This new awareness-raising campaign on gender equality highlights the goals of improving social health and financial wealth in Britain, and bringing justice to society. On the individual's level, gender inequalities complicate fitting together work, children, family and relationships. On the collective level, Britain loses out economically if the country's full potential is not used (women channelled into low paid work, families forced to struggle to cope, and skills of those who cannot work or have care responsibilities not utilised).

## Description

Five key messages and corresponding pop art images were developed. The images have been made into a series and they are available in different electronic and print formats (e-cards, screensavers, computer wallpaper, web buttons, web banners, posters, postcards). The messages are also tailored to three areas England, Wales and Scotland, and are available in different languages (Welsh).

Four out of five images are focused on gender inequality in work life (pay gap, long working hours and inflexible working time, glass ceilings preventing promotions). For example, the image covering the glass ceiling issue shows a women peeping through a key hole to see what a company boardroom is like. The image is accompanied by 'hard fact' that only ten companies in the Financial Times' Stock Exchange (FTSE) list of 100 top companies have a woman director. This image, in addition to stating the fact that women are under-represented in top management, suggests that women are not invited nor welcome at this level.

The images have also been extensively used on the EOC website. For example, EOC has developed an 'informative questionnaire' where the images are used both as elements of design but also for categorizing the topics (see examples in the end of the document). In the analysis part of the responses, the images are used again to 'describe' the common problems of the inequalities in work life. Using the images throughout the website helps the reader recognize the topics discussed.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pop art images with clever and humorous messages, backed up with relevant statistics, are easy to understand and can be assimilated quickly. Humour is aimed at creating positive public attitudes to gender equality. A publicity campaign in a comic strip format is a suitable tool to reach diverse audiences and catch their attention (even if it is for a short period of time).</li> <li>➤ The access to the campaign materials is free and simple: posters and other campaign materials are sent free of charge by post, everything is easy accessible via internet and there is even a web link for sending e-cards.</li> <li>➤ It is important that the amount of messages and images is limited. It helps to focus attention on the most important topics and the audience is more likely to remember all the different messages. A (mini-) series is a useful tool especially in the case where the awareness-raising campaign is designed to disseminate various inter-related information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The cost: publicity campaigns are often very expensive, so it will be necessary to ensure sufficient funding. The message has to be crafted out carefully and the format should be attractive to the potential audience. Too vague or complicated messages in the format that are difficult to spread will not eventually raise awareness nor improve attitudes.</li> <li>➤ The message for such a campaign should be well-balanced in terms of general and specific aspects. The more specific the information that is disseminated, the less it attracts a wider audience. Furthermore, if different target groups' profiles are taken into consideration and different messages are crafted, the key message of the campaign may get lost along with the campaign costs getting too high. However, if the campaign remains too general, there is a risk that the key target public (for example employers) will not be reached effectively. An effective balance must be found, in line with the campaign's targets.</li> <li>➤ Humour must of course be adapted to national contexts.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

<http://www.gender-agenda.co.uk/ecard.aspx>

**Language(s) available:**

English

**Multimedia campaign on work-life balance: “Men Taking the Lead”**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	<b>› 2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors</b>
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (EQUAL Development Partnership “Journey along Cultures”)

**Country:** The Netherlands

**Date of Implementation:** 2003-2004

**Type of Best Practice:** Multimedia (TV, radio, advertisements...) campaign

**Main objective**

To encourage partners (men and women) to discuss the current division of labour with each other, from broad social discussion down to discussions around the kitchen table.

**Context**

Even if recent research has indicated that the ‘new’ men in the Dutch society are taking their responsibilities as fathers and partners more seriously than in previous generations, the bulk of the work in Dutch households still seems to fall on female shoulders. As a result, too many women decide to stop working or move to part-time work when they have children, due to the double burden the combination of work and childcare would place on them. This contributes, among others, to the very high rate (the highest in Europe) of female part-time work (almost 75% of working women) in the Netherlands. In order to create more employment opportunities for women, and promote a better work-life balance for all, the Dutch Ministry for Social Affairs and Employment decided to launch a large multimedia campaign focusing on men, using humour and fun as a tool. The campaign was partly funded by an EQUAL project called “Journey along Cultures”.

## Description

The message conveyed through the campaign was clear and simple – “If more men were prepared to become more involved with tasks in the home, more women would be able to reconcile family and working life.”

The campaign included commercials on TV and on radio, press conferences, an internet site ([www.wiedoetwat.nl](http://www.wiedoetwat.nl)), a talk show (broadcasted in two series of 12 programmes) and lots of free tickets for several once-off, spontaneous events.

The first message of the TV commercials confronted men with the excuses that they offer to avoid taking on more tasks at home. Then, the strategy was fine-tuned and concentrated more on motivation and inspiration rather than provocation. This second round of messages addressed some of the cultural dilemmas, which are encountered by both men and women. Whilst women may like the idea of their partners taking on tasks at home, they can often get frustrated or even annoyed when these tasks are performed in a typically "male" way. But men must not only face female criticism. Employers do not usually react enthusiastically if a man undertakes more family responsibilities and, perhaps even more off putting is the likelihood he will become the butt of jokes and ridicule from work colleagues and friends. The campaign encourages men to start a dialogue on the equal division of family tasks with their employers and also with their colleagues and friends.

Radio commercials portray the fun and satisfaction that such men have gained in spending quality time with their kids and the difference that this can make to the lives of their children and partners.

The website is an extremely important communication tool. It provides factual information on relevant legislation and financial regulations, the lessons that have been learned and the good practices from daily life. With its polls, gimmicks, e-cards and popular games such as "vacuum victim" and "how to dream up a good excuse", it is attracting more and more visitors.

In addition to mass media, the Ministry organised discussion forums in secondary and vocational schools, using a TV talk show format. Through NGOs, it is also reaching out to ethnic minority groups, and the issue of role sharing has even been raised in mosques.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The impact of the media campaign was monitored in great detail and has been very positive. Using a representative sample of 700 individual men and women the Ministry measured the changes in their attitudes and perceptions from the beginning to the end of the campaign:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Three months after its launch, the campaign began to demonstrate its impact. At this stage, the campaign was known to 55% of the Dutch population. During this period, a change of attitude was recorded in relation to the statement, “If young children are part of the family, a mother should not have a job.” In January 2003, 40% of the respondents who had lower educational qualifications agreed with that statement, compared to only 25% in April of the same year. For those who had completed tertiary education, the figure was 38% who agreed in January but this had dropped to 30% in April.</li> <li>● According to the final analysis in May 2004, 59% of men and 52% of women were reported</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The main limitation of this campaign is the cost. Multimedia campaigns are very expensive, and so significant funding must be found.</li> </ul>

to have discussed the division of family tasks at least once a month. Agreements on sharing those tasks were mentioned as the most frequent result of such discussions. The last telephone survey also revealed that between April 2003 and May 2004, the number of men who had negotiated task-sharing agreements rose from 67% to 88%, whilst the percentage among women remained stable at 72%.

- ▶ There has also been significant impact in the private sector:
  - Apple Computer Corporation has decided to integrate the topic of reconciling work and family duties into their regular communication activities. This company is developing an Internet project involving all Apple users and employees in The Netherlands. The main question that it addresses is "How do men judge and benchmark themselves and others when it comes to fatherhood?"
  - The major Dutch business schools have now included the topic of role sharing in major business conferences and their management training and education. The Chambers of Commerce and the National Association of SMEs have also followed suit.
  
- ▶ Some of the main points of interest of this highly successful campaign include:
  - the use of humour
  - the targeting of men for what is often considered a "female issue"
  - the association of men in the design of the campaign
  - the use of different types of media
  - the partnerships established with different private sector bodies (enterprises, business schools...)
  - the holistic approach to the question (targeting young people, adults, employers, NGOs...)
  - the coordination provided by the Ministry (with its facilitated access to all target publics)
  - the fact that an extensive evaluation of the initiative has been carried out (as can be seen from the other examples, this is rare)

**Available online at:**

<http://www.wiedoetwat.nl/campagne/index.asp?mID=5995>

**Language(s) available:**

English, Dutch

**Other sources of relevant information:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-men-taking-lead\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-men-taking-lead_en.cfm)

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/data/document/etg4-suc-mentaking.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/data/document/etg4-suc-mentaking.pdf)

**Information Booklet for Employees on Equal Treatment and Full Equality at Work**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	<b>› 2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors</b>
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
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	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Federal Ministry for Health and Women

**Country:** Austria

**Date of Implementation:** 2006

**Type of Best Practice:** Guidebook

**Main objective**

To explain the Equal Treatment Act and give practical information to (female) employees and employee representatives about their rights regarding gender equality at work.

**Context**

In the Gender According to the new Austrian Equal Treatment Act (GIBG) for private enterprises, which entered into force in July 2004, the focus is shifted from the requirement of equal treatment to forbidding certain acts of discrimination. As stated in the brochure, inequalities between men and women are diminishing in some areas and increasing in others. Progress is slow and needs to be helped along. With women starting to enter the traditional male-dominated work-life areas, they form the majority of those who have experienced and reported discriminating acts (95% of cases brought to the Equal Treatment Commission in 1991-2004 dealt with discrimination of women).

**Description**

The 57-page brochure is based on the gender equality in employment part (Part I) of the Austrian Equal Treatment Act (GIBG).

The central theme of the booklet is GIBG and topics are distributed into two broad themes – (1) the purpose and the background of equal treatment and related laws and (2) introducing the theory and practise of the law along with future trends, first steps to be taken in case the employee's rights have been violated, and a list of institutions responsible for implementation of the law.

In the section "Equal Treatment Act: scope of application", the authors have listed changes/innovations compared to the previous equal treatment law. After the quotes from the law, some comments or explanations are given to shed more light onto the matter.

This material provides the employee with definitions of discriminatory acts in the workplace and gives very specific details of the responsibilities of the employer. Some examples from real life are presented; never full cases, just brief descriptions of certain behaviours that perhaps are not recognized as discrimination yet they fall under the scope of the Act.

Also, the employee is given a detailed overview of when and where to assert claims along with contacts and background info of relevant authorities.

In the end of the booklet there is check-list or self-analysis worksheet for the employee – How to get your rights.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The kind of comprehensive analysis of the previous and the present legal act, along with the mapping of every related party's responsibilities, is a good tool for empowering the employee to analyse her/his working environment and taking action in case his/her rights have been violated. It is also a useful tool for employee representatives.</li> <li>■ The comic illustrations and practical information bits (examples, check-list, and list of steps to be taken, contact info) help make the booklet more easy and entertaining to read.</li> <li>■ It is rare to find a tool of this type aimed at employees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Since the booklet is focused on the Equal Treatment Act and related legal matters, and covers all these issues very thoroughly, it might be too complicated for an employee to use it in case she/he has no previous experience with reading such materials. In order to use it properly, training would be required, or at least assistance from employee representatives or similar.</li> <li>■ The absence of concrete cases (only general examples are presented), may not encourage an employee to take action against discriminatory conduct.</li> <li>■ As the booklet is focused entirely on the Austrian Equal Treatment Act, it would need to be entirely adapted to the legal context in any other country. Because of this focus, the tool will also become useless if the current Austrian law is adapted or replaced.</li> </ul>

**Available for ordering at:**

Austrian National Equality Body, Ombud for Gender Equality in Employment

<http://www.bmgfj.gv.at>

**Language(s) available:**

German

**Other sources of relevant information :**

S. Feigl, A. Kartusch, K. Lukas, B. Weyss; *Your legitimate right: equal treatment and full equality of women and men in employment*. (Vienna: Federal Ministry of Health and Women (bmgf), National Equality Body, Ombud for Gender Equality in Employment, 2006).

ISBN 3-900019-95-9

### **III. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality**

In order for actors (employers, managers, social partners, ministries...) intervening in the private sector to gain expertise in the field of gender equality in the workplace, the provision of guidebooks, good practices and awareness-raising materials is often not sufficient. It is therefore necessary to develop appropriate training courses for all actors, at all levels, and to ensure regular “training updates”.

In this chapter, we present experiences from two Member States, as well as the European Training Network and two examples from the ILO in the field of training in gender equality. In the field of e-learning, we highlight the highly-interactive e-learning course on equality in the workplace from France, the on-line training course involving gender mainstreaming in the world of work developed by the ILO and the on-line training module for training workplace actors on work-life balance issues implemented by the European Training Network (ETN).

We also include two examples of training courses: the training course for human resource managers and company executives in gender equality in Spain offered as part of the national gender equality label certification process, and various examples from French enterprises of gender equality training which has been carried out.

Finally, in order to influence the way in which gender equality in the workplace is presented in the media, we have included an example of training in gender issues for journalists carried out by the ILO.

## E-learning on Equality in the Workplace

ACTION STEP	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
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	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** HALDE - Haute autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l'égalité (French Anti-Discrimination and Equality High Authority)

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** 2007

**Type of Best Practice:** Training

### Main objectives

To offer an opportunity for enterprises to follow an e-learning course on avoiding discrimination in the workplace.

### Context

Employers are key actors for introducing positive change in society concerning the fight against all forms of discrimination. The HALDE therefore decided to produce, and make available free of charge on their website, an e-learning module aimed at employers. Another e-learning module aimed at the general public is also available for download on their website.

### Description

The main target group of the e-learning module includes recruiters, human resource personnel, heads of businesses and managers at all levels, whether in small or large enterprises.

The highly-interactive module is introduced by a cartoon character who guides trainees throughout the module. It enables them to train in non-discriminatory professional practices through situation scenarios. On-line users log in, and are then taken through a variety of situations in the workplace: recruitment, promotion, decision-making and work organisation.

For each situation, a series of cartoon characters (who we meet regularly throughout the module) who work in the fictitious company "Toopartoo" - such as Dominique, the recruitment manager, and Daniel, the head of department - act out a different scene. At the end of the scene, the trainee is asked questions about discriminatory practices which the characters may have used. There is also an opportunity in each situation to learn more by clicking on "*en savoir plus*" – these links allow the learner to learn more about, for example, the definitions of different forms of discrimination (direct and indirect discrimination, etc.). At any point, the learner can try out their knowledge by clicking on the "quiz" button.

In the first scene for example, we can see Dominique in a meeting with Daniel, who is specifying the criteria he wants for his new sales manager. He specifies for example (among other criteria) that he

wants a man, because he states that a woman will not be prepared to travel as much and because he does not want his sales manager disappearing for 3 months on maternity leave. At the end of the scene, learners are asked to pinpoint the discriminatory criteria which have been listed by Daniel, the manager, and explanations are given as to why these are discriminatory. Then learners are told how to try and modify Daniel's criteria in a non-aggressive manner – for example by encouraging him to focus on objective criteria like the competencies which he wishes the new employee to have (rather than their sex, age or marital status).

The different situations each present different risks of discrimination in the workplace, or opportunities to ensure equal treatment. As learners work their way through the module, the situations become more complex and the discrimination less obvious. The module also contains an introduction to discrimination law and the legal risks incurred. Equal opportunities best practices are discussed as realistic alternatives to routine procedures.

At the end of the module, learners are referred to other tools developed by the HALDE for enterprises such as the Guide for Employers and the Framework for Action (see fiche 6).

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ This tool is very user-friendly: entertaining, amusing, attractive, with good variance between different forms of learning to keep the learner's attention (listening, reading, seeing scenes performed, taking tests and doing quizzes...).</li> <li>➤ The tool is free and easily accessible on line.</li> <li>➤ The tool not only provides information enabling trainees to identify discriminatory practices, but also solutions for avoiding them and promoting equal opportunities.</li> <li>➤ The module can be used for individual learning or in a classroom situation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The module concerns all forms of discrimination, not only gender equality.</li> <li>➤ As with all forms of e-learning, it is difficult to control how much each learner is assimilating. Capacities for this type of course vary according to learning abilities, levels of education and availability. The course is not enough alone to assume that learners will be "equality champions".</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

<http://www.halde.fr/elearning/>

**Language(s) available:**

French

**Other sources of relevant information:**

[www.halde.fr](http://www.halde.fr)

## GENDER CHECK – An Action to Promote the Balance between the Work and Private Life of Women and Men in Europe

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	<b>› 3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality</b>
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** European Training Network (ETN) as part of a programme set up between the EU-Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equality and ARBEIT UND LEBEN (Germany), CESEP (Belgium) and Leo Lagrange (France).

**Country:** Belgium, France, Germany

**Date of Implementation:** From 2007

**Type of Best Practice:** Awareness-raising / Training questionnaire

### Main objective

To raise the awareness of different actors, mainly from enterprises, on work-life balance issues, to test their existing knowledge and to provide training in this field. There is a particular focus on the role of men in promoting gender equality.

### Context

In the discussion over civil society and the economic structure of the European Union the question of reconciliation between work and private life plays an important role, and also needs to be viewed from the perspective of gender equality.

Even if many organisations, associations and federations in civil society, as well as companies and State bodies, welcome equal opportunity initiatives and strategies, their implementation tends to remain half-hearted. The reasons for this are diverse. They range from the lack of readiness of management and employee representatives to specifically promote the work-life balance for men to the protection of privileges and of firmly anchored allocations to completely reasonable fears about the loss of promotion opportunities and incomes. In practice, the situation is however still characterised by traditional role models. For example, according to an EU report on the equality of men and women conducted in 2006, the number of women with young children in employment is 13.6% lower than that of childless women. On the other hand, when it comes to men in long-term relationships with small children, their employment rate is 10% higher than that of childless men. Furthermore, the report states that 32.6% of women work part time on average, compared with only 7.4% of men. It is interesting to note that, according to a survey carried out among 21,000 companies in 21 EU Member States, as a European average, fathers took parental leave in 30% of companies. In Germany, this was only the case in 14% of companies, compared with 39% of French companies.

In order to address this issue the GENDER CHECK tool was developed within the context of a transnational European project.

## Description

The tool comes in the form of a questionnaire providing a selection of multiple choice answers, which can be used electronically and features evaluation software. It takes around one hour to complete the entire questionnaire.

The questionnaire concerns different target groups: employee representatives, personnel department staff and managers in organisations, associations and federations of civil society as well as private and public companies and firms.

For each question, there are comments (on the general situation), information and links to documentation. The items addressed are the following:

- Your experience of work-life balance: your appreciation of your own work-life balance, your activities outside paid work, who takes care of your children...;
- The situation in your organisation: is there a gender report, is your organisation working on measures to facilitate the work-life balance...;
- Laws, regulations, agreements and implementation: are you well informed of all measures (parental leave, training...), are these issues covered in agreements...;
- Work and time organisation: are there “models” of work and time organisation to make balance easier, how is the topic of part-time work considered...;
- Perspectives: which measures do you consider to be useful....

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To make clear the diversity and experience of the existing action systems and to clarify the role and meaning of the active role players and organisations of civil society as well as businesses for further development.</li> <li>■ The creation of a transnational partnership to exchange and reflect on the situation in Europe regarding the promotion of equality.</li> <li>■ The elaboration and publication of a strategic recommendation on how to strengthen the male perspective in the promotion of reconciling work and private life for both gender.</li> <li>■ The distribution of project results in further EU countries (GENDER CHECK and accompanying material, strategic recommendation and final documentation) as well as the distribution of the results in the media (internet, the media of European organizations and networks, media of member states, associations, organisations and institutions).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The tool does not yet exist in English.</li> <li>■ It supposes that all the actors concerned will spontaneously take the time to reply to this questionnaire. This means that the tool must be accompanied by strong communication on the advantages of using it for learning and training (both individually and collectively on the organisation’s perception).</li> <li>■ Beyond the training nature of the questionnaire, it would be useful if its results were analysed by the actors of the enterprise (HR manager, trade unions) in order to improve the situation.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[www.gendercheck.net](http://www.gendercheck.net)

**Language(s) available:**

English, French and German

**Other sources of relevant information:**

Babies and Bosses - Reconciling Work and Family Life (Vol. 4): Canada, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom

[http://www.oecd.org/document/49/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_34819\\_34905443\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/49/0,3343,en_2649_34819_34905443_1_1_1_1,00.html)

Reconciliation between work and private life

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/gender\\_equality/gender\\_mainstreaming/familylife/family\\_life\\_reconciliation\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/gender_mainstreaming/familylife/family_life_reconciliation_en.html)

How is the time of women and men distributed in Europe? - Issue number 4/2006

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?\\_pageid=1073,46587259&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL&p\\_product\\_code=KS-NK-06-004](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=1073,46587259&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_product_code=KS-NK-06-004)

## Óptima Training for Human Resource Personnel and Management in Gender Equality

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	<b>› 3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality</b>
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Instituto de la Mujer, Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales (Women's Institute, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs)

**Country:** Spain

**Date of Implementation:** Since 1996

**Type of Best Practice:** Training

### Main objectives

The main objectives of the training programme are:

- to understand the necessity and advantages of incorporating gender equality into human resource policies and practices;
- to analyse current human resource practices from a gender perspective;
- to learn about the tools and methods available to facilitate the integration of the gender perspective;
- to facilitate the creation of the Positive Action Plan (obligatory for enterprises participating in the Óptima programme).

### Context

In the past, Spain had some of largest gender gaps in the European Union. The employment rate of women was for example 48%, compared to 73% for men. Female unemployment is more than twice that of men.

In the 1990s, the Spanish Women's Institute decided that, in order to start changing this situation, it was essential to act within enterprises. It is for this reason that it launched the Óptima programme in 1995 aimed at ensuring the implementation of gender equality in Spanish enterprises. The programme received co-funding from the European Social Fund.

The programme has many facets, including the creation of a Gender Equality Label for enterprises (see fiche 45), promoting positive action for gender equality in enterprises, encouraging the advancement of women in Spanish enterprises and providing training. The training courses include those for women to reach top levels of management and to obtain high-level diplomas, and those for company managers and human resource personnel in gender equality: it is this latter training course which will be addressed in this fiche.

## Description

This training programme is made available to all the enterprises which have signed up to participating in the Óptima programme. It is aimed at human resource personnel and all levels of company management. The training programme is now an on-line course, including some collective training sessions and tasks set for each participant which are corrected by tutors.

The training course is comprised of three modules:

- Module 1: Gender Equality in Employment. This module addresses : (a) the situation of women on the labour market: work-life balance, differences between men and women in employment, and basic concepts for analysing and understanding differences between men and women, and (b) employment policies and gender equality: basic concepts of equality policies (equality and discrimination), positive actions, gender mainstreaming and gender equality plans.
- Module 2: Gender Equality in Human Resource Management. This module deals with: (a) equality and modernisation of enterprises: modernisation of enterprises, the promotion of gender equality in enterprises, opportunities and threats for the integration of gender equality into businesses, and (b): gender analysis of human resource practices: introduction, recruitment and selection, continuing training, promotion and career development, wage policy, reconciliation of family and working life and examples of good practice of the promotion of gender equality in enterprises.
- Module 3: Tools and Methods for Gender Equality in Enterprises. This module covers: (a) essential ingredients for the integration process: willingness for change, the role of management and of the human resource department, staff involvement, and the involvement of employee representatives, (b) the diagnosis on gender equality in the enterprise: what a gender equality diagnosis is, what it is useful for, how it is carried out (development phases, methodology and analysis) and by whom, and (c) the Positive Action Plan in enterprises: what a Positive Action Plan is and what it is used for, how it is drawn up (phases, type of activities), by whom, how it is implemented, development and monitoring of the Plan, keys for the development of the Positive Action Plan.

Individualised timetables are designed for each of the participating enterprises. The entire course takes place over approximately one month.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ The Óptima programme was chosen and disseminated as a good practice by the European Commission and by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.</li><li>➤ Some 45 enterprises have now participated in the Óptima programme, including: Adidas, BP, Barclays Bank, Coca Cola, Citibank, Microsoft, Nestlé, RENFE (the Spanish rail company) and Unilever. Other enterprises are in different stages of the process.</li><li>➤ The Óptima training programme for management and HR personnel in gender equality was highly innovative in Europe at the time of its launch and remains so today.</li><li>➤ The training programme ensures the quality of the Positive Action Plans required to gain the Óptima Label. It also contributes to the long-term impact of activities in favour of gender equality by raising awareness in these key groups.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ The training courses are not open to all enterprises, but only those signed up for the full Óptima programme. This means that individual managers or trade union representatives who may be interested in this training cannot join in the training courses unless their company signs up to the whole process.</li><li>➤ Larger companies tend to be involved in the full Óptima programme, so SME managers are often not able to access these courses.</li><li>➤ In order for the managers to be able to concentrate sufficiently on the on-line courses, enterprises should allow them specific time in which to do the courses.</li><li>➤ If possible, it would be interesting to provide refresher courses for managers having participated in this training programme, in order that they do not forget the lessons learnt.</li></ul>

- The training programme provides a good balance of theoretical information (statistics, concepts, policies) and practical tools for integrating gender equality.
- The combination of on-line, individualised courses and collective tutorials appears well-suited for the timetables of busy managers.
- In an evaluation carried out by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2007) in the Spanish train company RENFE, it is stated that: *“the training on gender equality conducted among the company and trade union representatives has increased awareness, as well as enabling the development of concrete resolution mechanisms. Moreover, RENFE has made the issue of gender equality an integral part of the continuous training activities provided to intermediate managers.”*

**Available online at:**

<http://www.hera2001.com/campus/index.asp?ProyectoID=10&c=4>

**Language(s) available:**

Spanish

**Other sources of relevant information:**

<http://www.tt.mtas.es/optima/>

*(See fiche 45 on the Óptima label for enterprises)*

## Awareness-raising and Training on Gender Equality for Managers

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	› 3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Various French enterprises (see below)

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** from 2001

**Type of Best Practice:** Training actions

### Main objective

To carry out awareness-raising and training on gender equality for managers in order that they implement the principles of gender equality in the different departments which they manage.

### Context

Certain French enterprises have noted in-company resistance to the development of gender equality, particularly in the large enterprises. Therefore involving and raising the awareness (or even training) managers at every hierarchical level on gender equality has become a priority of action in itself.

### Description

- In the Crédit Mutuel de Normandie (bank), the collective agreement signed on the 15th June 2006 includes a training module on “gender equality in the workplace” (including case studies) in its annual training programme for managers.
- In the collective agreement signed by Eaux de Paris (Paris Water Board) on the 15th December 2004, it is specified that all new managers should take part in a session on ethical management. Gender equality, prevention of discrimination and diversity management are addressed through presentations, case studies and summaries.

In this same enterprise, a test on ethical management has also been introduced into examinations leading to promotions. This involves evaluating all candidates for management posts on their aptitudes to manage without discrimination. A case study is proposed to candidates which allows the examiners to assess their legal knowledge and behaviour as regards equality and diversity. The candidate has an hour to analyse the situation and propose practical solutions in front of a jury. The score obtained in this test counts for 25% of the final score relating to the promotion. In order to prepare for this test, each candidate receives 10 hours’ training on this theme.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This step of training and awareness-raising is indispensable. It has been shown that enterprises that do not implement this type of measure are confronted with much more resistance when they try to apply the principles of equality.</li> <li>■ Eaux de Paris carried out an evaluation of the effect of its test on ethical management on success levels in examinations: the success rate is 90%, but it was shown that certain employees' examinations were postponed due to the fact that they did not appear to share these values.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Certain executives or future executives are reticent about receiving all kinds of training: they feel that they are sufficiently competent in human resource fields. It is therefore very important to communicate clearly on the key points of interest of this type of initiative, particularly if values on equality are not really shared. Similarly, managers have sometimes been reluctant to take part in non-technical training courses which are not centred on their job: they tend to consider that this is a "waste of time"...</li> </ul>

**Sources of relevant information:**

[http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/consulter-90/integralite-bonnes-pratiques-9165.html?id\\_mot%5B%5D=1&id\\_mot%5B%5D=0](http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/consulter-90/integralite-bonnes-pratiques-9165.html?id_mot%5B%5D=1&id_mot%5B%5D=0)

(see fiche 8)

[www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&r=accord-ent](http://www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&r=accord-ent)

(see fiche 5)

J. Laufer, R. Silvera; *Accords sur l'égalité professionnelle suite à la loi de 2001 : premiers éléments d'analyse* (Paris : Emergences, 2005)

Programme Equal Timetis

[www.emergences.fr/upload/ress\\_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf](http://www.emergences.fr/upload/ress_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf)

<http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/consulter-90/bonne-pratique-91/ethique-dans-10508.html>

**Language(s) available:**

French

## Conducting Gender Training for Journalists

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	<b>› 3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality</b>
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** International Labour Organisation

**Country:** International organization

**Date of implementation:** 2006

**Type of action:** Manual

### Main objective

To give gender trainers and lecturers an insight into how organising gender training for journalists.

### Context

The ILO office based in Moscow organised some gender training for journalists in Russia and other CIS countries in order to improve their capacity to deal with gender equality at work. Following these training courses, they have issued this publication compiling their experiences in order to disseminate them.

### Description

Considering the importance of communication to raise the awareness of general public on gender issues, one of the objectives of the ILO is promoting the idea of gender equality at work in mass media. In this perspective, in cooperation with the International Federation of Journalists, they issued a publication aimed at supporting gender advocates to deal with journalists. It is based on the outcomes of meetings, seminars, roundtables, public discussions and training workshops for journalists conducted in the region over the last few years.

This 64-page manual goes through all the questions those wanting to organise gender training for journalists have to deal with, from the strategy to the very practical organisation of the training. It is divided into different chapters presenting: the main stages of working with journalists, some tips to succeed in the preparation and the delivery of the training, a standard training format, some practical exercises for the trainees (mixed group, printed media reporters, TV journalists, or radio journalists), and some good practices in CIS countries.

For instance, among these exercises, journalists are shown the way they tend to reproduce gender stereotypes in their reports. Even though gender segregation in society does exist, this phenomenon is reinforced by the media. Interviews involving high status personalities tend to privilege men where as women tend to be over-represented when “common people” are interviewed. In other words, it has been proved that a higher legitimacy is given to male voices by journalists, whether unconsciously or not.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The manual deals in a very practical and down-to-earth way with gender training for journalists. Numerous tips are suggested to make the organisation of such training successful. Some models are even suggested (training programme, invitation letter, assessment form...). It makes this manual a very useful tool for the organisers of gender training for journalists.</li> <li>■ This manual is very precisely targeted. It specifically deals with gender equality at work issue, and suggests different exercises depending on the origin of the trainees (printed press, radio, TV, mixed group).</li> <li>■ The publication focuses on the methodology to organise some gender training for journalists. Thus, even if some tips do not apply out of Russia and CIS countries (see possible limitations column), the main part of the content of the manual can be implemented worldwide.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All the practical tips have been made in a specific geographical and cultural context (Russia and CIS countries). Some of them should not be taken in their present form, because they would not fit the Estonian context.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[www.ilo.ru/publications/files/MediaGenderTrainingEn.pdf](http://www.ilo.ru/publications/files/MediaGenderTrainingEn.pdf)

**Language(s) available:**

English

**On-line Course on Mainstreaming Gender eQuality in the World of Work**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	<b>› 3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality</b>
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** International Labour Organisation, International Training Centre

**Country:** International organization

**Date of Implementation:** 2007

**Type of Best Practice:** E-learning

**Main objective**

To provide policy makers, representatives of employers and trade-unions, the know-how to promote gender equality at work.

**Context**

Since the end of March 2007, the ILO has launched a Gender Campus, which is a virtual meeting place for gender experts and gender advocates. It includes on-line learning courses and other facilities.

**Description**

The Gender Coordination Unit of the ILO International Training Centre offers a course presenting strategies, good practices and tools for integrating gender equality at work. The modular structure of the course makes it very flexible for participants. Indeed, they can build a tailor-made learning path by choosing the modules they are interested in, with the exception of the first module which is compulsory and establishes a common overall framework.

The 7 modules provided are: Gender Work and Development: Basic Principles; International Legal Tools; Approaches and Methodologies; Statistical Tools; Planning and Evaluation; Advocacy, Sensitization and Networking; Institutional Machineries. Then, each module is divided into units. For instance, in the module devoted to approaches and methodologies, e-learners deal with 4 different units aimed at: integrating gender issues into technical cooperation; planning and designing a gender project; implementing the project; monitoring and assessing.

The participants can enrol in this course in two different ways, depending on their objectives and availability: guided lecture (about 10 hours per module) or tutored course, which offers the opportunity to share one's experience with other participants and lecturers (about 30 hours per module). The course is mainly intended for policy makers, i.e. national and local public services staff, and participants belonging to employers' and workers' organisations.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ This e-learning training scheme based on a modular structure allows some tailor-made learning paths, fitting the personal objectives of the different participant.</li> <li>➤ The tutored version of the course provides the opportunity to concretely make the link between what is learnt in the framework of the course and the professional activity of the participants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ This training course was designed by an international organisation. Thus, it focuses on methodology and does not provide specific and national information to implement gender equality projects in one's own country.</li> <li>➤ In spite of being tailor-made, the course is highly time-consuming (about 30 hours per module for the tutored version). In practice, a lot of professionals cannot afford spending such an amount of time in training.</li> <li>➤ The content of the course is more intended for policy makers than employers or human resources professionals. The results of such a training scheme would be more direct if it would target more precisely this kind of public as well.</li> <li>➤ It is not possible yet for the participants to start the course whenever they want. Both tutored participants and guided-readers have to wait for the launching of a training session to start the course. At the time of writing (Nov. 07), the next session is expected in Feb. 08.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

<http://gender.itcilo.org/lms/?mod=catalog>

**Language(s) available:**

English

## IV. Company practices for promoting gender equality

This chapter is by far the largest in the report, and is comprised of examples of policies and practices in favour of gender equality implemented by enterprises, in different fields, across the European Union.

The cases we have highlighted come from nine European countries (UK, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Finland, Denmark, Austria), and have been chosen, and classified, to represent initiatives in the following key human resource and management policies:

- a. Gender equality action plans
- b. Recruitment
- c. Wages & job evaluation
- d. Access to non-typical sectors (female- or male-dominated occupations)
- e. Promotion and access to management positions
- f. Access to training
- g. Work-life balance

The chapter also includes guidelines produced for helping enterprises to introduce gender-friendly policies in specific fields such as job evaluation and mentoring for combating horizontal and vertical segregation. We choose to classify them in this chapter, rather than in the chapter containing the other guidebooks, because of their direct relevance to the management policies presented here.

## Swedish Action Plan for Gender Equality

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	<b>› 4. Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Equal Opportunities Ombudsman (Jamö)

**Country:** Sweden

**Date of Implementation:** Since 1991 – reformed in 2001

**Type of Best Practice:** Action plans

### Main objective

All organisations with more than 10 employees are obliged to draw up and implement an Action Plan on Gender Equality. This Plan should include proactive measures in favour of equality, a review of pay differences and a follow-up of the results obtained.

### Context

Swedish law concerning equality in the workplace is very well developed. In 1991, the Equal Opportunities Act already stipulated the principle that enterprises should have an Equality Plan. This was reinforced in 2001 with the Pay Equity Action Plan which obliges enterprises to implement a more specific policy concerning equal pay. Finland adopted a similar system in 2005 (see fiche 21).

### Description

Each year, employers must prepare a plan describing their efforts to promote gender equality. The plan shall contain a survey of different measures which are required at the workplace and shall indicate which of such measures the employer intends to initiate or implement during the coming year:

- Working conditions: employers must take whatever steps may be required, insofar as their resources and general circumstances permit, to ensure that working conditions are suitable for both women and men.
- Employers shall facilitate the combination of gainful employment and parenthood with respect to both female and male employees.
- Employers shall take measures to forestall and prevent any employee from being subjected to gender-related harassment, to sexual harassment or to victimisation.
- Recruitment, etc.: employers shall, through training, skills development and other suitable measures, promote an equal distribution between women and men in various types of work and within different categories of employees.
- Employers shall endeavour to ensure that both women and men apply for vacant positions.
- At workplaces where there is not, in the main, an equal distribution of women and men in a certain type of work or within a certain category of employees, employers shall, in respect of new positions, strive in particular to recruit applicants of the underrepresented sex and shall seek a gradual

increase in the proportion of employees of that sex.

A report concerning how the planned measures have been implemented must be included in the plan for the following year. The obligation to prepare an equality plan does not apply where the employer had less than ten employees at the end of the immediately preceding calendar year.

As far as pay is concerned, the Pay Equity Action Plan obliges the company to reduce the differences between salaries for the same post, but equally for comparable work (between work in male- or female-dominated jobs, see fiche 25). The law describes the four obligatory assessment factors: qualifications, responsibilities, efforts and working conditions.

The Plan therefore assesses each year the situation of the previous year, and must include concrete measures, an estimation of their cost and a timetable for implementation (maximum 3 years).

One example is the Västra Götaland County Administrative Board in the west of Sweden with 650 employees and the largest county administrative board in Sweden. The Board carried out gender wage surveys in all its 15 sections and in December 2002 all sections but one had been surveyed. Certain generally well-known patterns emerged - men held senior positions to a greater extent than women. Men also had a higher and more individualized wage. The women worked as administrative staff, were paid less and were less likely to have an individualized wage. Also average pay for women was less than average pay for men in the majority of equal jobs as well as in job categories of equal value. The staff manager took the view that the wage surveys should work to the benefit of wage formation and wage negotiations in the organization. He also pointed to a number of benefits resulting from the job valuations. He had not imagined that the situation was such as it turned out to be! He had never before understood that he himself might have assessed women and men differently in setting their wages. (The example above is taken from a report written by Carin Holm and Ulrika Sjöbäck. It is published in the European Project on Equal Pay, A Gender Survey - how we did it [www.equalpay.nu](http://www.equalpay.nu))

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Swedish Gender Equality Plans are the most comprehensive and advanced. The principle is not only legal, but is genuinely applied in the enterprises.</li> <li>■ The extension of gender equality to the key issue of wage inequalities is very important. Sweden had noted that the overall improvements in gender equality (working conditions, recruitment...) were insufficient, and therefore introduced a more developed, and more constraining, section on wages.</li> <li>■ The existence of an external organisation (Jamö : Equal Opportunities Ombudsman) is very important because its role to incite (or even force) enterprises to respect the law and also monitors the measures (the law, in any case, is never enough on its own, including in a national context like Sweden where equality is fully integrated).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Very small enterprises (less than 10 employees) are not concerned.</li> <li>■ There are very few concrete examples from enterprises translated into English (only in Swedish).</li> <li>■ There is no general statistical monitoring of the Plans. However, in 1999, Jämo ordered a survey from Sweden Statistics. The results from this survey showed roughly that 25% of the private companies had equality plans according to the law, and 75% of the public authorities.</li> <li>■ Regarding the content of the Pay Equity Action Plans, evaluations have shown differences between companies: a survey carried out by Jamö, between 2001 and 2005, showed that, out of 900 enterprises, 100 had made adjustments (only 11%), approximately 1000 employees had benefited from an increase in wages for equal work, and 160 companies (9000 employees) had made an adjustment for work of comparable value (which is quite significant). In 2004-2005, another survey was carried out (again by Jamö) on 50 organisations (10 from the municipal sector, 40</li> </ul>

from the private sector): 24 of them had implemented an adjustment of wages (see Chicha, 2006).

**Available online at:**

[www.jamombud.se/InEnglish/](http://www.jamombud.se/InEnglish/)

**Language(s) available:**

Swedish, English

**Other sources of relevant information:**

C. Colclough, *Gender equality plans at the workplace*  
(European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2004)  
[www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/02/study/tn0402101s.htm](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/02/study/tn0402101s.htm)

A. Berg, *National Swedish questionnaire for Eiro report* (2004)  
<http://www.fr.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/02/word/se0310102s.doc>

M. T. Chicha, *A comparative analysis of promoting pay equity: models and impacts* (ILO, 2006)  
[http://www.world-psi.org/TemplateEn.cfm?Section=Pay\\_Equity\\_sub\\_page&CONTENTID=15055&TEMPLATE=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm](http://www.world-psi.org/TemplateEn.cfm?Section=Pay_Equity_sub_page&CONTENTID=15055&TEMPLATE=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm)

C. Holm, U. Sjöbäck; *A Gender Survey – The Västra Götaland Administrative Board*.  
European Project on Equal Pay  
[www.equalpay.nu/docs/en/1st\\_story\\_eng.pdf](http://www.equalpay.nu/docs/en/1st_story_eng.pdf)

## Finnish Action Plans on Gender Equality

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	<b>› 4. Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Office of the Ombudsman of Equality

**Country:** Finland

**Date of Implementation:** 2005

**Type of Best Practice:** Action plans

### Main objective

Since 2005, if an employer regularly has staff of at least 30 employees working in employment relationships, the employer shall implement measures that promote gender equality as set out in a gender equality plan to be produced annually that deals particularly with pay and other terms of employment. The gender equality plan may be incorporated into the personnel and training plan or an occupational safety and health action plan.

### Context

Gender equality plans were added to the Act on Equality between Women and Men in 1995. In Finland, all legislative changes concerning working life are prepared in tripartite negotiations.

Social partners have regular and active involvement on policy issues regarding gender equality. A so-called round table of equality, which comprises of the Ombudsman for Equality and social partners, meets regularly and has introduced several initiatives to improve gender equality. In 2002, there was a campaign for better reconciliation of working and family life. Furthermore, in the incomes policy settlement for 1998-9 it was agreed on a multidimensional equality project called Mosaic, which is a cooperation project between researchers, work organisations, and all national labour market organisations. One of its aims was to introduce equality measures for work organisations and a model for utilisation of an equality plan.

## Description

The gender equality plan shall be prepared in cooperation with personnel representatives and must include:

- 1) an assessment of the gender equality situation in the workplace, including details of the employment of women and men in different jobs and a survey of the grade of jobs performed by women and men, the pay for those jobs and the differences in pay;
- 2) necessary measures planned for introduction or implementation with the purpose of promoting gender equality and achieving equality in pay; and
- 3) a review of the extent to which measures previously included in the gender equality plan have been implemented and of the results achieved.

Two examples of Equality Plans can be cited:

- The Minister of Health and Social Services and the Ombudsman for Equality have rewarded the Finnish Police for its good practice related to equality planning. The initiative for equality planning was taken by the national police commissioner, who in 1997 set up a working group to promote equality among personnel in the Finnish police. The equality plan includes assessment of the gender structure of personnel, personnel training, wage structure, family policy measures, workplace atmosphere and sexual harassment. The gender equality plan is part of personnel strategy and its implementation is the responsibility of those in the police management who are responsible of general personnel strategy. The successfulness of the plan is monitored annually through specially developed indicators.
- The Minister of Health and Social Services and the Ombudsman for Equality have also rewarded Valmet Automotive, a car manufacturer from Uusikaupunki, for its equality planning. The concept of equality in this company is broad and in addition to gender includes issues related to age. The equality plan deals with the recruitment policy, on-the-job learning and task rotation, working conditions and working time, wages and rewarding, personnel training, situations related to change, family policy leaves, sexual harassment, welfare in the working community, discrimination in working life, implementation and monitoring of the equality plan. Cooperation committee monitors the implementation of the equality plan and sets new objectives for future plans. A set of indicators have been developed for which data will be gathered once or twice a year.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ There are many similarities with the Swedish experience (see fiche 20), but the Finnish experience is particularly interesting because the examples are available in English.</li><li>➤ The evaluation of the Plans is very precise, even if there are not yet many (see opposite).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ An evaluation of the Action Plans was conducted in 2002 (published in 2003), when the Office of the Ombudsman for Equality sent a questionnaire dealing with gender equality planning to 200 workplaces chosen by random sampling. The workplaces were chosen so that they were obliged to make an equality plan, i.e. they had 30 or more employees. The response rate was 73.5%. According to the Equality Act the companies are obliged to answer the queries of the Office of the Ombudsman for Equality in its capacity to monitor the compliance with the Act.</li><li>➤ In the 2002 study on equality planning, 90% of workplaces were from the private sector, so the results of the study for the most part concern private sector companies. According to it, equality planning took place in 27% of workplaces. In the private sector, in services equality planning took place in 27% of companies, and in industry in 28% of</li></ul>

companies. In other than private sector workplaces, equality planning took place in 21% of workplaces. There is not up-to-date information on the situation of gender equality planning in the public sector. According to an earlier study, all ministries have an equality plan. Large workplaces with more than 500 employees were most active in fulfilling their obligation to make gender equality plans.

**Available online at:**

<http://www.tasa-arvo.fi/Resource.phx/tasa-arvo/english/index.htm>

**Language(s) available:**

Finnish, English

**Other sources of relevant information:**

C. Colclough, *Gender equality plans at the workplace*  
(European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2004)

[www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/02/study/tn0402101s.htm](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/02/study/tn0402101s.htm)

R. Lilja, *Questionnaire for EIRO comparative study on gender equality plans  
at the workplace – the case of Finland*

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/02/word/fi0310203s.doc>

**Different actions in favour of gender equality in recruitment within French companies**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	› 4. <b>Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Various French enterprises (see below)

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** From 2004

**Type of Best Practice:** Actions

**Main objective**

To facilitate the recruitment of women at all levels.

**Context**

The French 2001 Law obliges the social partners to negotiate on gender equality. Furthermore, a national multi-sector agreement was signed by all the social partners in 2004. One of the key priorities is to facilitate and increase the recruitment of women. Different objectives are thus being pursued: addressing the lack of available candidates for certain jobs or sectors (for example in the construction or automobile industries); better utilising the potential of young, well-educated women; fighting against the discrimination in access to jobs which women sometimes face...

**Description**

**A) AXA Assurance (an insurance company): The Anonymous CV**

The anonymous CV is a means of clearly showing commitment to equal opportunities in the access to the recruitment process. Through this guarantee of equal opportunities, AXA Assurance aims to encourage categories of the population who are potential victims of discrimination to apply to job offers for sales staff which are published by the enterprise. In classic, non-anonymous recruitment procedures, these people would perhaps have disqualified themselves before trying. Thus, the anonymous CV aims to avoid potential forms of discrimination, conscious or unconscious, linked to the age, gender and origins of the candidate.

This procedure consists of carrying out a first selection of candidates based only on their education/training and professional experience. As soon as a CV arrives on AXA's website (recrute.axa.fr), the following data fields are masked before being sent, by intranet, to the teams in charge of recruitment: first and last names of the candidate, sex, date of birth, address and e-mail address. An automatic e-mail is sent to inform the candidate that he/she has been pre-selected. The person is asked to contact the person in charge of recruitment by telephone in order to agree on a

meeting. There is therefore no longer any anonymity after the automatic e-mail is sent. When an application is not successful, an automatic e-mail informs the candidate and the CV remains anonymous.

**B) Enterprises: SNCF (French rail company), banks, EADS (aeronautical industry), Aéroports de Paris (Paris Airports Authority): Setting targets for proportionality in recruitment – increasing the proportion of women recruited**

Various French enterprises have developed actions in favour of the recruitment of women. We have organised these on two levels: respecting the proportion of women candidates (or graduating from certain schools) in recruitment, or significantly increasing the proportion of women recruited, beyond the level of feminisation of the enterprise.

- The SNCF signed an agreement on the 8th March 2006 which commits it to “recruit each year, for each occupation in the “workers” category, (...) a proportion of women reflecting at least the proportion of female applications received” and to “recruit, for the “executive” category, a proportion of women equivalent to the number coming out of the educative system for each type of training corresponding to the needs of the enterprise.
- The banking sector signed an agreement on gender equality in the workplace on the 15th November 2006 which highlights that banks employ a majority of women (55%), but that they are only 36% of company executives. The agreement commits the signatories to go further: a quantitative objective of 40% of women in the total number of executives is foreseen as an intermediary step from now until 2010, but in the end equal numbers of men and women (50%) is the target. Similarly, EADS has committed to increasing the number of women recruited to at least 20% for all occupational categories (within 2 and a half years), whereas there is currently only 16% of women. In 2006, the 22.6% of total recruitments were of women (20.5% in 2005), therefore going beyond the enterprise’s targets. Finally, Aéroports de Paris does not specify a precise figure but commits itself to the fact that “if the required qualifications, experience and aptitudes for a given post are equivalent, priority will be given to a woman, unless a criteria is more favourable to a man for a limited period”.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<p><b>A</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The interesting aspects of this system are its simplicity and the fact that it avoids forms of conscious, or unconscious, discrimination by recruiters.</li> <li>➤ This measure allows the enterprise to have access to candidates who may have been excluded in the first stage of selection. Thus, for AXA, recruitment using the anonymous CV has increased significantly and now represents more than a quarter of the total (compared to 20% previously). We do not yet know if it has increased the number of women recruited as this system was only launched in 2005.</li> </ul>	<p><b>A</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It is important to find suitable ways of explaining this new approach to recruiters in order that they do not feel that it represents a criticism of their past practices, but rather a new tool available to them.</li> <li>➤ One of the limits is that although the process allows more women to pass the first phase of recruitment, it does not eliminate the risk of discrimination during the interview and in the other stages of recruitment.</li> <li>➤ Another possibility would be a “positive action” in order to favour female candidates over those of their male counterparts with the same level of competencies. In this case, the CV would of course need to reveal the candidate’s sex... (see section B).</li> </ul>
<p><b>B</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ As well as respecting the non-discriminatory principles, the main interest for enterprises is to diversify their recruitment, avoiding too much uniformity in their employees’ profiles,</li> </ul>	<p><b>B</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The principle of « proportionality » would seem more adapted to enterprises with a low level of female staff (lower than 30%) because it is less restrictive than a quantitative target. But</li> </ul>

which is a source of added value, innovation and even of performance.

- Furthermore, these measures can provide solutions for manpower needs in economic sectors lacking personnel.
- Finally, giving young women access to posts which correspond to their qualification level avoids “professional downgrading” which is often much more prevalent for women.

this principle has a limit: the number of “spontaneous” female applications is generally low in those sectors where young girls do not receive much encouragement to train (traditional industries). It is therefore necessary to carry out preparatory actions with the educative system in order to also work on the careers guidance of pupils (girls and boys) (see fiche 27).

- Committing to precise targets is very restricting, and requires constant monitoring of the efforts carried out by enterprises. It is still too often the case that there is not enough concrete evaluation of the measures implemented, which is partly the responsibility of union representatives.

**Sources of relevant information:**

[http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/consulter-90/integralite-bonnes-pratiques-9165.html?id\\_mot%5B%5D=1&id\\_mot%5B%5D=0](http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/consulter-90/integralite-bonnes-pratiques-9165.html?id_mot%5B%5D=1&id_mot%5B%5D=0)

(see fiche 8)

[www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&r=accord-ent](http://www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&r=accord-ent)

(see fiche 5)

J. Laufer, R. Silvera; *Accords sur l'égalité professionnelle suite à la loi de 2001 : premiers éléments d'analyse* (Paris: Emergences, 2005)  
Programme Equal Timetis

[www.emergences.fr/upload/ress\\_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf](http://www.emergences.fr/upload/ress_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf)

**Language(s) available:**

French

**Different actions in favour of reducing the gender pay gap in French companies**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	<b>› 4. Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Various French enterprises (see below)

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** From 2001

**Type of Best Practice:** Actions

Main objective	Context
<p>To introduce concrete measures for reducing the gender pay gap within enterprises.</p>	<p>One of the most entrenched forms of gender inequality is the gender pay gap: in every country in Europe, despite legislation, we can observe the persistence of pay inequalities (approximately 15% according to Eurostat sources). The differences in male and female wages can be explained by numerous factors : effect of the structure of jobs and sectors, part-time work, length of service, underestimated “value” attributed to female-dominated work (health, education, sales, cleaning...) and “pure” discrimination (wage differentials for strictly equivalent posts), etc.</p> <p>In France, the average inequalities are estimated at around 20% (all included). Confronted with the poor results obtained in this field, the 2001 Law (mentioned in fiche 2) was reinforced by a new law of the 23rd March 2006, making it obligatory to negotiate on the gender wage gap, with the threat of imposing even greater sanctions in 2010 (fine based on the total wage bill for enterprises which have not carried out negotiations). Since then, some enterprises have committed to reducing the wage gap. These are mostly large enterprises...</p>

**Description**

- Certain large enterprises (still too few) now recognise the existence of the gender pay gap and propose concrete measures for closing it. For example:

- EDF (electricity) has observed a pay gap of between 5 and 12%, depending on the categories, and has therefore decided, in its 2002 collective agreement, to include a catch-up rate of 4.9% of wage increases for women over 3 years
  - Schneider Electric (electronics) has committed to reducing the gender pay gap to below 1%. This enterprise has observed that the gap increases after 10 years of service and can be explained by the more frequent career breaks which women have: “we must take into account that when an employee ‘misses’ an individual pay rise, no ‘catch-up’ is carried out”. This concerns particularly the executive level of the company, which is going to earmark 0.2% of its total wages bill to achieving this reduction.
  - AXA (insurance) has earmarked at specific budget of approximately 1 million euros over a 3-year period.
  - Similarly, HSBC (bank) has set aside a budget of 800 000 euros.
- A more frequent solution is for enterprises to have planned to “neutralise the effect of maternity leave on wages”, i.e. giving a pregnant woman, the year of her maternity leave, the average general and individual wage rise in her category (or enterprise). This means considering the leave period as if it were a period of effective presence. The bank Crédit Mutuel is the first enterprise to have introduced this measure: since this date, the 2006 Law has generalised it.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reducing the gender pay gap is very difficult to implement because it is rarely direct discrimination (different basic salaries for men and women in equivalent jobs). Very often, it is the effect of non-deliberate measures which have indirect effects (criteria used to measure executive performance, promotions given to present staff...). We can therefore consider that these examples are innovative, and the beginning of a process of cultural change in management practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Unfortunately, we can only find a dozen or so large enterprises in France which have introduced these measures. Out of a hundred or so equality agreements, a large number of enterprises consider that there is no “unjustified” pay gap, except a difference of length of service of employees. This “resistance” can be explained by the sometimes high cost of introducing measures to catch up wage differentials in a context which is unfavourable to negotiating wage increases. Thus, even union representatives (particularly when they are men) fear that measures to close the gender pay gap will be carried out to the detriment of general wage rises.</li> <li>➤ Similarly, numerous middle management executives are not yet aware of this theme and consider that it is “normal” that a woman on maternity leave does not benefit from any wage rise. We can therefore see that this question requires profound cultural changes by all enterprise actors. In reality, the amounts presented in the above-mentioned examples are extremely low in comparison to the budgets set aside for communication and marketing for these large enterprises.</li> <li>➤ Finally, we can once again observe that these experiences are carried out more in large enterprises, for whom these measures indirectly constitute a communication tool linked to their brand image. It would be necessary to assist SMEs with financial and human (expertise)</li> </ul>

**Sources of relevant information:**

[http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/consulter-90/integralite-bonnes-pratiques-9165.html?id\\_mot%5B%5D=1&id\\_mot%5B%5D=0](http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/consulter-90/integralite-bonnes-pratiques-9165.html?id_mot%5B%5D=1&id_mot%5B%5D=0)

(see fiche 8)

[www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&r=accord-ent](http://www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&r=accord-ent)

(see fiche 5)

J. Laufer, R. Silvera; *Accords sur l'égalité professionnelle suite à la loi de 2001 : premiers éléments d'analyse* (Paris : Emergences, 2005)

Programme Equal Timetis

[www.emergences.fr/upload/ress\\_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf](http://www.emergences.fr/upload/ress_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf)

**Language(s) available:**

French

**Strategy in favour of Equal Pay in Scotland: “Close the Gap”**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	<b>› 4. Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** “Close the Gap” EQUAL Development Partnership, led by the Scottish Equal Opportunities Commission and involving (among others) the Scottish Executive (government), the Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC) and business representatives.

**Country:** United Kingdom (Scotland)

**Date of Implementation:** From 2002

**Type of Best Practice:** Strategy

**Main objective**

To tackle the gender pay gap in Scotland by targeting those with the power to change (government, enterprises, trade unions) and those affected by it (employees).

**Context**

In 2001, the average gap between women’s and men’s wages in Scotland was 19%. In some sectors, this gap widened dramatically. For example, the pay gap was 55% in the banking, finance and insurance sector. This was the highest earning sector in Britain in 1998 and a major employer of women in a key business sector in Scotland. For black and minority ethnic women, women with disabilities and geographically isolated women, the pay gap is even further. Women are also affected by the lower value placed on part-time work, as 83% of part-time workers are women. This situation led to the creation of the “Close the Gap” partnership and project, funded by the EQUAL programme from 2002 to 2005.

The aims of the strategy were to:

- engage employers to carry out pay audits;
- encourage effective action plans to combat inequalities in pay;
- engage unions in making equal pay a priority;
- empower women to challenge pay discrimination.

## Description

A five step model for an Equal Pay Review Process in enterprises was developed, set out in a toolkit (<http://www.eoc.org.uk/PDF/epk.pdf>). This process helps organisations to test their pay structures and to ensure that they are not discriminatory. An equal pay review is not simply a data collection exercise, as it entails a commitment to remedy any gender pay inequalities. This means that the review must have the involvement and support of managers who have the authority to deliver the necessary changes. The five steps in the process of the pay review proposed are:

- Deciding on the scope of the review and the data required;
- Identifying where women and men are doing equal work: like work, work rated as equivalent, or work of equal value (using job evaluation);
- Collecting pay data to identify gaps;
- Reviewing and monitoring, when pay gaps are free of discrimination:
- Developing an Equal Pay Action Plan; if pay gaps are not free of discrimination.

Advice was also developed for employers as to how to implement an Equal Pay Action Plan, in 4 clear recommendations accompanied by guidance notes:

1. Provide equal pay
2. Change the pay policies and practices that contribute to unequal pay
3. Introduce an Equal Pay Policy
4. Introduce ongoing monitoring of pay outcomes by gender

The STUC was involved throughout the activities and carried out awareness-raising and capacity-building activities for its trade union members. The Scottish Executive's role was also crucial in mainstreaming the tools and activities developed.

All resources can be found on the Close the Gap website which has clear access points for the 3 main target groups: employers, union representatives and employees. It contains a wealth of useful material including: up-to-date research on equal pay issues, case studies in enterprises (BAE, HSBC, British Telecom...), toolkits for equal pay reviews, publicity materials, advice on equal pay campaigning, the business case for equal pay and explanations of legal requirements.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Evaluations have shown that the strategy has had a positive impact:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scottish employers now carry out more Equal Pay Reviews than other British employers (49% in Scotland compared to 43% as a UK average).</li> <li>● More than 100 equal pay (union) representatives in enterprises were trained.</li> <li>● Equal pay is now a regular item on the collective bargaining agendas (even if other issues are given more weight).</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ The strategy is particularly innovative because of its global approach and its strong partnership involving the key actors able to make a difference in this field (government, equal opportunities bodies, trade unions and enterprises).</li> <li>■ The website is an excellent resource of information for all actors on this topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This type of strategy relies heavily on the commitment of the different key partners, and would be weakened significantly if one partner was to be inactive or refused to commit. A lot of work is therefore required in order to convince all the key actors to become involved.</li> <li>■ To be successful, such a strategy also requires a very strong lead partner (in this case the Scottish EOC) with expertise, time and resources which it can dedicate to the activities.</li> <li>■ Extra funding sources (as in this case European funding for the EQUAL project) are also important in ensuring time and resources (particularly for communication tools which are costly).</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

<http://www.closesthegap.org.uk/>

**Language(s) available:**

English

**Other sources of relevant information:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-close-the-gap\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-close-the-gap_en.cfm)

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=UKgb&national=68>

## Equal Pay for Equal Work

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	› 4. <b>Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Austrian Federal Ministry of Health and Women, Belgium Equal Opportunities Institute, Swedish Equal Opportunities Ombudsman,

**Country:** Austria, Belgium, Sweden

**Date of Implementation:** Since 2000

**Type of Best Practice:** Non-discriminatory Job evaluation system

### Main objective

To propose a method for enterprises to reduce gender wage gaps.

### Context

Wage gaps can be explained by two major sources: a gap for an equivalent job, and the existence of jobs of comparable value, not paid at the same level.

The principle of equal value requires a comparison of jobs by breaking down jobs into their various components (factors). Rating a job factor by factor, instead of as a total entity, reduces the risk of stereotyping male and female work. Most important is transparency and objective justification as well as that all relevant job demands are considered (e.g. emotional demands, communication skills).

The Austrian Evaluation guide was presented in the framework of the Austrian presidency of the European Union (2006). It proposes a simplified method of non-discriminatory job evaluation, aimed at enterprises, in order to check and correct any potential inequalities. The Belgian EVA project is an initiative of the Equal Opportunities Institute - supported by the Federal public employment, work and social consultation service, as well as the European Social Fund – with a view to improving equal treatment of women and men. CSC, FGTB and CGSLB are involved in this project, which involves various stages over several years. EVA means analytical job EVALuation. The aim of the project is to provide help for introducing new job classifications and encourage changing obsolete systems. The main principle is to raise social partners' awareness of gender-neutral systems; therefore the Institute can count on the cooperation of all of the social partners.

The Swedish guide "Steps to pay equity" is directly integrated into the Equality law and the obligation of monitoring Equality plans in enterprises (see fiche 20). It provides a method aimed at proposing different ways of evaluating jobs for company managers.

## Description

Pay can be negotiated individually between individual employees and employers. Many sectors and companies, however, want to create a structure, which ensures that each job is remunerated more fairly, on the basis of its value. This is what is called job evaluation and classification. Job evaluation makes it possible to attribute a value to each job and put them in a correct order. Then jobs are divided into groups and pay is attributed to each group or a scale leads to real pay structure.

Two principles play an essential role in this system: firstly, the nature of the job is the criterion used in job evaluation, quite independently of the intrinsic qualities of the person who is doing the job, i.e., the job is evaluated, not the services of the person occupying it; secondly, the principle of “equal pay for work of equal value”, i.e., more or less equivalent functions are paid the same. This is of particular importance, when comparing “men’s” and “women’s” jobs and explains why a good job evaluation system is an effective way of re-evaluating women’s pay and reducing the gulf between men and women’s pay.

When classifying jobs, there can be various phases, depending on the system, which is used. It is important to bear in mind gender neutrality at each stage of the process. The following phases can be identified:

- Description of the job – the content of the job is described very precisely and its significant components are listed.
- Analysis of the job – uniform analysis on the basis of the description. Each job is classified in line with a series of identical criteria.
- Evaluation of the job: determining its value on the basis of an evaluation table.
- Classification of the job – distribution of jobs in groups of equivalent jobs.

For instance, in the Swedish system (similar to the systems proposed in Austria and Belgium), 3 main areas are specified:

- Skills: Education/experience; problem solving; social skills (communication, co-operation, empathy...)
- Responsibility: for material resources and information, for people, for planning, development...
- Working conditions : physical conditions, mental conditions

Among these different factors, certain are in general under-estimated in traditional systems (empathy, responsibility for other people (including for example the sick, or children...) or indeed mental conditions (stress, monotony...).

The main aim of job evaluation is to create a pay structure and justify pay differences. The process of pay formation should, nevertheless, be clearly distinguished from phases of job description, analysis and evaluation. Establishing a link between pay groups and groups of jobs is part of a different process, namely collective bargaining, which is also essential, but should happen separately. Job evaluation is only a way of fixing part of pay, namely that which is related to the job itself. Besides that, there are other forms of pay, which in principle do not have anything to do with job evaluation, such as length of service payments, bonuses, over-time and extra payment for shift-work.

### How can prejudice be avoided?

It is generally accepted that analytical job evaluation systems offer better guarantees of gender neutrality than systems which are based on peer comparisons and ranking. The reason is that the latter run a greater risk of gender-biased value judgements influencing where jobs are put on pay scales, than is the case with analytical systems, where each job has to be systematically examined according to the same criteria. Gender discrimination is avoided if:

- the content of the job is described in a gender-neutral way (never referring to gender in the description);
- all relevant components of the job are described (one cannot evaluate something, which is not described);
- job evaluation is carried out in a gender-neutral way (without taking into account whether a woman or a man does the job);
- each job is systematically examined according to the same criteria;
- all the phases of the evaluation process and procedures are scrupulously implemented.

Only when all mechanisms of indirect discrimination have been identified can all traps be avoided and can job evaluation really lead to equal pay, in line with equal work accomplished.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The main aim of these methods of job evaluation is to fight concretely against wage inequalities. As long as occupational segregation exists, equal pay will not happen unless we compare typically male and female jobs. This also allows us to revalue traditionally female occupations, attributing a fair value to roles considered as “natural”, “innate” and little recognised (care, education, and administrative support). In the long-term, this might attract more men to these professions.</li> <li>■ In the Swedish case, the effects linked to this method have been highlighted in fiche 20: according to a survey, 160 large enterprises (9000 employees) had a wage adjustment for work of comparable value.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Implementing these methods is difficult: they require that the social partners are in agreement and that there are means for expertise (if possible external to the enterprise).</li> <li>■ In many countries, companies feel that their job evaluation system is their own business, and should not be made public.</li> <li>■ Men (including trade union representatives) do not always agree that certain jobs previously considered as “inferior” should be re-evaluated: this upsets the traditional job hierarchy.</li> <li>■ Revaluation of jobs requires funds to pay the rises, which is not always possible for enterprises.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

<http://www.frauen.bka.gv.at/DocView.axd?CobId=20830>

<http://www.iefh.fgov.be/DocListTool.aspx?levelID=63&lang=fr&themelD=5>

[http://www.equalpay.nu/docs/en/steps\\_to\\_pay\\_equity.pdf](http://www.equalpay.nu/docs/en/steps_to_pay_equity.pdf)

**Language(s) available:**

English, German, French, German, Swedish

**Other sources of relevant information:**

<http://www.iseres.org/msu/download2/DL8UK.pdf>

**Guidelines for mentoring in order to overcome horizontal and vertical segregation**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	<b>› 4. Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Gender and Technology EQUAL Development Partnership

**Country:** UK, Finland and Germany

**Date of Implementation:** 2005

**Type of Best Practice:** Guidelines

Main objective	Context
<p>To provide a practice-orientated vademecum on how to set up mentoring programmes for different female target groups.</p>	<p>Despite encouraging initiatives bringing about change in terms of sectoral and occupational desegregation, women opting for non-traditional career paths often feel like pioneers and in need of supportive environments. Mentoring can supply this kind of support.</p> <p>The evaluation of mentoring programmes reveals several positive effects for the mentees, (self-awareness and familiarity with female role models, support and advice concerning both professional and personal issues...). Companies getting involved often find that mentoring schemes help them to attract and retain qualified female employees.</p>

**Description**

This highly practice-orientated booklet provides clear information on how to set up mentoring programmes for different female target groups, including girls choosing careers towards the end of compulsory school, and young women during vocational training/education and/or the early stages of employment in male dominated fields such as science, engineering, construction and technology (SECT). Mature women who work in male domains and wish to advance their career are another target group. The mentoring schemes also incorporate approaches for ethnic minority women. Whilst conveying general guidelines on mentoring, this workbook contains methodologies and approaches developed by two universities with vast experience in supporting young women to access career paths in SECT, a major ICT company and a resource and training centre that accompanies girls to prepare for and successfully complete initial training in non-traditional occupations. Two different categories of mentoring are demonstrated through practical examples: the developmental type where mentees volunteer to be supported by mentors to develop themselves in a

relationship, usually with someone from outside the workplace, and sponsorship mentoring where mentees are backed by their manager to climb the corporate ladder. The itineraries described take interested readers step by step from a needs analysis of distinct female groups and/or employers to the final stage, which is a functioning mentoring programme that can be replicated for different target groups and in other contexts. Each chapter also contains case studies of "mentoring couples" and the main findings of the projects national and transnational evaluation. The European Mentoring Guidelines give practical advice on the pros and cons of individual, group, peer and web-based mentoring and also include a glossary with gender and mentoring terminology.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A clear, simple and practice-orientated guidebook which can give ideas on different types of mentoring programmes, and a step-by-step guide to implementing them.</li> <li>➤ The guidebook is innovative because it includes examples of mentoring not only for vertical desegregation (quite common) but also for horizontal desegregation.</li> <li>➤ Includes case studies from enterprises and a detailed description of the Deutsche Telekom mentoring programme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ In order to implement a mentoring programme, more detailed information would probably be necessary. This tool mainly provides a first level of information on what mentoring is, who it can concern, in what ways it can be implemented, and what its advantages are for staff, mentors and enterprises.</li> <li>➤ Mentoring itself has been proven to be successful, but is time-consuming and therefore costly for enterprises. They must therefore be strongly convinced of the benefits it can provide, and have necessary funding.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/products/sup/pro-029.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/products/sup/pro-029.pdf)

**Language(s) available:**

English

**Other sources of relevant information:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/products/prod029\\_en.cfm?query=-01-02&list=-prod064\\_en.cfm-prod030\\_en.cfm-prod046\\_en.cfm-prod068\\_en.cfm-prod120\\_en.cfm-prod075\\_en.cfm-prod029\\_en.cfm-prod058\\_en.cfm-prod114\\_en.cfm-prod088\\_en.cfm-prod085\\_en.cfm-prod039\\_en.cfm-prod091\\_en.cfm-prod065\\_en.cfm-prod111\\_en.cfm-prod033\\_en.cfm-prod061\\_en.cfm-prod082\\_en.cfm-prod084\\_en.cfm-prod127\\_en.cfm-prod005\\_en.cfm-prod028\\_en.cfm-prod040\\_en.cfm-prod112\\_en.cfm-prod119\\_en.cfm-prod126\\_en.cfm-prod066\\_en.cfm-prod043\\_en.cfm-prod125](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/products/prod029_en.cfm?query=-01-02&list=-prod064_en.cfm-prod030_en.cfm-prod046_en.cfm-prod068_en.cfm-prod120_en.cfm-prod075_en.cfm-prod029_en.cfm-prod058_en.cfm-prod114_en.cfm-prod088_en.cfm-prod085_en.cfm-prod039_en.cfm-prod091_en.cfm-prod065_en.cfm-prod111_en.cfm-prod033_en.cfm-prod061_en.cfm-prod082_en.cfm-prod084_en.cfm-prod127_en.cfm-prod005_en.cfm-prod028_en.cfm-prod040_en.cfm-prod112_en.cfm-prod119_en.cfm-prod126_en.cfm-prod066_en.cfm-prod043_en.cfm-prod125)

[http://www.kajaaninyliopistokeskus.oulu.fi/proj/womenit/in\\_english.php](http://www.kajaaninyliopistokeskus.oulu.fi/proj/womenit/in_english.php)

<http://www.equal-works.com/ProjectHome.aspx?ety=153b6f9d-ac4f-4668-aeb0-371207a7afd5>  
(do search for "mentoring", many tools available)

## Informing young women about traditionally male occupations – Girls' Day

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	<b>› 4. Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Nationwide Coordination Office for the Girls' Day (Bundesweite Koordinierungsstelle Girls' Day - Mädchen-Zukunftstag)

**Country:** Germany

**Date of Implementation:** Annual event since 2001

**Type of Best Practice:** Event

**Main objective**

To develop young women's interest in careers and working life in general, and particularly in male-dominated high technology occupations.

**Context**

In Germany women have caught up with men in terms of school education, but the differences in job orientations of young men and women follow strong gender lines, i.e. women are kept away from occupations in high technology. According to a report commissioned by the federal government from the Institute for Economic and Social Research (Wirtschafts- und sozialwissenschaftliches Institut, WSI) in 1999, 54% of all female applicants for apprenticeships chose just 10 out of a total of 400 possible occupations. The initiative was based on the US scheme entitled "Take our daughters to work day".

**Description**

The Girls' Day programme is run by an alliance consisting of various federal ministries, NGOs, representatives of employers and trade unions. On Girls' Day there are visits organised to companies, municipal governments, universities and research institutions (e.g. Airbus Deutschland, Deutsche Telekom, IBM, Alcatel SEL, AOL). High-school students aged 11 to 15 are given a day off from school to accompany their parents or special mentors to participate in their jobs. Besides the purpose of familiarising girls with the career opportunities (e.g. engineers and mechanics in aviation), skill requirements and work duties of a range of mostly technologically sophisticated workplaces, the programme also aims to allow students to develop contacts and networks for future application to an apprenticeship programme or a job.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Informing girls about different jobs in the labour market and encouraging them to make contacts with companies visited helps to change the 'gendered' patterns in the labour market. Also, this initiative may inspire the companies to think more about recruiting female workers.</li><li>➤ With the growing need for qualified manpower, exploiting the full potential of the entire future labour force (both women and men) should be at the top of the enterprises' agenda.</li><li>➤ 37 000 girls took part in the second Girls' Day initiative.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ It is difficult to evaluate the impact of such an activity in terms of whether the visits actually inspire young women to study a technology-related subject or pursue a career in any of the companies that are a part of the Girls' Day programme.</li><li>➤ The initiative is only focused on young women and not on young men. This in a way enforces the separation between girls and boys. It would be interesting to create similar opportunities for boys to discover career opportunities in female-dominated professions (health, education...).</li></ul>

**Available online at:**

<http://www.girls-day.de/>

**Language(s) available:**

English

**Other sources of relevant information:**

<http://www.kompetenzz.de/vk06>

## Access of Men to Traditionally Female Occupations

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	<b>› 4. Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** NGOs (BE, DK, IE), companies (FR, UK)

**Country:** Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, UK

**Date of Implementation:** since 2001

**Type of Best Practice:** training, awareness-raising

### Main objective

To encourage the access of men to traditionally female jobs.

### Context

The majority of the examples in these actions come from NGOs and concerns the care sector. A few examples come from private enterprises (France). In all cases, however, the reduction of gender segregation concerns the full life cycle (family behaviour, educational stereotypes, enterprises, etc.).

Generally when we talk about gender mix occupation, we usually focus on women entering typical male jobs. In addition to that, new actions also consider the complementary approach: to encourage men to access typical female jobs.

Care services, especially childcare and caring for the elderly are the domains where, traditionally, very few men have wanted to work. The reasons brought out to explain the situation include: for men it is difficult to develop a style of caring attitude that requires a great degree of intimacy with the clients, the working conditions and pay are not attractive enough, the training is very feminine (created by women for women).

Some countries have undertaken projects to make the care sector more 'men friendly'. Mainly they wish to change the status quo that is inhibiting positive developments.

- Belgium: childcare professionals' education level low, the sector is considered very feminine;

- Denmark: population ageing, due to moving from an industrial society to information society a lot of men have become unemployed;

- Ireland: inflexible work practices often exclude individuals from becoming members of the workforce and also prevent them from having a satisfying career.

In France, in a few firms where there are equality agreements (see Fiches 40 and 44), there are measures to favour the presence of men in female occupations. They are motivated to do this in order to fight stereotypes and to facilitate internal mobility.

## Description

It is considered that facilitating the breaking down of gender segregation both in vocational training and employment is a great challenge to the whole society, but the key aspect is to get the employers to embrace this attitude.

Activities include:

- increasing awareness, changing public opinion, influencing policy [BE, UK]
- analysis, interviews, focus group discussions on men's needs and obstacles regarding working in a certain sector [BE]
- training (assertiveness, sensitisation to diversity, media communication) [BE]
- creating workgroups to develop strategy ("development and learning groups" working on topics like Gender and Culture in Career Guidance, Education, Organisational Development, Care Sector) [DK]
- innovative staffing approaches involving recruitment and training of men as childcare workers [IE]
- conferences (title of conference *Childcare: Men's Work*, topics discussed *Childcare in Ireland: Evolving policy/Future Directions*, *The Invisible Man: Gender and Development of Young Children* and *How Dangerous are Men?*) [IE]
- circulating information on alternative job prospects in sports centres, working men's clubs and leisure centres [UK]
- involving practitioners (men who have retrained as childcare workers) in recruitment events [UK]
- offering induction programmes and mentoring (also buddying, coaching, diversity networks) at the workplaces to help the atypical employees to feel less isolated [UK]
- inclusive apprenticeship recruitment and selection system for the young (*everyone deserves a chance*): after submitting an application the candidate is invited to an information day to give an interview and do a basic skills assessment, then the candidate spends one day working in the (childcare) facility, the candidate will be assessed and the person gives a brief report on the experience. Selection decision is made based on the candidate's attitude, commitment and practical approach. Training places are offered to the strongest candidates, others are encouraged to gain more experiences in the given field and reapply in a few months.

Some companies in France (Air France, Schneider Electric Systems, Sejer Éditis Group, etc.) have equality plans and they have developed different measures to encourage men to enter traditionally female occupations.

Air France organizes forums and meetings to educators and pupils/students in order to present the different occupations available in Air France. This action is done in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. The aim of this action is to change the traditional occupation division in aviation (more men can be found in specialists' occupations both on the ground and in air like pilots and mechanics, and there are more women in service, i.e. handling retail and booking tasks on the ground and attending flights in the air). They wish to encourage women to take up traditional male jobs, and also, to encourage men to take traditional female jobs. It is a challenge because according to a study done by Air France, the high school students still have strong convictions about job segregation.

Schneider Electric Systems is one of the companies in France well known for its equality agreement (signed in 2005). One of the initiatives based on the agreement is to offer women retraining to improve their vocational qualification (in the first initiative, 200 women were planned to be included in the action plan). The action also supports men to take up traditional female jobs (especially clerical jobs). The focus of the action plan has been on training and changing the title of position (*for instance the title of a secretary is perhaps too pejorative for men in such a position and so the title of an assistant could be more suitable*).

The proactive action recommendations made by the Equal Opportunities Commission in UK can be transferred to all employers in all countries. The Commission recommends that employers should:

- train, recruit and retrain the non-traditional sex in their sectors
- re-skill atypical employees to undertake non-traditional work;

- support and promote better, more flexible employer practices;
- offer at least one non-traditional work experience placement.

In addition to that, society would benefit from reconsidering the values of female work, especially care, education and supportive tasks (which are considered by the majority of firms a “cost” to the company and “unproductive ventures”).

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Decrease unemployment among men / expand employment prospects of men who have lost their jobs due to the countries economic restructuring [DK].</li> <li>■ The care sector’s demand for employees will increase very quickly due to population ageing and on the other hand women have access to wider selection of occupations nowadays.</li> <li>■ Facilitate the development of a broad and diverse pool of candidates [DK].</li> <li>■ Promote non-stereotyped role models in order to foster the development of egalitarian gender role attitude and behaviour in children [BE, FR].</li> <li>■ ... and reconsider the value of typical women’s jobs in the society.</li> <li>■ Reducing occupational segregation enhances business and productivity [IE, FR].</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Even if the image of the typical female jobs has been improved, the stereotypes are still very strong for men to overcome.</li> <li>■ There are potential barriers in the care sector because women have ‘internalised’ the occupation and are not that open to let men to work together with them; especially as regards the safety of the children.</li> <li>■ Because of the strong images and stereotypes, it takes a long time to have a real impact in the society; the results and the evaluation of the current actions have not produced sufficient data.</li> <li>■ There is a need to reform the care sector to recognise informal skills and to professionalize this sector (official training, improvement of working conditions and salary, etc.).</li> <li>■ The employer who decides to start with this kind of a programme will face the need for additional human resources, time and finances.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[www.sos-mx.dk](http://www.sos-mx.dk)

**Language(s) available:**

Danish

**Other sources of relevant information:**

France

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?national=NAT-2004-42539&lang=fr&cip=FR>

Ireland

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-win-win-flexible-work\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-win-win-flexible-work_en.cfm)

UK

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/pages/eocdrccre.aspx>

J. Laufer, R. Silvera; *Accords sur l'égalité professionnelle suite à la loi de 2001 : premiers éléments d'analyse* (Paris : Emergences, 2005)

Programme Equal Timetis

[www.emergences.fr/upload/ress\\_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf](http://www.emergences.fr/upload/ress_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf)

## Introduction of Quotas of Women in Boards of Directors of Private Companies

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	› 4. <b>Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Norwegian Government

**Country:** Norway

**Date of Implementation:** From 2003

**Type of Best Practice:** Government policy

### Main objective

To reinforce the proportion of women in top management within enterprises.

### Context

The presence of women in the highest decision-making bodies in enterprises, particularly the largest ones, remains weak throughout Europe. According to the European Commission, in the 50 largest enterprises on the stock market in the 30 main European countries, there are only 3% of women directors and women make up only 11% of decision-making boards.

Norway is one of the countries which has been most pro-active in this field.

More recently, Spain has also introduced a new law (in March 2006) which obliges all companies to have at least 40% of women on their Boards of Directors.

### Description

From 1st January 2004, the boards in all State-owned companies are obliged to have a minimum of 40 percent representation of each gender. The Parliament has passed corresponding amendments regarding public limited companies in the private sector. For these companies, the regulations will be effective from 1st January 2006.

The aim is to achieve a 40% share of female board members in both larger private firms and public enterprises. The proposed legislation would be made applicable to private companies only if they fail to achieve an acceptable level of female representation on their boards. The government sees this as an equal opportunities issue and argues that the business and industry community is not doing enough.

The main features of the government's proposal are as follows:

- With regard to board members elected by company owners:
- on boards with two to three members, both sexes are to be represented;
- on boards with four to five members, each sex is to be represented by at least two members;

- on boards with six to eight members, each sex is to be represented by at least three members; and
- on boards with nine members, each sex is to be represented by at least four members, and on boards with more than nine members, at least 40% representation of each sex is required.

The new law is to apply to all state-owned companies, inter-municipal enterprises and public limited companies. The latter is by far the largest group, and consists of mainly larger private companies open to investments from external investors (but includes many more companies than those listed on the stock exchange). Quota rules are not proposed for private limited companies, because these mainly consist of small family enterprises where the owners are represented in person on the board. In January 2006, as foreseen, the government sent out a reminder that all enterprises must be in conformity by 2008...

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 37 000 girls took part in the second Girls' Day initiative. The outcomes as per 2006 show that 30% of the companies have already fulfilled the legal requirement. 100 women, younger and more qualified than their male fellow-workers, were elected. The boards of directors still have 545 seats available to women. In 2007, the progression is however much slower: it is estimated that 60% of Norwegian companies have fulfilled this obligation... Overall, about 500 Norwegian companies, including firms listed on the stock exchange and several hundred others, have to respect the quota.</li> <li>➤ Such a strong public statement on behalf of policy-makers has had an impact outside of the Norwegian borders. It seems that no other similar policy has been applied in private companies. Even if time will be required for adaptation (and extra delays will be required), this initiative is likely to have very concrete results.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Restrictive measures such as quotas are often criticised and this principle is not often welcomed, even by the candidates for posts themselves. In order to combat this negative perception, it is necessary to carry out information campaigns, explaining that the aim is to re-right an unjustified inequality, and only to give priority to one gender (or other discriminated group) with exactly the same competency level.</li> <li>➤ Over-interference by the State in private sectors is another common criticism. But not intervening carries the risk of confirming a situation which has already gone on too long: the under-representation of women in decision-making posts whereas they increasingly have the required competencies and qualifications...</li> <li>➤ Even in Norway, the measure was not approved unanimously: as being, certainly, a management limitation imposed on the directors of companies; women are sometimes appointed even if their directors do not find them qualified enough for the positions. In order to overcome this situation, and to assist companies in training women to the relevant level of competencies, the Norwegian Enterprise Confederation developed a programme entitled "Female Future", and made a joint list of women candidates available and capable of holding offices in boards of directors.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/bld/Topics/Equality/Balanced-gender-representation-on-compan.html?id=445728>

**Language(s) available:**

English, Norwegian

**Other sources of relevant information:**

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2003/06/feature/no0306106f.html>

## Training and Coaching Women in Middle Management

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	› 4. <b>Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of the Structure:** Copenhagen branch of the Trade Union of Commercial and Clerical Employees (HK)

**Country:** Denmark

**Date of Implementation:** 2004–2006

**Type of Best Practice:** Training and coaching programme

### Main Objective

To help women in middle management positions to develop their potential and to access senior management positions.

### Context

In the EU women account for just 32% of all managers. Denmark ranks above EU average in gender equality policies in general, but that is not the case in management issues. According to the analysis carried out by the Confederation of Danish Industry, 70% of women in middle management lack the ambition to move to a higher position. Main reasons tend to be family obligations, that companies give priority to men and that women value communication and cooperation whereas male-dominated companies value strategic and visionary skills along with achieving economic results. On the other hand, research done in US indicates that companies with women at the top generate considerably better bottom lines.

### Description

The Copenhagen branch of HK, in partnership with the Danish Centre for Gender Equality Research and the Centre for Leadership (Roskilde University) along with the management consulting company Mastercoaching, created a model for training and coaching women to maximize their management potential, within the context of an EQUAL project funded by the European Social Fund.

The project consortium had two target groups. Firstly, they invited women who were holding a position in middle management or just about to be promoted there to take part in the project. Altogether there were 50 participants between the ages of 35 and 45, including women from ethnic minority groups, and they came from public and private enterprises and organisations in and around Copenhagen. The employers were asked to grant the employees 28 free working days during the one-and-half year

project. Secondly, 13 trade union advisors were involved to be trained to become coaches and act as change agents within their organisations. The two groups' training was inter-related in the large part.

The training for women in middle management combined management skills and tools with knowledge and hands-on experience of concepts that are demanded by the business community.

The programme was distributed into four modules with each containing theoretical and practical components. The agenda consisted of topics like:

- development of personal leadership;
- development of personal plans, power and perseverance;
- personal planning for the future;
- personal management style;
- coaching employees;
- discussion and facilitation;
- etc.

Each participant was also assigned a personal coach. The method of coaching (persistently asking questions instead of lecturing and informing) helped the women to develop a personal management style based on the balance between the corporate and the personal values. For women, the link between corporate and personal identity, values and vision is very important for wanting to advance in their careers.

A self-supportive version of the programme is being transferred to other mainstream institutions along with a virtual tool kit which is being developed.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Offering women training on how to develop as a manager and how to avoid being hindered by typical barriers in working life, is a good way of supporting gender equality in management.</li> <li>➤ This kind of training and coaching programme is very personal and so it helps women to find development solutions to their personal career situation.</li> <li>➤ Training trade union advisors to coach is useful to mediate this self-development approach to other staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The approach is labour-intensive from both the organiser's and the participants' side. Employers might also not be supportive of their employees missing so many working days.</li> <li>➤ Coaching techniques and methods would need to be adapted in different Member States to the national business environment and situation of women on the labour market.</li> <li>➤ Women who have received this kind of coaching might leave their current employer if her career pursuits are not supported by the company's management. Companies must therefore consider how the women's new skills and expectations can be accommodated after training.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[www.ledelse-med-stil.socialfonden.net](http://www.ledelse-med-stil.socialfonden.net)

**Language(s) available:**

Danish

## Different Actions in Favour of Developing Gender Equality in Access to Training in French Companies

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	<b>› 4. Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Various French enterprises (see below)

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** From 2001

**Type of Best Practice:** Actions

### Main objective

Facilitating the access of women to training and increasing their proportion in training courses.

### Context

Training is an essential lever for gender equality: whether it be acting on the educative system in order to favour diversified career choices for girls and boys; or whether it be ensuring better access for women to vocational training in order to achieve in-company promotions.

In France, approximately 35% of employees (male and female) benefit from training, but significant differences can be noted between the sexes and according to different occupational categories. Training is most widespread for the highest qualified employees in general. But there are also gender inequalities: female manual workers and non-managerial employees are less likely to have access to training than their male counterparts.

Some French enterprises have implemented actions in order to achieve gender equality in access to training at all levels.

### Description

From 1st January 2004, the boards in all State-owned companies are obliged to have a minimum of 40 percent representation of each gender. The Parliament has passed corresponding amendments:

- Certain enterprises have established a partnership with the Ministry of Education or the National Agency for Vocational Training in order to meet with pupils and encourage them to take up traineeships, or get to know certain professions better. Air France has for example created an association called 'Airemploi' (operation 'Terre et Ciel' (Earth and Sky)) which, since 2001, has been presenting all the airport and aeronautical occupations in high schools. There are two main objectives: firstly, to introduce the occupations to everyone (young people, teachers, headteachers...) and thus to attract more candidates and, secondly, to carry out presentations at careers guidance events. Gender equality has been integrated into the presentations carried out

by these speakers in order, for example, to encourage young women to consider a career as a pilot, and young men as stewards.

- Certain collective agreements on gender equality aim to reinforce the proportion of women in training courses and, for example, to implement a specific training plan.
  - In Schneider Electric (electronics), 200 female manual workers were therefore able to benefit from a training course leading to a diploma (voluntary access);
  - In EDF (electricity), the objective in the collective agreement is to reduce the gender gap in participation in training courses. This means improving the organisation of training courses: carrying out training activities locally, reducing the length of training courses, introducing a more modular form of training, carried out in a more decentralised manner. The enterprise is still considering whether to pay for childcare costs during training.
  - In the Crédit du Nord bank, the proportion of men and women in training courses must correspond to the gender balance in the occupation concerned. The objective is to change the organisation of training in such a way as to limit the journeys necessary. Reimbursement of childcare costs are foreseen for overnight stays away from home for training.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These experiences are interesting and require a public commitment to achieving a gender balance in access to training. This means recognising that enterprises can play a role, from an early stage, in the representation of different occupations and can contribute to changing mentalities in terms of training and career choices. This dimension is totally new and still only partial, because enterprises very often consider that this is “not their fault”, but is a result of the educative system and of family choices.</li> <li>■ Implementing strategies to facilitate training access for mothers (or fathers) is also innovative because, until recently, the personal situation of employees (whether male or female) was not taken into account.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ As for the other measures, these policies have a cost and limit the possibility for SMEs to carry out actions, whether in terms of partnerships (time and human resources necessary for these operations) or in terms of direct cost. Support from the public employment services (PES) and the Ministry for Education is therefore necessary.</li> <li>■ This type of action requires that the educative system, and partially the public employment services (PES), accept a certain degree of interference from the private sector. In the French case, there is still a certain amount of inertia and bureaucracy in these public services which make interaction difficult between these two spheres.</li> </ul>

**Sources of relevant information:**

[http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/consulter-90/integralite-bonnes-pratiques-9165.html?id\\_mot%5B%5D=1&id\\_mot%5B%5D=0](http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/consulter-90/integralite-bonnes-pratiques-9165.html?id_mot%5B%5D=1&id_mot%5B%5D=0)  
(see fiche 8)

[www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&r=accord-ent](http://www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&r=accord-ent)  
(see fiche 5)

J. Laufer, R. Silvera; *Accords sur l'égalité professionnelle suite à la loi de 2001 : premiers éléments d'analyse* (Paris : Emergences, 2005)  
Programme Equal Timetis

[www.emergences.fr/upload/ress\\_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf](http://www.emergences.fr/upload/ress_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf)

**Language(s) available:**  
French

## Initiatives by UK Enterprises to Promote Work-Life Balance

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	› 4. <b>Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Different enterprises based in the UK (see below)

**Country:** United Kingdom

**Date of Implementation:** Since 1999

**Type of Best Practice:** Actions

Main objective	Context
<p>To implement effective policies to help employees better manage their work-life balance.</p>	<p>The Lisbon strategy requires that by 2010 the number of childcare facilities in each Member State should be increased to 33% for 0-3 year olds and to 90% for children of 3 years up until mandatory school age.</p> <p>The UK is still far from meeting this target, with only 27% of children aged 0-2 years in childcare, and 58% for 3-4 year olds.</p> <p>“Working Families” is a campaigning charity that supports and informs working parents and carers. It also works with employers to encourage them to reap the business benefits of helping their employees balance their work and home lives. Its website features a database of case studies of enterprises who have implemented innovative policies in order to help employees better manage their work-life balance.</p>

## Description

UK enterprises have developed a range of initiatives in order to promote a better work-life balance for employees. These include:

- *Promoting work-life balance for men:* Five Boroughs NHS (National Health Service) Trust has successfully raised the male agenda, by taking into account the needs of new fathers, flexible workers and non-resident dads (custody issues) with the aim of improving gender equality. A budget of 143,000€ has been devoted to these measures including appointing a permanent Work-life Balance Manager, and promoting childcare responsibilities for fathers. They have a comprehensive paternity/co-parenting policy with leave at full-pay.
- *Childcare and parent support:*
  - at BP (British Petroleum) Amoco, all employees with children have the opportunity to meet and discuss parenting at regularly held Parent Network meetings. Parent Education courses and a range of workshops on issues, such as balancing work and home, are provided on an 'as need' basis. Parents are helped to plan and select childcare and are given information on existing facilities in their area of choice as well as guidance on cost and formalities. For those wishing to employ a nanny, a register has been set up which provides opportunities to network with other BP Amoco parents and their nannies for mutual back-up or potential nanny-shares.
  - in the Citigroup, among the numerous work-life balance options provided in the context of the Symmetry programme, there is free emergency back-up childcare in the form of 20 available spaces at Little Herons Emergency Childcare Centre in Canary Wharf, taking children from 3 months to 8 years.
- *Flexible working:*
  - Aricot Vert Design is an SME employing 17 members of staff. The female managing director recognises there is a strong business rationale for work-life balance practices and all Aricot Vert staff, including herself, can work flexible hours as necessary. As she says: "if we show flexibility to an employee, invariably they will show us greater flexibility at times of heavy workload or during holiday periods."
  - British Telecom (BT): anyone in BT can request flexible working arrangements as part of their career/life planning discussions with their line manager. Part-time, flexitime/staggered hours, home/tele/ flexiplace, compressed working week, job-share, annualised hours, and term-time working are all on offer. The line manager reviews each request on an individual basis taking into account business needs as well as the more practical details of the employee's facilities at home.
  - In the Automobile Association (AA), in order to retain experienced staff and to help people with families to balance work and home, a wide range of flexible working practices has evolved. These include the move to teleworking for a proportion of the staff.
- *Maternity leave measures:*
  - at BP (British Petroleum) Amoco, for those going on maternity leave, advice and an information pack are available on all aspects of maternity rights, including BP Amoco policy. Once an employee is on maternity leave or a career break, she can be kept up to date with news from work via the 'Keep In touch' scheme. The scheme can also help with queries about return-to-work dates, childcare, networking with other parents via the newsletter and other in-house literature and information to help an employee feel supported and included.
  - Jaguar and Land Rover (automobile industry) have developed a highly beneficial maternity policy (52 weeks on full pay, and at Land Rover there is an option of an additional 52 weeks unpaid whilst retaining employee status, as compared to the State provision of only 26 weeks of statutory maternity leave, with 60-90% of pay). Further support is offered around the time of a second child, which has been identified as a time when women are more likely to leave. At one plant, nursery places have even been offered to grandparents caring for their grandchildren.
- *Services for employees to facilitate work-life balance:* Jaguar and Land Rover offer concierge services, including dry-cleaning collection, photograph development, video hire and shops. There is either a workplace gym or corporate gym affiliation at five of the six sites.
- *Other work-life strategies:* at Farrelly Engineering and Facilities (construction industry), the company has introduced a work-life strategy to combat the negative effects of over-long working hours. Now no one is allowed to start work before 8.30am or work later than 5pm, nor to take work home. This is monitored by a daily meeting at 5pm for everyone to share their problems and look forward to the next day's challenges. There is total flexibility for family emergencies and domestic needs. Personnel Development Reviews take place every 2 weeks, at which personal difficulties can also be addressed, with no time limit.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="188 315 767 927"> <p>➤ Some of the initiatives above are costly and so, despite the business benefits, may only be options for larger companies.</p> <p>Teleworking: the AA has seen considerable benefits, both for the business and for individual employees. The productivity of teleworkers is 30% higher than office-based staff. Sickness absence is very low and quality of performance very high. The AA benefits from greater flexibility to deal with unexpected peaks in customer demand. Teleworkers cite a variety of benefits: better quality time with family, a more relaxed working environment, reduced expenses and less time wasted in commuting and the associated stress of travelling to work. Several people who could only work part-time previously because of family commitments have been able to extend their hours and to benefit from increased salaries.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="188 958 767 1509"> <p>➤ Flexible working: at BT, flexible working patterns have proved popular since they were introduced and now around 5000 BT people work from home on a permanent basis. Many more may choose to share their working time between home and office. The business benefits of flexible working practices are many and include; enhanced employer brand, improved productivity and motivation, flexible resourcing, reduced sickness absence, reduced accommodation costs. These are documented in BT's lifestyle portfolio, 'Achieving the Balance'. In its annual employee satisfaction survey (CARE) which regularly reviews how BT people think they are doing, 72% of them felt that they could balance the demands of work with their lives outside BT.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="188 1541 767 1727"> <p>➤ Maternity leave measures: benefits to BPA include improved recruitment, retention and maternity return rates (up from 50% to 99%), and improved balance of management, creating a higher quality workforce and, externally, an enhanced public image.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="188 1758 767 2029"> <p>➤ Childcare and parents support: BPA is clear about the win-win benefits to the business and to parents: employees get support through sharing experiences with others in the same situation, helping to break down the isolation and anxiety experienced by some parents. By helping staff to feel supported, the organisation encourages them to feel more confident, committed and</p> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="804 315 1369 533"> <p>➤ These experiences are presented in a way to promote work-life balance and so discuss only the positive aspects of each initiative. Before introducing them in enterprises however, careful thought must be given to both the positive and potential negative aspects.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="804 564 1369 781"> <p>➤ Developing services for employees can be beneficial in employees' work-life balance and in making them more available for work commitments. However, there is a danger of the employer becoming over-involved in the employee's personal life and freedom of choice: the "Big Brother" phenomenon.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="804 813 1369 1084"> <p>➤ Teleworking can be a beneficial option for staff, but can also, if not well-managed, lead to isolation of staff and lack of motivation. It should not be considered as an option to be combined with full-time childminding at home, or can lead to severe stress for employees. The borderline between the private and professional spheres can become unclear with this sort of measure.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="804 1115 1369 1263"> <p>➤ As the UK has poor levels of provision of public childcare (see context), these measures can be seen by some as enterprises having to compensate for this lack.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="804 1294 1369 1386"> <p>➤ Some of the initiatives above are costly and so, despite the business benefits, may only be options for larger companies.</p> </li> </ul>

able to cope with the pressures of combining work and home.

- Maternity leave: At Jaguar and Land Rover, the maternity benefits have resulted in a 99% return rate from maternity leave.
- Work-life strategies: Since implementing work life balance strategies, sales at Farrelly have more than doubled to €6.4 million for 2001/2 and they are expecting three times this for financial year to 2003. Staff churn has decreased dramatically. On site waste has reduced from 15% to 1.5%, "Customer complaints and defects are almost a thing of the past."

**Available online at:**

[http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/asp/awards/a\\_casestudies.asp](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/asp/awards/a_casestudies.asp)

**Language(s) available:**

English

## Different Actions in Favour of Work-Life Balance within French Companies

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	› 4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Various French enterprises (see below)

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** From 2001

**Type of Best Practice:** Actions

### Main objective

Developing measures in enterprises in favour of work – life balance: family friendly actions like services, time arrangement, leave, etc.

### Context

Among the different actions in favour of gender equality, the theme of work-life balance (particularly concerning the reconciliation of family life with work commitments) has been developed in France. Certain enterprises have even introduced the term of “parenthood” to show that these initiatives are not only for improving work-life balance for mothers, but for all parents.

### Description

There are three types of initiative in this field: the development of services for employees; arrangements concerning long leave periods; and working time arrangements.

- Services for employees include facilitating access to childcare services (such as childcare centres) and to other services (dry cleaning, locksmiths, mechanics...) useful for everyday life, by a partial or total reimbursement of costs by employers:
  - The RATP (Parisian transport network) has created a service called “Pimprenelle” (fairy in the “Sleeping Beauty” cartoon) for all parents. Due to the atypical working hours of its staff and to the feminisation of the enterprise, this service tries to offer the best possible solution to parents (access to reserved places in childcare centres, help in finding a childminder...).
  - The ACCOR hotel group offers a “conciergerie” service. The enterprises who are members (like PSA Automobile) offer their employees access to these services in the workplace at a cost lower than market price. Thus the employee (usually managerial staff) has greater availability because he/she can use the services in case of emergencies (for example, sick children).
- In the field of periods of leave, different initiatives have been adopted. Enterprises have implemented accompanying measures for all the long leave periods available under French law (16-week maternity leave, 2-week paternity leave, 3-year parental leave where beneficiaries receive approximately 500€ per month):

- Dassault (aviation) signed an agreement on the 30th January 2007 which offers:
  - authorisations for extra absences for pregnant women or women returning from maternity leave;
  - remuneration of the entire paternity leave;
  - extra days for sick children (beyond the legal minimum).

Renault (automobile) offers each pregnant woman who wishes a specific interview before and after their maternity leave, during which the two parties explore ways of improving working conditions during the pregnancy. When returning from maternity or parental leave, training activities are made available. During the period of leave, information about company life can be sent to employees (men or women).

As far as working time arrangements are concerned, we can highlight the example of the Funeral Services of the City of Paris which obtained the equality label (see fiche 46). This enterprise established a charter on “time” which aims to ensure the respect of a better balance between time spent at work and out of work, by suggesting, for example, to not start meetings at the end of the working day and to allow flexible working solutions for all employees.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The development of measures in favour of work-life balance is one of the major levers for gender equality, even beyond the sphere of the enterprise. It is one of the tools which contributes to the increase in female employment and to maintaining, or even increasing, fertility rates. The involvement of enterprises in this field is a major innovation, even if, of course, the existence of public childcare services remains indispensable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Certain enterprises have a tendency to propose work-life balance measures mainly for mothers. This is a trap which carries the risk of having the inverse result of reinforcing discrimination against women by stigmatising them as “non-available mothers”. Care must be taken therefore to apply and develop these measures for all parents, and also offer services to single people with no children.</li> <li>■ Developing services for employees can be beneficial in employees’ work-life balance and in making them more available for work commitments. However, there is a danger of the employer becoming over-involved in the employee’s personal life and freedom of choice: the “Big Brother” phenomenon should be avoided!</li> </ul>

**Sources of relevant information:**

[http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/consulter-90/integralite-bonnes-pratiques-9165.html?id\\_mot%5B%5D=1&id\\_mot%5B%5D=0](http://www.halde.fr/repertoire-bonnes-pratiques-initiatives-86/consulter-90/integralite-bonnes-pratiques-9165.html?id_mot%5B%5D=1&id_mot%5B%5D=0)

(see fiche 8)

[www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&r=accord-ent](http://www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&r=accord-ent)

(see fiche 5)

J. Laufer, R. Silvera; *Accords sur l'égalité professionnelle suite à la loi de 2001 : premiers éléments d'analyse* (Paris : Emergences, 2005)

Programme Equal Timetis

[www.emergences.fr/upload/ress\\_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf](http://www.emergences.fr/upload/ress_generales/emer-bilan-accords.pdf)

**Language(s) available:**

French

**Toolkit for Childcare Provision to be Created by Networks of SMEs**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	<b>› 4. Company practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Gender Mainstreaming in der Informationsgesellschaft

**Country:** Germany

**Date of Implementation:** 2002

**Type of Best Practice:** Toolkit

**Main objective**

To support SMEs in developing joint initiatives for flexible childcare as part of their work-life balance policies.

**Context**

The Lisbon strategy requires that by 2010 the number of childcare facilities in each Member State should be increased to 33% for 0-3 year olds and to 90% for children of 3 years up until mandatory school age.

Germany faces an obvious lack of childcare facilities. In 2004, the proportion of children under 3 years of age in formal childcare centres was only 10% (whereas, for instance, almost 2/3 of the Danish children under 3 were in informal childcare centres at the same date).

This phenomenon has a concrete impact on the female employment rate. Indeed, in 2003, only 12.7% of the German women with child(ren) under 3 years old were full-employed, and this proportion was just little better (15.8%) for women with child(ren) between 3 and 6.

The German Family Affairs Secretary has reacted by drawing up a plan increasing nursery places to 750.000 by the year of 2013. Thus, nursery places are to be made available for 35 percent of all children under 3 years of age.

## Description

This toolkit contains the elements to support coalitions of SMEs in a very practical way in initiating the creation of joint childcare centres. It covers all the steps SMEs have to go through, from the diagnosis to the implementation.

The components of the toolkit include a guide for developing the concept of childcare facilities with atypical service hours; a research report which gathers all the necessary facts and figures for the preparation of the concept; a business plan generator for planning and start up the joint venture; a handbook for the use of the generator; a presentation of arguments for this new kind of childcare provision with the aim of convincing employers, public authorities, and local decision makers; a research report which gathers all the necessary facts and figures for the preparation of the concept.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="188 763 762 1037">➤ Supporting the creation of joint childcare centres is very important since Small and Medium Enterprises are not able, individually speaking, to shoulder the financial commitment offsetting up and securing the running costs of such infrastructures. This initiative could provide a valuable tool for promoting work-life balance for employees of SMEs.</li><li data-bbox="188 1070 735 1249">➤ SMEs do not usually have any employees qualified in monitoring such projects and they are not usually familiar at all with this issue. This toolkit provides them a very practical support to take such innovative initiatives.</li><li data-bbox="188 1283 767 1435">➤ The toolkit focuses as well on the development of flexible and atypical service hours, which is very useful since the “classic offer” of childcare services rarely responds to this growing demand of working parents.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="799 763 1369 976">➤ In this matter, the legislative background and the possibilities of private-public partnership between employers and local authorities vary from one country to another. Even if the framework of the toolkit is transferable, part of the content would have to be adapted to the Estonian context.</li></ul>

### Available online at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/products/prod085\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/products/prod085_en.cfm)

### Language(s) available:

German

### Other sources of relevant information:

[www.gendermainstreaming-it.de](http://www.gendermainstreaming-it.de)

## V. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality

In order for real progress to take place in the workplace concerning gender equality, it is essential that trade unions make this issue a priority and themselves become actors of change. However, all too often, trade unions and their representatives have not considered equality issues to be a main priority of their work, either at political level, in collective bargaining, or at shopfloor level. This is often due to the economic context (unemployment, low wage rises...).

Trade unions must develop their strategy concerning gender equality at two levels: firstly, within their own organisations and, secondly, in the activities which they carry out.

Developing gender equality within trade union organisations means, for example, ensuring that both men and women are represented in fair proportions at all levels of decision-making, in all sectors, and in collective bargaining delegations, and adopting formal commitments to gender equality at the highest decision-making level. Trade union representatives should receive materials and training / awareness-raising on gender equality. Attracting more women to become trade union members is an important means of maintaining, or increasing, trade union membership: in certain Member States (i.e. France), this may be the only way of saving trade unions.

Integrating gender equality into trade union activities involves, for example, making it a topic of collective bargaining with employers' representatives, supporting gender discrimination claims in the workplace, or making it a political priority or a theme for demonstrations or campaigns.

In this chapter, we present initiatives carried out in trade unions in three Member States, and at European level. These include the charters and equality plans developed by the ETUC and the Belgian Trade Unions, a training course run in Denmark in order to assist women trade unionists to reach decision-making posts and a campaign on equal pay for men and women run by a Belgian trade union. We also present a guidebook developed to assist trade unions in gender mainstreaming, which itself includes examples of good practice in this field.

## ETUC Equality plan

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	› 5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation)

**Country:** Europe

**Date of Implementation:** 1999 and 2003

**Type of Best Practice:** Action plan

### Main objective

The ETUC Equality Plan has 3 objectives: to eliminate the female representation gap in decision-making bodies of all unions; to mainstream gender equality in all trade union policies; to strengthen the role of the body responsible for gender equality policy.

### Context

The ETUC works for equal participation for women in the labour market, including equal pay, job quality, promotion opportunities and working conditions; and throughout society in general. Achieving gender equality entails changing Europe's long-hours work ethos and offering a better work/life balance for both men and women, within a framework of comprehensive care provision. The ETUC Women's Committee actively pursues these aims.

The Equality Plan, introduced in 1999 and renewed in 2003, aims to implement actions in favour of gender equality within the national affiliated confederations and within the ETUC itself. In effect, the available data shows an important gap between the proportion of female trade union members (40-50%) and their representation in the decision-making bodies of trade unions (20-30%). Similarly, the theme of gender equality is far from being present in all trade union action.

### Description

The plan refers to the concept of a representation gap, which is the difference between the proportion of women in the decision-making bodies of the organisation compared to the proportion of women in the overall membership. Again, like its predecessor, this new plan takes a dual approach, tackling specific gender equality issues as well as gender mainstreaming calling for the inclusion of the gender dimension in other policies.

- The first objective is to eliminate the female representation gap in decision-making bodies. A first step is to reduce by half the representation gap in decision-making bodies (this objective is based on quantified objectives, a timetable and a clear indication of the need for follow-up and evaluation and gender statistics).

- The second objective is to extend gender mainstreaming:
  - Firstly, by including the gender dimension in collective bargaining and/or collective bargaining guidelines (by training in equality issues for negotiators, preparing negotiations and/or negotiating guidelines in cooperation with equality officers...).
  - Secondly, by putting gender equality at the heart of a new social welfare architecture.
- The third objective is to strengthen the role of the body responsible for gender equality policy. A mid-term report on the implementation of the plan will be submitted to the ETUC Executive Committee and there will be an evaluation at the next ETUC Congress. If, after evaluation, it appears that national confederations and/or European Industry Federations have not taken efficient measures to increase the numbers of women in their decision making bodies, a list of the “bad students” will be published and circulated at the next ETUC Congress. Furthermore, a reduction in the numbers of votes at Congress for eligible members may also be foreseen.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ This Equality Plan is an important example for all the European trade union confederations. It opens the way for the introduction of gender equality in trade unions by giving different quantitative (proportion of women in decision-making bodies...) and qualitative (implementing gender equality in trade union actions) ideas.</li> <li>➤ It is important that both assessment and sanctions are foreseen in this Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Paradoxically, the ETUC is possibly not the best example to follow in Europe. For example, there are only 2 women in the 7 members of the secretariat (which runs the day-to-day activities).</li> <li>➤ Furthermore, it seems difficult for the ETUC to have a real power of control and evaluation over all the national trade union confederations. The 1999 Equality Plan was not taken up widely, particularly as far as the participation of women in decision-making bodies was concerned.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[www.etuc.org/a/692](http://www.etuc.org/a/692)

**Language(s) available:**

English, French

**Other sources of relevant information:**

European Trade Union Confederation, *Equality action plan* (Brussels: ETUC, 1999)

<http://www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int/1999/10/feature/eu9910201f.htm>

## Charter on Gender Mainstreaming in Trade Unions

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	<b>› 5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** The 3 principal Belgian trade unions

**Country:** Belgium

**Date of Implementation:** 2004

**Type of Best Practice:** Charter

### Main objective

To create a mission statement on gender mainstreaming within unions.

### Context

Since the year 2000, and particularly since the ETUC's Equality Plan in 1999, a desire to engage trade union organisations in a gender mainstreaming process has appeared. Belgium was the first country to initiate a gender mainstreaming charter. Since then in France, the CGT (the first and oldest trade union) signed a similar internal charter. Finally, at the last ETUC congress in Seville (2007), the women's committee generalised this proposal in addition to its Action Plan.

### Description

The Charter, signed in Belgium on 23 September 2004 by the three representative trade union confederations, is a good example of making a clear statement to all trade union members in Belgium (over 3,000,000 members).

The Charter first points out the context – it thus outlines the state of mind in which the commitments were made. In a second part, the Charter has 10 articles, starting with the commitment to the gender mainstreaming principle, as well as recognition of the importance of equality policy.

The trade unions agree on the importance of monitoring and checking gender policy, for which they will closely cooperate with the sector-level structures. Exchange of information (gender analysis and gender statistics) will be developed. In order to enable monitoring and checking, the unions agree on identifying monitoring and checking bodies and giving them statutory competencies.

As for the employers, trade unions will urge them to deliver the necessary information, in order to check on inequalities and to analyse gender specific problems in an adequate way. The unions also declared that they will take into account the gender dimension in relation to each point on the agenda. Training will be provided, in order to be able to discuss all agenda points in a gender specific way. Positive interaction with the feminist movement will be promoted.

In the last article, the trade unions agree on making an annual report, which will be analysed by the structures concerned and made available to all members.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ This process is innovative because it acts both on the internal organisation of the trade union, and its external activities. On the inside, it involves changing the trade union culture and ensuring better representation of women in decision-making bodies. On the outside, it means carrying the gender equality banner.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Despite what is indicated in the Belgian charter, we have no information about the monitoring carried out by the Belgian trade unions since 2004. Without any follow-up or assessment, this charter carries the risk of remaining a simple statement of intention, with no real concrete effects...</li></ul>

**Sources of relevant information:**

[www.cgt.fr](http://www.cgt.fr)

**Promoting Participation of Women by Education and Mentoring in Trade Unions**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	<b>› 5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality</b>
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** LO (the main Danish trade union)

**Country:** Denmark

**Date of Implementation:** 2001-2003

**Type of Best Practice:** Action

**Main objective**

Developing training for women unionists to foster women's access to leadership in trade unions.

**Context**

In European trade unions, women are under-represented in the upper spheres of trade union structures (on average, 20-30% of managers are women, despite the fact that they represent 40-50% of trade union members). Developing training is one of the key tools for removing certain obstacles to a greater participation of women in decision-making.

**Description**

LO in Denmark has started several innovative educational experiences, which aim at fostering women's access to leadership positions in unions.

- In the "Starlet" programme, young women, who are new to the union, received intensive training with the aim of expanding women's representation in the union, and of focusing on the expectations of the younger women in the union policies.
- The "Victoria" programme – for women trade union members, who have been in the union longer – aims at providing them with sufficient political and personal knowledge to improve their activities in the union.
- The "Feminist leadership" programme for union experts and leaders aims at creating a professional network for organisational development, personal development and life-long learning. The idea of this programme is to break glass ceilings and raise awareness of equality amongst all actors. The aim of the ongoing training is to put concrete daily work in an equality perspective.
- "FLUK" is LO's new leadership training for younger women on their way to a career in the trade union. FLUK is based on a combination of training, networking and mentoring (i.e. personal help for new members by a mentor). The aim is to entice leadership roles based on knowledge about gender. The training provides the possibility of getting a degree on 'gender and welfare'. LO also trains people to become "ambassadors for mainstreaming". These are networks of knowledgeable women and men, qualified and supported by the local and national network, to bring mainstreaming into companies. They can be invited by shop stewards to help them.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The training allows women, including young trade union members, to take responsibilities, gain access to personalised career paths, and remove personal obstacles to decision-making (low level of availability, lack of self-confidence...)</li> <li>➤ The gender equality training is developed in all the trade union structures, for all trade unionists (not only women), in order that gender equality is a permanent theme in demands and bargaining.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ There is a danger of an over-personalisation or individualisation of the training (such as in the Starlet programme), which could exclude some potential candidates who do not have direct access or knowledge of the programme. In order to avoid this risk, it is necessary to provide information widely on the training programmes available.</li> <li>➤ This type of experience should not only be limited to young women, but should be open to all new trade union members. The method can even be transposed to other under-represented groups (for example male trade union members in a highly feminised economic sector).</li> </ul>

**Sources of relevant information:**

Gender Mainstreaming in Trade Unions: MSU Manual  
<http://www.iseres.org/msu/download2/DL11UK.pdf>

**Language(s) available:**

English, French

## Guide for Gender Mainstreaming within Unions

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	› 5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** ISERES – CGT (French trade union research body)

**Country:** France, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Italy

**Date of Implementation:** 2004

**Type of Best Practice:** Guide

### Main objective

To develop a tool for practical implementation of gender mainstreaming into trade unions.

### Context

Gender mainstreaming as a strategy – namely to achieve equality of women and men in internal union organisation and in external practices (collective bargaining and union action) – takes many different forms in Europe. Even though some trade unions do not use the terminology and, therefore, are not even aware of gender mainstreaming policies, they do, in fact, practice gender mainstreaming. This is the case, for example, when, on drawing up union demands in the area of working time policies, attention is paid to how these would affect the work-life balance of all employees, women and men, taking into consideration the great variety in needs amongst them, for instance as result of household and family responsibilities.

### Description

The manual concentrates on various areas of friction within trade union equality policy: on the one hand, regarding the functioning of union structures and, on the other hand, regarding policies and negotiations on specific topics, namely on equal pay and working time.

The manual will, therefore, serve the interests of union organisations, which represent employees at enterprise and sector-levels. It targets trade union officials, in particular those who are active in trade union structures and in the collective bargaining process, shop stewards and works councils, other union officers and activists at workplace level. The main aim is to support and help these people in the following activities:

- the discovery and removal of inequalities based on gender;
- the development and implementation of measures, which foster equality for women and men in trade unions, the collective bargaining process and within enterprises;
- the exchange of experience, based on the principle of good practice examples

The manual is composed of six modules, which can be read separately: mission statement; trade union structures; trade union culture and functioning; union actions and collective bargaining; equal

pay; and working time. The content of each module is structured as follows: general introduction to the topic; background; good practice examples; recommendations; references and links to relevant websites. The manual also contains an introduction to gender mainstreaming, a glossary, and the legal framework for gender mainstreaming in all the countries participating in this project. The objective of this guidebook is therefore to allow trade unionists to find their way around the field of gender mainstreaming, in terms of procedures (for example writing a charter (see fiche 36), reinforcing the presence of women in decision-making bodies...); changing the activist culture of permanent availability (example of the Dutch FNV trade union); and concrete examples (how to reduce the gender pay gaps and achieve better work-life balance...).

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ This tool raises awareness of trade unionists at all levels (from trade union representatives at shop floor level to trade union leaders...) about gender mainstreaming.</li> <li>➤ It provides a concrete method for addressing this theme, examples of good practice from other European countries...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Even if this guide was presented to the ETUC women's committee, it is still underused both in its printed (only a few hundred copies were published) and on-line formats. Maybe this is because these sorts of actors find it difficult to use a tool which is both practical and theoretical... Furthermore, the theme of gender equality remains secondary in trade union priorities, which limits the motivation of trade unionists to find information on this topic and use such tools spontaneously.</li> </ul>

**Available online at :**

<http://www.iseres.org/msu/download2/DL11UK.pdf>

**Language(s) available:**

English, French

**Sources of relevant information:**

<http://www.iseres.org/msu/msu2.htm>

Rachel Silvera, *The challenge of mainstreaming for trade unions in Europe: how can trade unions foster gender equality in the workplace and in daily life?* Final report of MSU Programme (European Commission, Directorate-General Research, 2005)

## Equal Pay Day: Campaign in favour of Equal Pay

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	› 5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** FGTB (large Socialist trade union), in partnership with Zij-Kant (the Movement of Progressive Female Socialists) and the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men

**Country:** Belgium

**Date of Implementation:** Since 2005

**Type of Best Practice:** Campaign

### Main objective

To expose and criticise the gender pay gap in order to encourage action in the field.

### Context

Belgium has often been considered as a relatively good example in Europe as regards the gender pay gap. However, a recent report from the European Commission (2005) demonstrated that the pay gap widened between 1998 and 2003. Today, the average hourly gender wage gap is estimated at 12%. However, this difference in wages varies considerably depending on the economic sector, qualification level and employment category. The average gross monthly salary of women is considered to be 24% less than that of men: this means that women must work, on average, 3 months more every year to achieve the same annual salary as men!

### Description

In order to take action regarding this situation, the FGTB, Zij-Kant and the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men decided to launch an annual Equal Pay Day in Belgium, based on that carried out in the USA since 1996. The first Belgian Equal Pay Day took place on the 31st March 2005. The choice of the date was deliberate because it symbolises the three months more which women must work to earn a man's annual average pay. The first Equal Pay Day has been followed by others on the 31st March 2006 and the 30th March 2007.

The Equal Pay Day campaign includes:

- Campaign materials including posters, badges, and door signs ("Do not disturb").
- TV advertisements:
  - 18/11/2005: proposal from a woman senator for a law to support employers in changing their personnel policies to achieve gender equality in the workplace.

- The 2006 television advertisement, entitled “Executive Cow” won an award at the Cannes Publicity Festival. This humorous spot plays on the fact that paying women less than men is an insult and involves an executive women being insulted by all her male colleagues.
  - The 2007 advertisements focus on women’s own frustration at being paid less every month.
- Publication of research and studies on equal pay in Belgium.
  - Union-coordinated demonstrations across Belgium in key public places (train stations, national bank...).
  - Declarations by trade union leaders and politicians.
  - Policy proposals: for example need for annual statistics on the gender wage gap, need for awareness campaigns on career “choices”, re-evaluation of “female jobs”, needs for “equal opportunity plans” in employment, greater role for women in collective bargaining...

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Even though the campaign is only in its third edition, it has already stimulated proposals for action from politicians: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 18/11/2005: proposal from a woman senator for a law to support employers in changing their personnel policies to achieve gender equality in the workplace.</li> <li>● 15/06/2005: proposal from a female MP (Member of Parliament) for a new law, based on the Swedish example, to guarantee equal rights in terms of wages.</li> <li>● February 2007: proposal of the Minister for Employment of a checklist relating to gender neutral job classifications.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ This campaign is interesting because of its high level of visibility for the general public, but also its political impact. This has been achieved through the media campaigns, but also through the strong mobilisation of trade union members at all levels (from the highest decision-making level to ground-level activists) and politicians (Socialist Party).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The direct style of humour used in this campaign may need to be adapted to other national contexts.</li> <li>➤ This type of initiative requires high-level support and the backing of key trade union leaders and politicians is essential.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**  
<http://www.equalpayday.be/>  
[http://www.fgtb.be/code/fr/dossiers/speciaux/femmes/c01\\_05e0202.HTM](http://www.fgtb.be/code/fr/dossiers/speciaux/femmes/c01_05e0202.HTM)

**Language(s) available:**  
 English, French, Dutch

**Other sources of relevant information:**  
<http://www.zij-kant.be/>  
<http://www.iefh.fgov.be/>  
<http://www.pay-equity.org/day-kit-activities.html>

## VI. Negotiating on gender issues

In many Member States, negotiations between employers and trade unions on gender issues is an important way of ensuring that, through collective agreements, gender equality becomes an important issue in the workplace. Negotiations can take the form of formal collective bargaining or of joint meetings or committees in order to develop equality initiatives.

In this chapter, we present initiatives from three Member States, and from the European level. Firstly, we give the examples of guidebooks on negotiating on equality issues produced by the French Ministry of Employment and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Secondly, we present examples of agreements signed on gender equality at European, national and enterprise level: at European level, the ETUC signed an a Framework of Actions on Gender Equality; in France, the major trade union confederations signed a national multisectoral agreement on gender mix and equal opportunities between women and men; and, in Portugal, agreements on gender equality were signed in nineteen enterprises in the context of a European project.

## Guide and Benchmarks for Negotiating on Gender Equality in the Workplace

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	<b>› 6. Negotiating on gender issues</b>
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Service des Droits des femmes et de l'Égalité (Women's Rights and Equality Department)

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** 2007

**Type of Best Practice:** Guide

### Main objective

To inform enterprises and social partners on the laws and practices concerning gender equality in the workplace. The guidebook is also a very helpful tool for collective bargaining, containing real-life examples and clear legal, economic and social answers to any initiative involving gender equality in the workplace.

### Context

This guidebook is a complement to a first publication, "Guide for Assistance in Negotiating" which came out in conjunction with the French Law of the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2001. It updates the advice given based on the new measures in the French Law on Equal Pay of the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2006 (which reinforces the obligation to negotiate particularly on wages, and introduces new sanctions if bargaining does not take place before 2009). Faced with such an imposing French legal barrage, this guidebook is extremely useful for all the actors involved in order to facilitate their initiatives in this field, both of a legal and practical nature.

## Description

In the format of a small, practical, 100-page publication, this guidebook aims to provide answers to a series of questions: how should negotiating on gender equality in the workplace be done? In what ways will wage bargaining be transformed dramatically following the introduction of the Equal Pay Law of the 23rd March 2006? Is it possible to implement affirmative actions in favour of women? What financial assistance can enterprises use? The publication tries to answer this type of question within the framework of an operational approach including a summary of the applicable law, references to relevant texts, highlighting the new or key aspects, examples and practical fiches.

The publication is divided into two sections:

Gender equality in the workplace: the main legal, economic and social foundations (the legal bases, the comparative situation in the economic and social spheres)

The rights and obligations of enterprises regarding gender equality in the workplace (existing discriminations, the obligation to negotiate, the incentives for action).

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Confronted with the numerous legal measures and new recommendations in this field, this guide is a good reference point for both human resource managers and trade union representatives.</li> <li>➤ It gives many examples of updated good practices which are often difficult to find (on internet, in the specialised press or from the regional departments of the Ministry of Labour).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Contrary to the first guidebook (Guide for Assistance in Negotiating) which was widely disseminated free-of-charge, this new guidebook is for sale (20€), and is not available on-line, which provides a real obstacle to its dissemination and, at the end of day, means its readers are limited to those who are already informed and involved!</li> <li>➤ It is not translated into English despite the fact that, beyond French legislation, it gives interesting examples of good practices and reference points which could be transferable to other countries.</li> </ul>

### Available for ordering online at:

[http://www.femmes-egalite.gouv.fr/grands\\_dossiers/dossiers/egalite\\_en\\_entreprise/demarches\\_outils\\_guide.htm](http://www.femmes-egalite.gouv.fr/grands_dossiers/dossiers/egalite_en_entreprise/demarches_outils_guide.htm)

### Language(s) available:

French

## Toolkit: "Negotiating for Equality – Gender and Pay"

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	<b>&gt; 6. Negotiating on gender issues</b>
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** ICTU (Irish Congress of Trade Unions)

**Country:** Ireland

**Date of Implementation:** 2005

**Type of Best Practice:** Toolkit

### Main objective

To provide a practical toolkit for trade union negotiators on gender and pay

### Context

The Irish legislation outlawing wage discrimination on the grounds of sex exists since 1975. There have been major changes in the role of women in society and a marked increase in the number of women in the workplace since Ireland's entry into the EU.

The concept of equal pay for equal work has become more widely accepted than it was in the early fifties. However a 15% gender pay gap still remains in Ireland (5% in the public sector in which women mostly work and which is highly unionised).

The ICTU considers that the gender pay gap is, among others, linked to discrimination in pay-systems, to grading structures, and performance related pay. In general in Ireland, as elsewhere, there is also an undervaluing of female skills and female education.

A multi-faceted approach, in which the trade unions have a key role to play, is needed in order to overcome this phenomenon.

### Description

The toolkit developed by ICTU is part of a broader gender equality programme. It offers a one-stop shop facility (information, advice, background etc.) for negotiators dealing with gender equality in the workplace, and offers practical advice on what employers and workers can do. Employers, through IBEC (Irish Business and Employers Confederation), were invited to make comments on the tool kit before its publication.

While it is one complete publication, individual sections can stand alone and are cross-referenced. The tool kit contains 11 chapters:

1. Gender Pay Gap - Current Findings
2. The Law and Equality

3. Equality Audit
4. Job Evaluation
5. Gender Proofing/Gender Impact Assessment
6. Recruitment & Selection
7. Gender Pay Questionnaire
8. Promote Yourself
9. Equality Briefing for Employers
10. Resources
11. Bibliography

The toolkit is very practical and is meant to be used by trade union officials or shop stewards in order to encourage the implementation of joint actions by employers and trade unions. It is a basis for improving women's negotiating skills, which is part of ICTU's agenda.

Possible actions are described in the kit such as training of interviewers or middle managers, mentoring, etc. The business case for equal pay is also described and can be used by employers or to help trade unionists in their discussions with employers.

The training courses presented can be adapted depending on the context.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The toolkit is featured as a good practice in the annex to the ETUC's Framework of Action on Gender Equality.</li> <li>➤ It is a rare example, produced by a trade union confederation, of a very comprehensive package developed in order to help trade union negotiators in the field of gender equality, particularly focusing on equal pay.</li> <li>➤ The toolkit builds on the experience developed by the ITUC in 2002 with its toolkit and training manuals aimed at supporting trade union negotiators at introducing family-friendly and work-life balance initiatives in enterprises.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The toolkit is a fairly recent initiative and so there has not yet been significant experience of its use in companies.</li> <li>➤ As it is a detailed tool, it requires trade union negotiators to receive training in using the tool in order to be able to use it effectively. This training is of course time-consuming, and it may be necessary to "sell" the gender equality agenda very strongly to negotiators in order for them to invest their time.</li> </ul>

**Sources of relevant information:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/news/2005/mar/gender\\_equality\\_annex\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/news/2005/mar/gender_equality_annex_en.pdf)

Other toolkits and training materials produced by the ICTU on gender equality:

<http://www.ictu.ie/html/publications/ictu/Congress%20Family%20Friendly%20Toolkit%20&%20Guidelines%20for%20Trade%20Unions.pdf>

and

<http://www.ictu.ie/html/publications/ictu/Congress%20Family%20Friendly%20Work%20Life%20Balance%20Training%20Manual.pdf>

## Framework of Actions on Gender Equality between European Social Partners

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	<b>› 6. Negotiating on gender issues</b>
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** ETUC, Business Europe (ex-UNICE/UEAPME), CEEP

**Country:** International organization

**Date of Implementation:** 2005

**Type of Best Practice:** Kind of collective agreement

### Main objective

To develop common actions between social partners on gender equality.

### Context

The European social partners UNICE/UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC are committed to enhancing gender equality on the labour market and in the workplace. In this context, they have a key role to play. They have adopted this framework of actions to contribute to the implementation of the Lisbon strategy for economic growth, more and better jobs and social cohesion as well as of the EU legislative framework on equal treatment between women and men.

### Description

ETUC, CEEP and UNICE/UEAPME have studied a rich variety of good practice cases, showing that on all relevant levels and in many different ways social partners are contributing to achieving gender equality on the labour market. They have identified four priorities on which they ask national social partners to take action during the next five years. Under each of these priorities, they have highlighted elements on which social partners, acting and intensifying their dialogue at different levels, can add value. Inspired by current practices in various Member States and companies of different sectors and sizes, they identified examples of tools, which can inspire social partners' actions across Europe. The four priorities on which CEEP, UNICE/UEAPME and ETUC want national social partners to take action during the next five years are set out below:

- addressing gender roles;
- promoting women in decision-making;
- supporting work-life balance;
- tackling the gender pay gap.

These priorities are interconnected and of equal importance. Actions at national, sectoral and/or company levels are most effective if the various aspects of these priorities are tackled in an integrated approach.

This framework of actions, a dozen or so pages long, sets out, for each priority, the statistical context, examples of practical tools and recommendations.

The member organisations of UNICE/UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC (and the liaison committee EUROCADRES/CEC) will promote this framework of actions in Member States at all appropriate levels taking account of national practices, through joint and separate actions, as appropriate. Given the interest of the matter under consideration, the social partners have also decided to transmit this document to all relevant players at European and national levels, including EU sectoral social partners, EU and national public authorities etc.

The national social partners will draw up an annual report on the actions carried out in Member States on the four priorities identified. The members of EUROCADRES/CEC have a particular role to play with regard to the priority *“promoting women in decision making”*.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Commitment of the social partners at European level in a shared framework of actions is essential: this will give impetus to the genuine integration of this issue in all European countries by all actors (public and private sector, trade unions).</li> <li>➤ In 2006-2007, a first assessment was carried out. The follow-up report is based upon the information collected from national social partners in 19 EU Member States and Norway. The introduction of the framework of actions in the various national contexts has provided a new impetus for debates between the social partners on gender equality. Regarding the follow-up actions taken, it is possible to distinguish 5 levels of actions: activities to disseminate the framework of actions; integration of the priorities in collective agreements; tripartite concertation; projects or initiatives. In addition, some trade union and companies' practices or policies are being presented which correspond to the elements highlighted in the framework of actions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ This framework is not, in legal terms, a negotiated agreement which really commits the partners. Even if the first results are real, the question remains as to whether this level of effort will be maintained and whether all actors and all European countries are genuinely involved. It can indeed be observed that the countries and enterprise which are already ahead in the field of gender equality are those who presented the first actions. This commitment will be more difficult in countries where tensions exist between social partners or/and where trade unions are weak.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/framework\\_of\\_actions\\_gender\\_equality\\_010305-2.pdf](http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/framework_of_actions_gender_equality_010305-2.pdf)

**Language(s) available:**

English, French

## Collective Agreements for Gender Equality in Portugal

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	<b>› 6. Negotiating on gender issues</b>
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** CGTP - Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses (Portuguese National Trade Union Confederation)

**Country:** Portugal

**Date of Implementation:** Since 2002

**Type of Best Practice:** Collective agreements

Main objective	Context
<p>To negotiate collective agreements with management in order to implement positive action plans in favour of gender equality in enterprises where there is under- or over-representation of women.</p>	<p>Despite the fact that Portugal has the highest employment rate for women in the EU Mediterranean countries (61.7% in 2005), women are underrepresented in certain activities and professions and overrepresented in others. There is a higher concentration of women in low qualification levels, although there are more women in secondary and higher education is higher than men. Women's average earnings represent, in gross terms, about 71% of men's, with salary differences, after withdrawing the influence of the uneven sectoral distribution and qualification levels of men and women's employment, of about 11.5%. Based on this situation, the CGTP decided to launch an initiative to negotiate positive action plans in enterprises where women are either under- or over-represented. The initiative was carried out with partners including the National Commission for Gender Equality in Employment, and the National Institute for the Development of Working Conditions and Labour Inspection. It received funding from the EU's Equal programme.</p>

## Description

The selection of the companies targeted by the CGTP is important: about half of them employ a predominantly male work force and the other half belongs in "feminised" sectors where, despite the overwhelming majority of employees being female, leadership positions are almost entirely in male hands.

The first step was a thorough analysis of the job situation of women and men in each of the participating companies. The results showed that, in most enterprises, women suffered from discrimination, as a result of different factors including fewer opportunities for career development, lower pay, loss of rights due to maternity leave and more precarious contracts. Some discriminatory practices were also discovered that affected all employees, both women and men, particularly in relation to levels of pay, precariousness of employment and the unsuitability of working conditions.

The findings were presented to management and to the works council in each organisation. At first, the employers refused to accept the existence of the discriminatory practices that had been detected. Unequal treatment was blamed on higher rates of female absenteeism resulting from the competing demands of their other roles as mothers and homemakers. However, two companies, which had previously participated in a gender equality project, were able to demonstrate how recruiting women with good educational credentials for technical jobs had greatly improved their companies' performance and productivity. This example of good practice provided by their peers helped the other employers to understand that gender equality was an integral part of personnel policies and could generate business advantages, and they agreed to negotiate on these issues.

As a result, collective agreements were successfully negotiated and signed in all of the 19 enterprises. Each agreement was based on a proposal by the CGTP and its partners, which was then tailored to the needs of the company. The agreements state that all categories of workers must have equal access to the benefits that the gender equality action plan would produce. They also establish concrete goals and measures for the achievement of these benefits. Priorities addressed include training, recruitment and selection procedures and also the reformulation of criteria for career progress and promotion. In many cases, the plans include specific actions to improve the situation of female employees such as tackling gender gaps and the introduction of family-friendly flexible working time and improvements in parental leave schemes. Awareness raising and training for employers, HR staff and union representatives is another major aspect of all the action plans. In addition, the agreements contain a commitment to a continuing review of progress focused on six-monthly monitoring meetings.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>It is important that the collective agreements were negotiated on the basis of an analysis of the situation in each enterprise, and not simply on the basis of general "principles" concerning gender equality.</li><li>The "peer" approach to employers also appears to have been an important lever for action. The fact that the initiative was targeted at several employers simultaneously rather than singling out just one enterprise as a "bad example" seems to have helped in encouraging employers to agree.</li><li>The partnership set up by the CGTP with other organisations (like the National Commission for Gender Equality in Employment) helped to bring expertise from different fields on board.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A lot of time and resources must be invested in setting-up partnerships of this type, as well as in contacting and persuading employers. This was possible in this case because of the funding of the Equal project, but may be difficult for trade unions without extra sources of funding.</li><li>How will the programme continue without the funding provided by Equal?</li><li>It is essential for trade unions without in-house gender equality expertise to associate outside experts for this type of initiative.</li></ul>

- The fact that the agreements address the situation of both men and women, and stipulate that all workers must have access to the benefits of the agreement, means that the agreements were well-accepted by all employees (men and women).

**Available online at :**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-trade-union-employers\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-trade-union-employers_en.cfm)

**Language(s) available:**

English, French

**Other sources of relevant information:**

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/equal/jsp/dpComplete.jsp?cip=PT&national=2001-022>

<http://www.cgtp.pt/>

**French National Multisectoral Collective Agreement on Gender Mix and Equal Opportunities between Men and Women**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	<b>› 6. Negotiating on gender issues</b>
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** MEDEF (French employers organisation) and the 5 representative French Unions

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** 2004

**Type of Best Practice:** Social agreement

**Main objective**

A national agreement on gender equality between the all main social actors.

**Context**

In France, multisectoral negotiation is difficult: industrial relations are tense, and there are divisions between different trade unions and a low level of trade union membership (approximately 9% trade union membership, but belonging to a trade union gives you no social rights). Nonetheless, unanimous agreement has been reached in two important fields: vocational training and gender equality in the workplace: an agreement was signed on this theme par all representative trade unions on the 1st March 2004.

- cultural attitudes towards gender mix;
- insufficient awareness of employers, managers, employees’ representatives and employees themselves on this issue.

**Description**

The multisectoral national collective agreement describes useful instruments which can be put in place or used more actively, referring the decision on which instruments are the most suitable according to their specific needs to collective agreements at sector and/or company levels.

Instruments include:

- Setting gender balance objectives at sector level for access to vocational training;
- Promoting tailored and accurate information on labour markets evolutions in order to help desegregate labour markets;
- More attention given to the fact that flexible working time arrangement can have adverse effects on women’s career promotion;

- Providing training sessions to workers before the end of the leave in order to facilitate the return to work;
- Maintaining the link between the enterprise and women on maternity or parental leave;
- Catch-up measures on equal pay for work of equal value and possibility of positive discrimination;
- Measures to be taken if there is evidence of an “outstanding imbalance” in the career of women and men such as analysis of the causes, definition of clear objectives and deadlines to take action such as three-year-plans;
- A review of the effects of the agreement in three years time.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ This type of commitment is important because it shows that certain themes can be the subject of a consensus. All the actors find an interest: for enterprises, this means facilitating recruitment procedures, reducing absenteeism, taking advantages of new competencies and improving their performance, but also reinforcing their social responsibility; for trade unions, this means committing themselves to reducing gender inequalities, becoming involved on a practical level and not only on paper and, indirectly, improving their image and increasing women’s level of trade union membership (lower than that of men in France).</li> <li>➤ The agreement has provided impetus in branches and enterprise for the opening of negotiations and agreements on the basis of this multisectoral model.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ This framework is not, in legal terms, a negotiated agreement which really commits the partners. Even if the first results are real, the question remains as to whether this level of effort will be maintained and whether all actors and all European countries are genuinely involved. It can indeed be observed that the countries and enterprise which are already ahead in the field of gender equality are those who presented the first actions. This commitment will be more difficult in countries where tensions exist between social partners or/and where trade unions are weak.</li> <li>➤ The available evaluations on the number of agreements signed are mixed: it is estimated that approximately one hundred branch and enterprise agreements have been signed (see the website: <a href="http://www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&amp;r=accord-ent">http://www.egaliteprofessionnelle.org/index.php?p=dialogue&amp;r=accord-ent</a> which lists all the agreements). This is far from being nothing in the French context... but is also far from the legal obligation of negotiating on gender equality in all enterprises and branches since the 2001 and 2006 laws.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

<http://www.lexisnexis.fr/pdf/DO/mixite.pdf>

**Language(s) available:**

French

**Other sources of relevant information :**

[http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/Annex\\_fram\\_of\\_actions\\_gender\\_equality\\_0103051.pdf](http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/Annex_fram_of_actions_gender_equality_0103051.pdf)

## **VII. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality**

Particularly over recent years, initiatives have increased in terms of encouraging enterprises and business actors to implement gender equality initiatives through a series of incentives.

Two main incentives for enterprises have been used to good effect. Firstly, some Member States have created awards or prizes to reward enterprises or specific managers who have implemented particularly innovative or successful gender equality policies. The awards may, or may not, involve material prizes, but their main aim is positive publicity for the company involved. Secondly, other Member States have chosen to instigate gender equality labels for enterprises, obtained after adhering to a strict, quality-controlled process which often takes many months if not years.

In this chapter, we present examples from four Member States: gender equality awards developed in Slovakia and in the UK, and gender equality labels created in Spain and France.

## Optima Label for Gender Equality

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	<b>› 7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality</b>
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Instituto de la Mujer, Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales (Women's Institute, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs)

**Country:** Spain

**Date of Implementation:** Since 1995

**Type of Best Practice:** Label

### Main objective

To encourage enterprises to implement actions in the field of gender equality.

### Context

Spain has some of largest gender gaps in the European Union. The employment rate of women is for example 48%, compared to 73% for men. Female unemployment is more than twice that of men.

In the 1990s, the Spanish Women's Institute decided that, in order to start changing this situation, it was essential to act within enterprises. It is for this reason that it launched the Óptima programme in 1995 aimed at ensuring the implementation of gender equality in Spanish enterprises. The programme received co-funding from the European Social Fund.

The programme has many facets, including the creation of a Gender Equality Label for enterprises.

### Description

The Óptima Gender Equality Label ("Entidad Colaboradora en Igualdad de Oportunidades entre Mujeres et Hombres") was created by law on the 25th January 1996.

In order to be awarded the Label, the enterprise must go through a series of stages:

- Firstly, the enterprise must write to the Women's Institute stating its wish to participate in programme and providing a certain amount of basic information on the enterprise (name, economic sector, total number of employees...);
- The Women's Institute then provides the enterprise with a questionnaire, structured in various fields (selection, promotion, training, wages, etc.) which must be completed;

- The enterprise is then invited to a meeting with the Women’s Institute where further information is gathered in order to supplement the information gathered from the questionnaire and fill in any grey areas;
- On the basis of this questionnaire and the meeting results, the Women’s Institute then draws up a diagnosis of the current situation regarding gender equality in the enterprise concerned;
- The enterprise is then required to draw up a proposal for a Positive Action Plan, addressing all the main areas in the enterprise where gender equality is weakest. The Action Plan is also divided into a number of sections which should be examined by the enterprise: selection/recruitment, training, promotion, work-life balance, communication, health and safety, labour relations. Each enterprise must also set up an “Impetus Committee” with representatives from different departments made responsible for ensuring that the Action Plan is implanted in every department, given sufficient resources and implemented successfully. The enterprises receive help from the Women’s Institute for ideas of what to include in the Action Plan and how to make it most effective.
- Once the Action Plan is agreed by the enterprise and the Women’s Institute, both parties agree on implementation;
- After a period of time, the degree of success of the implementation of the Action Plan is evaluated by the Women’s Institute using, among others, a questionnaire on impact.
- If the results are positive, the enterprise is awarded recognition as an “Entidad Colaboradora en Igualdad de Oportunidades entre Mujeres et Hombres” (Collaborative Entity for Gender Equality). This achievement is published in the State Official Bulletin. The enterprise is then authorised to use the Óptima logo in any of its internal or external communication activities. The enterprise will also feature in publicity broadcast by the Women’s Institute and Ministry for Labour.
- The enterprises awarded the logo are monitored by the Women’s Institute.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Óptima programme was chosen and disseminated as a good practice by the European Commission.</li> <li>■ Some 45 enterprises have now received the Óptima label, including: Adidas, BP, Barclays Bank, Coca Cola, Citibank, Microsoft, Nestlé, RENFE (the Spanish rail company) and Unilever. Other enterprises are in different stages of the process.</li> <li>■ The Óptima Label was highly innovative in Europe at the time of its launch and had a great impact throughout Europe.</li> <li>■ This type of label acts as an incentive for enterprises who wish to use the label in their public relations strategy, and also as proof of good in-company labour relations.</li> <li>■ It is clear that the impact of this initiative in the Spanish private sector was very important, and there are many positive results. For one small IT company which received the label, evaluators stated that “the company would never have developed an equality action on its own”. For other enterprises, the label has been a catalyst for further action in the field: “their action plan acquired greater strength and more daring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Some evaluations have highlighted the limitations of Óptima as regards the long-term sustainability of the equality action: “the activities related to the programme have a short-term perspective (one year’s technical assistance). In order to be awarded the equal opportunities qualification, companies must achieve tangible results in a relatively short period of time. Therefore, in many cases, mainly short-term actions are selected as long-term actions, particularly those implying a change in company culture, are more difficult to implement”.</li> <li>■ Because of the level of implication necessary, this type of initiative is better suited to large companies with more resources. Nonetheless, the fact that technical assistance appears to have been provided free of charge by the Women’s Institute, opens the door to smaller companies, a number of which did gain the label.</li> <li>■ The danger of this type of initiative is that companies use the label simply as a communication tool, and are not really committed to the goals of gender equality. For this reason, continuous monitoring is essential.</li> </ul>

measures were implemented than before...  
Greater understanding of the gender  
equality policy ensures greater integration of  
female employees”.

➤ It is difficult to find recent evaluations of this  
label so are not aware of its current status.

**Available online at:**

<http://www.tt.mtas.es/optima/>

<http://www.hera2001.com/campus/index.asp?ProyectoID=10&c=4>

**Language(s) available:**

Spanish

**Other sources of relevant information**

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2001/61/en/1/ef0161en.pdf>

(see fiche 16 on the Óptima training for employers)

**French Equality Label**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	<b>&gt; 7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality</b>
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structures:** Ministère de la Parité et de l'Égalité Professionnelle (Ministry for Gender Equality), AFAQ-AFNOR

**Country:** France

**Date of Implementation:** 2004

**Type of Best Practice:** Label

**Main objective**

To give public recognition to enterprises implementing gender equality policies, and to encourage other enterprises to follow suit.

**Context**

Since the years 2000, successive French governments have displayed a strong political willingness to achieve progress concerning gender equality. First of all, the government gave priority to the law and negotiations. Then, from 2004, confronted with the rather weak results of negotiations, the State decided to encourage the enterprises in a different manner with this label.

Set out since March 2004 in the Charter for equality between men and women, the equality label is the distinctive mark that acknowledges companies, associations and administrations are resolutely committed to gender equality at work.

The equality label is a simple and rigorous procedure. Conducted by an internationally recognised organisation, AFAQ AFNOR Certification, the labelling file presents the gender equality at work policy implemented by the candidate. A commission composed of management and labour and Government representatives gives advice enabling AFAQ AFNOR Certification to make the labelling decision.

The equality label is the outward sign of success – a successfully completed dialogue between the French Government and the party concerned. It is an additional step undertaken by management organisations and unions in their national multi-sector agreement of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2004, signed unanimously.

## Description

There are three stages to the labelling procedure:

- 1st stage: Submitting the application.

The candidate can download the application file from the Ministry for social integration and equal opportunities website ([www.femmes-egalite.gouv.fr](http://www.femmes-egalite.gouv.fr)) or from the AFAQ AFNOR Group Certification website ([www.afaq.org](http://www.afaq.org)). This file includes a questionnaire relating to the different criteria provided for by the specifications. Duly completed and submitted to the consultative opinion of the gender equality at work commission formed within the company, or, failing this, of elected employee representatives, it is then sent to AFAQ AFNOR Certification.

- 2nd stage: Examination of the application.

An initial examination of the application is made by AFAQ AFNOR Certification in order to check the information and documents comply with specifications. The purpose of the examination is to assess the incorporation by the candidate of the elements of the project through the examination of compliance with the labelling specifications. The examination of the file will take place in two stages:

- the labelling organisation analyses the application through an audit;
- after analysing the documents, the auditor compiles an examination report. He may organise an interview with the candidate. The examination report is then submitted to the labelling commission.

- 3rd stage: The labelling decision.

The labelling commission includes five representatives from the Government, five representatives from unions representing employees and five representatives from management organisations. It is ensured that there are an equal number of men and women on the commission. On the basis of the examination report, they form a majority opinion. This opinion enables the AFAQ Group to make the labelling decision. The holder of the label can, from then on, under specified conditions, use the equality label for a period of three years (with a check after 18 months).

The "Equality label" specifications include twenty criteria based on three areas:

- The first area relates to the actions carried out in the company towards gender equality at work. These actions are assessed by taking account of:
  - information and raising awareness of the gender mix and equality of managers, employees and their representatives;
  - internal communication operations, adapted to the size of the company, to promote gender mix and equality;
  - the signing of a company agreement in the gender equality at work area.
- The second area is centred on the management of human resources and management. It concerns:
  - actions taken to strengthen the equality of access of women and men to ongoing vocational training;
  - the analysis of indicators relating to general work conditions and training of men and women in the company, in order to draw up goals;
  - the policy aimed at the gender mix of employees in the different decision-making committees (board, executive committee, strategic committee).
- The third area corresponds to parenthood in professional life. The actions of the company enabling a balance between work and family life are assessed, and particularly:
  - flexibility of hours;
  - organisation and working conditions;
  - methods for leaving on and returning from maternity and/or parental leave in order to take career objectives into account.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since the launch of the label, 33 enterprises have managed to obtain and renew their certification (after 18 months). This figure may seem low (there are more than 110 collective equality agreements in France, which represent only 1.6% of the agreements signed in France), but it reveals that the label requires a major investment in gender equality (concrete measures for progress, absence of discrimination, true commitments...). It is a good tool for encouraging enterprises to act and for convincing high-level management of the advantages of investing in equality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inversely, we can criticise the fact of « selling equality ». For certain people (particularly researchers), equality is a fundamental right which should not be instrumentalised, which is partly the case with this label: enterprises use this tool as a means of communication or publicity (a lot of press articles are written when a label is obtained). Thus, it was underlined that PSA (automobile industry) was the first enterprise to gain the label, that Axa was the first enterprise in the insurance industry to be awarded the label... But, beyond this mediatisation, concrete operations took place: PSA for example laid the foundation stone of its inter-company crèche in January 2007. For many years the company has been increasing its level of female recruitment, bringing it up to 25%. In 2005, of the 932 engineers recruited, 232 were women...</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[http://www.afaq.org/web/ressources.nsf/vpdf/msen\\_10.pdf/\\$file/msen\\_10.pdf](http://www.afaq.org/web/ressources.nsf/vpdf/msen_10.pdf/$file/msen_10.pdf)

**Language(s) available:**

English, French

**Other sources of relevant information:**

[http://www.femmes-egalite.gouv.fr/grands\\_dossiers/dossiers/egalite\\_en\\_entreprise/label\\_egalite.htm](http://www.femmes-egalite.gouv.fr/grands_dossiers/dossiers/egalite_en_entreprise/label_egalite.htm)

**UK Awards for Family Friendly Employers**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	<b>&gt; 7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality</b>
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of Structure:** Working Families  
**Country:** United Kingdom  
**Date of Implementation:** Since 1990  
**Type of Best Practice:** Awards

**Main objective**  
 To raise the profile of current best practice in the field of family-friendly policies in the enterprise, and of the work-life debate.

**Context**  
 As presented in fiche 32, “Working Families” is a campaigning charity that supports and informs working parents and carers. Among its different activities, it runs the Employer of the Year Awards and the Best Boss competition to help spread the word about best practice in this vital area.

**Description**

The Working Families Employer of the Year Awards have promoted work-life balance in the workplace since 1990. Employers nominate themselves in one or more of following categories: Innovation Award, Family Friendly Award, Public Sector Award, Silver Service Award, Small Business Award, Wellbeing Award and Science, Engineering and Technology Award. Each of the awards is sponsored by different charities and large enterprises (Hewlett Packard, Jaguar, Land Rover, The Times newspaper, CAREER, Norman Broadbent).

In 2006, the Metropolitan Police won the overall award of Working Families Employer of the Year, due in particular to their innovative and comprehensive childcare provision in a profession where unpredictability and variable working hours are common. The judges were particularly impressed by the fast progress made in a difficult organisational culture.

Previous winners include HSBC, British Telecom, Jaguar, MSN UK and The Penguin Group. Case studies of all winners and finalists are available on the Working Families website, with full details of their activities.

The Working Families American Express Best Boss competition rewards individual bosses and line managers who promote a greater understanding of balancing work and home life. Sponsored by American Express, it was started in 2000 to give employees the opportunity to thank and win recognition for supportive bosses. Employees who nominate winning bosses are invited (with their

boss) to a celebratory luncheon and presentation at the House of Lords. The person who nominates the overall winner receives a meal for two at a top London restaurant and a night at a London hotel. The winning boss receives a trophy and 1000 pounds of gift vouchers, so that they can celebrate with their team.

Previous winners come from a range of companies, both small and large, from both the public and private sector. The winner of the 2006 award came from a small engineering manufacturer called Geotechnical Instruments. He caught the eye of the Best Boss judges because he turned around a very traditional engineering company culture by introducing an extensive array of employee benefits. He says his team most values the flexible working on offer – the 85 employees have more than 40 different working patterns and some work part-time or term-time only – and the “guilt-free” time off for family emergencies. The company also offers childcare vouchers, free medical insurance, counselling sessions and even free breakfasts and fruit. This has had very positive effects for the business, which is now a successful small manufacturer, with a very low turnover of staff and absence levels. More information about previous winners is available on the Working Families website.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The awards, with their high-profile support and sponsorship (charities, large companies, House of Lords...), are an important way of making known good practice by employers in the field of work-life balance. This could encourage other employers to implement similar initiatives.</li> <li>➤ The awards also focus public awareness on work-life balance issues, which are often situations taken for granted as “normal” (for example, that women bear the brunt of childcare or other domestic responsibilities).</li> <li>➤ The good publicity for employers surrounding the awards is positive for their public image, and also for staff retention and levels of contentment. A “good employer” is more likely to attract the most qualified staff.</li> <li>➤ Sponsorship by large private companies, renowned charities and government is an important endorsement of the awards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The awards are an important and effective communication tool, but do not constitute a “scientific” evaluation of the policies implemented by the different companies.</li> <li>➤ The Best Boss competition seems particularly subjective in nature, and puts the emphasis on individual’s efforts to improve work-life balance for staff.</li> <li>➤ Because of the corporate sponsorship, it is particularly important to show that judging is impartial, by for example choosing judges from a variety of sources (companies, charities, experts...).</li> <li>➤ This type of award system creates competition between enterprises (instead of working together) which can have some negative side effects.</li> <li>➤ Some of the family-friendly policies which are presented are not designed specifically with the aim of progressing gender equality, so should be read with care.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/asp/awards/a\\_welcome.asp](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/asp/awards/a_welcome.asp)

**Language(s) available:**

English

**Other sources of relevant information:**

[http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/asp/awards/a\\_casestudies.asp](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/asp/awards/a_casestudies.asp)

## Competition for gender-friendly and family-friendly employers

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	<b>&gt; 7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality</b>
	8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies

**Name of the Structure:** Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Family

**Country:** Slovak Republic

**Date of Implementation:** From 2000

**Type of Best Practice:** Competition

### Main Objective

To stimulate the willingness of the employers to promote gender equality and create flexible working regimes for the employees with children.

### Context

The fertility rate has dropped in the Slovak Republic from 2.1 in 1990 to 1.25 in 2005, which is among the lowest rates in Europe. Consequently, family policy has become a central issue in Slovakia. In the meanwhile, women on the labour market are faced with a high unemployment rate (17.2% in 2005 vs. 15.5% for male), both vertical and horizontal segregation, and a gender pay gap estimated at 24% (15% on average within EU).

### Description

Since 2000, the Ministry of Labour, Social affairs and Family, has organised a competition every year for enterprises divided into three different categories:

1. Family policy (flexibility of working-time, support for caring, leisure time...);
2. Gender equality (recruitment, remuneration, career development...);
3. The most original family-friendly measure adopted by an SME.

The jury of the competition is appointed by the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, and Family. In addition to the members from the Ministry, it is composed of representatives of employers, trade-unions, academics, and women's NGOs.

There are 3 enterprises awarded in each category. The winners are given their prizes during a ceremony covered by the media, and added into the "list of family-friendly employers". There is no material prize or money at stake.

Whereas only 9 enterprises participated in the competition in 2001, the participation has raised to 58 applicants in 2007 (for all three categories).

In 2007, among the three categories, the one devoted to gender equality has been the most successful. In this category, IBM was awarded the first place for having achieved equal representation of women and men in its management positions (50% male and 50% female.)

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ This kind of initiative tends to demonstrate gender equality and work-life balance policies can be rewarding for enterprises. This approach is complementary to a legal approach, which is more constraining for them.</li> <li>➤ The example set by the winning enterprises is much more efficient to convince other employers to design such internal policies than recommendations from international or national institutions (European Union, ministries, trade-unions...).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The competition has been initiated on the occasion of the International Family Day and is called “family-friendly competition” although it is a gender-friendly <i>and</i> family-friendly competition. In order to avoid confusion whose effects could reinforce gender stereotypes (“<i>family is a female issue</i>”), it could be more reasonable to organise two different competitions, separating more clearly gender-friendly employers from family-friendly ones.</li> <li>➤ This competition should not be considered as a policy in itself. It is more a communication event which must be complementary to a structural policy to promote gender equality and work-life balance.</li> <li>➤ The competition somehow faces a lack of credibility. It has been pointed out the competition could be transformed into a “Family and Work” audit based on European criteria and certification, which would provide more credibility to the assessments.</li> </ul>

**Sources of relevant information:**

[http://www.employment.gov.sk/new/index.php?SMC=1&mod=news&news\\_id=86](http://www.employment.gov.sk/new/index.php?SMC=1&mod=news&news_id=86)

**Language(s) available:**

Slovak

## **VIII. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies**

Enterprises - particularly small and medium-sized enterprises - do not always have the in-house expertise necessary for integrating gender equality policies into their policies and practices. Even if training or guidelines are available, some enterprises will not have the necessary manpower resources to devote a member of staff's time to this issue.

In order to help such enterprises to respect national gender equality legal requirements and implement gender equality policies which will be beneficial for the business, some Member States have experimented in the training and use of external experts who can provide assistance in a number of different enterprises.

The examples presented here come from Finland and Austria.

## Equality Consultants in Finnish Companies

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	<b>› 8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies</b>

**Name of Structure:** Equal Development Partnership “Monikko” led by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH)

**Country:** Finland

**Date of Implementation:** 2005-2007

**Type of Best Practice:** Expertise

### Main objective

To associate external expertise in order to help enterprises to draw up an equality plan.

### Context

The Finnish Act on Equality between Women and Men, passed in 2005, obliges companies and organisations employing over 30 people to produce an annual gender equality plan in consultation with staff representatives. Violation of the law is subject to a fine.

A consultancy agency specialising in gender equality issues, World of Management Ltd (WoM), led a subproject for FIOH where, in partnership with trade unions and four technology industry companies, practical examples for drafting equality plans were made.

Among these four companies there was Planar Systems Inc, the Finnish branch of a US-based company that manufactures flat panel displays.

### Description

The consultancy agency’s role was to work in cooperation with employees to draw up the equality plan. WoM provided training in equality know-how, help in assessing the current equality situation and support for the organisation or company at all stages in the development of a practical equality plan. In the case of Planar Systems Inc., the consultancy agency’s representative was in contact with the company’s HR manager who was in charge of the gender equality planning process, and the in-house equality team. The equality plan developed consisted of six steps:

- (1) setting up an equality team and studying the theoretical background of equality planning,
- (2) surveying the gender and equality situation in the company,
- (3) specifying the areas for equality promotion,

- (4) planning targets and measures,
- (5) deciding on those responsible for implementation, and
- (6) planning follow-up and information.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Consultancy agencies are known to have an image of being neutral, highly specialised and professional. If a consultancy agency offers assistance in drawing up a gender equality plan, then the positive image of the consultancy agencies may also improve the companies' attitude towards gender equality.</li> <li>➤ The consultancy agencies are also able to capitalize on knowledge and experience. Their know-how of the legal requirements, companies' interests in general and everyday practicalities improves with every consultation case.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Consultancy agencies' fees tend to be high, which means that their expertise is only available to those who can afford it.</li> <li>➤ Considering the fees of the external consultants, the companies could be tempted to use their services only for the elaboration of the plan. However, the sustainability of the plan requires external support at all stages of the plan, i.e. elaboration, implementation and evaluation.</li> </ul>

**Available online at:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-06-fi-monikko\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-06-fi-monikko_en.cfm)

**Language(s) available:**

English

**Other sources of relevant information**

[http://www.monikko.net/index\\_eng.html](http://www.monikko.net/index_eng.html)

<http://www.ttl.fi/internet/english>

<http://www.wom.fi>

**Creation of a new professional profile: the equal pay agent**

<b>ACTION STEP</b>	1. Identifying and analysing gender inequalities and issues in private enterprises
	2. Informing and raising awareness on gender equality for private sector actors
	3. Increasing the competencies of private sector actors in gender equality
	4. Company practices for promoting gender equality
	5. Trade union practices for promoting gender equality
	6. Negotiating on gender issues
	7. Giving incentives to enterprises for promoting gender equality
	<b>› 8. External expertise to help enterprises implement gender equality strategies</b>

**Name of Structure:** Equal Development Partnership KLARA! led by Netzwerk österreichischer Frauen- und Mädchenberatungsstellen (FIOH)

**Country:** Austria

**Date of Implementation:** 2004-2006

**Type of Best Practice:** Expertise

**Main objective**

Training equal pay specialists.

**Context**

In Austria, there are companies that oblige the employees not to discuss their income with colleagues and include this obligation in the contract. In addition, Austria belongs to the group of EU member states that have the highest gender pay gaps. Depending on the region and the profession women may earn up to 40% less than men.

The KLARA! EQUAL project is aimed at awareness-raising and strengthening the existing women’s resource centres and NGOs. Within the partnership, the SOFIA Institute for Holistic and Applied Social Research is focusing on carrying out the training of equal pay specialists.

**Description**

The SOFIA Institute for Holistic and Applied Social Research developed a curriculum to train gender equal pay specialists. This training is designed to make them able to understand and deal with the interconnectedness of different aspects (individual, organisational and societal) behind the gender pay gap.

The training programme reflects the steps that are required for the work of the equal pay agent:

- the analysis of the situation,
- the decision to intervene in a situation assessed as discriminatory,
- the implementation of a solution or remedy and
- the marketing and dissemination of the approach.

The more theoretical issues discussed in the agenda include:

- legal information;
- macro-economic developments and their impact on women;
- gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting.
- More practically oriented aspects of the curriculum include:
- equal pay actions and interventions at company level;
- negotiation;
- self-marketing and public relations skills,;
- networking and lobbying.

Key points of interest	Possible limitations and necessary adaptations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ The gender pay gap is a complex issue and specialists trained to understand the influencing aspects along with the skills to reach solutions can make it easier for organizations in all sectors to alleviate the gender pay gap problem effectively.</li><li>➤ The creation of a new occupation like this helps to raise awareness about gender pay gaps.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Within the KLARA! project fifteen people representing gender equality bodies, trade unions, works councils, research institutions, business consultancies specialised on gender equality, political parties and NGOs were trained. It would be useful to try and include more representatives from private companies who should be / can be expected the main actors in this field.</li></ul>

**Available online at:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-06-at-klara\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/practical-examples/opport-06-at-klara_en.cfm)

**Language(s) available:**

English

**Other sources of relevant information :**

<http://www.institut-sofia.at/>

## CONCLUSION

On reading the entire series of best practice fiches, we wish, in these concluding remarks, to highlight a certain number of transversal features:

- Firstly, when compiling the list of best practices, we were surprised at the quantity, diversity and quality of experiences in the field of gender equality in the private sector which exist in the European Union (company and trade union practices, publicity campaigns, e-learning, guidelines, indicators, training courses, labels and awards, collective agreements...). Furthermore, these best practices are often easily accessible via internet, and often use a variety of innovative techniques for conveying the message (humour, cartoons, games, images...);
- Secondly, in all the Member States, the majority of the good practices identified are implemented by large enterprises. These enterprises have understood the economic benefits of developing gender equality strategies for reducing turnover and absenteeism, attracting suitable candidates (...), but also for providing positive publicity and improving their public image. This guidebook should change this fact, and aims to promote the development of gender equality policies in SMEs as many of the measures described are accessible for all (working time arrangements, recruitment policy, encouraging access to non-typical occupations, using e-learning tools...);
- Thirdly, it is interesting to note that, in many Member States (Sweden, Finland, France, Spain, Norway...), a constrictive and/or incentive-based legislative framework has been necessary in order to implement good practices in the field of gender equality. The role of the State is therefore important in all the different steps necessary for implementing successful strategies in this field: procedures, evaluation, monitoring...;
- Fourthly, and inversely, in Member States where the State has played a lesser role in inciting gender equality (such as the UK), other actors have sometimes taking a forward role in this field, for example independent equality authorities (such as the Equal Opportunities Commission), NGOs and enterprises themselves;
- Fifthly, it is important to remember that the notion of “best practices” has its limits. Good practices are often linked to a specific national context (history, culture, social, economic, political, religious...), which may limit their transferability into other contexts. Even if there is a certain harmonisation in the European Union of gender equality legislation and principles, different social models continue to persist and strongly influence implementation;
- Sixthly, in different organisations and Member States, we can observe different approaches to the question of treating gender equality as a specific issue, or integrating this form of discrimination into a wider treatment of all forms of equality (disability, age, ethnic origin, sexual orientation...). This latter approach is often referred to as a “diversity” approach and can be observed in certain Member States

(i.e. UK and Ireland) and organisations (i.e. the Dutch trade union FNV and the French independent equality body, the HALDE). This diversity approach has certain positive aspects, but carries the risk of diluting efforts in favour of gender equality, which is a transversal issue to all forms of discrimination.

*Vicki Donlevy & Rachel Silvera,  
November 2007*

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