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## Project information

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## Executive Summary

**The main aim of the project** was to increase the capacity of the employees to lobby for having family-friendly measures implemented at their workplaces and as a result be able to remain active in the labour market.

**Project's target groups were clearly identified and distributed in 3 sectors:**

**I sector.** Learners-family members having problems in work and life balance.

**II sector.** Adult educators- family consultants on work and life balance.

**III sector.** Adult education organizations, trade unions, workers' unions, family associations, NGOs, interested to use the prepared training material for their clients.

During the project implementation all 3 target groups were reached within and beyond the partnership.

**The main project objectives were:**

- to raise awareness of the society about the need for bottom-up initiatives encouraging involvement of employees themselves in implementing family-friendly policies at their workplaces;
- to promote employability by creating awareness of working family members on good practices of implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces, which could help them to reconcile work and family life and as a result to remain active on the labour market;
- to offer an innovative ICT-based training material for learners "Family learning on work & life balance";
- to develop key competences of working employees having work and life problems in the area of gender equality, family-friendly policies and work and life balance; to strengthen their competences to protect their human rights and lobby for implementing work and life balance measures at their workplaces;
- to address the need for qualified family consultant on work & life balance to work with families having problems to reconcile work and family life.

The Project's Consortium was composed of eight organizations from five EU countries. Each organization has distinguished for its high level of expertise which was crucial for the development of the planned outcomes. The main skills and competences of the Consortium comprised the high social research skills and experience in the field of gender equality and family-friendly measures at workplaces, special professional skills in organizing and promoting training, skills in implementing ICT-based training materials. The expertise of the Consortium has been strengthened through involvement of the associated partners from the trade unions, workers' unions, family associations. During the project's lifetime the Consortium has developed the State of Art Review, the brochure "Best Practices on Work & Life Balance", DVD with video collection "Good Practices. Work & Life Balance", E-Handbook "Family Learning on Work & Life Balance", Guidelines for Family Consultants. The quality of the developed products have been assessed during the European training session for family consultants as well as during 16 national pilot training sessions organized by each partner in its country with total number of 164 participants, as well external evaluators. For dissemination purposes a leaflet containing information about the project and its activities have been published in EN, DE, FI, IT, LT, LV languages as well two e-newsletters about the project progress with identification of the website have been developed and sent to project partners for further dissemination within different their networks on national and European level. Project's website [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu) contains all the outcomes of the project available for download. The visibility and sustainability of the project outcomes was achieved by organizing in total 8 national cooperation seminars for 93 family consultants and personal consultations for 42 family members having problems in work and life balance, by distributing more than 400 copies of eHandbook on DVD. The optimal use of the results beyond the partnership, during and beyond the life time of the project has been ensured by the final conference and by registering training course for family consultant "Balancing work and family responsibilities through information, motivation, consultation and training" in Grundtvig In-Service Training databank.

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# 1. Project Objectives

The main **objectives of the project** were:

- to raise awareness of the society about the need for bottom-up initiatives encouraging involvement of employees themselves in implementing family-friendly policies at their workplaces;
- to prepare recommendations for the quality and content of trainings for family learning on work and life balance;
- to promote employability by creating awareness of working family members about the possibilities to balance work and family life by showing them good practices of implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces, which could help them to reconcile work and family life and as a result to remain active in the labour market;
- to encourage family members to contribute themselves in implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces;
- to offer an innovative ICT-based training material for learners “Family learning on work & life balance”;
- to develop key competences of working employees having work and life reconciliation problems in the area of gender equality, family-friendly policies, and reconciliation of work and family life; to strengthen their competences to protect their human rights and lobby for implementing work and life balance measures at their workplaces;
- to address the need for qualified family consultant on work and life balance to work with families having problems to reconcile work & family life;
- to ensure optimal use of the results beyond the partnership, during and beyond the lifetime of the project.

Reconciliation of work and family roles has recently gained a particular popularity in public policy debates across Europe. Countries differ in their policy responses, sometimes stressing the need for more flexible working arrangements, sometimes encouraging the supply of care services or focusing on a more equal distribution between paid and unpaid work.

Nevertheless, the problem of work and life balance is still faced by many families and often results in withdrawal of one of family members from the labour market. Despite some employers' initiatives to create family-friendly workplaces, they aren't widely spread and recognized in most European countries. Thus, the bottom-up approach encouraging involvement of employees themselves in implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces and as a result to remain active in the labour market becomes of crucial importance.

The project addressed the needs of working family members to improve their knowledge on family-friendly measures which could be applied at workplaces in order to assist them to reconcile work and family life in a more efficient and mutually beneficial way.

The following target groups have been reached during the life of the project:

The first short-term target group - 21 family consultants attended the European training session on work & life balance, which was held in Liverpool, UK in December 2010. They have been selected by project partners according to their skills, qualification and motivation for further preparation to work with families having problems in reconciliation of work and family life. During the European training session, family consultants got the skills to apply the developed training modules in their work with working family members having difficulties to balance their work and family life responsibilities.

The second short-term target group - 164 family members trained on work and life balance issues during the National Pilot training sessions, organized in the frame of one-day workshops. During

the project's lifetime there were 16 workshops organized, during which the training modules were tested by learners – family members and later improved in accordance with their feedback and suggestions. Involvement of the target group in the piloting of the developed training materials helped to assess their quality and to ensure their utility beyond the project life time.

The third short-term target group - 42 family members who received personal consultations on the issues of work and life balance. After the European Training session family consultants provided consultations to the working family members on the issues of work and life balance depending on their needs. The developed multilanguage DVD “Family learning on work & life balance” has been used as an aspiration tool for consultations at the same time ensuring an innovative approach to solving the work and family life reconciliation problems. Personal consultations provided for family members having work and life balance problems were aimed to motivate them to self-learning on work and life balance.

The fourth short-term target group – more than 400 families encouraged for self-learning on family-friendly measures by providing them with multilanguage DVD “Family learning on work & life balance”. This target group has been reached by those family members who got consultations on work and life balance during the project and were encouraged to distribute the developed DVD for their friends having the same work and life balance problems.

The fifth short-term target group -93 adult educators and other social partners acquainted with the role of family consultant on work and life balance. They have been invited to participate in the Cooperation seminars at national level. Representatives of trade unions, worker's unions, adult education centres, family centres and other stakeholders were invited to attend those seminars, where they got familiar with the developed materials and were encouraged to organize similar trainings for their clients – working family members. Those seminars ensured the optimal use of the developed training modules on DVD and guidelines for family consultants beyond the partnership.

In addition to the short-term target groups the project also had the long-term target groups, which will be reached beyond the project's official Consortium and beyond the project lifetime. Project's long-term target groups are clearly defined and distributed in 3 sectors:

- learners-family members having problems in work and life balance;
- adult educators- family consultants on work and life balance;
- adult education organizations, trade unions, workers' unions, family associations, NGOs interested in using the prepared training material for their clients.

During implementation of the project's all 3 target groups have been reached within and beyond the partnership.

The project established the network of the associated partners, which helped the Consortium to reach the above-listed target groups and keep contacts with similar organizations from the other EU Member States as well as from the national and European networks. Public and private organizations, trade unions, employers' associations, training institutions have been already involved in the project's activities.

Besides the overall impact of the project for employees increasing their capacity to contribute themselves to implementation of family-friendly measures at workplaces and thus, remaining active on the labour market, the project also offers the brand new solutions for trade unions, worker's unions, adult education centres, family associations and NGOs for preparation of consultants on work and life balance enabling them to provide trainings, personal guidance and consultations to families having problems to reconcile work and family life. The long-term impact is seen also through rising awareness of the society regarding the gender equality and family-friendly measures for the employees.

## 2. Project Approach

Project aimed at introducing innovative approach to family learning on work and life balance influencing the implementation of family-friendly policies at workplaces as a part of business strategy with a dual agenda of creating “win-win” situation for achieving organizational effectiveness and employees’ wellbeing (required by the EU directive No.2002/73/EC 8b).

The project started with the development of the **State of Art Review** which overviewed the family-friendly policies targeted towards the reconciliation agenda in Finland, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and United Kingdom with the main focus on national public policies with regard to diverse leave facilities, care services, flexible working arrangements or training/retraining of employees, who return to labour market after a break due to family reasons. The general aim of this survey was to prepare recommendations for the quality and content of trainings for family learning on work and life balance.

The Review started with a brief overview of the policies targeted towards the reconciliation agenda in partner countries (Finland, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and United Kingdom). That part of the report was focused on national public policies with regard to diverse leave facilities, care services, flexible working arrangements or training/retraining of employees, who return to labour market after a break due to family reasons.

The second part of the State of Art Review presented the cases of good practices on effective implementation of family-friendly measures at workplaces in all partner countries.

The third part of the report briefly overviewed the quality standards for training modules and competency profile of family consultant on work and life balance.

The fourth part of the Report ensured a good added value to the whole project as it suggested the general structure of the training model and prompted ideas for the methodological approach to be applied.

The results of the survey also served as a basis for creation of the Guidelines for family consultants to facilitate family learning. The survey had a European added value from the political, organizational and pedagogical points of view as it included chapters that covered all the topics mentioned above.

State of Art Review has been finalised, assessed by external evaluator, printed in each partner country and added (in pdf format) to the project website [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu) for further dissemination.

This outcome provided the basis for the content and methodology of **The Collection of Best Practices on work and life balance** which aimed to encourage family members to contribute themselves in implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces.

Collection (consisting of the brochure of best practices and DVD with video clips) was developed with the purpose to encourage family learning on work and life balance through positive personal experience and to encourage family members to contribute themselves in implementing family-friendly measures at workplace. It provided the personal reflections of those working family members, who benefited from family-friendly measures implemented at their workplace.

Development of the multilanguage DVD required an input from all partners. Each of them had to select one family for creation of a video clip in its national language. Later it also had to prepare the transcripts of the video clip produced in English language and provide them to the partnership. The transcripts of each video have been then translated by each partner into their national languages. The final multilanguage DVD contained eight video clips with the subtitles in all national languages of the partnership. This collection of video clips on the DVD is a good visual tool for training of those employees who have problems in reconciling their responsibilities for work and

family. All video clips are available on the project's website [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu) for the download and further dissemination.

The Collection has been used during the personal consultations with families in order to inspire family members to lobby for effective implementing of family-friendly measures at their workplace. As well it created a basis for the development of innovative training modules for family learning on work and life balance resulting in e-Handbook. The video clips have been incorporated into the training modules as visual case studies on family-friendly measures implemented at workplaces.

Thus, the State of Art Review and the Collection "Best practices on work & life balance" (brochure and video) served as a basis for further development of the training modules. The above mentioned outcomes have been transformed into the format which allowed application of information derived from these outcomes during organized adult education sessions/workshops.

**e-Handbook "Family learning on work & life balance"** has been developed on the basis of the common agreement of the partnership with main aim to offer innovative training modules for family learning on work-life balance in order to help the learners to develop their social and civic competences in the area of gender equality, family-friendly workplaces and work-life balance. As agreed with the partnership, the structure of e-Handbook contained introduction to the training programme and six training modules.

The training approach was based on the module principle meaning that each module was developed as an accomplished unit and could be used during the one-day workshops or for self-education.

The training modules presented in the E-Handbook could be used both for face-to-face and self-learning.

In order to facilitate self-learning on work and life balance within the families by using the developed training materials, the partnership prepared the **Guidelines for family consultants** to facilitate their work with families on work and life balance. The guidelines present the methods for organizing workshops using the State of Art Review, video clips, good practice examples based on interviews with employees and E-handbook containing modules with the main topics concerning work and life balance of employees. It also discuss the methods on how to organize personal consultations for families having problems in work and life balance, as well as how to facilitate family members having similar problems to help each other.

The project's outcomes have been piloted during the European training session on work and life balance for family consultants and National Pilot Training Sessions for working family members organized by family consultants in project partners' countries. The main outcomes have been also evaluated by the external evaluators. The appropriate improvements have been done on the basis of the feedback from the participants of training sessions and recommendations provided by the external evaluators.

During the first partnership meeting all partners agreed in detail the dissemination and exploitation strategies. The leaflet about the project has been developed in all languages of partnership (EN, DE, FI, IT, LT & LV), published in 3000 copies in total and widely distributed at regional, national and European level. The website [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu) has been designed with the main information about the project and the developed outcomes for further download. 227 dissemination and exploitation activities were undertaken during the lifetime of the project by the partners. The total number of dissemination activities comprised: 130 on local level; 56 activities on European level and 13 activities on international level. 70 events have been organised by the project partners themselves, for the others dissemination activities many different occasions have been used. Information about the project was placed on partners' websites and the project website [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu).

Two brief e-newsletters about the project progress with identification of the website were sent to various European and national networks, which project partners were in contact with. The Final International one-day conference with 62 participants was held in Kaunas, Lithuania as a major



dissemination event. The dissemination beyond the partnership has been ensured by participation of 4 outside experts in the Conference. Dissemination of project's results beyond the project's lifetime will be ensured by the Grundtvig Training Course for family consultant "Balancing work and family responsibilities through information, motivation, consultation and training" which has been registered in Grundtvig In-Service Training databank (Grundtvig Reference Number. LT-2012-027-001) and will take place in Kaunas, Lithuania on 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

The systematic and effective exploitation of the project's outcomes / results has been ensured during and beyond the project lifetime as well as beyond the Consortium due to the valorisation strategy which included a variety of events for transferring the results to appropriate organizations (trade unions, workers' unions, adult education centres, etc.) at local and national level. The organizations working with families were encouraged to apply the developed outcomes at their educational and consultancy work during the Cooperation seminars organized by each partner in their country. Participation of the associated partners in the Cooperation seminars ensured further exploitation of project's results.

During the project's lifetime personal consultations for family members having problems in reconciliation of work and family life were organized. Family consultants provided personal consultations for working family members having problems in reconciliation of work and family life to motivate them to commit to self-learning on work and life balance and contribute themselves to implementation of family-friendly measures at their workplaces. Thus, these 46 working family members and more than 400 other families having similar problems have been encouraged to self-learning by using the developed training materials.

Linguistic and cultural issues have been appropriately addressed by providing the following outcomes at national languages of the partnership: Collection of best practice on work & life balance, E-handbook on DVD "Family learning on work & life balance", leaflet for dissemination about the project. These outcomes ensured the exploitability of the project's outcomes by learners (working family members having problems to reconcile work and family life) in all partner countries.

### 3. Project Outcomes & Results

During the project's lifetime the following **products** and **results** were achieved:

**State of Art Review** report has been prepared to overview the situation in partner countries on effective implementation of family-friendly measures at workplaces. It was developed on the basis of national reports that have been done by each partner. Information on national contexts was based on the analysis of documents, statistical data, and interviews with national experts. The report formed the basis for development of content of training modules for learners and produced recommendations for quality standards of respective training materials for both learners and family consultants. State of Art Review report was divided into four parts:

The first part contains the overview of the policies targeted towards the reconciliation agenda in partner countries (Finland, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and United Kingdom). Reconciliation policies can be defined as policies that directly support the combination of professional, family and private lives. This part of the report is focused on national public policies with regard to diverse leave facilities, care services, flexible working arrangements or training/retraining of employees, who return to labour market after a break due to family reasons.

The second part of the report presents the cases of good practices on effective implementation of family-friendly measures at workplaces in all partner countries. This part discusses the provisions that emerge at company level as organizations may either supplement public provisions and services or other family-friendly measures at workplace.

The third part of the report discusses the quality standards for training modules and competency profile of family consultant on work & life balance.

The fourth part consists of the recommendations for content of the training program for learners.

The Report was used within partnership as a basis for developing the training modules for learners. It was also a good dissemination tool – it has been disseminated during the first stage of the project and will be further disseminated for family consultants during the Cooperation seminars and at the International Conference in Kaunas, Lithuania.

The Report was developed in English language, printed in each partner country and added to the project's website [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu) (in pdf format) and is available for downloading.

This outcome covered the objectives stated by the project:

- To raise awareness of the society about the need for bottom-up initiatives encouraging involvement of employees themselves in implementing family-friendly policies at their workplaces;
- To prepare recommendations for the quality and content of trainings for family learning on work & life balance.

**Brochure "Best practices on work & life balance"** was developed to encourage family members to contribute themselves in implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces. Brochure includes collection of 32 interviews with family members who benefited from family-friendly measures at the workplace. Each partner has selected and interviewed four working family members, who benefited from the following family-friendly measures at workplace:

- flexible work arrangements,
- child care services,
- care services for elderly or family members with disabilities,
- paternity/maternity/child care support leaves by company,
- training/retraining of employees, who return to labour market after a break due to family reasons,
- career break,
- additional services provided by company for families/mothers who are on paternity/maternity/child care leaves,
- other type of measures.

The outcome was developed in English language and has been translated into national languages of partnership Germany, Finish, Italian, Latvian and Lithuanian. During the reporting period the

brochure has been printed in national languages, in total 800 copies and was used for dissemination at national and European levels. It is also available for downloading in pdf format from the project's website [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu) (in EN, DE, FI, IT, LT and LV languages). The brochure has been used during the national pilot sessions for family members, personal consultations for families and also for dissemination at national level beyond the partnership.

This outcome covered the objectives stated by the project:

- to promote employability by creating awareness of working family members on good practices of implementing family-friendly practices at workplaces, which could help them to reconcile their work & family life and as a result to remain active on the labour market;
- to encourage family members to contribute themselves in implementing family-friendly workplaces using bottom-up approach.

**Video collection “Good practices. Work & life balance”** has been developed and contains 8 video clips where working family members who benefited from family-friendly measures at workplace have been interviewed. Each partner has developed one video in national language, translated the transcripts of its video into English language. Then the multilanguage DVD has been developed with transcripts in all partners' languages (in EN, DE, FI, IT, LT and LV). The final Multilanguage DVD consists of the following 8 video clips in national languages with transcripts:

- **Gender Balance in Lithuania: Good Practice of Positive Paternity.** (In Lithuanian language with transcripts in English, Finnish, German, Italian and Latvian);
- **Flexible work arrangements for shift work.** (In Lithuanian language with transcripts in English, Finnish, German, Italian and Latvian);
- **Family-friendly workplace with „mini kindergarten“.** (In Lithuanian language with transcripts in English, Finnish, German, Italian and Latvian);
- **Slow Life.** (In Finnish language with transcripts in English, German, Italian, Latvian and Lithuanian);
- **Family Friendly Work Places with Trade Union and Collective Agreement.** (In Latvian language with transcripts in English, Finnish, German, Italian, and Lithuanian);
- **Organisational Ethos Assists Disabled Woman to Work.** (In English language with transcripts in Finnish, German, Italian, Latvian and Lithuanian);
- **Work life balance: how to be flexible.** (In Italian language with transcripts in English, German, Finnish, Latvian and Lithuanian);
- **FamUnDo – An innovative project to improve companies in family-friendly policies.** (In German language with transcripts in English, Finnish, Italian, Latvian and Lithuanian).

Video clips have been used as a training tool for further training of employees (family members) having problems in work and life balance. Thus, partners have used the methodology of creation this training tool (video clips) based on expert knowledge and personal reflection. It means, that some other players (not only employees having work and life balance problems) were included into the video clips. The following additional players have been included in the video clips:

- Experts on family-friendly policies and practices;
- Academic scientists making any research in the field;
- Employers, human resource managers, etc.;
- Politicians;
- Project managers.

The Multilanguage DVD has been delivered to partners for future dissemination on national and international levels, and for further use during personal consultations to inspire family members to lobby for implementing effective family friendly measures at their workplaces. The videos with the subtitles in national languages (in EN, DE, FI, IT, LT and LV) are available for download from the project's website [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu). Video collection created a base for further development of visual case studies for training modules on family learning.

This outcome covered the objectives stated by the project:

- to promote employability by creating awareness of working family members on good practices of implementing family-friendly practices at workplaces, which could help them to reconcile their work & family life and as a result to remain active on the labour market;
- to encourage family members to contribute themselves in implementing family-friendly workplaces using bottom-up approach.

**E-Handbook “Family learning on work & life balance”** with innovative training modules for family learning on work & life balance has been developed and produced in the format of multilanguage DVD (in EN, DE, FI, IT, LT and LV languages). It aims to help learners to develop their social and civic competences in the area of gender equality, family-friendly and work-life balance.

E-Handbook consists of introductory part (common for each training module), and the following six modules.

*Module 1.* Arrangements in cases of maternity/paternity leave and “time-out”.

*Module 2.* Possibilities for flexible working time arrangements (including flexible working hours, part-time work, job-sharing, work from home and telecommuting).

*Module 3.* Possibilities for dealing with responsibilities to care for long-term disabled and elderly people and other dependents.

*Module 4.* Support services for childcare and pre-natal and post-natal arrangements for protecting and supporting women in the workplace (e.g. breast-feeding facilities).

*Module 5.* Additional opportunities for services provided by companies for employees and their families on the basis of collective or other type of agreements. Opportunities for education, training and career development when experiencing problems in work & life balance.

*Module 6* Improving quality of working life: Overview of policies and practices for family-friendly workplace at European and national levels.

Each training module has a common structure, which comprises:

*Theoretical part.* The main aim of this part is to create awareness and sensitise the participants on the issues of the topic. Thus, this part is rather short, written in learner-friendly manner pointing out the importance of the topic in implementation of family-friendly practices at workplaces, the main problems and challenges, and the benefits for the employees.

*Practical part.* The practical part is the most important part of each module. The main aim is to deepen the knowledge gained while reading the theoretical part. The methodology of the practical part of each module is based on self-learning from personal experiences of other employees. Mostly all case studies are created on the basis of Collection of the best practices developed within the project, which consists of videos and interviews with the personal reflection of the employees who have benefited from family-friendly measures applied at their workplaces. Practical parts of all modules are constructed in the way that each of 6 modules gives learner a possibility to analyse at least one video clip and 3-4 interviews on the topic. The questions provided at the end of each case study are aimed at encouraging self-reflection of the learner on her/his information presented in the case study in comparison with own situation. In total there are 30 case studies developed on the basis of good practices collected within the project.

*Next steps.* This part aims to encourage the learner to think about the further steps he/she could undertake after having completed any of the modules. Presented general questions could give the learner the idea how he/she could act further to ensure the possibility to reconcile work and family life.

The product is available as an e-handbook on DVD, with total 800 copies. This outcome covers the objectives stated by the project:

- to encourage family members to contribute themselves in implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces;
- to offer an innovative ICT-based training material for learners “Family learning on work & life balance”;
- to develop key competences of working employees having work and life problems in the area of gender equality, family-friendly policies, and reconciliation of work and family life; to strengthen their competences to protect their human rights and lobby for implementing work and life balance measures at their workplaces.

**The Guidelines for family consultants** present methods how to organize trainings and consultations on work and life balance for working family members and to encourage their active involvement in implementing family-friendly initiatives within their workplaces.

The main aims of guidelines are

- To introduce newly developed training materials for facilitation family learning on work and family life balance.
- To equip family consultants/trainers with training materials in workshops for increasing capacity of family members having problems with work-life balance to protect their rights at workplaces.
- To show new educational pathways for family consultants/trainers how to organize personal consultations for families having problems in work and life balance.

It also provides practical examples, how to hold visual workshops with developed within the project e-Handbook, how to organize personal consultations for families having problems in work and life balance.

The outcome was developed in English language, published as a brochure in total 500 copies for the further dissemination at national and European levels. It has been also added to the project's website [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu) (in pdf format) available for downloading.

This outcome covered the objectives stated by the project:

- to prepare recommendations for the quality and content of trainings for family learning on work and life balance;
- to address the need for qualified family consultant on work and life balance to work with families having problems to reconcile work & family life;
- to encourage family members to contribute themselves in implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces

**European training session on work and life balance for family consultants** has been organized on the basis of developed training materials. Addressing the need for qualified family consultant on work and life balance to work with families having problems to reconcile work and family life the European training for trainers session was held on 10<sup>th</sup> of December, 2010 in Liverpool, UK. 21 family consultants from different countries have been introduced to the training modules “Family learning on work and life balance” and got familiar with the collection of best practice. During the group work in workshops the participants had opportunity to evaluate the quality of developed training materials and give their feedback. Thus, they were educated to provide trainings to family learners having problems in reconciliation of work and family life and to facilitate further piloting of the training modules at national levels and to ensure sustainability of the developed training materials beyond the project lifetime. This outcome covers the project objective: to address the need for qualified family consultant on work and life balance to work with families having problems to reconcile work & family life.

**National Pilot Training Sessions.** Sixteen national pilot training sessions for 162 family members were organised during February-May 2011 to assess the quality of the training programme. Sessions were organized in the frame of one-day workshops to test training modules. Each of 6

training modules was tested at least by two partners. This outcome also covers and even exceeds the objectives stated in the project:

- to promote employability by creating awareness of working family members on good practices of implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces, which could help them to reconcile work and family life and as a result to remain active on the labour market;
- to encourage family members to contribute themselves in implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces;
- to develop key competences of working employees having work and life problems in the area of gender equality, family-friendly policies, and reconciliation of work and family life; to strengthen their competences to protect their human rights and lobby for implementing work and life balance measures at their workplaces;

**Leaflet** about the project was designed in English language, translated into all national languages of partnership (DE, FI, IT, LT, LV) and published in 3000 copies in total. The leaflet has been used by partners for wide dissemination activities. It has been also added to the project's website [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu) in pdf format for downloading.

This outcome covered the objective stated by the project: to ensure optimal use of the results beyond the partnership, during and beyond the lifetime of the project.

**Project's website** [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu) has been developed and constantly updated with the results/outcomes of the project. This website served as a dissemination tool. It includes information about the project, partners, developed products for downloading in, the network of associated partners, useful links, and photo gallery. If products are developed in the national languages of the partnership, they are also included into the project's website in this particular language (in EN and DE, FI, IT, LT, LV). This outcome covered the objective stated by the project: to ensure optimal use of the results beyond the partnership, during and beyond the lifetime of the project.

**Final International Conference.** The main dissemination event was held on 8<sup>th</sup> of July, 2011 in Kaunas, Lithuania. It was organized in order will to create awareness of the wide public about the importance of reconciliation of work and family life and to overview all developed outcomes of the project. 62 stakeholders including local and national politicians and decision-makers, representatives from trade unions, public organizations, partners and their associated partners as well as other stakeholders were participating in the event. The participants of the Conference approved the Recommendations though which they addressed national politicians and decision-makers and encouraged them to adapt and incorporate the developed training program into national educational systems. These Recommendations will be further presented to national decision-makers in other partner countries, thus they are an effective tool for ensuring the sustainability of the project beyond project's lifetime. The agenda of the Conference, Recommendations as well as presentations and speeches of the guest speakers of the Conference can be found at project's website: [www.family-learning.eu](http://www.family-learning.eu). The Conference covered the project's objective: to raise awareness of the society about the need for bottom-up initiatives encouraging involvement of employees themselves in implementing family-friendly policies at their workplaces.

**Grundtvig Training Course for family consultant on work and life balance.** The course "Balancing work and family responsibilities through information, motivation, consultation and training" has been registered in the Grundtvig in service training data bank in August, 2011. (Grundtvig Reference number: LT-2012-027-001). The organization of the course is foreseen for May, 2012. The course is intended for adult education providers, centres for guidance and counselling, trade unions. The aim of the training

- to raise awareness of the participants about the need for encouraging initiatives of employees
- to get involved themselves in implementing family-friendly policies at their workplaces;

- to introduce the new concept of successful work with employees having work and life reconciliation problems through positive personal experience of families who benefited from family-friendly measures at workplaces;
- to teach the participants of the course how to work with families having problems by using the ICT-based training material “Family learning on work & life balance”.

This outcome covers the project’s objective: to raise awareness of the society about the need for bottom-up initiatives encouraging involvement of employees themselves in implementing family-friendly policies at their workplaces.

**Personal consultations for working family members** having problems in work and life balance to motivate them to commit self-learning on work and life balance have been given to 46 family members. Each of partners made personal consultations for at least 5 working family members having problems in work and life balance to motivate them to commit self-learning on work and life balance. More than 400 DVD’s were distributed for family members for self-directed learning. The personal consultations cover following objectives stated by the project.

- to promote employability by creating awareness of working family members on good practices of implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces, which could help them to reconcile work and family life and as a result to remain active on the labour market;
- to encourage family members to contribute themselves in implementing family-friendly measures at workplaces;
- to develop key competences of working employees having work and life problems in the area of gender equality, family-friendly policies, and reconciliation of work and family life; to strengthen their competences to protect their human rights and lobby for implementing work and life balance measures at their workplaces;
- to ensure optimal use of the results beyond the partnership, during and beyond the lifetime of the project.

**Cooperation seminars for family consultants.** Eight national Cooperation seminars were held in every partner country in June-September in order to increase the level of cooperation among family consultants, trade unions, employers, social partners, adult educators, academics and to ensure the optimal use of the developed training modules on DVD and guidelines for family consultants beyond the partnership. In total 86 participants from trade unions, worker’s unions, adult education centers, family centers and etc. discussed the possibilities to use the developed training materials during the seminars, which covered two objectives stated by the project:

- to address the need for qualified family consultant on work and life balance to work with families having problems to reconcile work & family life;
- to ensure optimal use of the results beyond the partnership, during and beyond the lifetime of the project.

## 4. Partnerships

From the beginning of the initial project the Consortium is composed of eight organizations from four European countries (Finland, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and United Kingdom) and ensures a good cooperation between new and old European Member States as well as different type of organizations, skilled in various aspects required to undertake this project in a good quality. The European added value of the multi-countries partnership lies in the clear distribution of tasks of different partners, based on their competences and experiences in the field.

The sound value of the Consortium is created by its Applicant - the Office of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson in Lithuania, which is directly responsible for implementation of gender equality at workplaces and has high level of expertise and competencies in the field of family-friendly measures to be implemented at workplaces.

The main skills and competences of Consortium are the following:

- high social research skills and experience in the field of gender equality and family-friendly measures at workplaces;
- special professional skills in organizing and promoting trainings;
- skills in implementing ICT-based approach of training programmes.

All partners have experience in European cooperation, possess communication skills, are very responsible and realise the importance of quick reaction, intelligence, tolerant communication and respect the deadlines.

The Social Innovation Fund as a coordinator of this project can ensure the overall good quality management of the project during its implementation as it has over 15 years experience in networking on lifelong learning, an extensive experience acting as coordinator in eight European projects and to act as a local manager for more than 20 European projects, in which it was a partner.

The involvement of seven associated partners have brought added value to the partnership by strengthening the quality of the Consortium. The associated partners include the trade union; the equality consultancy and training company; the parents' network; the employment network; the disability federation; the centre for the study of the child, the family and the law; the economic development agency. Associated partners will help to reach family consultants and employees for further valorisation of E-Handbook "Family learning on work & life balance" and especially to share collection of the practices brochure and multilanguage DVD beyond the project's Consortium and beyond the project's lifetime.



## 5. Plans for the Future

To ensure the sustainability of the developed innovative training approach, the extensive dissemination and exploitation strategies were set up during the project's lifetime. Effective implementation of these strategies has created a basis for the sustainability of the project after the project's lifetime: the implemented dissemination strategy includes 227 different kinds of dissemination activities undertaken by project's partners for introduction, promotion and distribution of the project's outcomes through various networks of partners and their associated partners at national and European levels to the long-term target groups.

Exploitation strategy of the project covered both basic parts: multiplication and mainstreaming of the results into policy development.

During the European trainings for trainers 21 family consultants were educated to provide trainings or conduct consultations on work life balance. They are expected to contribute to the project sustainability through organizing further trainings or encouraging family members basing on the developed materials

In order to convince the end-users to adopt/or apply the developed training materials and other outcomes and to encourage to use the materials for trainings and self-directed learning the exploitation activities were undertaken by all partners. The exploitation activities to ensure visibility and sustainability of the project's results were organized on 3 levels:

1. *by organizing Cooperation seminars for family consultants at national level.* Eight cooperation seminars organised by partners locally with total participation of 93 stakeholders.
2. *by giving personal consultations to family members having problems in work and life balance to motivate them to commit to self-learning on work and life balance.* Personal consultations for 42 family members were conducted in all partner countries.
3. *by encouraging families, who received consultations, to distribute the developed DVDs for their family friends having same work and life balance problems.* More than 400 DVDs were distributed through family members.

The main dissemination event - the International Conference - was organized in Kaunas, Lithuania on 08.07. 2011. 62 participants including project's partners and their associated partners or stakeholders were present at the Conference. In order to ensure the dissemination of the project beyond the partnership countries 4 outside experts were invited to take part in the final Conference and to make the speeches. To ensure visibility and sustainability of project's results by transferring them to appropriate decision-makers at national level, the participants of the conference approved the most important outcome of the Conference – the Recommendations for decision-makers. In these Recommendations the participants emphasized that 1) the reconciliation of work and family life is recognised at European level as an important means, 2) successful implementation of Equal opportunities for women and men at workplaces needs to include effective family-friendly measures to the gender equality plans, 3) raising awareness and training of employees and employers on work-life balance, and exchange of good practices of family-friendly measures contribute to the promotion of well-being in workplaces, 4) better support for reconciliation measures is needed to enable women and men to exercise greater choice in balancing work and family life, 5) active participation of involvement of men in reconciliation measures is crucial for achieving work-life balance. The participants recommended politicians and government officials:

1. to ensure gender equality planning at workplaces de jure and de facto emphasizing the importance of family-friendly measures;
2. to ensure financial support for educational and other initiatives at national, regional and local levels in order to promote men's role in the family, equality between women and men and reconciliation of work and family life;
3. to ensure that the European training course "Facilitating family learning on work-life balance" will be implemented via national programs.

The Recommendations have been already sent to the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of Lithuania. Other partners are also planning to discuss the Recommendations with their national and local decision-makers in their countries after the project's lifetime.

Furthermore, the Grundtvig training course "Balancing work and family responsibilities through information, motivation, consultation and training" has been registered in Grundtvig In-Service Training Databank what ensures dissemination of project's results beyond the project's lifetime. The training course will take place in Kaunas, Lithuania on 11th – 15th June 2012.

Two brief e-newsletters about the project's progress with identification of the website have been developed and have been periodically sent to various European and national networks that project partners are in contact with.

The wide range of the target groups were reached: adult trainers, teachers, gender equality experts, civil servants representatives from public institutions, employers and managers from enterprises, employees, politicians, NGOs, Higher Education and Further Training Institutions, trade unions, researchers, HR managers, family and company consultants. The project information has been also provided to representatives from employers' organisations, unions and national authorities.

All these actions helped to spread the information about the project and its expected outcomes among the target groups and other parties and organizations working in the field. All partners have discussed, agreed and signed the Agreement of Intellectual Property Rights where they have agreed that outcomes of the project belong to the project "*Facilitating family learning on work & life balance*".

## 6. Contribution to EU policies

This project contributed to the EU 2020 Strategy, as well it showed clear connection with European pact for gender equality.

The implementation of gender equality policies at workplaces is requested by EU directive No. 2002/73/EC. However, legislation alone is insufficient, systematic approach is needed to support implementation of family-friendly measures at workplaces, as it should be part of the gender equality policies in the enterprises. The problem of work and life balance is still faced by many families and often results in withdrawal of one of family members from the labour market. Despite some employers' initiatives to create family-friendly workplaces, they aren't widely spread and recognized in partner countries. That's why it is important to raise awareness on the necessity of a bottom-up approach encouraging the involvement of employees themselves in implementing family-friendly initiatives within their workplaces. Project aims to develop an innovative approach to family learning on work and life balance, by increasing capacity of employees to contribute themselves to implementation of family-friendly initiatives at workplace and as a result, to remain active on the labour market.

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION in European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020) reaffirms its commitment to fulfil EU ambitions on gender equality to “promote better work-life balance for women and men throughout the life-course, so as to enhance gender equality increase women's participation in the labour market and contribute to meeting the demographic challenge”. EU document “Manual for gender mainstreaming in Employment policies’ (2007) emphasizes necessity for training facilities to ensure gender equality mainstreaming. Striving for development of these training facilities, this project offers an innovative training material for family learning on work and life balance. It promotes gender equality in employment and working life.

The EU 2020 strategy recognises contribution of gender equality for meeting its objectives. The project creates the practical basis for the gender equality and work-life balance to ensure better jobs for all and wellbeing at workplace. In this way it contributes to the achievement of strategy's objectives. Moreover, family friendly initiatives at workplaces create good conditions for employees, having responsibilities to their families, and let them to remain active in the labour market. Those, in this way project contributes to the objective “75% of the working-age population (20-64 years) in work” targeted in Europe 2020 strategy.

The project also contributes to the newly adapted EU strategy - “New Skills for New Jobs”. This document serves as an essential tool of the European Employment Strategy to expand and enhance investment in development of employees' skills, as part of its overall aim is to create more and better jobs throughout the EU. One of the main objectives of creating better job is to develop and implement social innovation on well-being at work, thus the developed innovative training approach encouraging the involvement of employees themselves in implementing family-friendly initiatives within their workplaces is fully coherent with this objective.

The project is contributing to the achievement of these objectives by creating the practical basis to encourage employees themselves to initiate implementation of family-friendly measures at their workplace, thus ensuring an effective promotion of better jobs by using the bottom-up approach.

