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Gender Equality & Diversity Planning at Workplaces

State of Art Review

2009

Lithuania, Germany, Finland, Luxembourg

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Content

About the project	4
Introduction	6
I. European policy measures and challenges for gender equality and diversity (GED) planning at work	7
1.1 Short overview of national legislations on GED at work in project partner countries	9
• Finland	9
• Germany	10
• Lithuania	12
• Luxembourg	13
1.2 Legal/policy recommendations on how to promote GED planning at work	16
II. GED planning at workplaces: availability of training programs and training providers	19
• Finland	19
• Germany	20
• Lithuania	20
• Luxembourg	21
III. Good practices for promotion of GED planning at workplaces	22
• Finland	22
• Germany	23
• Lithuania	25
• Luxembourg	27
IV. Recommendations for developing quality standards for GED consultancy/training at workplaces and for training program “GED consultant at workplaces”	30
Conclusions	34
Bibliographical references	36



About the project

This **Report** is one of the results of the EU Leonardo da Vinci project “**Gender Equality & Diversity Planning at Workplaces**”.

Project aim is to develop an innovative solution within Vocational Education and Training (VET) system by introducing new institutional settings and practices ensuring implementation of gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces.

Project objectives are:

- to create quality standards for GED (gender equality and diversity) consultancy at workplaces to assure the effectiveness of innovative qualification – GED consultant at workplace,
- to support innovation in vocational education and training practices by developing an e-learning-training program for GED consultant at workplace,
- to ensure effective promotion of GED consultancy model at national and European levels.

Short-term target groups are:

- 18 public/private organisations; employers from the selected organizations will get acquainted with general principles of GED planning at workplaces,
- 21 trainers-multipliers for GED consultants, who will be trained to hold the piloting of the training program,
- 54 employees from the selected organisations, who will be trained to acquire complementary qualifications as GED consultants.

Long-term target groups are:

- Public and private organisations willing to implement GED planning at workplaces,
 - Employees within 18 pilot organisations who will benefit from implementation of GED planning at their workplaces,
 - Labour market consultancy and training institutions,
 - Trade unions, Employers' associations,
 - Politicians and decision makers.
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The main products of the project:

- **State of Art Review report** defining the ways how new qualification of GED consultant at workplaces might be introduced into national programs of VET system.
- **Quality standards for GED consultancy at workplaces** both at system and VET provider levels to assure the effectiveness of proposed innovative qualification - GED consultant at workplace.
- **Framework of the European model “Implementation of gender equality and diversity at workplaces”** - a basis for integration of innovative professional profile of qualified in-house GED consultant into VET systems.
- **Outline curriculum “GED consultant at workplace”** describing content, duration, learning outcomes, teaching and learning as well assessment strategies of the training program.
- **Training program “GED consultant at workplace”** with blended learning approach containing theoretical materials, practical exercises as well other methodical and didactical materials, such as good-practice examples on GED planning, tool-kit for GED planning and trainer's guide.
- **E-learning platform for GED consultants' learning-conducive workplaces** which allows learning at workplace environment.

The project **will address the specific needs** of the employers to have qualified in house GED consultant in order to promote equal treatment for all in the workplace in a planned and systematic way.

If you have any questions or comments about the project or publication please contact the coordinator of the project:



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Introduction

The state of art report is a part of the project entitled *Gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces (GED-PLAN)*, which is designed to address the need for qualified gender equality and diversity consultants within organizations and to promote equal treatment for all at the workplace in a planned and systematic way. Despite a number of good initiatives of gender equality and diversity (GED) planning at work in the project partner countries, none of them has well-functioning institutional framework in national vocational and education systems (VET), which would provide training and professional qualification of GED consultants at workplaces. New approach and practices are needed in VET system in order to promote the effective and systematic implementation of GED planning at workplaces.

The general aim of the report is to prepare recommendations for introduction of an innovative professional profile of GED consultant at workplace into the VET model. The review will also serve as a basis for creation of the European framework of GED consultancy model at workplace.

The report starts with a brief overview of European policy measures and challenges for GED planning at work with a greater focus on national legal and policy contexts in Finland, Germany, Lithuania and Luxembourg. The overview is concluded by policy recommendations of UN CEDAW Committee for partner countries regarding gender equality and diversity at work.

The second and third parts of the report present the concrete examples and challenges of GED training and planning at workplaces in four countries: availability of the programs, the profile of training providers and target groups as well as good practices for promotion of GED planning at work. The chapter reveals that almost all good initiatives serve as good practice examples rather than a well-functioning system of GED planning at workplaces. The up to date practices in almost all partner countries, with some exceptions in Finland, are fragmented and unsustainable, mostly short – term project based, and tend to serve the strategies of labour force management rather than any larger goal of equality or diversity.

The final part of the report briefly discusses the quality standards for GED consultancy/training at work and provides recommendations for training program “GED consultant at workplaces”. The report concludes the ways how innovative professional profile of GED consultant at workplaces might be introduced into the national VET systems of partner countries.

The state of art report is prepared on the basis of national reports that have been developed by each partner country. The structure of country reports reflects four main areas of investigation: national machinery of gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces, training initiatives for GED consultants at national level, quality standards for GED consultancy/training at workplaces and good practices on the implementation of certain measures in enterprises. The information on national contexts is based on the analysis of documents and structured interviews (5-7 per country) with national experts. The country reports helped to identify the examples of good practice in GED planning at work in national contexts as well as to provide recommendations for quality standards and training program for GED consultants at workplaces.

I. **European policy measures and challenges for gender equality and diversity (GED) planning at work**

Equality between women and men is a central socio-political target of EU policies. Both women and men should have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities in all areas of society. Gender equality is achieved when society places equal value and emphasis on the knowledge and skills of both women and men.

Many international conventions and the EU Directives in the areas of equal pay, equal treatment in employment and working conditions, and equal treatment in social security oblige national policy makers to legislate on equality according to various grounds. For example, the Council directive 2002/73/EC aims to ensure equal treatment for men and women in respect of access to employment, vocational training and career advancement, as well as working conditions. The Directive 2004/113/EC established the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services. The racial equality directive (2000/43/EC) and the employment framework directive (2000/78/EC) set out the principles of diversity and non-discrimination regarding ethnic and racial origin, disability, religion or belief, age and sexual orientation. All those directives encourage employers in the Member States to promote equal treatment for everyone at workplace in a planned and systematic way.

Prohibited discrimination grounds usually include: language, race, colour, opinion, sex/gender, political orientation, national origin, property or other discrimination based on the position. The right to equal treatment at work is considered as a basic social right as well as characteristic of good work.

Since its beginning in 1957, EU gender policy has been based predominantly on the concept of equal opportunities, which has set the legal basis for the elimination of discrimination against women in the field of employment in the EU and its member states. Eventually, the equal opportunities approach revealed limitations embedded in a perspective that adopts the logic of the individual, rather than paying attention to the gender-biased structural conditions under which opportunities are offered. It is mostly in the nineties that other types of political strategies such as positive action measures and gender mainstreaming have emerged to complement the approach of equal opportunities. It was recognized that it is important to consider the existence of material conditions, determined by the patriarchal social contexts in which women and men live, that prevent women from exercising their rights and having equal access to the opportunities they are offered on a fair ground with men. A new provision in the Treaty of Amsterdam, i.e., Article 141.4 allows member states to introduce positive actions, defined as “specific advantages in order to make it easier for the underrepresented sex to pursue a vocational activity or to prevent or compensate for disadvantages in professional careers”. The aim of these measures is that of “ensuring full equality in practice between men and women in working life”. Unlike the principle of equal opportunities, positive actions have not been given the legally binding form of a directive yet (Lombardo, Meier, 2007).

The trend in the European Union towards the adoption of “soft” measures to address the problem of gender inequality increased even more with gender mainstreaming. This refers to the introduction by governments and EU institutional actors of a gender perspective all policies and programs, in order not only to analyze their effects on women and men before decisions are taken, but also to implement, evaluate and review policies and political processes taking gender account. Gender mainstreaming was introduced in the new Articles 2 and 3.2 of the Treaty of Amsterdam, the latter stating that in all its activities “the Community shall aim to eliminate inequalities and to promote equality, between women and men”. However, the rhetoric on gender mainstreaming has not been supported by legally binding measures, such as directives. It has rather privileged soft

law instruments such as National action programmes for equal opportunities between women and men. In spite of the general claims included in these programmes, usually there are no specific measures for implementing gender mainstreaming, monitoring its application, or sanctioning in compliant actors. What regards gender equality and diversity planning at work, the Action programmes of member states usually include the notions about obligations of state institutions within the scope of their competence to draw up and implement programmes and measures aimed at ensuring equal opportunities, in other words, to take an active role to prevent discrimination on different grounds. The problem with this principle is that usually there is no legal mechanism of monitoring and control that would enforce the state institutions to implement equality duty in practice.

The problem partly lays in an uneven evolution of EU equality concepts as far as legal instruments are concerned. According to Lombardo and Meier (2007), both the broadening of the policy areas beyond the labour market in which the EU could intervene, through gender mainstreaming, and the deepening of focus in order to tackle the structural conditions of gender inequality and to challenge the gender dimension of political power, through positive actions, have been inversely proportional to the binding nature of the measures adopted. If the principle of equal opportunities in the area of labour market has been endorsed through a series of directives on equal pay, equal treatment at work and in social security, no directives have been approved on positive actions and gender mainstreaming, in spite of the incorporation of these two concepts in the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty and the 2004 Constitutional Treaty. The problems of gender equality and diversity planning at workplace (to be precise, the absence of this process in most of the countries) are for the most part related to the lack of binding nature of legal instruments that would oblige employers to plan, adopt certain objectives, allocate resources and monitor implementation process.

There are several other issues of increasing importance, which should be considered as well. The globalisation of working life and interaction between many nationalities and cultures at workplaces has increased the importance of questions related with the equality issues within a broader perspective. Along with ageing of the labour force, the prevention of inequality based on age has become more important than before. Another important issue of today is that diversity and multiculturalism in working life of European countries will grow in the future as the number of people with immigrant origin is increasing. The member states will have to revise their immigration policies and work-related immigration issues in order to promote the development of a healthy, inclusive and multicultural workplace culture in Europe.

In the context of contemporary challenges of diversity, the European Council and Parliament designated the year 2007 as 'European year of equal opportunities for all'. The aim was to promote equal opportunities in all spheres, with relations at workplace being a key focus of the initiative. The year 2007 as the European year of equal opportunities was focused on discrimination linked to gender, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

1.1 Short overview of national legislations on GED at work in project partner countries

- **Finland**

Gender equality and respect for diversity at workplaces is legally founded in the **Constitution of Finland (731/1999)**, the non-discrimination provisions are given a concrete content in the **Non-Discrimination Act (21/2004)** as well as several more specific legal acts are applied to working life. **The Employment Contracts Act (55/2001)** is applied to work based on employment contract. The Act obliges the employer to treat all employees equally. The Act includes prohibition of discrimination. Accordingly, the employer shall not exercise

any unjustified discrimination against employees on the basis of age, health, national or ethnic origin, sexual preference, language, religion, opinion, family ties, trade union activity, political activity or any other circumstance comparable to these. The supervision of the observance of the Employment Contracts Act belongs to the occupational safety and health authorities.

The Finnish **Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1986)** deserves a specific attention. It includes provisions on the prohibition of sexual/gender-based discrimination in working life. The Act was amended in 1992, 1995 and 2005. The aim of the amendment of 2005 was:

- to adjust Finnish legislation according to the EU equality directives;
- to emphasize the role of workplace-specific equality planning;
- to promote equal pay.

The amended Equality Act provides more practical tools for promoting gender equality at work. Section 6a of the Act presents concrete measures to promote equality purposefully and systematically: *"If an employer regularly employs a staff of at least 30, the said employer must include measures to further equality between women and men in the workplace within annual personnel and training plan or the action programme for labour safety and health"*. The equality plan can be a part of the organisation's safety and health plan or staff development action plan. The equality plan can also be made separately. The Plan basically aims to desegregate labour market on the basis of gender and to close the gender - based wage gap. Other aspects belonging to equality such as ethnic origin, age, disability and sexual orientation or preference can also be included in the equality plan even though the focus is on the equality between women and men. *Multi-dimensional* concept of gender can be applied, if this is found necessary in the workplace. The Equality Ombudsman and the Equality Board are responsible for supervision of the Equality Act.

The governmental **Action plan for gender equality** (2004-2007) particularly emphasizes gender equality in working life, gender mainstreaming and men's role in relation to gender equality. One further objective was to put more emphasis on workplace-specific equality plans. A new governmental action plan with the similar objectives was issued for the period of 2008-2011. It has seven priorities, among which, reducing pay differentials, promoting women's careers, raising gender equality awareness in schools and reducing gender segregation in education and the labour market.

The Equal Pay Programme, administered by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, includes a number of research and development actions and projects (www.samapalkka.fi). The various actions have been carried out by the government and public authorities, labour market organizations or workplaces and research institutes. The main objective of the programme is to reduce the pay gap between women and men from 20 percent to at most 15 percent by the year 2015. The programme contains numerous sets of actions. One of the main instruments is related to equality plans and pay surveys. It is also important to support women's career development and training at work.

There are no national programs or action plans on gender equality and diversity at workplace that would specifically target VET system.

- **Germany**

Since 2006, **The General Equal Treatment Act (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz, AGG)** came into force. The main aim of this Act is to prevent discrimination, in particular in employment and to contribute to the implementation of the Council directives 2000/43/EC, 2000/78/EC, 2002/73/EC and 2004/113/EC. The purpose of this federal law is to prevent or abolish discrimination on the ground of race or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation. In order to realise this aim, persons protected by the law obtain rights against employers and private persons, if those offend the legal prohibition of discrimination towards them. In its labour related part, the AGG applies to employees and apprentices of the private sector to applicants for a job. For civil servants, judges and government employees the Act finds the respective application in the service law.

In 2001 the **Gender Equality Act (Bundesgleichstellungsgesetz)** replaced the Act for Women's Advancement (Frauenfördergesetz) from 1994. The Gender Equality Act applies to the entire federal administration and mainly aims at three areas: in the section, *promoting equality between women and men* it regulates issues like staff recruitment, placement and advancement, further education and gender equality planning. In this law gender equality planning is focused mainly at raising the share of women in single areas. At least half of the vacant positions in areas where women are underrepresented have to be provided for women. In case of staff reductions in areas where women are underrepresented the share of women is supposed to remain constant. Furthermore, the gender equality plan has to describe the situation of female employees compared to male employees and to evaluate present measures for the advancement of women. The gender equality plan is issued for four years. In case of failure to implement objectives, the reasons for that have to be exposed in the next gender equality plan and the superior authority has to be informed. Possibilities for sanctioning are not anticipated. The section *reconciliation of work and family life* covers family-friendly working times and conditions, part time, telework, and the return after family break. The Act is also representing the basis for the work of the *equal opportunities commissioner*. Similar to an ombudswoman she is responsible for monitoring the law and represents the interests of the female employees in the administration. The female employees of all federal administration bodies with more than 100 employees elect her. She has the right of participating in all decision-making processes regarding issues of personnel and organisational policies as well as social affairs, but does not have the power of veto.

The scope of the Gender Equality Act was extended to cover research institutes funded by the federal government through agreements, which oblige them to apply the basic terms of the Federal Equal Opportunity Act as of 2004/2005.

On the level of the German Laender (States), each of them has its own gender equality act for the respective public service sector/public administration. In Lower Saxony, for instance the Act for Equal Rights of Men and Women was established in 1994. The Act is setting strategies for the equal share of women in leading positions and for the reduction of discrimination in public administration. It includes regulations for the human resources management (e.g. recruitment, promotion, selecting procedures and education), regulations for working time (e.g. part-time, flexible time) and work-life-balance and the obligation to appoint women's representatives in all public offices.

In general, the gender equality acts of the German Laender require that municipalities and regional administrative bodies develop gender equality plans and report them to their respective state ministries, regularly. A women's officer /gender has to be appointed in the organisation with different right of intervention in the different Laender. In many cases, she can participate and intervene in favor of women in recruitment processes. The gender

equality acts had a positive influence on gender equality in many municipalities and other public institutions even though in most German Länder there are no sanctions for those institutions who do not achieve any improvements in gender equality. One of the effects was that the numbers of women in leading positions in German public administrations have increased significantly.

The attempt to introduce a federal law on Gender Equality Act for private enterprises failed. Instead, in 2001 the Federal Government and umbrella associations of the German economy concluded an **Agreement for the promotion of equal opportunities of women and men in the private economy**. With this agreement, the partners commit to improve vocational training perspectives and job chances of women as well as the reconciliation of work and family life for women and men, to increase the share of women in leading positions and in future-orientated professions and to contribute to the reduction of unequal payment. Every two years the partners examine the progress on certain issues of the agreement and publish a report.

During the last years, the Federal Government has been concentrating on family issues promoting the reconciliation of work and family life. Together with the head associations of the German economy and the German Federation of Trade Unions, The Federal Ministry introduced the national programme “Family – a factor of success for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth”. It encourages enterprises to support a family-friendly working environment. The programme outlines information (studies, fact sheets and guidelines) related with family-friendly companies, family-friendly regulations and success stories of companies practising a family-friendly personnel policy by implementation of innovative measures. The programme includes also a company network, a company contest and a funding programme for childcare facilities offered by companies.

Despite the above-mentioned legal regulations and policy initiatives, the detailed mechanisms aimed at purposeful planning of gender equality and diversity at workplaces in economy and administration are absent.

- **Lithuania**

The principle of equal opportunities is a part of a number of general legislation, among them **The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men** and **The Law on Equal Treatment** being the most important ones.

Both laws established a legal obligation for education institutions and employers to apply principles of equal treatment in recruitment, promotion, work conditions, equal pay, freedom from harassment, etc. For instance, the Article 3 of the Law on Equal Treatment obliges state institutions within the scope of their competence to draw up and implement programmes and measures aimed at ensuring equal opportunities, in other words, to take an active role to prevent discrimination on different grounds. This obligation does not apply to private institutions. The problem of this principle is the lack of legal mechanism of monitoring and control that would enforce the state institutions to implement equality duty in practice.

Both laws created a system for investigating discrimination cases, which fall under the competence of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson institution.

The concrete measures of the principles of the above mentioned gender equality law are outlined in the **National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for 2005-2009**. The Programme aims at addressing, in a consistent, complex and systematic

manner, gender equality issues, ensuring gender mainstreaming in all spheres and tackling specific problems of women and men. The Programme identifies main priorities for gender equality, and specific measures to achieve set goals. In the area of employment, the following measures are outlined:

- trainings for employers, social partners and other representatives of labour market institutions in order to change the *gender stereotypes* related to economic activities;
- trainings for employers about *reconciliation issues* in order to promote family-friendly work organization;
- to provide trainings for women to *reintegrate them into labour* market after career break (maternity leave, women of older age);
- trainings and information campaigns to *promote women's entrepreneurship*;
- consultations and campaigns to promote *women's employment in rural areas*;
- to present to social partners a new *methodology of work assessment* developed by Labour and Social research institute;
- to run seminars about the *role and responsibility of social partners* to implement equal opportunities at work.

The **National Anti-discrimination Action Programme for 2009-2011** aims to eliminate discrimination based on age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, racial or ethnic origin, religion or beliefs in all spheres of public life and to increase tolerance of the society.

The programme outlines measures in the following areas:

- to *strengthen the legal basis* for non-discrimination at work;
- to support *research* about the situation of diverse social groups in the society and premises for discrimination (particular focus to ethnic minorities);
- to run *public campaigns of anti-discrimination* (f.e. to run a campaign "Equality-friendly work organization");
- to provide *trainings and training materials for employers*, social partners and representatives of labour exchange institutions in order to promote gender equality and respect for diversity at work.

The concrete means aimed at GED planning at workplace are not anticipated and are basically oriented towards awareness – raising actions.

The short overview of the legal and policy initiatives in Lithuania shows, that there is no legal regulation, which would specifically target gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces in the country.

- **Luxembourg**

In Luxembourg, gender equality and diversity (GED) at workplaces is legally founded by the **Law of 13th of May 2008**. It specifies equal treatment for employees at all types of employment. It is tied to the legislation of collective agreements as well as to the legislation of contractual agreements (the so-called labour contracts). It is also legally bound to the legislation on positive actions in favour of the underrepresented gender in the companies within the private sector. Finally, it concerns the field of employees' representation as well as the promotion of vocational training plans for enterprises. As far as employees' representation is concerned, it should be also referred to the Labour Code, in particular to its

article L. 414-1, defining the framework of staff representation, and to the articles L. 414-3 to 414-7, which are specifying the mission of the gender equality representative. According to the legal requirements, each company with a size of more than 15 people is obliged to install a personnel delegation. Furthermore, it has an obligation to nominate a gender equality representative among the members of this delegation. The mission of the gender equality representative is to defend the principle of equal treatment of female and male staff members with regard to their access to employment, training, career progression and remuneration. In order to exercise this mission, the gender equality representative disposes a certain number of rights and prerogatives, concerning among others the access to information, consultation role in case of discrimination, mediation and training role. Consequently, the very comprehensive Law of 13th of May 2008 includes the principle of gender equality and diversity at workplaces at all levels.

On one hand, the law is transposing the Council Directive 2002/73/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions. On the other hand, this law modifies the former Law of 28th of November 2006 concerning the transposition of Directive 2000/43/EC and Directive 2000/78/EC. At the same time some chapters of the Labour Code were amended as well to include notions on equal treatment in employment and labour.

The introduction of **positive actions** on GED planning at work in private companies under articles L. 243-1 to 243-5 of the Labour Code seems to be a remarkable achievement in this context. Private companies at all economic sectors and of all sizes are eligible to get acknowledged as an employer of positive actions in the field of gender equality. This objective – giving the companies an official recognition for 2 years and thus allowing them to accede to a financial aid, could be reached by taking consequently a certain number of steps.

First, the employer has to formalize his/her demand for positive action by addressing a motivated letter of intent to the Ministry for Equal Opportunities, in which he/she presents a short overview of the gender segregated data of the company. He/she adds hereto the results of a first snapshot evaluation proposed by the Ministry, which is highlighting the situation of equality of women and men in regard to equal treatment, decision taking, and work - family life balance. Certificates by the tax and social security departments show if the candidate company has fulfilled all its legal obligations. The government verifies the conformity of the applicant's social management procedures, the compliance with the employment regulations and with the right of establishment of companies. If these preliminary conditions have been successfully fulfilled, the applicant company and the Minister of Equal Opportunities may sign an agreement of collaboration defining the scope of the relationship, as well as the rights and obligations of the parties. On the ground of this partnership agreement, the company declares its acceptance of collaborating under the perspective of an external gender equality audit and its readiness for the conducting of a comprehensive staff survey. By doing this, the applicant enterprise agrees to offer an insight to company sensitive data, such as employment and remuneration figures, internal evaluation procedures as well as internal and external communication operations. The analysis of the data of both information sources (audit and survey figures) is communicated to the company and recommendations for a plan of positive actions are discussed. The data analysis is free of charge for the company. The next step is the design of the company's action plan presenting integrated measures on gender equality in the action fields of equal treatment, decision taking and work – family life balance. If the plan is positively acknowledged by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities, the company is entitled to a kind of

certification (ministerial agreement; “agrément ministerial”) as gender equality respectful employer for a period limited to two years. Additionally, the company may then apply for a subsidy for executing positive actions envisaged within the plan.

Luxembourg has also established a few national programmes, which include among other topics, the aspects of gender equality at work. At the current stage of advancement, the diversity dimension does not yet figure explicitly in these programmes. The best known of these kinds of programmes is the **National Reform Programme**. The less known **National Action Plan for Gender Equality**, which was adopted in February 2006, contains a few measures to gender equality, in particular, at work.

The measures related to GED at workplaces and more specifically to gender equality, included in Luxembourg’s **National Reform Programme** (NRP) for the period of 2007 to 2010, are linked to the implementation of positive actions in private enterprises. They concern more precisely about the elimination of gender pay gaps by providing trainings sessions to employers and employees on gender-neutral evaluation systems of employees. The national measures reflect the guideline No. 18 of the European Integrated guidelines for growth and jobs (2005-2008) which declares a need to “promote a lifecycle approach to work through a resolute action to increase female participation and reduce gender gaps in employment, unemployment and pay”.

The concerned measures in the **National Action Plan for Gender Equality** are targeted at the integration of the gender principle into the management of human resources in education and training. Relevant measures to be quoted in this context are described with the following objectives: “to highlight the gender dimension in actions related to school staff”, “to promote the equality between women and men in staff management at the Ministry for Education and Training”, “to further the access of women and men to life-long-learning and the information society” as well as to enhance gender equality training measures at specific levels of concern. As potential training fields, the plan gives here the examples of university trainings and research activities, as well as education and training of school workers. Furthermore, it refers to awareness raising on gender equality at the level of magistrates, police and prison workforces.

The evaluation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality, initiated by the Ministry of Equal Opportunities on the basis of a restricted call for tender in 2006, produced the following recommendations: gender equality has to be integrated into the national legislation system and all its machineries; the implication of gender equality actors at all decision levels is a prerequisite for a successful implementation of the principle; a transversal coordination is needed; gender equality should be acknowledged as a leadership principle.

It appears that the references in policies related to diversity at the workplace are at the current stage mainly focused on the creation of an Equal Treatment Centre in 2008 as foreseen by the Equal Treatment Act (Law of 28 November 2006) and to the presentation of a multi-lingual information leaflet (German, English, French and Portuguese) exposing the scope and means of the aforementioned law. The Equal Treatment Centre carries out its missions independently, and its purpose is to promote, analyse and monitor equal treatment between all persons without discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs, disability or age. The Centre is not intended to get involved directly on behalf of victims of discrimination, but rather to serve as an important contact by means of its advisory and orientation functions, such as to carry out its mission on a consultative basis and with the distance required to objectively assess the existing mechanisms, structures and procedures. This shows that Luxembourg’s Equal Treatment

Centre mainly engenders a consultative mission to the government and is limited in its relation with victims of discrimination to an information role.

1.2 Legal/policy recommendations on how to promote GED planning at work

Countries that have ratified CEDAW, are obliged to produce the periodical reports on the progress of status of women's human rights in national context. In response to CEDAW national reports, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women urges all States to prioritize the realization of women's *de facto* equality with men in labour market, including the private sector, which is an obligation of the States under the Convention. All countries are generally recommended to take all necessary measures, including temporary special measures, to eliminate occupational segregation, both horizontal and vertical (especially to concentrate on women in part-time, fixed-term and low-paid jobs and those on low hierarchical levels) and close the gender-based wage gap. In this context the States are encouraged to consider different measures for example, amendment of their national equality acts to include obligatory equality planning by public and private employers; to cover issues of pay gap, family – friendly policies and men's involvement in care on equal basis with women, etc.

During the 41st session in July 2008, in response to the fifth and sixth periodic report on the implementation of CEDAW, UN Committee recommended **Finland** to:

- strengthen its efforts to foster an increase of number of women in high-ranking posts, in particular in academia and the private sector;
- prioritize the realization of women's *de facto* equality with men in the labour market;
- eliminate both vertical and horizontal occupational segregation and close the gender-based wage gap between women and men, as well as take measures to prevent the practice of illegal dismissal of women in cases of pregnancy and childbirth;
- continue its efforts to ensure reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities and to promote equal sharing of domestic and family tasks between women and men, including development of incentives to encourage more men to avail themselves of parental leave;
- conduct regular and comprehensive studies on discrimination against women from ethnic minority groups, to collect statistics on their situation in employment, education and health care;
- take effective measures to integrate women with disabilities the Finnish labour market and to conduct regular and comprehensive studies on discrimination against them, collect statistics on their situation in employment, education and health.

The specific recommendations for **Germany** in response to the sixth periodic report on the implementation of CEDAW, prepared by the UN Committee during the 43rd session in January/February 2009, emphasize the need to:

- consider enacting an Equality Act for the private sector with the establishment of a gender-based definition of pay in wage agreements and company pay structures or to amend the General Equal Treatment Act for reaching that effect;
- assess the impact on women of the Fourth Law for Modern Services in the Labour Market and undertake corrective measures, including the review of the "needs unit" construct

- (increase of financial dependence of unemployed women on husbands or partners and proportional increase of women whose access to benefits has been denied);
- mainstream the issues of immigrant women, who may suffer multiple discrimination, and women with disabilities employment policies and programmes;
 - continue its efforts to ensure reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities and, for the promotion of equal sharing of domestic and family tasks between women and men, to increase the incentives for men to use their right to parental leave (less than 10% of parental leave is taken by fathers);
 - ensure that non-discriminatory job evaluations and job assignment systems are put in place and implemented.

There was no recommendation on GED planning at work for the private sector. The recommendation to enact an Equality act for the private sector included the introduction of equality planning with a special emphasis on equal pay issues. Recently, the federal government is launching a program to make private companies apply a gender test to their remuneration system and receive an expert consultation to introduce necessary changes.

For **Lithuania**, responding to the third and fourth national periodic reports, in its 41st session in July 2008 the Committee stressed the importance:

- discussing the amendments of the Law of Equal Opportunities for Women and Men including the *obligatory gender equality planning* to be done by the employers of public and private sectors under supervision of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson. Gender equality plans should include the section regarding wages and implementation of family-friendly policies at enterprises;
- changing the Law of Equal Opportunities for Women and Men including the obligatory commitment of employer to appoint a gender equality specialist for each municipal and regional administration and to strengthen network between national, regional and local institutions in their activities related to gender equality by organizing trainings on gender equality, gender awareness, integration of gender aspect;
- making every effort striving for reconciliation of work and family life and promoting equal distribution of roles within the family and encouraging men to take parental leave.

The recommendations for Lithuania emphasized the importance of the obligatory gender equality planning, which should be included in the national legislation.

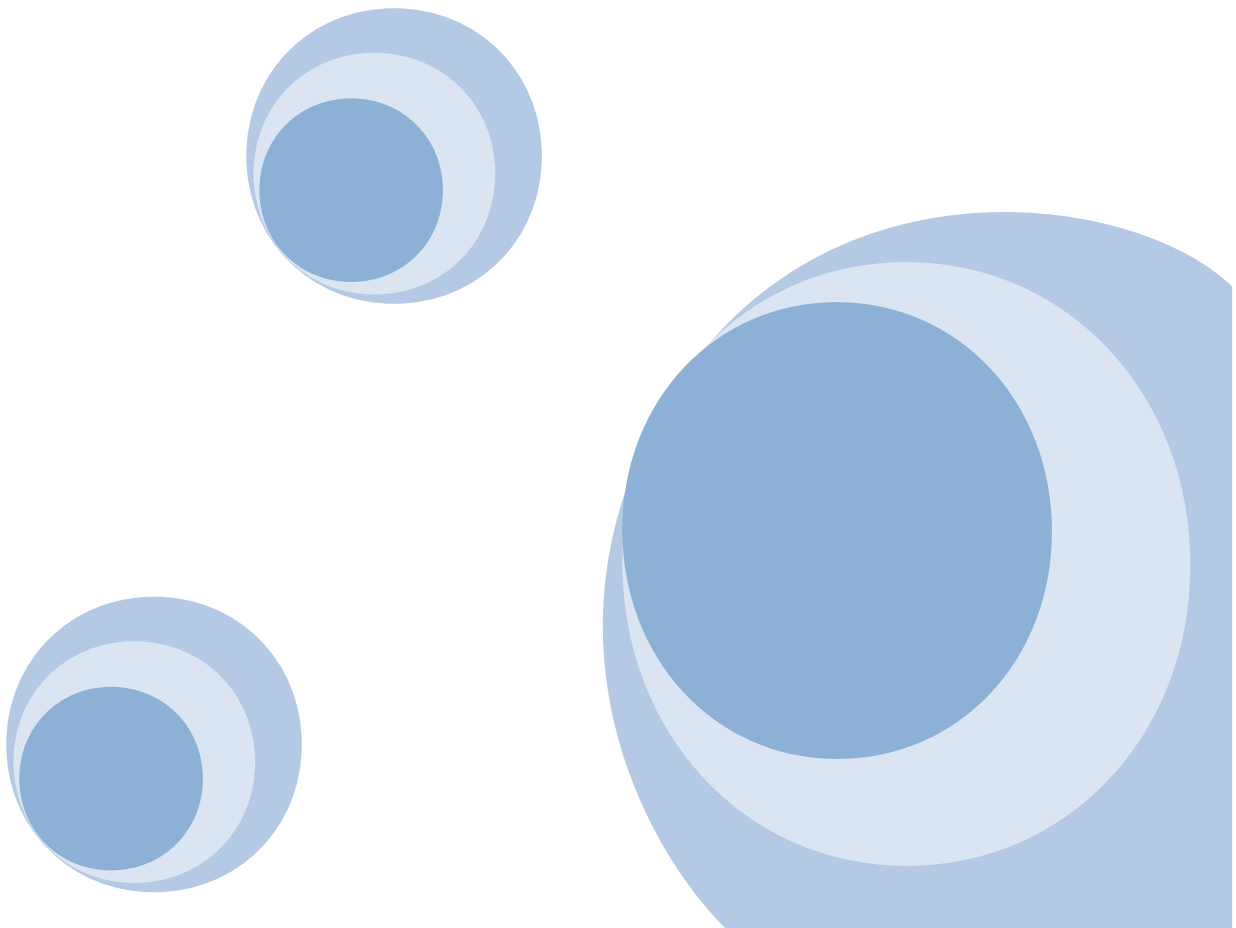
UN CEDAW recommendations for **Luxembourg**, prepared during 40th session in January 2008, did touch GED planning at workplaces indirectly. In particular, the Committee called upon Luxembourg:

- to adopt policies and take all necessary measures with time-bound targets, to eliminate occupational segregation, both horizontal and vertical;
- to mainstream the issues of immigrant women, who may suffer multiple discriminations, its employment policies and programmes;
- to adopt further measures to narrow and close the pay gap between women and men and to adopt mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value;



- to continue its data collection and analysis efforts to monitor the effectiveness of policy and measures adopted to improve the employment situation of women;
- to include, in its next report, information on the extent of use and impact of affirmative actions within the private sector, and information about the measures taken to improve the situation of women in the labour market, and their impact.

The GED planning at workplaces is not mentioned directly, but the particular emphasis on gender pay gap presupposes the notion of the importance of GED planning at workplaces.



II. **GED planning at workplaces: availability of training programs and training providers**

The training programmes and institutions or other training initiatives described in this chapter by no means reflect an exhaustive list of practices, which have been recently developed in various countries, but just few cases represent the main trends in partner countries.

- **Finland**

There is a great variety of different initiatives and institutions in Finland that specifically target the issues of equality and diversity planning at workplaces. Nevertheless, they do not ensure the need for qualified gender equality and diversity consultancy and planning at workplace in a coherent and sustainable way. The country does not have well-functioning framework of training facilities for GED consultants in its national VET system, which would ensure the training and qualification raising in a more systematic and accessible way.

The initiatives are usually taken by academic institutions, consultancy or training companies, employers' or employees' organizations. Several examples could be mentioned. *University of Jyväskylä* arranged two training programmes for equality consultants in the frame of professional development training programme (PD-programme), beginning in 1995 and 1997. The training was financially supported by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Both courses had about 20 participants. The target was to provide training for both external and internal equality consultants. Since that no institution or organisation at national level has provided training for equality consultants or trainers in a systematic way. The training programme included theoretical education (e.g. equality legislation, women/gender studies, training and consulting methods) and a practical case work on promoting gender equality by each participant. A serious problem is that the training programmes have not been continued. New training programmes and public financial support is needed so that the training will be sustainable and not too expensive for the participants.

The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH) has also carried out research, training and consulting projects on equality planning at workplaces, e.g. Equality Plan of the Police Force in Finland (2006-2009). A research & development project MONIKKO (supported by the EU EQUAL initiative) was coordinated by the FIOH (2005-2008). A training booklet (www.wom.fi), a Fact Sheet on Gender equality planning, and a Fact Sheet on age-friendly workplace were published (www.monikko.net). It was noted that the aim of equality planning is to prevent discrimination and promote equality of both genders at workplaces. The results have been widely disseminated among the workplaces and they have benefited the governmental action plans for equality. Also training courses on gender equality and diversity have been offered for the workplaces.

World of Management Ltd (WoM Ltd) is an equality consultancy and training company. WoM has provided training and consultancy on equality planning for workplaces in private and public sector since 2000. The training and consultancy of WoM is intended not for trainers or consultants, but for the representatives of employers and employees at workplaces. According to the Finnish Act of Equality, the equality plan must be made in cooperation between the employer and employees (the plan is drawn up normally by an equality group at workplace). WoM provides training and process consultation for the equality groups and

leaders at workplaces. In addition, WoM has carried out EU-projects, including training and consulting on equality planning at workplaces.

The cooperation between labour market organisations on promoting gender equality has an important role in Finland as well. Both employers' and employees' organisations provide training on equality issues and equality planning to their members and organize trainings and projects together too.

- **Germany**

There is a large number of various training institutions and freelance working trainers who work in the area of GED consultancy in Germany. Moreover, a growing number of private enterprises have introduced various diversity policies in their organizations. Nevertheless, those are specific initiatives, which lack consistency, sustainability and the national dimension. Furthermore, the goal of gender equality or diversity usually plays just a minor role in those cases of "good practice". VET training programs for GED consultants do not exist on national level nor exist the qualification profile of GED consultant at workplaces in the national VET system.

A few training institutions with a nation wide reputation can be mentioned. One of them is the *Heinrich-Böll Foundation*, a foundation of the German Green Party. It is one of the earliest and most prestigious training institutions for GED trainers in Germany. A representative from this institution founded a federal professional association (see below), which is leading the discussion about quality standards and certification of GED training.

The federal professional association *Gender Diversity* operates on the national level. Trainers and mentors of Gender Diversity have joined forces in the federal association to represent their combined job-related, technical and political interests. The association provides the possibility of training certification.

- **Lithuania**

There are no officially approved training institutions/organizations that would be granted a right to provide the formal qualification of GED consultants at workplaces. This qualification is not existent at the national VET system. The trainings on gender equality and diversity for employers or employees are not duty-based or somehow formally binding as well. The trainings on gender equality and diversity at workplaces are usually short term project-based and provided mostly by women's NGOs (Women's Issues Information Center, the Center for Equality Advancement, Social Innovation Fund, Women's Employment Information Center, etc), state institutions dealing with gender equality and diversity (Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson Office) or academic institutions (Siauliai University, Vytautas Magnus University, Vilnius University).

In general, the majority of trainings in Lithuania usually aim at awareness raising or consciousness building around the issues of vertical and horizontal segregation at work, pay gap or family-friendly measures at workplace. There is no formal mechanism to involve employers or representatives of employees in more coherent and longer lasting GED trainings or to enforce the equality planning at workplaces in practice.

- **Luxembourg**

The GED training programmes in Luxembourg should be implemented by diverse institutions like public departments, professional chambers' training centres, sector based training centres, public research centres, consultancy agencies and enterprises or other training centres. All these bodies target in fact a large spectrum of people from employees in private companies, self-employed people, job seekers to civil servants at national and local levels. None of these training providers have integrated GED planning at workplaces as a systematic training aspect yet, but have included the topic sporadically in their training offer.

In order to get a clear view of the situation of GED training programmes, it is necessary to differentiate between institutes and institutions targeting the public sector and training bodies that aim to address the needs of the private sector. In regard to the **public sector**, some projects can be mentioned. Currently, there is an initiative going on with the aim to design an integrated gender equality training offer for the initial and continuous vocational training at both national and local levels of the public sector (see chapter III about the PROGRESS project of the Ministry for Equal Opportunities for the period of 2008-2009). Nevertheless, this project does not specifically intend to address the diversity issues. The project focuses on the design of a curriculum of training on gender equality in the public sector.

Regarding the **private sector**, there appears a multiplicity of training providers ranging from public or semi-public organisations to a vast number of consultancy agencies. Additionally to this, the companies themselves may become training providers. Up to now, with regard to the GED planning at workplaces topic, only isolated initiatives (specific training courses) have been offered. These were mostly dealing with gender equality but also covering the diversity issues, even if these offers have not been a part of a systematic and comprehensive training offer yet. Up to now, the demand for such an offer has not been yet clearly expressed. This might change as in the framework of corporate social responsibility (CSR) employers have taken initiative within the last few years to create new networks. These are, for instance, a network of enterprises called IMS ("Institut pour le Mouvement Sociétal" constituted in March 2007; <http://www.imslux.lu/>) and a network of employers' federations, called as INDR ("Institut National pour le Développement Durable et pour la Responsabilité Sociale des Entreprises ; <http://www.indr.lu/>; 2009). The IMS defines itself as a knowledge centre for companies and it has been organising a certain number of conferences since its establishment. The INDR intends to promote CSR and has developed a labelling procedure on CSR which is on its way to be tested on the first companies.

III. **Good practices for promotion of GED planning at workplaces**

The good practices, initiatives or cases described in this chapter by no means reflect an exhaustive list of the practices for promotion of GED planning at workplaces, which has been recently developed in various countries, but here are just few cases, representing the trends and/or good practices in partner countries.

- **Finland**

Below are described three examples of the implementation of Equality Planning at workplaces in Finland. The Finnish Equality Act obliges employers with a regular staff of 30 or more to draw up a gender equality plan. The Plan can be either a separate plan or incorporated into the organization's human resources development (HRD) policy. The examples are taken from public state institutions. The Equality plan is drafted in close co-operation with the staff members and/or their representatives. It is typical that a working group, responsible for equality planning is established and the staff is regularly informed about it. The Equality Plan is workplace-specific and answers to its specific needs. Typically, 4-5 most important targets are chosen for the development. Suggested key targets typically are: pay comparison, parental leaves, family-friendly practices and equal recruitment and training of women and men.

Equality plan of the Police Force in Finland (2006-2009) (www.intermin.fi)

The key targets of development:

- fair recruitment policy;
- woman-friendly atmosphere;
- zero-tolerance of sexual and gender-based harassment;
- equal career and training opportunities for women and men.

The equality plan was prepared in cooperation with researchers from the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH). Two equality surveys have been carried out at the Finnish police organization, and the results have been applied in the equality planning. The first survey was carried out in 1999 and the second one in 2004. The results have mostly been published in Finnish. There is one publication in English (Kauppinen, K. & Patoluoto, S. "Sexual harassment and violence toward policewomen in Finland", in: In the Company of Men. 2005. North-western University Press).

The City of Helsinki Equality Plan (www.hel.fi)

- The key targets of development:
- the rise in the average age of the staff members;
- coping strategies with stress and burnout at work;
- customer - orientation: equal treatment of all customer groups is guaranteed regardless of age, ethnic origin, and other background factors.

The Academy of Finland Equality Plan (www.aka.fi)

The key targets of development:

- applicants for research grants must include a report on gender distribution of the research group;
- gender mainstreaming and gender sensitivity in planning, designing and reporting of research results;
- reconciliation of work and family life within the research project: use of parental leaves is equally guaranteed for both women and men participating in research staff.

- **Germany**

Besides the obligatory activities introduced by law in the German public administration there are quite a few initiatives which promote GED planning at workplaces in Germany.

In 1996 the association **TOTAL E-QUALITY Deutschland e.V.** was established to promote equal opportunities in business, science, politics and civil service. The association annually honours practiced equal opportunity with the TOTAL E-QUALITY award. Applications can be turned in to all organizations with more than 15 employees, which are verifiably committed to a long-term policy of equal opportunities. The award intends to support the self-initiative of organizations. Since 1996 more than 170 enterprises and institutions from the private sector, the civil service and Higher Education with more than two million employees were honoured for their equal opportunity oriented human resource policy. In this context, equal opportunities do not exclusively refer to the reconciliation of professional and family life. The award conceives equal opportunities far more comprehensive and applies to areas such as staff recruitment and placement, the recruitment and advancement of young people as well as the promotion of continuing education and the commitment to equal opportunities as a goal for corporate social responsibility. The initiative TOTAL E-QUALITY is supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth Both ministries have funded projects of the TOTAL E-QUALITY association.

Another approach is pursued by the audit berufundfamilie® initiated by the non-profit Hertie Foundation in 1995. It supports companies in creating new options towards family-oriented hr policies.

Currently over 600 companies have been certified, among them 284 companies, 246 institutions and 75 universities. The *work and family audit* combines a network of partners from science and research, politics and central associations, companies, institutions and universities and licensed auditors. The “audit berufundfamilie” evaluates current measures aimed at enhancing compatibility of work and family life and also assesses potential for development in the participating enterprises and supports them in reaching future goals. During the auditing process, the company or institution can choose between different areas of activity like working time, organisation, work place, information/communication, leadership, personal development, remuneration or service for families. A successful audit promotes family conscious HR policies, offers tailor-made solutions and initiates a sustainable process. It also offers significant economic benefits for certified companies.

The *work and family audit* is supported by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the ESF.

Some recent initiatives are directed towards diversity. The campaign ***Diversity as a Chance*** started in the *European Year of Equal Opportunities 2007* and went until the end of 2008. *Diversity as a Chance* aimed at raising awareness in companies, administration and organisations about the fact that ethnic and cultural diversity builds an outstanding and important economic resource. The campaign thereby pursued different basic ideas:

- companies of all branches and size groups as well as administrations on all levels can benefit from lived diversity;
- in many companies diversity approaches are already existing; other companies can learn from them;
- Germany still has a backlog demand: in a study of the Bertelsmann Foundation of 2007, an average of 75% of the European, 92% of the US, but only 44% of the German companies indicated that they practiced Intercultural Diversity Management.

With a variety of events – among others competitions, workshops and congresses – German companies and institutions have been informed how they can use the potential of migrants in a successful way. At the same time, they have been invited to present their concepts and success stories to the public at large. The campaign was implemented by the Federal Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration and among others funded by the ESF.

Another initiative - ***A Charter of Diversity*** - was launched in 2007 in parallel with the above-mentioned campaign. It was initiated by private enterprises in cooperation with the Federal Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration. The programme aims at promoting the recognition, appreciation and integration of diversity in the German business culture. Companies are supposed to create a work environment that is free from prejudices and discrimination. All employees have to be appreciated, regardless of their gender, race or ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation. Up to now, more than 600 companies and institutions have joined it. By signing the Charta companies confess to the economic use of diversity and tolerance, fairness and appreciation of their employees. The good practices of a few signatory organizations - Deutsche Bank and Deutsche Telekom - can be more elaborated.

In 1999, the ***Deutsche Bank*** launched the campaign, which aimed to foster an inclusive work environment in which all employees can contribute their full potential. The campaign was based on the inclusion on the grounds of sexual orientation. To achieve this, it set up a global diversity team to support various initiatives, such as talent and development initiatives, employee networks and diversity training. Diversity management workshops have been held for all managers who are also required to set personal diversity objectives. Members of the diversity team now work as business consultants to the business divisions, helping them to analyze data, develop projects and monitor their impact. One project that is being undertaken with Deutsche Bank's retail banking business in Germany is targeting potential gay and lesbian clients with the aim of gaining market share by positioning the bank as an open-minded and empathetic financial services provider.

In 2004 the **Deutsche Telekom** launched a comprehensive diversity policy built on previous initiatives aimed at gender equality issues. The diversity policy focused on age diversity, particularly the rising average age of company employees, mainly in Germany but also in Italy and Hungary. This challenge has led the Deutsche Telekom to become a founder member of the New Quality of Work Initiative (INQA), a venture between the German Government, social partners and business to find solutions to the demands of tomorrow's world of work, one of which is ensuring people remain employable into and beyond their 50s. Aligned with this initiative, Deutsche Telekom is sponsoring free internet courses across Germany for people over 50 years of age to help ensure they will be aware of and able to use this technology. At the same time, it is running a marketing campaign offering internet access products specifically designed for older people. The company has also recently appointed an age manager who is working closely with the group's diversity team to develop further its age diversity strategy.

Recently more and more enterprises started to introduce diversity policies based on inclusion and mutual respect. In most cases, these are internationally well known companies, which developed concepts and introduced measures to deal with a diverse workforce as well as with diverse customer's groups. Meanwhile, more and more SMEs also realize the necessity to pay attention to diversity issues and initiate good practices as well. In this context, it is very important to take into account that the above-mentioned policies by private enterprises might serve commercial purposes rather than any larger goal of equality or diversity. For this reason, the training of qualified GED consultants at workplace and the introduction of this professional profile into national programs of VET system is of a vital importance.

- **Lithuania**

Several projects, which aimed at promotion of gender equality and diversity at workplace, are described below.

Social Innovation Fund, together with The Office of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson and Lithuanian Business Employers' Confederation, carried out the project **Implementation of Equal Employment Opportunities for Men and Women: Measures, Practice, Changes** (2006-2008) funded among others by the ESF. One of the main aims was to foster employers to understand the nature of gender equality, to realize its importance to enterprise, to create and implement systematically the measures for ensuring gender equality at workplaces. During the project time, 54 employers or representatives of employers' organisations participated in 80 hours training programme "Gender equality planning at enterprises". The programme was based on international experience of gender equality planning and Finnish experience in preparing gender equality plans in enterprises. As an outcome, seven Lithuanian enterprises developed gender equality plans for further implementation. The key areas distinguished by most of the employers in their equality plans were following:

- wages and payment structure;
- education and training of employees;
- safety and health at work;
- reconciliation of work and family life;
- recruitment;

- organisation of work, personnel structure;
- access to career advancement and diversification of tasks.

The “Practical guide for employers on gender equality planning” with the concrete measures to be included into gender equality plans was developed and widely disseminated among employers.

Within this project, the Social Innovation Fund together with Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson Office and Lithuanian Employers’ Association addressed the official appeal to the main institutions of policy making in Lithuania. This appeal was based on the recommendations of UN CEDAW Committee, mentioned in chapter 1.2. It was suggested to initiate the amendment of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men to include an obligation of equality planning by public and private employers. If an employer regularly employs a staff of more than 50, it is recommended, that the employer must include measures to further equality between women and men at workplace within annual gender equality plan. It must be drafted in cooperation with representatives of employees and include the following measures: an assessment of gender situation at workplace, including the analysis of work performed by women and men and the pay structure; concrete measures for promoting gender equality and closing pay gap must be specified as well as the follow -up and review of previous measures and results achieved. For successful implementation of gender equality planning, it is also recommended to allocate resources for training of gender equality consultants, who would be qualified to develop equality plans and consult on their implementation.

The project ***Open and safe at work.It*** (EU EQUAL initiative) coordinated by Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson Office together with Lithuanian Gay League (LGL), Vytautas Magnus University and other social partners was the initiative to increase tolerance for employees, experiencing discrimination related to their sexual orientation, to integrate and mainstream equal opportunities at workplaces in Lithuania. For the first time in Lithuania new human and organisational forces have gathered together to form a development partnership (researchers, representatives from the private business sector, social skills development and target group organisations) that never before jointly dealt with the issue of reducing discrimination and inequality on the grounds of sexual orientation. On the basis of research of the situation of the target group in the labour market and familiarising the public as well as international experience a new model of equal employment opportunities (a set of methodology, tools and measures) was developed and distributed among Lithuanian companies willing to implement the provisions of the Law on Equal Treatment in an effective/efficient manner (f.e. a guidebook for employers and employees “Equality and diversity at workplace: overview of the policy of equal opportunities and legal recommendations”, ed. by Laima Vengale and Indre Mackeviciute, 2007).

The project ***Equality for Local Development: Gender Mainstreaming in Municipalities*** (2006-2007) coordinated by Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson Office provided knowledge and skills for managerial staff of local administration to map and analyze the ways women and men participate in local activities and the norms for that involvement in order to develop equality action plans and deconstruct traditional gender-neutral categories. The project targeted decision-makers, middle and low range civil servants at municipalities, local media and local community. Project activities included the training of municipal officials on 3R

method in order to investigate gender equality situation at their municipalities and to develop gender equality plans within their respective organizations.

The initiative entitled as *Family Universe: Family-Friendly Organization* (2004-2007) was implemented by the Institute for Gender Studies at Šiauliai University. It aimed to create and test an innovative methodology and means for better reconciliation of family and professional life and to change stereotypical gender roles inside the family and at workplace by forming family-friendly study and work environment at Siauliai University. The project team created and tested flexible organizational means of working and studying at Siauliai University, which allowed combining family and career responsibilities for students and employees in a more family - friendly way. The social, psychological and educational support and services within Siauliai University, such as counselling, career planning and employment services have been provided, helping students and employees of the educational institution to reconcile family and career obligations more effectively.

- **Luxembourg**

There is a certain number of measures that could be mentioned in this context, but three policy initiatives that deal with the implementation of gender equality planning at workplaces in Luxembourg seem to be the most remarkable. The good practices comprise in particular the introduction of positive actions for companies of the private sector (more information about it in chapter 1.1 on national legislation), the design of strategic tools in order to enhance gender equality at local level, and finally, the design of a concept for integrating gender equality into the curricula of the initial and vocational training of staff working in the public sector. All these measures are public initiatives financed by the state and partly by European funds. Regarding the positive actions' programme, it stands for a national initiative which is entirely funded by the State of Luxembourg. Concerning the last two projects, these are originated from EU funded actions (see below for a more detailed description).

Implementation of gender equality at local level (project status: implementation; policy measure: awareness raising; term and financial source: initiated under the project name "Gender equality in local development" by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities in a partnership with Slovenian and Danish public administrations for the period of 2007-2008 under the Programme relating to the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2007)).

The project resulted in the development of a concept for assessing the level of gender equality in a municipality at different levels. This means that local governments have to assess the situation of gender equality at their administrations and at the political representation boards (the so-called internal level), on the one hand. On the other hand, the local governments have to analyse the current socio-economic and cultural situation in their municipalities (specified as external level). The tools for this analysis were designed by the project and were proposed to the local governments by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities as a mainstreaming instrument. The ultimate aim of the project is the design of respective gender equality plans for both levels of action¹. In parallel a minimum set of indicators to evaluate the gender equality situation were chosen in the framework of this project, which provided the context for the establishment of a quality framework for a Gender Equality

¹ See also http://www.mega.public.lu/actualites/actu_min/2007/07/politique_communale020707/outils/description_en.pdf

Award of the Best Local Practice. A recent call for proposals of the best local practice was closed by the end of February 2009.²

Introduction of gender equality to the initial and vocational training in the public sector (project status: analysis, term and financial source: initiated under the project “Integration of the gender dimension in national policies through training” by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities under the PROGRESS programme. The pilot project started in 2008 and is envisaged to be closed by the end of 2009).

Within this community project the actual training situation with regard to gender equality is evaluated for the public sector (national and regional) with the objective to develop an adequate gender equality training programme. The evaluation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality has shown the need for a reinforced training of the public sector staff on gender equality issues. It appeared that one of the priorities to enhance gender mainstreaming was to increase the awareness of the supervising staff members on the subject of gender equality at workplaces. Presently, a first assessment of the training situation in gender equality within the public sector has been made and the elaboration of a draft curriculum is under preparation. The new curriculum proposal on gender equality is foreseen to be tested by the end of 2009 at the Institute of Public Administration (the training centre of the public sector in Luxembourg).

Moreover, there is a number of good practices in applying gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces. They refer, on the one hand, to measures that have been introduced in the management procedures of private sector companies and where the impulse has been given by the positive actions’ programme. On the other hand, there are recent efforts made on the employers’ initiative and are mainly linked to the objective of sustainable development.

In order to enhance the equality objectives of private and public enterprises, a special recognition of policies of equal opportunities for women and men – Gender equality award - has been established by Luxembourg’s Government in 1993. Up to now, 14 companies have received such an award.

The first Equality Award was the result of a project launched in the framework of the community action programme PETRA.³ The project holder was a vocational school of secondary education, which motivated an SME, specialised in the production of tailor-made industrial devices to train and employ female students and applicants in industrial jobs. Luxembourg’s first award had the original name of “Prix Féminin de l’Entreprise” which signifies in literal translation “Female company award”. It was awarded by the Ministry for Labour and Employment at that time. The first gender equality prize was rewarding the company for its outstanding efforts made in the area of work organisation.

After 1999, the Award was integrated into the Positive Actions Programme. Since then 7 further enterprises have been rewarded. They cover diverse sectors, varying between craftsmanship, heavy industry, financial services, and healthcare and different in size: from 30 to 2.700 employees. Luxembourg’s Equality Award amounts to 12.395 € per selection.

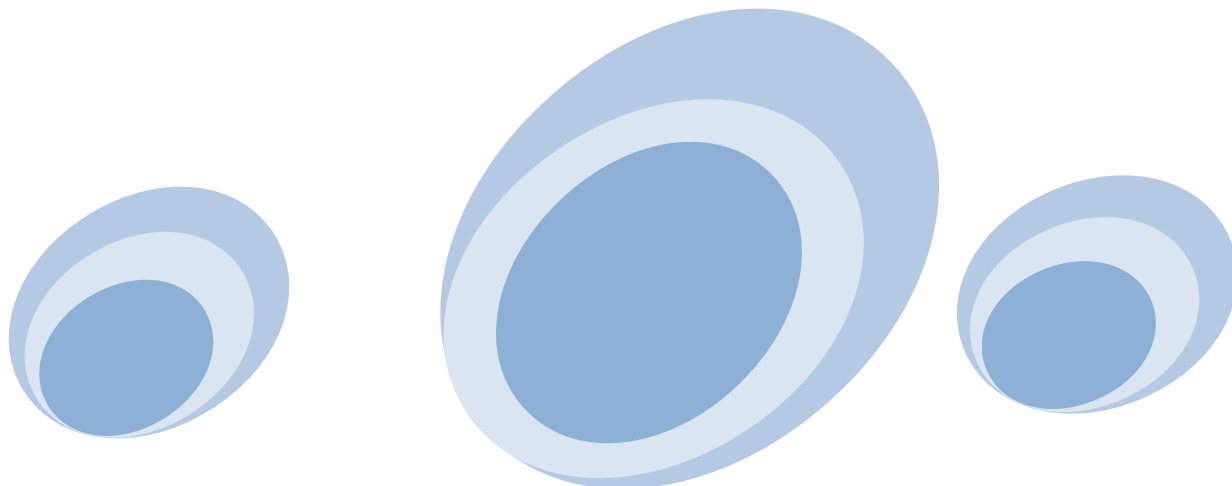
Additionally, the employers’ representatives decided to pay more attention to corporate social responsibility (CSR). In 2003, they signed a Charter on Sustainable Development and

² See also http://www.mega.public.lu/actions_projets/politique_communale/national/reglement.html

³ This community initiative programme was aimed between 1988 and 1994 to promote improvement and diversification of the vocational trainings, to encourage greater adaptability of such training to economic, technological and social change, and to give a Community dimension to vocational qualifications.



established an institute called "National Institute for Sustainable Development and Social Responsibility of Enterprises". A CSR label, designed on this background, was officially launched in March 2009 and is actually running in its test phase.



IV. Recommendations for developing quality standards for GED consultancy/training at workplaces and for training program “GED consultant at workplaces”

The analysis of the situation in partner countries regarding the basis for implementation of gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces and the overview of good practices provide a basis for recommendations on quality standards for GED consultancy/training at workplaces as well as training programme “GED consultant at workplaces”.

One of the innovations of the GED-PLAN project is that it supports gender equality and diversity skills development in adults within the labour market by enhancing links between continuing VET and working life as well as increasing opportunities to learn at workplaces. This will be achieved by developing and piloting the training programme for e-learning environment, which will allow trainees to receive theoretical knowledge and to apply it in practice without leaving their workplace. The lifelong learning of employees will be ensured through e-learning platform, complemented by training materials and qualified trainers during the learning process. In this way the action will contribute to the development of e-learning conducive environment at workplace. This method of teaching/learning requires that the quality standards for e-learning platform were considered as well.

To sum up, the GED-PLAN project will consider four categories of quality standards:

1. Quality standards for training programme “GED consultant at workplaces”.
2. Quality standards for training institutions.
3. GED consultant’s professional profile and required competences.
4. Quality standards for e-learning platform for training of GED consultants.

In this report, the focus will be given to the recommendations of the national experts for the *content* and *methodology* of the training programme “GED consultant at workplaces”. The quality standards for training institutions, GED consultant’s professional profile and required competences and quality standards for e-learning platform will be developed during the run of the project.

The content of the training programme “GED consultant at workplaces” should ensure that the programme:

- addresses the interaction between individual, interpersonal, institutional and ideological factors in the area of discrimination and inequality;
- provides participants with facts, figures and indicators concerning the social and economic situation of women and men as well as diversities at the different levels;
- illustrates the wide and diverse context of equality;
- addresses the link between the value of diversity and the legal basis for equality measures and policies protecting the rights of specific social groups which are subject to discrimination;
- addresses prejudicial language, the basic terms and concepts relating to prejudice and discrimination, and their application to interactions with others;

- recognizes that certain groups in society have often historically been and currently still are subject to stereotyping, prejudice and trait ascription, in a way which leads to inequality and discrimination;
- addresses the factor of culture in communication.

The methodology of the programme should be guided by the following principles:

- GED training programme supports the participants in self-reflection and in developing self-awareness, and helps them define their personal and social identity, particularly with regard to gender and diversities.
- The programme lets participants to examine personal attitudes and behaviours, as well as review organizational policies and practices for bias and inequity but also creates anti-discriminatory attitudes and behaviours.
- Diagnosis of needs is conducted and taken into account within the programme.
- The programme is tailored to fit target groups' needs with regard to the content, methods and time schedule.
- The training materials support the participants in their learning process in the most effective and comprehensive manner.
- Facilitators use the most proper methods to enable the personal engagement of participants.
- GED - sensitive language is used during the course.
- Participants' life experience, their knowledge and professional experience related to GED issues is taken into account.
- GED training challenges prejudices on the personal level and aids in planning a course of action on the organizational level.

The experts from the partner countries recommend paying a particular attention to the following issues during the trainings:

- equality legislation: national and EU legislation and the most important international conventions with special emphasis on promotion of GED at workplaces;
- facts and research on equality and diversity in working life;
- strategies, tools and good practices to promote gender equality and diversity at workplace level;
- theoretical approaches on equality and discrimination;
- training and consulting methods;
- practical exercise/case work on promoting equality in a workplace by each trainee.

The transnational cooperation project entitled **Proequality** (EU EQUAL initiative) distinguished the following recommendations for the quality of gender equality and diversity training⁴:

⁴ See under : http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/products/sup/pro-126-2.pdf

1. Training provides participants with facts, figures and indicators concerning the social and economic situation of women and men.
2. Gender equality training supports the participants in self-reflection and in developing self-awareness, and helps them define their personal and social identity, particularly with regard to gender.
3. The participants gain an understanding of the origin and functioning of gender stereotypes and of prejudice and its results – gender inequality and discrimination.
4. Gender equality training creates anti-discriminatory attitudes and behaviours.
5. The legal context of gender equality is presented in a comprehensive manner.
6. Knowledge, skills and attitudes are acquired and help incorporate gender-linked considerations and perspectives into all organization's activities.
7. Training illustrates the wide and diverse context of gender equality.

Following the above recommendations, the training programme should investigate and discuss key subject matters through the series of specific modules, which can be divided into the three main sections:

- Section I. Introduction to Gender Equality and Diversity (GED) planning at workplaces,** which consists of the specific modules on European and national legislation and policy measures towards the implementation of the equal opportunities to all at workplaces.
- Section II. Equal Treatment and prohibition of Multi-discrimination at Workplaces,** which includes the specific modules to acquiring and deepening knowledge on diversity of workforce, on necessity to protect the discrimination at workplace on the ground of gender, age, ethnicity, religion and beliefs, disability and sexual orientation.
- Section III. Implementation of GED planning at workplaces,** which includes the specific modules to become acquainted with the methods for analysing the problems linked to ensuring equal treatment of all at workplaces, as well as with the methods to develop the gender equality and diversity plans to cope with the diversity at workplaces.

The Section I should cover the following topics:

- European policy measures and challenges for GED planning at workplaces;
- Overview of national legislation and policy measures for GED at work.

The Section II should focus on different grounds of discrimination and should analyze the various aspects of multi-discrimination at work:

- Gender sensitive workplaces;
- Age friendly workplaces;
- Ensuring antidiscrimination practices on the grounds of ethnicity, religion and beliefs;
- Disability friendly work environment;
- Combating heteronormativity at work.

The section III should cover the following topics:

- organization of work and structure of human resources;
- recruitment and promotion;
- pay structure in organisation; equal pay policies and legislation;
- education, training and career development;
- reconciliation of work and family roles;
- work environment and ergonomics;
- prevention of discrimination and sexual harassment at the workplace;
- best practices on GED integration into the labour market/workplaces.

All topics should be discussed through multi-dimensional concepts of gender equality and diversity. Multi-dimensional approach provides insights into the complex interactions between gender and other social characteristics, such as age, ethnicity, sexual identity, etc.

To ensure successful implementation of the trainings, it is suggested that each module should follow a **3-step model** (Taylor Cox): sensitizing-acquiring and deepening knowledge-changing behaviour, and include the theoretical part, practical exercises and self-evaluation part.

It is suggested that the training course constitutes 3 credits of the European Credit Transfer System for the non-formal adult education. The pedagogical strategy of this training course should be based on blended-learning approach for e-learning-conducive workplaces; the course should allow combination of face-to-face training and e-learning training via developed e-learning platform with the possibility to study at workplace.

The structural framework of the curriculum should include a short description of the aim and methodological approach of the programme, learning outcomes, content, time schedule and distribution of hours, description of tasks and assignments, teaching/learning as well as assessment strategies, sources of mandatory and additional learning materials.

Conclusions

Finland is the only country in this project where national legal mechanisms provide concrete and real measures to promote equality planning at workplaces purposefully and systematically. The legally binding equality plans at enterprises and workplaces with at least 30 employees have so far focused on the following key targets: wage surveys; safety and health at work: sexual harassment, workplace design, ergonomics; equal access of women and men to training, education and career development. In most cases, a multi-dimensional concept of equality has been applied. In 2008, around 60% of the companies and workplaces were involved in equality planning at workplace in Finland.

In Germany a legal obligation for employers to implement positive action for equal opportunities at workplaces exists only in the area of public administration. Equal opportunities for female and male employees are statutorily regulated, but an obligation for a systematic gender equality and diversity planning is either non-existent (Act of Equal Rights for Men and Women in Lower Saxony) or very low developed (Federal Gender Equality Act). In the area of private economy, there is no legal obligation for GED planning at all. Just the agreement for the promotion of equal opportunities for women and men in private economy between federal government and head associations of German economy could be mentioned.

The legal regulation of equal opportunities in Lithuania does not specifically target gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces as well. The laws on equal opportunities oblige institutions of public administration to draw up and implement programmes and measures aimed at ensuring equal opportunities, but the problem with this principle is that there is no legal mechanism of auditing, control or sanctioning. The concrete means aimed at GED planning at workplace are not anticipated in the national programs dealing with equal opportunities and anti-discrimination either. In its recommendations for Lithuania, the UN CEDAW Committee placed a special emphasis on the obligatory gender equality planning by public and private employers, which should be included in the national legislation.

Luxembourg's legislation is offering a series of good possibilities to enhance gender equality planning at workplaces. The positive actions' programme is based on a voluntary participation of enterprises. It proposes incentives to employers of the private sector that show readiness to enhance their gender equality policies. The positive actions programme is open to different kinds of private sector companies independently of the fact if they have signed a collective agreement or not. On the other hand, the regulations on collective agreements are legally binding for all those companies and/or institutions that have signed such an accord. This leaves consequently no liberty of choice to the concerned companies/institutions that need at least to outline their gender equality intentions at workplace in a formal way. Both are instruments of the national machinery that have produced some positive effects. But, up to now there is no mechanism of control and the results, especially in the field of collective agreements, are quite poor. In the public sector, following the evaluation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality, the legal prerequisites are given in order to have a gender equality planning at workplaces, but the level of consciousness still needs to be reinforced and practical trainings to be elaborated.

In all countries, there is an established set of training institutions and offers for GED trainings and consultations. In the early days these trainings were mainly targeted to non profit organisations and public administrations. Nowadays more and more offers address private companies and link GED to human resource management and organisational development. The discussion about GED trainings/consultations (e.g. quality standards) is on a high level in Finland, Germany and Luxembourg. There are various examples of good practice and different trainers' associations and networks, working on the professionalization of training/consultation offers.

Nevertheless, there are no officially approved training programs for in-house GED consultants at workplace in national VET systems. The trainings for employers and/or employees are mostly voluntary, based on short – term projects, usually lack consistency and sustainability. There are several other difficulties to be mentioned. Firstly, it is very hard to attract the attention of employers. Secondly, there is no formal mechanism to involve employers or representatives of employees in more coherent and longer lasting GED trainings or to enforce the equality planning at workplace in practice. The whole system in national VET structures is needed. It would allow an employer to get qualified in-house GED consultant and to run GED planning at workplace in an effective and systematic way. An innovative professional profile of GED consultant at workplace in national VET system would be an important progress in terms of quality management and making GED planning at workplace more attractive for companies and organisations.

The professional profile of GED consultant at workplace supports innovations in vocational education and training practices. One of them is the development of innovative ICT-based program (content, methods and tools) as well as pedagogies and practices of lifelong learning to be used for gender equality and diversity planning, implementation and monitoring at workplaces. The e-learning platform at work can be used to promote e-learning conducive workplaces and lifelong learning approach. The ICT-based practices facilitate self-directed learning practices as well as allow trainees to apply acquired knowledge straight away within his/her working environment. This innovative approach supports GED skills development in adults within the labour market by enhancing links between continuing vocational training and working life as well as increasing opportunities to learn at work.

For the e-learning programme “GED consultant at workplace” to be successful, the consortium should consider quality standards for content and methods of the training programme, quality standards for training institutions, GED consultant’s professional profile and required competences as well as quality standards for e-learning platform. The content of the training programme should cover the issues of work organisation and human resource management with a clear focus on multi-dimensional concepts of gender equality and diversity. It also seems very important that GED consultant and GED planning at workplace were embedded in the concept of Gender Mainstreaming and Diversity Management in the organization. According to the specific features of GED training at workplaces, the following main criteria can be identified as the most relevant for the programme: target groups needs, participatory methods, gender and diversity sensitive language and reflection upon discriminatory situations.

The training program “GED consultant at workplace” comprises just a part of the whole framework of GED consultancy at workplace. In order to ensure the successful work of the framework, the favourable legal and policy contexts are of the basic importance. An innovative GED consultancy at workplace should also be facilitated by the training facilities/institutions, external GED consultancy and audit agencies as well as GED consultancy promotion strategies.

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Internet resources:

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