

**JOINT DECLARATION DATED 15 FEBRUARY 2013  
RELATIVE TO QUALITY OF LIFE AT WORK<sup>1</sup>**

Between, on the one hand,

The Chairman of the European Works Council, represented by Thierry Martel, CEO of Groupama SA,

And on the other hand,

The European Works Council, the European employee representative body, represented by its secretary, Bianca Cuciniello.

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<sup>1</sup> This joint declaration falls within the purview of European regulations, such as the European framework agreement on stress dated 8 October 2004, the directive on equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation dated 5 July 2006, the European framework agreement on harassment and violence at work dated 26 April 2007, the directive concerning the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and consideration between men and women regarding employment dated 5 July 2006, and the Joint Declaration dated 26/01/2010 issued by the insurance Sector Social Dialogue Committee (ISSDC).

## BACKGROUND

Aware of the changing economic environment in which it evolves and the ensuing impacts on the group, management and the unions at European level wished to reassert in this joint declaration their commitment to the general principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunities within the group, from the moment staff are recruited and throughout their entire working lives. In more general terms, they also wished to express the need to reaffirm their conviction that in order for performance to be efficient, it must take place within a framework of quality of life at work agreed in dialogue with the unions.

In that capacity, management highlights the fact that it has reasserted its commitment as a socially responsible employer by making its actions to promote diversity, prevent discrimination and ensure the quality of life at work part of its sustainable development and social and societal ethics policy. On 7 February 2007, Groupama signed the United Nations Global Compact, the principles of which are in line with the group's values and strategies.

Group policy is structured particularly around the major axes outlined below:

- Willingness and involvement of general management to work in favour of non-discrimination and diversity in companies
- Employees and management committed to and mobilised for the company and the group
- Human resources management policy allocating a major role to professional development and mobility
- Reaffirmed commitment to be a socially responsible employer day to day.

This joint declaration is intended to reflect the shared aim of Groupama general management and unions at European level:

- Prevent, tackle, eliminate or reduce psychological and sociological risks and in particular stress, harassment and violence at work as well as discourtesy
- Prevent all forms of discrimination throughout employees' working lives and promote diversity, as a dynamic approach that complements the concept of non-discrimination
- Improve the quality of life at work for employees in conjunction with the company's collective efficiency.

In this regard, this declaration is intended to provide a general direction for group companies within the scope of the European WDiffusé par  
Regulation and Corporate Practices up to them to stipulate priorities in light of domestic

## **I. MAIN GUIDELINES**

The unions at European level and group management wish to continue to implement the main guidelines, in compliance with locally applicable laws by promoting the following axes:

Axis 1: prevention of discrimination (based on age, race or ethnicity, gender, religion or religious beliefs, sexual orientation or disability) and ensuring equal opportunities at work

Axis 2: promotion of diversity as an ethical approach and source of development for employees, in particular cultural diversity and support for employing people with disabilities

Axis 3: well-being at work:

- The health of persons at work in its broadest sense, i.e., a high degree of physical, mental and social well-being, as per the definition provided by the World Health Organization
- Prevention and management of stress situations at work and condemnation of all forms of harassment.

Management and unions are committed to ensuring continuous dialogue about these issues within the framework of this declaration, leading to actions in the companies.

Groupama is committed to offering, maintaining and, where relevant, improving the social and human framework for all employees working in the group's companies and included in the changing scope of the European Works Council, as defined in its constitutive agreement.

## **II. AXES**

### **1. AXIS 1: Prevent discrimination**

The first axis aims at complying with the principle of equal opportunity and consideration between group employees.

Accordingly, companies in the group, as defined in axis 1, commit to complying and ensuring compliance with rules concerning non-discrimination, as stipulated in the statutes (laws, European Directives and domestic standards among others). They will supervise the application of equal consideration in particular with regard to hiring, career development, compensation and professional training.

Unions and management therefore prioritize compliance with the principle of equal opportunity and consideration for all, irrespective of race or ethnicity, gender, disability, genetic traits, customs, sexual orientation, age, political opinion, religion or beliefs.

### **2. AXIS 2: Promote diversity**

The second axis focuses on promoting diversity in all forms and in all stages of the human resources management process, which include among others hiring, training, advancement or professional promotion of employees.

Unions and management are convinced that working to promote diversity means developing a positive image of the group with regard to its members, clients, suppliers, employees and partners.

Teams made up of individuals with different profiles where everyone has a role to play can enhance economic performance, better understand the expectations of different types of customers, penetrate new markets, enhance the company's ability to innovate and adapt more effectively to change.

The group and its companies undertake in particular to promote diversity amongst all its employees and notably the following groups:

### **Professional equality between men and women**

Compliance with the principle of non-discrimination and equal consideration and opportunity between men and women in the group is hereby reasserted.

Companies are invited to commit to or continue their actions intended to promote professional equality with regard to hiring, compensation and career management and to implement measures to prevent psychological and sexual harassment in the workplace.

### **People with disabilities**

In due compliance with national legislation, companies are encouraged to hire or continue actions to promote job retention for people with disabilities and to consider applications by these persons equally.

Where applicable, they may sign partnerships with organisations promoting people with disabilities in professional environments.

### **Cultural diversity**

Management is aware that profile diversity is a source of enrichment and creativity for the company and encourages companies to commit to the principle of equal consideration of persons at the workplace regardless in particular of race, real or assumed membership of an ethnic group, political opinion, union or group activities and religious conviction.

This joint declaration states the objective of a group with an international dimension to reflect and integrate cultural diversity in its workforce at every level of qualification and in every activity.

### **Bridging the generation gap**

Companies are encouraged to implement measures to promote work between the generations. Bridging the generation gap prompts in particular the imparting of knowledge and know-how within teams and also enables both personal and professional sharing and enhancement.

Wherever possible, companies will strive not only to develop a program to integrate newly hired staff members, but also to anticipate the second half of the careers of more senior staff members and in any event to ensure generational balance in teams.

## **3. AXIS 3: Promote quality of life at work**

Convinced that well-being in the workplace is a key performance driver, the Groupama group is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its employees and to offering a high-quality work environment.

Accordingly, the group and its companies must ensure that they implement preventive measures aimed at stress, harassment, violence and discourtesy at work.

Vital definitions are provided below for this purpose.

**The concept of stress at work:** a state of stress <sup>1</sup> results from an “imbalance between the perception a person has of the constraints imposed by his/her environment and the perception he/she has of the resources made available to cope with those constraints”.

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<sup>1</sup> Definition proposed by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

To prevent stressful situations at work, companies, working with the unions and pursuant to national applicable rules, can for example:

- Assess stress factors
- Put in place preventive measures to improve the quality of life at work (implement awareness actions, measures to reconcile professional and personal life, actions to acknowledge staff during their career development, etc.)
- Inform and listen to employees (implement tools).

The concept of harassment at work: harassment<sup>1</sup> refers to abusive and repeated behaviour aimed at an employee or group of employees entailing unfair treatment, humiliation or attempts to weaken or threaten the victim of harassment.

In the event of harassment or any other event liable to affect physical and/or mental health, employees, victims or witnesses may refer the matter to their supervisor and/or Human Resources to inform them of the situation and to have it stopped, without fear of sanction, dismissal or any discriminatory measure whatsoever.

Once an investigation of the facts reveals actual harassment, a disciplinary procedure must be initiated against the harasser.

The concept of violence at work<sup>2</sup>: violence includes insults, threats and physical assault.

Violence can arise from within or from outside an entity. Although some acts of violence are unpredictable, situations which may provoke violence are not. The most significant risk factors include work in contact with the public, work involving the handling of cash and the fact of working alone.

Harassment and violence may:

- Take a physical, psychological and/or sexual dimension
- Be isolated incidents or more systematic behaviours
- Occur between colleagues, between subordinates and supervisors or be instigated by third parties such as customers, suppliers, or service providers
- Range from minor manifestations of disrespect to more serious acts such as criminal offences requiring police intervention.

### **III. MEANS THAT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED**

In order to foster equality and promote rights and well-being at work, companies can, in accordance with applicable national rules, get inspiration from or draw on the following measures:

#### **1. Information and communication**

Each company in the group undertakes to provide information and communication on the contents of this joint declaration:

- To management boards depending on local practice
- To staff representative bodies according to local rules and laws
- To employees, for example on the company Intranet, where relevant, by posting up information, newsletters or by any other means common in the company.

Above and beyond this declaration, the aim for Groupama is to divulge the group's commitment to non-discrimination, diversity and well-being at work to all employees.

The group undertakes to post this declaration in Kiosk in English and in French.

#### **2. Awareness and training**

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<sup>1</sup> Definition proposed by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

<sup>2</sup> Definition proposed by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

### **Awareness actions**

Companies are encouraged to initiate or continue their awareness actions aimed at employees and managers, and to provide regular information via conventional means of communication used in the companies or through exceptional actions.

Awareness actions may, for instance, take several forms according to the company's possibilities and include in particular the following:

- Publication of brochures, newsletters, in-house news, fliers and information kits
- Newspaper articles
- Conferences and meetings
- Videos and testimonials
- Participation in events and forums
- Presentation at various seminars and corporate conventions
- Sharing best practices, especially with occupational physicians, and according to current practices in companies.

### **Training actions**

Companies are also invited to implement training actions (if they haven't already done so), with the assistance if necessary from the University, concerning issues raised in this declaration and intended to support employees and managers involved in hiring, training and career development, and to include these issues in current training actions, in particular pertaining to management issues.

Companies may organise training in crisis management following an accident or other traumatic event, aimed at developing:

- Operating capabilities to cope with crises by implementing appropriate actions,
- The ability to take an objective view to enhance management of the crisis,
- The ability to listen to those in distress.

### **Reconciling professional and private life**

Improvements to the balance between private/family and working life can enhance both the quality of life at work for employees, in particular in a demanding professional environment, and the company's image and appeal.

Consequently, companies are encouraged to consider innovative practices that promote a better-balanced use of time (for example, flexi-time working hours, flexibility in working hours and venues, miscellaneous forms of aid, etc.). Such practices can improve companies' productivity whilst ensuring the well-being of employees. Actions could also be examined jointly with the unions, in compliance with current practices in the country.

### **3. Promoting these values externally**

Companies are encouraged to develop partnerships outside the company.

For example, companies can:

- Establish permanent dialogue with charities, authorities and working groups
- Launch projects in partnership with other stakeholders (the State, specialist charities, research institutes and other parties) to promote diversity and well-being at work
- Participate in hiring fairs to enable the company to meet applicants and communicate its stance against discrimination.

## **IV. PROMOTION OF THIS JOINT DECLARATION**

Management and unions will strive to promote all the axes stipulated in this declaration in group companies.

With this in mind, this declaration will be translated into all the languages used in the countries concerned at the initiative of each company.

## **V. FINAL PROVISIONS**

### **1. Regular monitoring**

Management and the unions will conduct an assessment of the application of this declaration at one of the plenary meetings of the European Works Council.

### **2. Official version**

The French version of this joint declaration shall prevail as the only official version.

In Paris, on 15 February 2013

Chairman of the European Works Council  
Thierry Martel

Secretary of the European Works Council  
Bianca CUCINIELLO