



MODULE 6

Promoting quality of working life: Overview of policies and practices for family-friendly workplaces at European and national levels

**This model was created and presented
during trainings by partner
Office of Equal Opportunities
Ombudsmen
Lithuania**



Main aims of the module:

- to sensitize trainees about the European and national policies that help people to balance professional, private and family life and improve the quality of life for both women and men.
- to overview of good practices towards reconciliation of work and private/family life at company level.

MODULE 6.



The European policies targeted towards reconciliation of work and private life in different countries may have different provisions, but there are several main aims which are common to all the Member States, including:

- Facilitation of different leave schemes and arrangements (paternity leave, maternity leave, parental leave, career breaks).
- Increasing labour supply through flexible working time arrangements.
- Increasing labour supply through provision of services for care for elderly or family members with disabilities.
- Increasing labour supply through provision of services for childcare and arrangements to ensure safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who are breastfeeding.
- Facilitation of training/retraining of employees who return to the labour market after the break due to family reasons.

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The main policies regarding work and life reconciliation on European level:

Council Directive 96/34/EC obliges Member States to introduce legislation on parental leave that will enable parents to care full-time for their child over a period of three months. This directive ensures that a certain minimum standard is guaranteed within the Member States.

Council Directive 92/85/EEC introduces the measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding.

MODULE 6.



Council Directive 92/85/EEC extend the minimum *maternity leave* from **14 to 20** weeks, paying workers on maternity leave 100% of their last monthly salary or their average monthly salary and last four weeks of 20 paid at least of 75% of salary; give fathers the right to *fully paid paternity leave of at least 2 weeks* within the period of maternity leave.

The Maternity Protection Recommendation 2000 (No. 191) aims to ensure that women's *work does not threaten the health* of the woman or child during and after pregnancy.

Strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015) equal economic independence for women and men, where the European Commission aims at improving the overall framework for a better work/life balance paying particular attention to the *availability of affordable high-quality care services*

European employment strategy (EES) aims at strengthening *the coordination of national employment policies*. The main objective of EES is to involve Member States in a series of common objectives and targets, including equal opportunities for combating the gender gap and supporting the increased employment of women.

GOOD PRACTICES

- Adapted EU legislation on reconciliation of work and family life started to be implemented in partners' countries.
- Good examples of implemented family-friendly policies could foster both employers and employees to contribute themselves to implementation of work and family balance measures at workplaces.
- During the trainings we present the collected good practices from partner countries – Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Latvia and Lithuania. More information about good practices you can find in State of Art Review on www.family-learning.eu

MODULE 6.



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The philosophy of “down-shifting” is becoming more and more popular.

It aims to introduce the new measures in one’s quality of life showing that decelerating the overscheduled realities can be the best way to improve efficiency.

The video film “Slow Life”, developed during the project aims to raise awareness of people about “down-shifting” philosophy.



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MODULE 6. GOOD PRACTICES



The examples of family-friendly measures offered to employees by the companies on their own initiative can be found in different countries:

Germany

- Child care service on the company's area, (*Fraport AG, Windwaerts Energie GmbH*);
- Flexible work arrangements as tele-work and part-time for employees who don't have to be available at workplace permanently (*Fraport AG*) or sabbaticals (*Windwaerts Energie GmbH*);
- Assistance to parents and employees with family members in need of care to find child care services (public services, babysitter, etc.) or care for elderly (*Fraport AG*);
- Special programme for employees planning a paternity leave (offering coaching, workshops, etc.), pool of employees on paternity leave helping to find substitute in cases of sickness or holidays and informal "generation network" which aims at assisting employees by mutual assistance and supports the exchange and contact between people of different generations (*Weleda AG*);
- Offering employees opportunities to participate in trainings, keeping informed employees on parental leave via intranet and e-mails (*Windwaerts Energie GmbH*);

! You can select the country that interests you.

MODULE 6. GOOD PRACTICES



Italy

- Introducing a model of flexible management of human resources at retail stores and aiming to match store employee requirements concerning staff attendance on the job with their family needs (childcare, disables or elderly relatives care) (*Coop Liguria*);
- Individual or small group training for employees re-entering the workplace after leave or absence (*Coop Liguria*);
- Private crèches set up for children aged 13 to 36 months of employees and the local residents in various urban areas (*Consorzio sociale Agorà, Mignanego società cooperativa*);
- Summer schools for school-children (*Consorzio sociale Agorà*);
- Babysitting service for children from 12 months “S.O.S. NANNY” – a first-aid for families having problems with childcare in emergency situations (*Mignanego società cooperativa*).



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MODULE 6. GOOD PRACTICES



Lithuania

- Flexible working hours (JSC “Jaros sauga, JSC “Omnitel”, JSC “Festo, “Rimi Lietuva”, JSC “Office system”);
- A certain financial allowance is allocated for employees who get a baby (JSC “Omnitel”);
- Christmas parties and other events organized for employees and their children (JSC “Omnitel, JSC “Festo”, “Pas Agota”, JSC “Jaros sauga”);
- Implementation of the measures encouraging reconciliation of work and family life through participation in the project contributing to the family-friendly attitude formation in the society (JSC “Omnitel”);
- Establishing mini-kindergarten within the premises of enterprise (“Pas Agota”, “Rimi Lietuva”);
- Possibility to work at home (JSC “Festo”, JSC “Omnitel”, JSC “Office system”).



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National and local policies facilitating reconciliation of work and family life

Aim:	to create awareness of trainees about the national and local policies related with reconciliation of work and life balance
Task:	to review the introductory part of the video clip No. 8 and reflect on the questions provided below.
Duration:	30 min.

Questions for reflection:

- Do you like the initiatives presented in video clip?
- Do you think such initiatives could be taken at your municipality level?
- Who could help you to implement such initiatives (think of networking)?
- What national policies (legislation, secondary legislation) facilitating work and life balance adopted in your country do you know? Are you satisfied by the legislation and the extent to which it covers reconciliation of work and family life? What kind of improvements of national legislations would you suggest?
- Who could help you to establish or improve existing local initiatives on municipal level for reconciliation of work and family life?

Case study “Fraport AG”

Aim:	to create awareness about the initiatives of employers to implement
Task:	to read the case study “Weleda AG” and reflect on the questions provided below.
Duration:	30 min.

Questions for reflection:

- Work and family reconciliation in the company is a concern for men or women? Why?
- Does the welfare system as in Germany itself guarantee gender equality in the workplaces or is it good will of the managers?
- Do your company provide the possibility to use flexible working hours or to work part-time? How often men use their right to choose these family-friendly policies?
- How can the lack of proactive family support policies, namely child care services and measures aimed at facilitating the reconciliation of work and family life effect the decision of employees to create a family and to have a baby?

Case study

Video “Gender Balance In Lithuania: Good Practice Of Positive Paternity”

- Video reviews the gender equality tendencies in Lithuania and the possibilities as well as good practice example about the possible way to reconcile daily commitments for family and work.
- By presenting the story of a man who works at public institution and who decided to take parental leave and take care himself about his two little daughters.
- I welcome you to enjoy the video and to have short discussion.

Questions for discussion



- Work and family reconciliation in the company is a concern for men or women? Why?
- What national policies (legislation, secondary legislation) facilitating work and life balance adopted in your country do you know? Are you satisfied by the legislation and the extent to which it covers reconciliation of work and family life? What kind of improvements of national legislations would you suggest?
- Do your company provide the possibility to take parental leave and use flexible working hours or to work part-time?
- What other measures could be used to help families reconcile work and family?

Thank you for your attention!