



**Study on non-legislative initiatives for companies to  
promote gender equality at the workplace – Contract  
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**Synthesis Report**

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This study has been elaborated with reasonable care. The project co-ordinator and the project team does not, however, accept responsibility for printing errors and/or other imperfections and potential (consequential) damage resulting thereof.

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## Executive Summary

Gender equality is a fundamental right, a common value of the EU and a necessary condition for the achievement of the EU objectives on growth, employment and social cohesion. Indeed, the combined efforts of the Community and the Member States genuinely helped to transform the situation of men and women in Europe. This is reflected in a steadily increasing female participation in employment and a higher level of education as compared to men. However, women are still disadvantaged on the labour market, as labour market segregation and inequalities in working conditions still persist.

For a long time, the **European Union** has been taking **measures** and has responded with policies to reduce the imbalances in gender equality and reconcile professional, private and family lives of women and men. Also the **European social partners** have been active in promoting gender equality at the workplace.

At **national level** the European endeavours have found its counterpart. Many national laws have been adopted on the basis of the Community acquis. Moreover, the national authorities, social partners and other players (NGOs, networks etc.) have launched various programmes and projects tackling gender inequality at the workplace in different fields following a variety of approaches. One way of combating gender inequalities is the development of tools to manage, measure, communicate and reward good practices of enterprises and organisations in the field of gender equality. Different types of tools have been developed at national and regional level such as labels, prizes and awards, charters, classifications of companies, and publications which aim

- to disseminate good practices
- to motivate other companies to adopt and implement similar measures
- to achieve a far-reaching publicity for the assigned enterprises
- to provide economic arguments for equality measures.

Today's diversity of instruments calls for a systematic review of approaches used and for a synopsis of lessons learned so far. In this context, the **study aims**:

- To create an inventory of label-type or related initiatives taken by national authorities, social partners and other stakeholders as well as of selected initiatives individually taken by companies,
- To analyse and compare these types of measures to gain better knowledge of their operation, results, effectiveness, economic and social impact and the impact on gender equality in particular, as well as insight into the economic and social arguments/benefits which motivate companies to sign up for label-type initiatives
- To identify and highlight good practices in the field
- To draw conclusions on how to further develop non-legislative initiatives to promote gender equality at the workplace



## Methodological approach of the study

In the course of the study, an exhaustive list of all important non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality (public and private initiatives) currently under way has been produced. Additionally, the most important initiatives having finished not before 2004 have been included in the study. Emphasis has been put on labels, charters and awards with a clear gender focus. In addition, selected rankings and compendium of good practices have been included. Initiatives addressing a broader issue (e.g. CSR, Diversity) have been taken into account only if specific elements deal with gender equality (mainly in countries where no specific gender related initiatives could be identified). Family-related issues have been analysed only if they do not reinforce traditional gender roles. Geographically, all initiatives at national level have been analysed as well as the most important initiatives at regional level (in particular for countries with federal structures). Initiatives at European level and examples of initiatives at international level have been incorporated in the study as well.

National research partners have gathered the required information on the initiatives by means of internet research, document analysis and telephone/personal interviews with the responsible persons. The information has been collected and presented according to a semi-structured guideline.

**133 initiatives<sup>1</sup>** have been identified, analysed, and structured around the main types:

- **22 Labels**
- **68 Prizes/awards**
- **11 Charters**
- **19 Rankings/Indices**
- **19 Compendium of good practice**

Furthermore, the specific **approaches and initiatives of 30 companies** to enable and/or assure gender equality at the workplace have been described and analysed. The focus has been laid on multinational companies, but the sample also includes the approaches of one large national company and of 5 SMEs. The 30 enterprises are located in different European countries and are active in different industries. The companies have been carefully chosen, based e. g. on expert recommendations, company rankings or award winners. The Austrian Institute for SME Research has carried out the field research by means of internet/document research and telephone or personal interviews with responsible persons at the enterprises (basically from the HR Department or CSR/Diversity & Inclusion Department or the owners).

A total of **26 non-legislative initiatives and 7 company initiatives** have been **analysed in-depth** and are subject of **case studies**. The case studies are based on a more detailed document analysis and extended personal interviews.

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<sup>1</sup> As 6 initiatives combine two types (e.g. ranking and prize) and therefore are attributed to more than one type, the number of the initiatives by type exceeds the total number of initiatives analysed.





## The main types of non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality at the workplace

In many countries, companies with an outstanding commitment for gender equality and having implemented measures promoting gender equality in the workplace are given the possibility to receive a certificate or **label** for their endeavour. The labelling is mostly conceived as a process and based on an audit involving elements of self-assessment and/or external evaluation, involvement of an independent jury and often the participation in a consulting process with the aim of improving gender equality within the organisation. The labels are often granted for a limited time period (e.g. for three years) and a precondition for a new labelling is the improvement of the company's equality policy. Therefore the labelling shall not be considered as the end of the process but as a sign that the company dedicates and changes continuously its corporate culture towards the enhancement of gender equality.

Besides more general labels (e. g. "*Label Égalité (Professionnelle)*" (equality label) in France, "*Agrément Ministériel du Projet d'Action Positive*" (Ministerial Agreement for Positive Actions) in Luxembourg) which cover a wide range of gender equality issues and take measures in various fields, there are specific labels for reconciliation of work and family life (e. g. "*Audit berufundfamilie*" (work and family audit) in Germany), labels created in the framework of EQUAL (e. g. "*Šanca na rovnost*" (chance for equality) in Slovakia) or labels with a diversity focus (e. g. *Label Egalité Diversité/Label Gelijkheid Diversiteit* (Label Equality Diversity) in Belgium). Moreover, one example for a label focussing on a crucial aspect with regard to gender equality has been launched in Switzerland and is currently in the pilot phase ("*equal salary - Zertifikation der Lohngleichheit von Frauen und Männern*" (Certification of wage equality between women and men)).

**Prizes and awards** constitute by far the biggest category of non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality in the workplace. In general, the prizes – most of them are awarded annually – are rather heterogeneous with respect to their thematic focus; they address different targets / target groups as follows:

- Equal opportunities for women and men, e. g. "*Tasa-arvosuunnittelukilpailu*" (gender equality plan prize) in Finland;
- Reconciliation of family and work, e. g. "*Guldnappen*" (the golden pacifier prize) in Sweden, "*Firma roku: rovné příležitosti*" (company of the year: equal opportunities) in the Czech Republic
- Women in leading positions, e. g. "*Managerkam prijazno podjetje*" (women managers friendly company) in Slovenia, "*K2 prisien & K2 næsen*" (K2 reward & K2 reproach) in Denmark,
- Women in specific sectors / sectors traditionally dominated by men, e. g. "*Investor in WISE award*" in the United Kingdom, "*amaZone*" (amazone) in Austria

Furthermore, there are prizes and awards which, in general, have a broader frame but are also covering gender equality issues (explicitly or implicitly) such as

- Lists of best workplaces for women – special awards in the frame of Great place to Work® (e. g. "*Melhor Empresa para Trabalhar para Mulheres*" (the best company to work for women) in Portugal)
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Diversity



Many prizes use a two- or more-phases-process in order to identify the winners: In a first step, participating companies usually have to fill in a questionnaire or another standardised form accompanied by further documents and statistical data. Usually, the documents are reviewed by a jury / committee, which may request additional information. Frequently, the process of identifying the winning company / companies includes on-site visits at the firm and interviews with the management and/or employees.

In many cases, winning enterprises are allowed to submit an application for the same prize again at a later date or after a time span of two or more years. In certain cases, enterprises are allowed to participate again if processes or projects in the field of gender equality have substantially enhanced since being awarded last time.

In some cases, prizes are also linked to labels or rankings / indices. In the frame of such rankings / indices, usually the top-ranked companies are also awarded.

The commitment to promote gender equality can be shown by signing a **charter**. The charter states the common values of the signed who declare to act according to the requirements of and in line with the goals of the charter. Normally, the activities and progress of the members concerning the core concepts of the charter are not assessed or controlled by external bodies. It is up to each signing organisation in which way it supports the charter's aim. In many cases the charters are not signed by enterprises only, but involve key stakeholders like ministries, regional governments, business organisations, trade unions, public employment services, NGOs etc. Apart from charters aiming at gender equality in working life in general, most of the charters have a special focus. Thus, there are charters which emphasise the commitment of the undersigned enterprises and organisations to create framework conditions for a better reconciliation of work and family life (e. g. "*Charte de la Parentalité en Entreprise*" (charter for parenthood in the workplace) in France). Another subject of charters is tackling the horizontal segregation of the labour market and raising the participation of women in science and technology (e. g. "*CEO Charter*" and "*Athena SWAN Charter for Women in Science*" in the UK) as well as the vertical segregation (e. g. "*Charter for flere kvinder i ledelse*" (charter for more women in management) in Denmark).

**Rankings** of companies can be defined as the result of a comparison of enterprises based on the assessment of different criteria. Often such criteria are concentrated in an index. It can be distinguished between rankings which are based on the analysis of publicly available data (e. g. extracted from annual reports, communication materials of companies like websites) and ones which require the co-operation of the companies by answering a questionnaire. Often such rankings focus on large enterprises or only take into account enterprises with a certain minimum size. For example, there are rankings based on an index analysing exclusively companies quoted on the stock market or assessing the largest companies in a country. Rankings mainly assess the gender equality policy in general taking into account different thematic fields, but there are also ones which highlight enterprises e. g. active in fostering women in managerial positions. One example of transferring a well established initiative from the USA to Europe is "*Bästa arbetsplatsen för kvinnor*" (best workplace for women) in Sweden. The US initiative gains such outstanding recognition that there now exist different lists such as the "*50 Best Law Firms for Women*" or the "*Best Companies for Multicultural Women*". Rankings can also serve as an instrument to support new legislation. For instance, "*Top 5 de las empresas modelo de igualdad*" (Top 5 of model companies in equality) has been created to promote and evaluate the implementation of the "Equality Law" in Spain.



In the framework of research studies, network activities and projects dealing with gender equality, sometimes one of the outcomes is a **compendium of good practices**. This means that a number of enterprises which have an outstanding commitment in terms of gender equality in the workplace are presented in detail in a publication and/or on a website. The main reason for providing such compendia is to set examples for other enterprises and to share knowledge. Presenting good practices in terms of gender equality in the workplace have the potential to be an inspiration for other enterprises and workplaces. They may help to raise awareness and change social norms in order to minimise and/or eliminate gender inequalities. Frequently, compendia of good practices arise from competitions for prizes / awards, where good practices of winning or participating enterprises running for a prize / award are integrated in a publication or success stories are collected on a website.

The largest group are compendia in the field of equal opportunities for women and men in general, including thematic issues such as recruitment, training and career opportunities, salary as well as combining work and private life, but there also exist compendia with a specific focus (e. g. “*Ligeløn*” (equal pay) in Denmark).

### What companies do to promote gender equality at the workplace

How do companies address the various dimensions of gender equality more specifically? **Multinational enterprises (MNE) adapt their strategies** and approaches according to the legislative and cultural environment of the country they are operating in. So, a MNE’s specific measures may vary from one country to another. Also, while some of the company initiatives have a rather industry specific background, others appear to be more general and can easily be transferred across industries.

The analysis has revealed the following **seven fields of intervention**: recruitment, reconciliation, retention, career opportunities, training, networking and communication. As multinational companies usually have in place rather comprehensive gender equality or diversity strategies, which include measures for several if not all the fields mentioned above, the strategies have been disaggregated into their components to allow for a structured analysis. A measure that is applied in a certain field by one company can thereby also be taken up by another company and transferred to other fields (e. g. while one company uses female role models to encourage applications from women, the measure “role model” could, in principle, as well be applied by another company to promote career progression of women). The practices of the model companies can as well be an inspiration for the designers and organisers of non-legislative initiatives when shaping their initiatives.

**Recruitment:** In general, when recruiting, companies (have to) formulate their job advertisements in a way to attract both men and women. Nevertheless, there are ways to positively influence applications by the gender that is underrepresented in a company’s employment structure. On the one hand, such gender biases often exist in certain **industries** and especially companies that are active in technology oriented sectors have elaborated ways to attract more women (while companies in e. g. the cosmetics industry are working on raising their share of male employees). On the other hand, a bias may also occur within one company in **different job positions** (e. g. when women tend to work in administrative jobs and men in production) or in different hierarchical levels. Many of the enterprises considered in this study have implemented procedures to attract and employ more women in order to achieve a better balanced staff structure and to benefit from the diverse talents and skills. The initiatives and measures go beyond quotas and range from simple to more sophisticated procedures.



In industries/jobs that are dominated by men, some companies have started to build a pool of potential applicants and thereby work against gender biases well **before the actual application process**, e. g. by implementing actions to interest more women into the subject. There are **measures for each phase of the recruitment procedure**, starting from actively encouraging applications by women in job advertisements or presenting female role models at job fairs when the company presents itself. In the application process, the utilisation of anonymous application forms or CVs that do not reveal information about the gender of the applicant facilitate neutral procedures. To take into account different points of view in the selection process, male and female assessors can be engaged for assessment centres; simulation based hiring procedures may be used to assess talents and capabilities and shortlists, that foresee a certain percentage of women, may be applied as well. Another interesting approach is the attempt to reproduce the quotas of male and female alumni of a certain study subject among the managers.

**Reconciliation:** In the field of reconciliation, there are a **range of work-life procedures** that have already become standard in multinational companies. An important factor here is that reconciliation measures are **addressed and available to both male and female employees**.

The company initiatives in this field relate to work place arrangements (flexible work place, telecommuting), working time arrangements (flexible working time, part time, shift trading), job-sharing models and specific measures for persons with caring responsibilities (child care facilities, nursery vouchers). The initiatives of the companies in the field of reconciliation are in general composed of a combination of these measures. Nevertheless, reconciliation even goes beyond these aspects and some companies also consider meeting times to be appropriate for e. g. persons working part-time, or hold virtual meetings to reduce travel time and thus facilitate participation.

**Retention:** The basic motivation for a company to start retention initiatives is that **competences are lost** when well qualified personnel are leaving. Retention becomes especially relevant when major changes in the private life of employees make adaptations of their work schedule necessary, notably when a child is born.

The large companies analysed here have over the past years elaborated rather **sophisticated retention strategies** for talented women. These initiatives are often composed of measures from different fields of intervention, e. g. reconciliation, career development and networking. The measures range from e. g. support programmes for persons with caring responsibilities to developing career objectives or networking. Although women are at the core of most retention strategies, a precondition for successful retention is to also regard and treat male employees as persons with caring responsibilities.

**Career opportunities:** Via their **reporting systems**, multinational companies may monitor the allocation of employees across areas of operation and job positions by gender. Most of the companies analysed in this study have rather detailed gender specific employee data. Such systems have in many companies revealed a lack of female managers which induced the companies to elaborate initiatives to raise the shares of women throughout the hierarchy.

The measures implemented in the field of career opportunities range from formulating objectives for managers as a basic requirement to ensure gender equality in career progression to gender specific assessment of talent/potential (accounting for different



behavioural patterns of men and women) and to comprehensive career development programmes as well as systems to ensure equal pay. Besides having a reporting system and monitoring the figures, the companies analysed find it crucial to detect and understand the **reasons behind career breaks** of women in order to react adequately and elaborate targeted initiatives.

**Training:** Enterprises often use training on diversity and inclusion issues (that also includes gender equality) to familiarise new employees with the company's diversity culture. Specific training on gender issues for managers may help to become conscious of personal biases and develop strategies to overcome these. Many of the more comprehensive initiatives to enable gender equality in a company include such trainings.

There are also **measures** that can be used in other **fields of training**, i. e. to provide training in a way that is supportive to gender equality. Some of the enterprises analysed in this study have set minimum training targets for all their employees or make sure that their trainee programmes have a fairly good distribution of men and women.

It has been noted by the companies that training is often designed in a way that appears to suit men more than women. Among the **measures to design a training** that also accounts for the exigencies of women are e. g. considering both "male" and "female" learning patterns, considering male and female trainers as well as determining appropriate training mode, time and learning environment. Training is also used to promote gender equality in other fields of intervention, e. g. women specific training in career development.

**Networks:** While in most companies **internal networks of women**, respectively of women and men, have emerged to serve the purpose of gender equality, there are also examples of companies that start networking activities for women by participating in **external women's networks**.

There are mainly networking approaches that concentrate on a certain **hierarchical level** (e. g. on women in management respectively men and women in management supporting gender equality), but networks that allow for membership from any hierarchical level could also be identified.

Networks often **act as drivers** for the development of new strategies to promote gender equality, they have proven very useful to raise and share information among members (e. g. about fields that require action), discuss priorities and develop action plans. Some rather powerful company internal women networks are described in this study. Networking may also be applied as means to support career progression of women, e. g. when different hierarchical levels are brought together. Several **mentoring** programmes follow this approach.

**Communication:** Clear and concise **internal and external communication** about an enterprise's gender equality approach (in general within the corporate diversity and inclusion policy) is crucial to impart a reliable and sustainable picture of a companies' corporate identity and values. Among the measures to support this are e. g. written statements by the Board that show the commitment to the issue (the identification of the top level with the issue is crucial) but also internal Codes of Conduct or Agreements with external parties (such as unions). In this context, many companies have also become more gender sensitive towards their external appearance (and their **advertising**).



## Comparing non-legislative initiatives

The overall aim of all the non-legislative initiatives identified is to tackle gender inequalities and to contribute to more gender equality. Nevertheless, many of the initiatives have a more special focus. Specific **purposes** of implementing such measures are **manifold** and reflect both **specific aspects** of gender inequalities and/or as well as particular **regional conditions**, such as:

- **Reconciliation of work and family:** As women remain the main responsible person in the families to organise the household and to care for the children, a better reconciliation leads to an improvement of the situation of women in the labour market. All these initiatives include elements which aim at changing the common attitude and traditional division of labour among the genders to arrive at an equal sharing of family duties.
- **Horizontal labour market segregation:** The horizontal segregation is seen as one of the reasons for the gender pay gap, as female connoted jobs are regularly lower compensated. Thus, some of the initiatives aim at increasing women's participation in so-called "male sectors" to contribute to more gender equality and to tackle companies' skills shortages at the same time.
- **Vertical labour market segregation:** There also persists a vertical gender segregation which results in an underrepresentation of women in management positions and contributes to the gender pay gap as well. Thus, some initiatives explicitly focus on measures to increase the share of women in decision-making bodies.
- **Backlash in former socialist countries:** The socialist regimes aimed at integrating all persons into the workforce and full time employment for women was the normal case (albeit poorly paid). The state provided childcare institutions and full-time day-care for children in school. Due to ideological backgrounds, education was seen as a public duty and families did not have the same importance here as in civil society. After the fall of the Iron Curtain a backlash started which resulted in a re-orientation towards a very traditional female role in society. Moreover, social services were cut due to the limitation of state subsidies in this field. Thus, the discussion on gender issues has only recently emerged and the awareness of gender inequalities in the labour market is still to be risen. Initiatives to foster gender equality put much emphasis on the reconciliation theme in these countries.
- **Support for broad legislation:** In a way, the Scandinavian countries represent the opposite case. There, the importance of tackling gender inequalities in the labour market is political mainstreaming which led to extensive legislation in the field. Measures which are of a voluntary nature in many other countries are actually compulsory e.g. in Finland or Iceland. Nevertheless, in some fields the practical implementation of gender equality law needs to be improved. Thus, there exist non-legislative initiatives aiming at highlighting enterprises which can serve as role models in implementing the law.

Accordingly, the initiatives can also be distinguished along their **target group**. Initiatives may address the whole staff, thus men and women, all women among the staff, employees with family duties or specific sub-groups of women.



Initiatives also address different **groups of enterprises**. Initiatives with a broad scope mostly address all types of employers including companies, public organisations and NGOs, although often different subgroups are created. As public organisations are often subject to a more stringent legislation as regards quotas, equality requirements etc. many initiatives concentrate their efforts on the private sector. These private enterprises are often divided into subgroups following **size criteria** or the initiative is dedicated to enterprises of a specific size. Initiatives targeting at the horizontal segregation often focus their activities on enterprises active in male-dominated sectors.

There are certain differences between the main types of initiatives in terms of the target groups and other characteristics such as the application process, the assessment criteria and procedure as well as the degree of commitment a participating enterprise is bound to. Thus, rankings mainly assess large enterprises and also charters are more likely to be signed by large organisations. As far as charters are concerned, beside the private sector many public authorities and NGOs tend to join. On the contrary, labels and prizes more often address all **types of enterprises**. To guarantee a fair competition and to motivate SMEs and public or third sector organisations to participate, different prizes in different categories are awarded and the requirements (and/or fees) for smaller enterprises are reduced.

Concerning the **application process**, enterprises apply for participating in a label or an award, whereas in the case of charters enterprises are often already involved in formulating and launching the charter or even initiate it. A ranking based on an external evaluation knows no application or just a registration of the enterprise.

The **assessment process** in a label initiative is normally based on an audit consisting of self-assessment tools, external evaluation by a jury and workshops in which the status quo is identified and targets are formulated. As regards prizes, a jury of experts usually nominates the winners after having passed a two-phase process including self-description, interviews and on-site visits. As charters have strong elements of self-commitment and therefore are comparable to measures independently taken by companies, there is basically no external assessment of the signing enterprises. Rankings assess the enterprises mainly on the basis of quantitative data with the help of predefined criteria and have a strong comparative element. A compendium of good practice emphasises the description of the practices rather than assessing them.

The **time horizon** of the initiatives varies as well. Labels are usually granted for a limited period of time (usually three years); prizes are awarded yearly as well as rankings are published periodically. The signing of a charter is theoretically unlimited whereas compendium of good practices are basically a one-time initiative or ongoing in case of websites.

Concerning the initiative's **degree of commitment** and the binding character for the companies, in principle, rankings and compendia require no commitment from the enterprise to promote gender equality but describe the degree to which the company's policy is currently dedicated to it. As a prize awards the status quo of the gender equality policy of an enterprise no commitments are required theoretically, but in practice future plans and mission statements are taken into consideration when assessing the candidates. Labels and charters, on the contrary, entail a strong commitment of the enterprise as all measures should be based on a mission statement dedicated to gender equality.



## Success factors and barriers

There are a number of key **success factors** which contribute to the acceptance of the initiatives and, consequently, also to the achievement of their societal goal.

- **Flexible and tailored approach:** A basic principle is that the broader an initiative is designed the more flexible the approach should be in terms of creating sub-categories of different target groups. The requirements have to be adapted to the situation of the companies as the measures implemented in SMEs will differ from those in large companies. Private enterprises face other challenges than public organisations.
- **Adaptation of the initiative:** Flexibility should also be given in relation to developments on the labour market and social change. In many countries it can be observed that the focus of the initiatives has shifted from reconciliation issues to e.g. issues concerning the vertical segregation on the labour market. A possibility of keeping the initiatives flexible is the setting of yearly changing themes to react on recent developments and actual trends. In addition, this can foster the continuous efforts of companies to become active in various fields.
- **Gender equality as a dynamic process:** Most of the initiatives set their assessment criteria based on the concept of gender equality as a dynamic process rather than a status quo. Enterprises should not only have to prove achievements with regard to gender equality but commit themselves to a continuous effort to ameliorate the situation. Gender equality can not only be measured by figures but also becomes manifest in a change of consciousness among the companies' staff and management.
- **Professional organisation:** Concerning the organisation the postulate is service orientation. The clearer the requirements and the easier the administration the rather companies will consider participation. If questionnaires or on-site visits are foreseen, there should be substantial support to guide the companies.
- **Clear monitoring and evaluation criteria:** Transparency with a view to the assessment criteria is crucial to reach credibility and comparability. Clear indicators, the regular review of commitments by requiring annual reports, the assessment of self-evaluations by an independent expert jury are good practice examples. Moreover, the selection or auditing process should be documented. Comprehensive and detailed feedback to the accepted and rejected candidates can initiate the desired learning process.
- **Publicity:** To underline the relevance of a non-legislative initiative adequate PR measures are required. This can, on the one hand, increase the awareness of the initiative itself and its issues and, on the other hand, benefit the enterprises with a view to their public image.
- **Creation of binding commitments:** The success of the initiative is highly dependent on the creation of binding commitments of the management as the implementation of gender equality is mainly a top-down management strategy.





These pros have to be contrasted with the **obstacles and challenges** for the initiatives:

- **Diversity of participating enterprises:** Initiatives promoting gender equality are well known among companies which are aware of the importance of corporate social responsibility. Thus, participation rates are high among the “usually suspects” which are also active in initiatives with another CSR or diversity focus. This entails two questions: How could other enterprises be motivated to bring new principles into the company’s organisation? And how can a “distortion of competition” be avoided so that new participants have a real chance to compete?
- **Participation of SMEs:** Many responsible organisations report on the difficulties to recruit SMEs as they often lack a systematic HR policy and thus, do not see themselves as a target group of the initiatives.
- **Participation in times of economic crisis:** Gender equality and social responsibility is often seen as an additional target which can be aimed at if the company’s results are satisfactory. In times of economic crisis and negative business performance these additional targets are often sacrificed for the core business issues.
- **Balance between quality and accessibility:** Non-legislative initiatives rely on the voluntary participation of companies and therefore must orient their organising principles to the requirements of the companies. However, the initiatives will only be assessed as valuable in societal terms if the requirements for participation are sufficiently demanding, if standards and practices address crucial areas and induce sustainable change, and if this is actually evaluated so that the companies can serve as real role models.

### Benefits and challenges from an enterprise perspective

Although more and more enterprises commit themselves to corporate social responsibility, a responsible management will only implement voluntary measures if the enterprise itself can benefit from this, i. e. if it can be seen as a business case. Positive impacts of participating in a non-legislative gender equality initiative include:

- **Recognition for the company:** The participation in such initiatives often does not initiate totally new processes in the company but puts spotlight on actions already existing. As large enterprises are nowadays requested by customers and business partners to show engagement in CSR/diversity the signing of a charter, a label or being awarded is an external “proof” of the engagement.
- **Tool for internal communication:** The external proof is a perfect tool for internal communication as it is a symbol for the managements’ principles and can support the internal marketing. The participation in (well-)known initiatives can make commitments within the staff clear.
- **Positive internal effects on employees:** The communicated social responsibility taken by the employer leads to a positive attitude of the employees towards the enterprise as it shows the esteem of the management towards its staff. Motivated and loyal staff will lead to a decrease in fluctuation.



- **Tool for external communication:** The visible signs of the commitment to gender equality via awards or labels or the signing of a charter is one important instrument to develop a positive public image of the company. Such symbols represent a comparative advantage for the company.
- **Recruitment of key personnel:** Key personnel are attracted by a company with a positive corporate image. The participation in non-legislative initiatives enhances the chance of an enterprise to be the employer of choice, an advantage in the “war for talents”.
- **Innovation and creativity:** The recruitment of key personnel is a prerequisite to become and stay innovative and create innovative products. The increase of women within the team means the insertion of different perspectives into the production and management process. As more and more women take the buying decisions in households it seems logical that a female perspective is integrated when creating new products and services.
- **Revision of HR management:** The assessment process often represents the possibility of reviewing the HR policy based on and with the help of external expertise.
- **Networking:** The participation in an awarding or labelling process, the signing of a charter etc. represents the entry into a “community of companies”, a network aiming at tackling gender inequalities at the workplace and the possibility of exchanging experiences.

However, there are several **challenges** to overcome in order to fully utilise the advantages connected with engaging in a non-legislative initiative:

- **Gender equality as a top-down strategy:** Gender equality assumes a climatic change in the enterprise’s culture. Regardless of which quality the implemented measures are, they require the unrestricted commitment of the management.
- **Internal communication:** The manager’s commitment and the specific measures have to be communicated accurately. Although gender equality is a top-down strategy it takes shape in the interaction of the whole staff. Thus, internal communication offering the possibility for an open discussion between the management and staff is important.
- **Costs:** Measures fostering gender equality entail costs. There are direct costs such as the investment for childcare services, but also indirect costs as e.g. a person will dedicate his/her working time for the co-ordination of gender equality measures. The costs seem to be much more visible and occur immediately while, in contrary, the benefits of gender equality initiatives are more difficult to be assessed in terms of figures and are only visible in a long-term perspective.
- **Clear responsibility:** The successful implementation of measures often relies on the creation of clear responsibilities. The best designed measures will fail if nobody is in charge of the implementation and evaluation and would assess whether targets are achieved or not. Such a person must have time to manage the process and the power to intervene.



## Comparative assessment of non-legislative initiatives

In general, non-legislative gender equality initiatives for companies appear to have the following advantages:

- Positive incentives are easier to be enforced politically than punishment systems.
- The implementation of gender equality represents a fundamental change within the organisational structures of an enterprise. The initiatives can contribute to motivate companies to undergo this process.
- The initiatives can increase the benefits of the enterprises' "investment" in promoting gender equality.
- The initiatives represent a possibility for enterprises to assess and improve their practices.
- The highlighting of good practices illustrates practicable solutions which have been tested and approved in the enterprises' daily business.

Moreover, such initiatives can move gender equality on the agenda of the media and public debate. Thus, they contribute to raising awareness of the issue in general.

However, each **type of non-legislative initiative** has relative advantages and disadvantages in terms of effectiveness and appropriateness for different situations.

**Labels** can initiate a sustainable organisational change and continuous improvement of the enterprise's gender equality policy. The assessment process includes clear requirements and an external evaluation. Based on the analysis of the status quo development plans are formulated with the help of external consultants. Thus, sustainable organisational change is fostered. In contrast, such external consultancy often entails costs and could be rather time consuming. As the labelling is constituted as a process such an initiative seems to be appropriate for enterprises willing to change its organisational structure and implement a sustainable gender equality policy throughout the whole organisation.

**Prizes or awards** have the advantage of a wide media echo, for the enterprises as well as for the promotion of gender equality in general. As it is based on the analysis of the status quo it is an instrument to recognize the efforts an enterprise has already made rather than initiating further developments. Thus, it also seems to be an appropriate additional instrument to highlight those enterprises which are active in other initiatives (e. g. prize for labelled enterprises), too. Furthermore, prizes seem to be a good "starter drug" for enterprises that have started to implement gender equality measures but have not yet publicised their efforts or undergone an external evaluation. The enterprise does not risk much when participating.

The signing of a **charter** can be interpreted as a missionary act. It represents a strong commitment of the enterprise to act in line with the charter's principles which become part of the mission statement and include implicitly the wish to motivate others to follow. It is an ideal instrument for enterprises which have already started to support gender equality and want to promote their activities. As it requires much self-initiative and includes the commitment that enterprises implement the charter's principles in concrete measures tailored to their specific situation it can be seen as a hybrid between non-legislative initiatives and initiatives individually taken by companies. This stress to self-



initiative entails the danger that the charter is seen as a public relations measure to position the enterprise as a socially responsible one without concrete measure to follow.

**Rankings** have the advantage that they are ideally based on “hard facts” and quantitative data which is assessed by external experts. This guarantees neutrality but processes and developments are not taken into account. Moreover it highlights also bad practices which can lead to public pressure and motivates the worst ranked enterprises to review their HR policy with a view to gender equality aspects. Rankings can serve as an additional tool to illustrate the level of gender equality among a certain type of enterprises and as a monitoring instrument. They do not provide support to the enterprises’ activities.

Finally, a **compendium of good practice** can be seen as an additional tool to illustrate the practice of gender equality measures. As it is normally not based on a “critical” assessment it is a descriptive way of showing possible ways of promoting gender equality at the workplace without initiating further processes in the involved companies. Nevertheless, it can motivate other enterprises to design and implement measures to promote gender equality.

## Conclusions

Through the different types of initiatives business communities in different stages of maturity in terms of gender equality can be addressed. Initially, it is important to find an easy access to motivate a company to put gender equality as a topic on its agenda and to have its HR management externally assessed. Initiatives where enterprises “have much to win and nothing to loose” and are not forced to commit themselves too strongly seem to be adequate in this context. **Prizes and awards** have the advantage to not mention the non-winners, the participation entails no costs and a broad media echo is promised to the winners and to the subject of gender equality. This motivational effect could and should be better enforced by creating prizes for newcomers.

The next step can be made through a **label**, as it aims at a sustainable organisational change and is highly process-oriented. An enterprise starting the labelling process does not need to have implemented a broad equality plan but should express its commitment to design and implement appropriate measures to promote gender equality (in the framework of such an equality plan) and its willingness to undergo an analysis of its status quo and to formulate equality objectives with the help of external experts. The label represents, on the one hand, recognition of the efforts and, on the other hand, commits the enterprise to further improve its gender equality activities.

Finally, enterprises which have already implemented a broad range of complementary instruments and actively aspire to act as role models to “evangelise” other employers may choose to join a **charter**. As the charter is often strongly based on self-commitment and basically does not include neither any external support nor external assessment it will only be appropriate for a spearhead of “advanced gender equality promoters”.

Additionally, **rankings** could serve as a monitoring instrument and allow for also highlighting bad practices when publishing the lowest ranked enterprises. This can produce public pressure towards black sheep and probably initiates an internal reflection and discussion process. For enterprises the ranking means a barometer on how their activities are evaluated in comparison to others. **Compendia of good**



**practice** can serve as complementary measure to illustrate practical experiences, but do not directly initiate a change in the enterprises. Thus, they could be used for information campaigns or in the framework of PR measures.

In some countries **various types of initiatives are combined** to promote gender equality. For example, among labelled enterprises those most successful in implementing instruments to promote gender equality may be awarded a prize. There would be the possibility of awarding the “best performer” among the undersigned of a charter, too. These combinations can profit from the advantages of different types of initiatives.

In any case, it seems to be important that the responsible organisations of different initiatives co-operate closely at national and European level to create a strong and coordinated **network** for promoting gender equality. The networking should also be fostered at the level of the participating enterprises to support the exchange of experiences.

With a view to the **design, implementation and further development of non-legislative initiatives** for companies to promote gender equality at the workplace, several aspects should be taken into account.

In terms of **scope and focus of initiatives** it is important to consider the general development of gender equality in a particular country and the problem of interdependences between the different fields of intervention. This could best be addressed by initiatives with a broad thematic scope, while developments within society can be considered by continuously shifting the focus towards the most topical problems. The more specialised initiatives have the advantage of promoting best tailored measures to a specific problem and putting emphasis on more controversial issues. Special attention has to be put on the field of reconciliation: Being a precondition for fostering many aspects of women’s equal labour market participation it is naturally very important to promote initiatives which focus on reconciliation. But there is a danger that gender equality is reduced to the reconciliation debate and traditional gender roles are even reinforced.

To avoid the reinforcement of gender roles and gender stereotypes, more attention should be paid to the fact that **gender equality addresses both, women and men**. Thus, initiatives promoting gender equality at the workplace must support programmes of enterprises which involve both genders. This is mainly true for measures supporting the reconciliation of work and family life. Further participation of men in childcare and household will on the one hand give women a real choice on how to combine work and family life and on the other hand entail the breaking of gender stereotypes. The participation of men is also crucial e. g. to tackle the vertical segregation. Managers – mainly men – have to be convinced about the advantages of women in managerial boards or male co-workers have to accept a female boss.

As non-legislative initiatives for companies have no end in themselves but want to promote and increase the level of gender equality in a broad sense the design of these initiatives must be **adaptable to the changing social environment** and the progress gender equality registers. This continuous development is crucial for both the thematic focus of the initiative in general and the concrete design with a view to requirements, assessment criteria, and target groups (groups of enterprises and employees) etc.. An adjustable initiative will also be easier transferable from one country to another.





## Résumé

L'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes est une valeur fondamentale de l'Union Européenne et une condition nécessaire pour la réalisation des objectifs de croissance, d'emploi et de cohésion sociale de l'UE. Les efforts déployés par la Communauté et les États membres ont activement contribué à changer la situation des hommes et des femmes en Europe. Ceci se reflète dans une progression de l'emploi des femmes ainsi que dans leur niveau d'études plus élevé que les hommes. Cependant la situation de l'emploi demeure défavorable aux femmes étant donné que les disparités dans les modalités de travail et la ségrégation du marché de l'emploi ne reculent pas.

Depuis longtemps, l'**Union Européenne** a adopté des **mesures** et a répondu par des politiques en matière d'égalité des sexes pour concilier le travail, la vie privée et familiale des femmes et des hommes. De même les **partenaires sociaux** sont très actifs dans la promotion de l'égalité des sexes sur le lieu de travail.

Au **niveau national**, les efforts européens ont eu des répercussions notables. De nombreuses législations nationales ont été développées sur la base de l'acquis communautaire. Les autorités nationales, les partenaires sociaux et autres acteurs du marché du travail (ONG, réseaux, etc.) ont développé de nombreux programmes et projets avec des approches variées pour lutter contre l'inégalité entre les femmes et les hommes sur le lieu du travail. Une façon de combattre les inégalités de sexes est de développer des instruments permettant de gérer, mesurer, communiquer et récompenser les bonnes pratiques des entreprises et des organisations dans le domaine de l'égalité des femmes et des hommes. Parmi ces instruments qui ont été développés, au niveau national et régional, peuvent être cités les labels, les prix et récompenses, les chartes, les classements d'entreprises et les publications qui ont pour but de

- disséminer les pratiques exemplaires,
- motiver d'autres entreprises d'adopter et de mettre en œuvre des mesures similaires,
- permettre une communication à large audience pour les entreprises récompensées et
- connaître les arguments économiques pour les initiatives qui visent l'égalité des genres.

La diversité actuelle d'instruments à l'intention des entreprises visant la promotion de l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes demande une analyse systématique des approches utilisées et une vue synoptique des conclusions à tirer. Dans ce contexte, **l'étude vise à :**

- créer un inventaire des initiatives existantes de type label, charte ou prix menées par des autorités nationales, des partenaires sociaux et autres acteurs ainsi que des initiatives choisies d'entreprises mis en œuvre de manière indépendante.
- analyser et comparer ces types d'initiatives pour améliorer la connaissance sur leurs fonctionnements, leurs pertinences, leurs valeurs ajoutées et leurs impacts économiques, sociaux ainsi que leur impact sur l'égalité des femmes et des hommes en particulier et, de plus, à identifier les arguments économiques et sociaux qui incitent les entreprises à s'inscrire dans une démarche de type label.



- identifier et mettre en avant les bonnes pratiques dans ce domaine.
- tirer des conclusions en vue du développement futur des ces initiatives pour promouvoir l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes sur le lieu de travail.

### Approche méthodologique de l'étude

Dans le cadre de l'étude, un inventaire exhaustif de toutes les initiatives non législatives courantes visant à la promotion de l'égalité entre hommes et femmes (initiatives publiques et privées) a été réalisé. Les initiatives les plus importantes qui se sont terminées après 2004 ont également été incluses dans l'étude. L'accent a été mis sur les labels, les chartes et les prix étant clairement orienté genre. De plus, un choix de classements et des compendiums de bonnes pratiques ont été inclus. Les initiatives ayant une approche plus large (par ex. la responsabilité sociale des entreprises, le thème de la diversité) ont seulement été prises en compte si elles comportaient des éléments spécifiques ayant trait à l'égalité des genres (identifiées principalement dans les pays n'ayant pas d'initiatives spécifiques de genre). Les initiatives pour la conciliation de la vie privée et professionnelle ont seulement été analysées si elles ne renforçaient pas les rôles traditionnels des hommes et des femmes. D'un point de vue géographique, toutes les initiatives de niveau national ont été analysées, ainsi que les initiatives les plus importantes au niveau régional (en particulier dans les pays avec des structures fédérales). Les initiatives européennes et des exemples d'initiatives au niveau international ont également été inclus dans l'étude.

Des partenaires nationaux de recherche ont compilés les informations requises sur les initiatives avec l'aide de recherches internet, d'analyses de documents et d'interviews téléphoniques/personnels avec les responsables. Les informations ont été collectées et présentées d'après une structure préalablement définie.

**133 initiatives<sup>2</sup>** ont été identifiées, analysée et classifiées d'après les types d'instruments principaux :

- **22 labels**
- **68 prix / récompenses**
- **11 chartes**
- **19 classements**
- **19 compendiums de bonnes pratiques**

De plus, les **approches et les initiatives spécifiques de 30 entreprises** visant à permettre et/ou à assurer l'égalité des sexes sur le lieu de travail ont été décrites et analysées. Une attention particulière a été donnée aux entreprises multinationales mais l'échantillon inclus également l'approche d'une grande entreprise nationale ainsi que de 5 PME. Les 30 entreprises sont situées dans différents pays européens et sont actives dans des secteurs différents. Les entreprises ont été choisies avec soin sur la base de recommandations d'experts, de classements d'entreprises ou parmi les lauréats de prix. Le Austrian Institute for SME Research (KMU FORSCHUNG AUSTRIA) a approfondie l'analyse de ces initiatives par le biais de recherches internet, d'analyses

<sup>2</sup> Comme 6 initiatives comportent 2 types d'instruments (par ex. un classement et un prix), celles-ci ont été attribuées à plusieurs types d'instruments, la somme totale des initiatives par types est plus élevée que le nombre d'initiatives analysées.





de documents et d'interviews téléphoniques/personnels avec les responsables dans les entreprises concernées (principalement les départements RH, les départements RSE/de la diversité et l'inclusion ou les patrons).

Au total **26 initiatives non législatives et 7 initiatives d'entreprises** ont été **analysées en détail** et ont été l'objet d'**études de cas**. Ces études de cas se basent sur des analyses détaillées de documents ainsi que sur des interviews personnels approfondis.

### **Les principaux types d'initiatives non législatives pour promouvoir l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes sur le lieu de travail**

Dans de nombreux pays, les entreprises faisant preuve d'un engagement prééminent pour l'égalité des genres et ayant mis en œuvre des mesures visant à promouvoir l'égalité sur le lieu de travail ont la possibilité de se voir décerner un certificat ou un **label** pour les efforts fournis. Le processus de labellisation est basé sur un audit impliquant des éléments d'auto-évaluation et/ou d'évaluation externe, incluant un jury indépendant ainsi que souvent une participation à un processus de consulting visant à améliorer l'égalité des sexes dans toute l'organisation. Les labels sont généralement décernés pour une période limitée (par ex. 3 ans). Le préalable à toute nouvelle labellisation est l'amélioration de la politique de l'entreprise en matière d'égalité. Ainsi, la labellisation ne doit pas être considérée comme la finalité d'un processus mais comme le signe que l'entreprise se dédie à l'amélioration de l'égalité des sexes et qu'elle se trouve dans un processus d'adaptation continue de sa propre culture dans ce but.

À côté de labels plutôt généraux (comme par ex. "*Label Égalité (Professionnelle)*" en France, "*Agrément Ministériel du Projet d'Action Positive*" au Luxembourg), qui couvrent plusieurs thèmes concernant l'égalité des genres et comportent des mesures dans divers domaines, il existe des labels plus spécifiques pour la conciliation du travail, de la vie privée et familiale (par ex. "*Audit berufundfamilie*" (audit vie professionnelle et famille) en Allemagne), des labels créés dans le cadre d'EQUAL (par ex. "*Šanca na rovnost*" (Chance pour l'égalité) en Slovaquie) ou des labels concernant la diversité (par ex. "*Label Egalité Diversité/Label Gelijkheid Diversiteit*" en Belgique). On évoquera également un exemple de label ayant pour objet un aspect crucial de l'égalité des genres qui vient d'être lancé en Suisse et qui se trouve momentanément dans une phase pilote ("*equal salary - Zertifikation der Lohnleichheit von Frauen und Männern*" (Certification d'égalité salariale entre femmes et hommes)).

**Les prix et les récompenses** sont de loin la catégorie la plus importante en termes de nombre d'initiatives non législatives pour la promotion de l'égalité des femmes et des hommes sur le lieu de travail. En général, les prix – qui sont souvent décernés annuellement – sont plus hétérogènes dans les thèmes qu'ils abordent et ont des buts/des groupes-cibles différents, comme par ex. :

- L'égalité des chances pour les femmes et les hommes, par ex. "*Tasa-arvosuunnittelukilpailu*" (Prix pour un plan d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes) en Finlande ;
- La conciliation du travail, de la vie privée et familiale, par ex. "*Guldnappen*" (la tétine dorée) en Suède, "*Firma roku : rovní příležitosti*" (l'entreprise de l'année : égalité des chances) en République tchèque ;



- Les femmes dans des postes à responsabilités, par ex. *“Managerkam prijazno podjetje”* (entreprises favorables aux femmes cadres) en Slovénie, *“K2 prisen & K2 næsen”* (K2 Prix & K2 Reproche) au Danemark,
- Présence des femmes dans des secteurs spécifiques/secteurs à dominance traditionnellement masculine, par ex. *“Investor in WISE award”* (Prix pour l’investissement dans WISE) au Royaume-Uni, *“amaZone”* en Autriche.

En outre, il existe des prix et des récompenses qui s’inscrivent dans une thématique plus large, mais qui incluent aussi des questions d’égalité des genres (d’une manière explicite ou implicite) comme par ex. :

- La liste des meilleurs lieux de travail pour les femmes – prix spécial dans le cadre de Great place to Work® (par ex. *“Melhor Empresa para Trabalhar para Mulheres”* (la meilleure entreprise pour travailler pour les femmes) au Portugal)
- La Responsabilité Sociale des Entreprises (RSE) et la Diversité

Beaucoup de prix sélectionnent les lauréats en 2 ou plusieurs étapes : dans un premier temps, les entreprises participantes doivent remplir un questionnaire ou un formulaire standard et fournir divers documents et données statistiques. Normalement les documents sont évalués par un jury ou comité qui peut demander des informations supplémentaires. Souvent le processus de sélection de l’entreprise/des entreprises gagnante(s) est accompagné de visites dans l’entreprise et d’interviews avec les cadres dirigeants et/ou les employés.

Dans de nombreux cas, les entreprises lauréates ont la possibilité de soumettre à nouveau leur candidature pour le même prix ultérieurement ou après un délai de 2 ans et plus. Dans certains cas, les entreprises peuvent candidater ultérieurement que si des projets conséquents ont été menés dans le domaine ou qu’un processus substantiel a été initié depuis l’obtention du prix.

Dans certains cas les prix sont liés à des labels ou des classements. Dans le cadre de ces classements, l’entreprise la mieux classée est également celle à qui le prix est décerné.

L’engagement envers la promotion de l’égalité des genres peut être signalisé par la ratification d’une **charte**. La charte met en évidence les valeurs communes des signataires qui déclarent ainsi agir en accord avec les exigences qu’elle requiert et les buts qu’elle fixe. Normalement les activités et les progrès des membres concernant les concepts fondamentaux de la charte ne sont ni évalués, ni contrôlés par des entités externes. C’est à chaque organisation signataire de définir comment elle soutient les buts de la charte. Dans de nombreux cas, les chartes ne sont pas seulement signées par des entreprises mais incluent également des acteurs-clé comme des ministères, des gouvernements régionaux, des réseaux d’entreprises, des syndicats, les agences pour l’emploi, des NGO, etc. En dehors des chartes qui ont pour but l’égalité des genres sur le lieu de travail d’une manière générale, la plupart d’entre elles mettent des accents sur des thèmes particuliers. Ainsi, certaines chartes soulignent l’engagement des entreprises signataires pour créer de meilleures conditions pour la conciliation de la vie professionnelle et familiale (par ex. la *“Charte de la Parentalité en Entreprise”* en France). D’autres thèmes de chartes concernent la lutte contre la ségrégation horizontale du marché de travail et l’augmentation du taux de participation féminine dans la recherche et les sciences (par ex. *“CEO Charter”* et *“Athena SWAN Charter for Women in Science”* (Athena SWAN Charte pour les femmes dans les sciences au



Royaume-Uni) ainsi que la ségrégation verticale (par ex. *“Charter for flere kvinder i ledelse”* (Chartre pour plus de femmes dans le management) au Danemark).

**Le classement** d'entreprises est le résultat de comparaisons d'entreprises basées sur une évaluation à partir de différents critères. Ces critères sont souvent définis sous forme d'index. On peut distinguer les classements qui sont faits à partir d'analyses de documents publics (par ex. informations extraites des rapports annuels, des matériels de communication de l'entreprise tels que les sites internet) et ceux qui nécessitent la coopération des entreprises pour remplir un questionnaire. Ce sont souvent les grandes entreprises ou alors des entreprises avec une taille minimale qui font l'objet de ces classements. Ainsi, il existe des classements faits à partir d'index qui analysent exclusivement les entreprises cotées en bourse ou alors les entreprises les plus grandes d'un pays. Les classements mesurent principalement la politique générale d'égalité des genres dans l'entreprise en prenant en compte différents domaines thématiques. Cependant, il existe des classements qui mettent en évidence des entreprises par ex. très actives dans la promotion des femmes pour des postes de cadres-dirigeants. Le classement *“Bästa arbetsplatsen för kvinnor”* (meilleurs lieux de travail pour femmes) en Suède est un exemple de transfert d'initiative des États-Unis vers l'Europe. L'initiative américaine a eu un tel succès qu'il existe désormais différentes listes comme par ex. la liste des *“50 Best Law Firms for Women”* (50 meilleurs cabinets d'avocats) ou la liste des *“Best Companies for Multicultural Women”* (les meilleures entreprises pour les femmes d'origines multiculturelles). Les classements peuvent également servir d'instrument pour soutenir de nouvelles législations. Par exemple, en Espagne, la liste des *“Top 5 de las empresas modelo de igualdad”* (Top 5 des entreprises-modèles en matière d'égalité) a été créée pour promouvoir et évaluer la mise en place de la loi d'égalité.

Un **compendium de bonnes pratiques** peut être le résultat d'études, d'activités de réseaux et de projets qui ont pour objet l'égalité des genres. Dans ces compendiums, un certain nombre d'entreprises ayant un engagement marqué pour promouvoir l'égalité des sexes sur le lieu de travail est présenté en détail dans une publication et/ou sur un site internet. Ces compendiums sont produits pour montrer des exemples à d'autres entreprises et pour partager le savoir. Le fait de présenter des bonnes pratiques dans le domaine de l'égalité entre hommes et femmes sur le lieu de travail peut être une source d'inspiration pour d'autres entreprises dans d'autres environnements de travail. Les compendiums peuvent favoriser la prise de conscience et le changement des normes sociales afin de minimiser et/ou éliminer les inégalités dues au genre. Les compendiums de bonnes pratiques sont souvent le résultat de compétitions pour des prix/récompenses. Dans le cadre de ces compétitions, les bonnes pratiques des entreprises participantes ou gagnantes sont intégrées dans une publication ou alors les histoires à succès sont publiées sur un site internet.

Le plus grand groupe de compendiums traite de l'égalité des chances et a pour objet des thèmes tels que le recrutement, les formations et les possibilités de carrières, les salaires ainsi que la conciliation de la vie professionnelle et familiale mais il existe également des compendiums avec une focalisation thématique précise (par ex. *“Ligeløn”* (Salaire égal) au Danemark).



## Ce que font les entreprises pour promouvoir l'égalité des genres sur le lieu du travail

Comment les entreprises traitent-elles des dimensions variées de l'égalité des genres plus spécifiquement ? **Les entreprises multinationales adaptent leurs stratégies** et approches en fonction du cadre législatif et culturel du pays dans lequel elles se trouvent. Ainsi, les mesures spécifiques d'une entreprise multinationale varient d'un pays à l'autre. De même, pendant que certaines initiatives d'entreprises s'inscrivent dans un contexte sectoriel spécifique, d'autres sont facilement transférables d'un secteur à l'autre.

L'analyse a révélé les **sept champs d'interventions** suivants : le recrutement, la conciliation, la fidélisation des employés, les opportunités de carrières, la formation, le networking et la communication. Les entreprises multinationales appliquant le plus souvent, dans le cadre d'une politique de l'égalité des sexes ou de la diversité, des stratégies globales qui incluent des mesures dans la plupart ou dans tous les domaines cités ci-dessus, il a été nécessaire de désagréger les stratégies dans leurs différentes composantes pour permettre une analyse structurée. Une mesure qui est appliquée par une entreprise dans un certain domaine peut être transférable dans une autre entreprise sur d'autres domaines (par ex, alors qu'une entreprise se sert de « modèles féminins » pour encourager les candidatures de femmes, une autre peut utiliser ce type de mesure pour promouvoir les plans de carrière des femmes). Les pratiques des entreprises modèles peuvent également être une source d'inspiration pour les concepteurs et organisateurs d'initiatives non législatives.

**Le recrutement** : En général, lorsqu'une entreprise recrute, celle-ci formule ces annonces d'emploi d'une manière à toucher tant des employés potentiels femmes ou hommes. Cependant il existe différentes possibilités pour influencer d'une manière positive la candidature de personnes du sexe sous-représenté dans la structure de l'entreprise. Ainsi certaines entreprises, spécialement des **secteurs** technologiques ont développé des moyens pour s'adresser plus particulièrement aux femmes (pendant que d'autres entreprises, par ex. du secteur cosmétique, essaient d'augmenter leur taux d'employés masculins). De même, cette **ségrégation** se retrouve aussi au sein même de l'entreprise **dans les champs d'activités** des employés (par ex. les femmes ont plutôt des emplois administratifs pendant que les hommes travaillent dans la production) ou sur les différents niveaux hiérarchiques. Une grande partie des entreprises qui ont été sélectionnées pour cette étude ont mis en place des procédures spécifiques pour attirer et employer plus de femmes pour atteindre un meilleur équilibre dans la structure des effectifs et de mieux tirer profit des différents talents et qualifications. Les initiatives vont au-delà de quotas et s'étendent de procédures simples à de plus sophistiquées.

Dans les secteurs ou champs d'activités dominés par les hommes, certaines entreprises mettent en place **avant le début du processus d'embauche** des pôles emplois avec des candidats potentiels pour essayer de lutter préalablement contre les inégalités de sexes, par ex. en proposant des actions pour intéresser plus de femmes à ces domaines. Il existe des **mesures spécifiques pour chaque phase du processus d'embauche** en commençant par l'encouragement actif de candidatures féminines dans les annonces d'emploi ou l'intervention d'employées ambassadrices de l'entreprise lors de foires d'emploi. Dans le processus d'embauche, l'utilisation de candidatures ou de CV rendus anonymes, qui ne révèlent aucune information sur le sexe du candidat, facilite une procédure neutre. Pour prendre en compte différents points de vue dans la procédure de sélection, la participation d'évaluateurs masculins



et féminins dans les centres de recrutement peut être préconisée ; des processus d'embauche basés sur la simulation peuvent être utilisés pour évaluer les talents et les qualifications, ainsi que des "short lists" qui prévoient un certain pourcentage de femmes. Une approche intéressante consiste à atteindre le même taux de femmes et d'hommes au sein des cadres-dirigeants que celui en vigueur au sein des diplômés des filières correspondantes.

**Conciliation :** Dans le domaine de la conciliation, des mesures standard pour permettre une meilleure conciliation de la vie professionnelle et privée ont été mis en place dans de nombreuses entreprises multinationales. Il est important que les mesures de conciliation s'adressent aux hommes autant qu'aux femmes.

Les initiatives des entreprises dans ce domaine concernent les aménagements du lieu de travail (lieu de travail flexible, télétravail), les aménagements du temps de travail (heures de travail flexibles, temps partiel, travail par roulement), des modèles d'emploi partagé et des mesures spécifiques pour personnes qui ont des responsabilités de garde (garderie d'enfants, bons de crèches). Les initiatives des entreprises dans le domaine de la conciliation de la vie professionnelle et privée sont généralement une combinaison des ces différentes mesures. Cependant la conciliation peut aller au-delà de ces formes d'initiatives et certaines entreprises organisent les meetings de travail en fonction par ex. des personnes qui travaillent en temps partiel ou tiennent des meetings virtuels pour réduire le temps de voyage et pour faciliter la participation.

**La fidélisation des employés :** Le départ de personnes très qualifiées induit **une perte de compétences**. Ceci est donc la motivation principale qui incite les entreprises à se lancer dans des initiatives pour fidéliser ses employés. La fidélisation est d'autant plus importante que des changements majeurs interviennent dans la vie des employés, nécessitant des adaptations au niveau du temps de travail, notamment lors de la naissance d'un enfant.

Les grandes entreprises analysées ont développé ces dernières années des **stratégies de fidélisation complexes** pour les femmes talentueuses. Ces initiatives sont souvent une combinaison de plusieurs mesures de différents champs d'intervention comme par ex. la conciliation, le développement de carrière et le networking. Les mesures s'étendent de programmes de soutien aux personnes avec des responsabilités de garde au développement d'objectifs de carrière ou de networking. Quoique les femmes soient la cible principale de ces stratégies, une condition requise pour une fidélisation réussie est de prendre en compte et de traiter les hommes avec des responsabilités de garde de la même manière que les femmes.

**Les opportunités de carrière :** Par leurs **systèmes de reporting**, les entreprises multinationales peuvent analyser la répartition des employés féminins et masculins par postes et par niveaux hiérarchiques. La plupart des entreprises analysées disposent de statistiques très détaillées sur la structure de son personnel. Ces systèmes ont révélé un faible nombre de cadres-dirigeants féminins ce qui a conduit les entreprises à élaborer des initiatives pour augmenter la part des femmes sur les différents niveaux hiérarchiques.

Les mesures mises en place dans le cadre des opportunités de carrière s'étendent de la formulation d'objectifs pour les cadres-dirigeants en tant qu'impératif pour permettre l'égalité des hommes et des femmes dans la progression de leur carrière, en passant par l'évaluation spécifique par genre des talents et potentiels (en prenant en compte les différences de comportement entre les hommes et les femmes) jusqu'à des



programmes de développement de carrière complets ainsi que des systèmes qui garantissent des salaires égaux. À côté du système de reporting et de monitoring de données, il apparaît crucial pour les entreprises d'analyser **les raisons** qui se cachent **derrière les interruptions de carrière des femmes** pour réagir adéquatement et pour élaborer des initiatives précises.

**La formation** : Les entreprises se servent des formations sur les questions de diversité et d'inclusion (cela inclus aussi l'égalité des genres) pour familiariser les nouveaux employés avec la culture de diversité de l'entreprise. Des formations spécifiques pour les cadres-dirigeants sur la thématique du genre permettent à ces derniers de prendre conscience de leurs propres préjugés et de développer des stratégies pour les dépasser. Ces formations font partie intégrante de la plupart des initiatives les plus complètes pour atteindre l'égalité des sexes.

Il y a aussi des **mesures** qui peuvent être employées pour **d'autres domaines de formation** comme par ex. pour faire des formations qui soutiennent l'égalité des sexes. Certaines entreprises analysées ont mis en place des objectifs minimums à atteindre pour leurs employés et essayent d'assurer une bonne répartition hommes et femmes dans les programmes de formation.

Les entreprises ont remarqué que les formations étaient souvent conçues d'une manière qui paraît convenir plus aux hommes qu'aux femmes. Parmi les **mesures permettant de concevoir des formations** qui prennent aussi bien en compte les besoins des femmes que ceux des hommes, peuvent être citées la prise en compte des modes d'apprentissage féminin et masculin; l'inclusion de formateurs féminins et masculins ainsi qu'une détermination appropriée du mode de formation, du temps et de l'environnement d'apprentissage. La formation est aussi utilisée comme outil de promotion de l'égalité des genres dans d'autres champs d'intervention comme par ex. dans des formations spécifiques pour les femmes pour le développement de plans de carrière.

**Les réseaux** : Alors que des **réseaux internes** pour les femmes et respectivement pour les femmes et les hommes ont émergé dans beaucoup d'entreprises avec pour but de l'égalité des genres, il y a aussi des exemples d'entreprises qui ont débuté leurs activités de networking pour les femmes en participant à des **réseaux externes féminins**.

Dans la plupart des cas, les réseaux se constituent de personnes de même **niveau hiérarchique** (par ex., ils ciblent les femmes cadres-dirigeantes et respectivement les hommes et les femmes cadres-dirigeants qui soutiennent l'égalité des chances). Des réseaux qui acceptent des membres de différents niveaux hiérarchiques ont aussi été identifiés.

Les réseaux ont souvent une **fonction motrice** pour le développement de nouvelles stratégies de promotion de l'égalité des sexes, ils se sont avérés être très utile pour l'échange d'informations entre les membres (par ex. dans des domaines qui demandent des actions), la discussion sur les priorités et le développement de plans d'actions. Certains réseaux internes importants de femmes dans des entreprises sont décrits dans l'étude. Les réseaux peuvent aussi aider les femmes dans leur progression de carrière en particulier quand ce sont des réseaux avec des personnes de niveau hiérarchique différent. De nombreux programmes de **mentoring** adoptent également cette approche.



**La communication** : Pour donner une image fiable et durable de l'esprit d'entreprise et de ses valeurs, il est crucial que la **communication interne et externe** de l'approche poursuivie par l'entreprise dans le domaine de l'égalité des chances (en général dans le cadre d'une politique de diversité et d'inclusion) soit claire et concise. Ceci se traduit dans les mesures par ex. par une position écrite de la direction de l'entreprise qui signale un engagement envers cette thématique (l'identification de la direction à ce thème est cruciale), des codes internes de conduite ou des conventions avec des parties externes (comme les syndicats). Dans ce contexte, de nombreuses entreprises deviennent plus sensibles par rapport au genre dans leur présentation externe (et dans leur **publicité**).

### La comparaison d'initiatives non législatives

Le but subordonné de toutes les initiatives non législatives identifiées est la lutte contre les inégalités de genre et la contribution à plus d'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes. Néanmoins, de nombreuses initiatives ont une focalisation thématique spécifique. Les raisons précises de mettre en place de telles mesures sont multiples et reflètent aussi bien des **aspects spécifiques** de l'inégalité des genres que des **contextes régionaux** particuliers, comme par exemple :

- **La conciliation de la vie professionnelle et familiale** : Étant donné que la femme reste la personne de référence dans la famille pour organiser les tâches ménagères et la garde des enfants, une meilleure conciliation implique une amélioration de la situation de la femme sur le marché de travail. Toutes ces initiatives ont comme points communs des éléments qui visent à changer les attitudes courantes et la division du travail traditionnel entre les hommes et les femmes pour réussir d'atteindre un partage égal des obligations familiales.
- **Ségrégation horizontale du marché de travail** : La ségrégation horizontale est considérée comme une des raisons expliquant les différences salariales entre les hommes et les femmes, les emplois dits "féminins" étant généralement moins bien rémunérés. Certaines de ces initiatives ont pour objectif d'augmenter la participation féminine dans des secteurs dits "masculins" pour permettre une meilleure égalité des genres et en même temps pour lutter contre le manque de main-d'œuvre des entreprises dans ces secteurs.
- **Ségrégation verticale du marché de travail** : Une conséquence de la ségrégation verticale qui persiste encore est la sous-représentation des femmes dans des positions de management ce qui contribue à la différence salariale entre les hommes et les femmes. Ainsi, certaines initiatives visent explicitement l'augmentation du taux de femmes aux postes à responsabilités.
- **Revers dans les pays anciennement socialistes** : Les régimes socialistes avaient entre autres comme but d'intégrer toutes les personnes sur le marché du travail et l'emploi à temps plein (bien que peu payé) était la règle générale. L'État mettait à disposition des garderies et des écoles assurant un service à temps plein. Étant donné le contexte idéologique l'éducation comme devoir public et la famille n'avaient pas la même importance que dans les sociétés à caractère bourgeois. Après la chute du rideau de fer, un contre-courant s'est fait sentir qui favorisait le retour du rôle traditionnel de la femme dans la société. De plus, les services sociaux furent fortement réduits à la suite de coupes budgétaires dans ce secteur. Ceci explique que les discussions sur les questions de genre n'ont débuté que récemment et que la prise de conscience



sur l'existence d'inégalités entre les hommes et les femmes sur le marché de travail doit encore être améliorée. Les initiatives pour la promotion de l'égalité des genres dans ces pays mettent l'accent sur le thème de la conciliation de la vie professionnelle et familiale.

- **Soutien pour une législation plus étendue** : Les pays scandinaves sont pour ainsi dire aux antipodes. Ici, l'importance de la lutte contre les inégalités sur le marché du travail est au centre des préoccupations politiques ce qui a généré une législation extensive dans ce domaine. Beaucoup de mesures basées sur le volontarisme dans de nombreux pays (par ex. en Finlande ou en Islande) sont obligatoires. Néanmoins, dans certains domaines, la mise en application de certaines lois sur l'égalité demande à être améliorée. De ce fait, il existe des initiatives non législatives qui ont pour but de mettre en avant des entreprises modèles dans l'application de la loi.

De façon analogue, les initiatives peuvent également être différenciées selon leur **groupe-cible**. Les initiatives peuvent cibler tout le personnel, c.à.d. les hommes et les femmes, tous les employés féminins, les employés avec familles ou des sous-groupes de femmes.

Les initiatives sont également destinées à différents **groupes d'entreprises**. Les initiatives avec un large champ d'application sont en majorité destinées à tous types d'employeurs incluant des entreprises, des organisations publiques et des ONG, bien que souvent différents sous-groupes soient formés. Étant donné que les organisations publiques sont souvent sujettes à une législation plus stricte en ce qui concerne les quotas, les objectifs d'égalité, etc., un grand nombre d'initiatives est orienté vers le secteur privé. Ces entreprises privées sont souvent réparties en sous-groupes **de taille** ou alors l'initiative est destinée à des entreprises avec une taille spécifique. La plupart du temps, les initiatives visant la ségrégation horizontale concentrent leurs activités sur des entreprises dans des secteurs à forte présence masculine.

Il existe certaines différences entre les types d'initiatives en termes de groupe-cibles ou d'autres caractéristiques comme par ex. la procédure de candidature, les critères d'évaluation et les procédures ainsi que le degré d'implication requis des entreprises participantes. Ainsi, les classements évaluent en majorité les grandes entreprises. Ce sont également les grandes organisations qui sont plus amenées à ratifier les chartes. Non seulement le secteur privé mais également de plus en plus d'organisations publiques et d'ONG participent à des chartes. Par contre, les labels et les prix sont destinés à tous **types d'entreprises**. Afin de garantir une juste compétition et de motiver les PME et les organisations publiques ou les ONG à participer, différents prix sont attribués dans différentes catégories et les exigences (et/ou les frais) sont réduites pour les petites entreprises.

Concernant les **procédures de candidature**, il faut noter que les entreprises *posent leurs candidatures* pour participer à un label ou à un prix, alors que dans le cas des chartes, les entreprises sont souvent impliquées dans la formulation et le lancement de la charte ou les ont même initiées. Dans le cadre de classements fondés sur une évaluation externe, il n'y a pas de candidature possible sauf, dans certains cas, seule l'inscription de l'entreprise est possible.

Le **processus d'évaluation**/de sélection dans une initiative de type "label" est normalement basé sur un audit comportant une auto-évaluation, une évaluation externe par un jury et des séminaires qui permettent d'identifier la situation initiale et de





formuler les objectifs. En ce qui concerne les initiatives de type “prix”, c’est généralement un jury d’expert qui nomme les lauréats après une procédure en deux phases qui inclut une auto-description, des interviews et une visite de l’entreprise. Étant donné que les chartes ont un aspect d’engagement très fort et qu’elles sont ainsi comparables à des mesures individuelles prises par les entreprises, il n’y a en fait pas d’évaluation externe des entreprises signataires. Les classements évaluent les entreprises principalement sur la base de données quantitatives selon des critères prédéfinis et comportent donc un fort élément de comparabilité. Un compendium de bonnes pratiques sert, en premier lieu, à la description des pratiques plutôt qu’à leur évaluation.

La **durée** des initiatives varient également. Les labels sont octroyés habituellement pour une durée limitée (ordinairement trois ans) ; les prix sont décernés annuellement tout comme les classements qui sont publiés périodiquement. La ratification d’une charte est théoriquement illimité dans sa durée de validité alors que les compendiums de bonnes pratiques comportent des initiatives uniques ou alors en cours dans le cas de site internet.

Concernant le **degré d’implication** et le caractère obligatoire des initiatives pour les entreprises participantes, en principe, les classements et les compendiums ne demandent pas d’engagement formel de l’entreprise dans la promotion de l’égalité des genres mais servent à décrire le degré d’implication actuel de la politique d’entreprise à ce sujet. Les prix récompensent le bilan de la politique d’égalité des genres d’une entreprise et n’exigent donc théoriquement pas d’engagement, mais, en pratique, les plans futurs et la définition de la stratégie sont également pris en compte dans l’évaluation des candidats. Les labels et les chartes, au contraire, demandent un engagement marqué de l’entreprise étant donné que toutes les mesures prises par l’entreprise doivent être fondées sur une stratégie vouée à l’égalité des genres.

### Facteurs de réussite et barrières

Il existe un certain nombre de **facteurs-clé de réussite** qui permettent d’améliorer l’acceptation des initiatives et, par conséquent, d’atteindre les buts sociaux.

- **Une approche flexible et adaptée** : Un principe de base est que plus la conception de l’initiative est large, plus l’approche doit être flexible en ce qui concerne la création de sous-catégories de différents groupes-cibles. Les exigences doivent être adaptées à la situation des entreprises étant donné que les mesures appliquées dans les PME diffèrent de celles des grandes entreprises. Les entreprises privées sont confrontées à d’autres défis que les organisations publiques.
- **Ajustement de l’initiative** : La flexibilité doit être donnée par rapport au développement du marché du travail et aux changements sociaux. Dans de nombreux pays, on remarque que les thèmes principaux des initiatives se déplacent de la conciliation entre la vie professionnelle et familiale vers des problématiques liées, par ex., à la ségrégation verticale sur le marché de travail. Une possibilité d’assurer la flexibilité des initiatives est d’alterner annuellement les thématiques afin de pouvoir réagir à des développements récents et aux tendances actuelles. En plus, ceci peut permettre de soutenir les entreprises à devenir actives dans différents domaines.



- **L'égalité des genres comme processus dynamique** : La plupart des initiatives définissent leurs critères d'évaluation sur la base du concept d'égalité des genres considéré comme processus dynamique plutôt qu'un statu quo. Les entreprises ne doivent pas seulement être amenées à montrer leurs réussites en ce qui concerne l'égalité des genres, mais elles doivent s'engager à fournir des efforts constants afin d'améliorer la situation. L'égalité des genres ne peut être mesurée qu'à l'aide de chiffres. Elle se manifeste surtout à travers un changement de prise de conscience du personnel et de la direction dans les entreprises.
- **Organisation professionnelle** : Le postulat concernant l'organisation des initiatives est la prestation de services. Plus les exigences sont claires et l'administration simple, plus il y a de chances que les entreprises participent. Si des questionnaires ou des visites de l'entreprise sont prévus, un soutien important doit être pourvu pour guider les entreprises.
- **Des critères d'évaluation et de contrôle transparents** : Afin de s'assurer une crédibilité et une comparabilité, la transparence des critères d'évaluation est cruciale. Des indicateurs clairs, l'examen régulier des engagements à travers une obligation de rapport annuel, l'appréciation des auto-évaluations par un jury indépendant sont des exemples de bonnes pratiques. De plus, la procédure de sélection ou d'audit doit être documentée. Un feedback complet et détaillé aux candidats acceptés ou rejetés permet d'initier le processus d'apprentissage attendu.
- **Publicité** : Afin de souligner la pertinence d'une initiative non législative, des mesures adéquates de relations publiques sont nécessaires. Cela peut, d'une part, augmenter le degré de notoriété de l'initiative et, d'autre part, bénéficier à l'image publique des entreprises.
- **La création d'engagements obligatoires** : le succès d'une initiative est fortement lié à la création d'engagement obligatoire de la part de la direction des entreprises étant donné que la mise en place de l'égalité des genres est principalement une stratégie de management top-down.

Ces facteurs de réussite doivent être comparés aux **obstacles et défis** rencontrés dans la mise en place des initiatives :

- **La diversité des entreprises participantes** : Les initiatives pour la promotion de l'égalité des genres sont particulièrement connues dans les entreprises qui sont conscientes de l'importance de la responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise. Ainsi, le taux de participation est élevé parmi les entreprises "converties à la cause" qui sont également actives dans des initiatives centrées sur des thématiques de RSE ou de diversité. Ceci ramène à deux questions : Comment peut-on motiver d'autres entreprises à inclure de nouveaux principes au sein de leur organisation ? Et comment peut-on éviter "des distorsions de concurrence" afin que les nouveaux participants aient de réelles chances de participation ?
- **Participation des PME** : De nombreuses organisations responsables rapportent avoir rencontré des difficultés pour recruter les PME, car ces dernières ne disposent souvent pas d'une politique systématique de ressources humaines et pour cela ne se retrouvent pas dans le groupe-cible des initiatives.



- **Participation dans des temps de crise** : L'égalité des genres et la responsabilité sociale est souvent vu comme un objectif supplémentaire qui peut être poursuivi lorsque les résultats de l'entreprise sont satisfaisants. Dans des phases de crise économique et de résultats négatifs de l'entreprise, ces objectifs supplémentaires sont sacrifiés pour les objectifs principaux.
- **Équilibre entre la qualité et l'accessibilité** : Les initiatives non législatives sont dépendantes de la participation volontaire des entreprises et doivent ainsi orienter leurs principes d'organisation vers les besoins des entreprises. Cependant ces initiatives représentent une plus-value d'un point de vue social uniquement si les conditions requises en vue d'une participation sont suffisamment exigeantes et si les standards et pratiques concernent des domaines cruciaux et induisent un changement durable et que ceci est effectivement évalué afin que les entreprises puissent servir de modèles.

### Bénéfices et défis pour les entreprises

Bien que de nombreuses entreprises se reconnaissent dans la responsabilité sociale, une direction responsable ne mettra en œuvre d'une façon volontaire que des mesures dont elle peut profiter, c.à.d. des mesures justifiables sur le plan économique. Les bénéfices d'une participation à des initiatives non législatives pour la promotion de l'égalité des chances de femmes et d'hommes sont les suivants :

- **Reconnaissance pour l'entreprise** : La participation à ce type d'initiatives n'initie souvent pas de processus complètement nouveaux au sein de l'entreprise, mais met souvent l'accent sur des actions existantes. La clientèle ainsi que les partenaires commerciaux attendent de plus en plus de preuves de l'engagement des grandes entreprises dans le domaine de la responsabilité sociale et de la diversité. La ratification d'une charte, un label ou encore le décernement d'un prix est une preuve d'engagement.
- **Un outil de communication interne** : Cette preuve externe est un outil parfait pour la communication interne, car elle fait figure de principe de management et peut soutenir le marketing interne. La participation à des initiatives connues met clairement en évidence au sein du personnel les engagements pris par l'entreprise
- **Des effets positifs internes pour les employés** : La responsabilité sociale véhiculée par l'employeur entraîne une attitude positive des employés envers l'entreprise, étant donné que celle-ci montre l'estime du management envers son personnel. Des employés motivés et loyaux réduisent le turnover.
- **Un outil de communication externe** : Les signes d'engagement dans l'égalité des genres par le biais de prix, de label ou encore la ratification d'une charte sont des outils importants pour développer une image publique positive de l'entreprise. De tels symboles représentent un avantage comparatif pour l'entreprise.
- **Le recrutement de personnel-clé** : Les entreprises avec une image positive attire un personnel-clé. La participation à des initiatives non législatives augmente les chances d'une entreprise d'être un employeur de choix, un avantage dans la "course aux talents".



- **Innovation et créativité** : Le recrutement de personnel-clé est une condition préalable pour rester et devenir innovant et créer des produits innovants. L'augmentation de la part des femmes dans les équipes permet d'inclure des perspectives différentes dans le processus de production et de management. Comme se sont souvent les femmes qui prennent les décisions d'achats dans les foyers, il apparaît logique qu'une perspective féminine soit intégrée dans la création de nouveaux produits et services.
- **Révision du management des ressources humaines** : Le processus d'évaluation permet de faire une révision des politiques RH avec l'aide d'une expertise externe.
- **Les réseaux** : La participation à une compétition ou à des processus de certification, la ratification des chartes représentent l'accession à une "communauté d'entreprises", un réseau, qui a pour but la suppression des inégalités de genre sur le lieu du travail et la possibilité d'échanges.

Cependant il y a plusieurs **obstacles** à surmonter pour profiter pleinement d'une participation à une initiative non législative :

- **Une stratégie top-down de l'égalité des genres** : L'égalité des genres requiert un changement de climat de la culture de l'entreprise. Indépendamment de la qualité des mesures implantées, un engagement inconditionnel du management est nécessaire.
- **La communication interne** : L'engagement du management et les mesures spécifiques doivent être communiqués adéquatement. Bien que l'égalité des genres soit une stratégie top-down, elle prend forme lors de l'interaction avec l'ensemble du personnel. Ainsi une communication interne qui permet un dialogue ouvert entre le management et le personnel est importante.
- **Les coûts** : Des mesures qui promeuvent l'égalité des genres entraînent des coûts. Il y a des coûts directs comme l'investissement dans des garderies d'enfants, mais aussi des coûts indirects comme par ex. les coûts d'une personne qui a pour tâche de coordonner les mesures de l'égalité des genres. Ces coûts sont, dès le départ, bien plus visibles et immédiats en comparaison des effets bénéfiques à long terme des initiatives pour l'égalité des genres.
- **Une responsabilité transparente** : Le succès de la mise en place des mesures dépend de l'établissement d'une structure de responsabilité claire. La meilleure mesure ne pourra être couronnée de succès s'il n'y a pas une personne responsable de sa mise en œuvre, de son évaluation et qui contrôle si les objectifs ont été atteints. On doit également mettre du temps à disposition de cette personne responsable afin qu'elle organise ce processus. Il faut également lui conférer le pouvoir d'intervention nécessaire.



## La comparaison des initiatives non législatives

D'une façon générale, il apparaît que les initiatives non législatives ont les avantages suivants pour les entreprises :

- Des incitations sont plus faciles à faire passer d'un point de vue politiquement que des systèmes contraignants.
- La mise en œuvre de principes d'égalité des genres induit un changement fondamental au sein de l'organisation d'une entreprise. Ces initiatives peuvent motiver les entreprises à se soumettre à ce processus.
- Les initiatives peuvent renforcer les avantages d'un "investissement" dans la promotion de l'égalité des genres pour l'entreprise.
- Les initiatives peuvent permettre aux entreprises de contrôler et améliorer la mise en pratique de leurs mesures.
- La présentation de bonnes pratiques illustre des solutions applicables qui ont été testées et approuvées dans le quotidien de l'entreprise.

De plus, ces types d'initiatives permettent de mettre l'égalité des genres à l'ordre du jour dans les médias et dans le débat public. Ainsi elles contribuent à une prise de conscience accrue de cette thématique.

Cependant chaque **type d'initiatives non législatives** montre des avantages et des inconvénients en termes d'effectivité et d'adéquation dans différentes situations.

Les **labels** peuvent initier un changement organisationnel durable et une amélioration continue de la politique d'égalité des genres de l'entreprise. Le processus d'évaluation requiert des paramètres clairs et une évaluation externe. En se basant sur la situation de départ, des plans de développement sont formulés avec l'aide de consultants externes. Ainsi un changement organisationnel durable est impulsé. Cependant, la consultance externe occasionne des coûts et requiert beaucoup de temps. La certification étant un processus, il apparaît que ce type d'initiative est particulièrement approprié pour des entreprises qui ont le souhait de faire évoluer leur structure organisationnelle et de mettre en œuvre une politique d'égalité de genres durable dans l'ensemble de l'organisation.

**Les prix et les récompenses** ont l'avantage d'avoir un grand écho médiatique pour l'entreprise elle-même et pour la promotion de l'égalité des genres en général. Comme ils sont basés sur l'analyse de la situation existante, ils apparaissent être plus un instrument pour reconnaître les efforts accomplis par les entreprises qu'un instrument servant à d'initier de nouveaux développements. Ainsi ils apparaissent être un instrument supplémentaire pour mettre en avant les entreprises qui sont déjà actives dans d'autres initiatives (par. ex. le prix des entreprises labellisées). Ainsi les prix sont une bonne porte d'entrée pour les entreprises qui ont déjà introduit des mesures d'égalité des genres, mais qui n'ont pas encore rendu ceci public ou qui ne se sont pas encore fait évaluer en externe. L'entreprise risque peu en participant.

La ratification d'une **charte** peut être interprétée comme un acte "missionnaire". Elle représente un fort engagement de l'entreprise à suivre les principes de la charte qui deviennent part de la stratégie globale de l'entreprise et qui contiennent le désir implicite de motiver d'autres entreprises à suivre l'exemple. Comme une charte demande beaucoup d'auto-initiative de la part de l'entreprise et un engagement clair



dans la mise en pratique de ses principes dans des mesures concrètes et adaptées individuellement à la situation ; la charte peut être vue comme une forme hybride entre une initiative non législative et une initiative individuelle de l'entreprise. L'importance de l'auto-initiative de l'entreprise abrite le danger que la charte soit vécue comme une mesure de relations publiques pour présenter l'entreprise comme socialement responsable, mais sans être suivi de mesures concrètes.

Les **classements** ont l'avantage d'être théoriquement basés sur des faits et des données quantitatives qui sont évalués par des experts externes. Ceci garantit la neutralité, mais les processus et les développements ne sont pas pris en compte. Par contre cela peut permettre de rendre visibles des pratiques négatives et peut motiver les entreprises les plus mal classées, sous la pression publique, à revoir leur politique RH dans une optique d'égalité des genres. Les classements sont un outil supplémentaire pour illustrer le niveau d'égalité des genres au sein de certaines entreprises et sont un instrument de monitoring. Ils ne permettent cependant pas de soutenir les entreprises dans leurs activités.

Finalement, un **compendium de bonnes pratiques** est un moyen supplémentaire pour illustrer les mesures pratiquées dans le domaine de l'égalité des genres. Comme le compendium n'est pas basé sur une évaluation critique, il est un moyen de montrer différentes façons de promouvoir l'égalité des hommes et des femmes sans pour autant initier des processus supplémentaires au sein des entreprises impliquées. Par contre, cela peut motiver d'autres entreprises à développer et mettre en place des mesures semblables.

## Conclusions

Les différents types d'initiatives s'adressent aux entreprises à différents "stades de maturité" en termes d'égalité des genres. Au départ, il est important de trouver une bonne entrée en la matière pour motiver les entreprises à mettre l'égalité des genres sur leur ordre du jour et de faire évaluer en externe leur politique des ressources humaines. Les initiatives qui apportent des avantages aux entreprises sans pour autant être accompagnées de risques et qui ne les obligent pas à trop s'engager semblent appropriées à ce stade. **Les prix et les récompenses** ont l'avantage de ne pas mentionner les perdants, la participation n'induit pas de coûts et un large écho médiatique est promis à l'entreprise et à la thématique de l'égalité des genres. Cet effet motivant pourrait être renforcé par la création de prix pour des nouveaux arrivants.

L'étape suivante peut être enclenchée par un **label**, étant donné que celui-ci vise un changement organisationnel durable et est très orienté processus. Une entreprise qui démarre un processus de certification, ne doit pas nécessairement avoir déjà défini un plan d'égalité conséquent, mais doit seulement exprimer son engagement à concevoir et mettre en œuvre des mesures appropriées pour promouvoir l'égalité des genres (dans le cadre d'un plan d'égalité). De même, l'entreprise doit se soumettre à une analyse de sa situation actuelle et formuler des objectifs d'égalité des genres avec l'aide d'experts externes. Un label représente, d'un côté, une reconnaissance des efforts déployés et de l'autre côté, engage l'entreprise à poursuivre ses activités dans le domaine de l'égalité des genres.

Finalement, les entreprises qui ont déjà mis en place une large palette d'instruments complémentaires et qui veulent activement jouer le rôle de "missionnaire" en faisant figure de modèle pour d'autres employeurs vont être amenées à ratifier une **charte**. Comme les chartes sont souvent basées sur un fort engagement personnel et ne



comporte normalement aucun contrôle et aucune aide externe, elles sont en premier lieu appropriées pour des entreprises qui sont déjà bien avancées dans leurs efforts d'égalité des genres.

De même, les **classements** peuvent servir d'instrument de monitoring et permettre de rendre visible des pratiques négatives en publiant les entreprises les plus mal classées. Ceci peut produire une pression publique sur ces dernières et avoir pour effet d'initier une réflexion interne et un processus de discussion au sein de ces entreprises. Les classements représentent pour les entreprises un baromètre de leurs activités en comparaison avec d'autres. Des **compendiums de bonnes pratiques** sont une mesure supplémentaire qui permet d'illustrer les expériences pratiques, mais ne produisent pas de changements immédiats dans les entreprises. Ainsi, ils peuvent être utilisés lors des campagnes d'informations ou dans le cadre de mesures de relations publiques.

Dans certains pays, les **différents types d'initiatives** pour promouvoir l'égalité des genres **sont combinés**. Par ex. les entreprises labellisées qui ont le mieux implanté des instruments pour promouvoir l'égalité des genres peuvent être récompensées par un prix. Il est aussi possible de récompenser le "plus performant" des signataires de la charte. Ces combinaisons profitent des avantages des différents types d'initiatives.

Dans certains cas, il semble opportun que les organisations responsables de différentes initiatives coopèrent étroitement sur le plan national et européen pour créer un fort **réseau** qui s'accorde pour promouvoir l'égalité des genres. Le networking doit être également encouragé au niveau des entreprises participantes pour permettre l'échange des expériences.

Au niveau de la **conception, de la mise en œuvre et du développement futur des initiatives non législatives** pour la promotion de l'égalité des genres sur le lieu de travail un certain nombre d'aspects doivent être pris en compte par les entreprises.

Par rapport à **la portée et au domaine d'application des initiatives**, il est important de considérer le développement général de l'égalité des genres dans chaque pays et la question des interdépendances entre les différents champs d'interventions. Ceci peut être solutionné par des initiatives avec un large champ thématique, car cela permet une flexibilité dans la réponse et une adaptation à des problématiques actuelles de la société. Les initiatives spécifiques ont l'avantage d'apporter des instruments sur mesure à des problèmes spécifiques et de mettre l'accent sur des thématiques plus controversées. Une attention spéciale doit être apportée à la conciliation de la vie familiale et professionnelle : Pour permettre la promotion de la participation égale des femmes au marché du travail, il est naturellement important de promouvoir des initiatives qui ciblent la conciliation. Cependant il y a le danger que l'égalité des genres soit réduite au débat de la conciliation et renforce par ce biais les rôles traditionnels des sexes.

Pour éviter un renforcement des rôles de genres et des stéréotypes masculins et féminins, il faut veiller à ce que **l'égalité des genres s'adresse aux femmes autant qu'aux hommes**. Ainsi les initiatives qui promeuvent l'égalité des genres sur le lieu de travail doivent soutenir les programmes des entreprises qui impliquent les deux sexes. Ceci est d'autant plus important pour les mesures qui soutiennent la conciliation de la vie familiale et professionnelle. Une participation accrue des hommes dans la garde des enfants et les tâches ménagères offrent, d'une part, aux femmes un vrai choix dans la façon dont elles veulent combiner leur vie professionnelle et familiale et d'autre



part permet de lutter contre les stéréotypes. La participation des hommes est également importante pour lutter, par ex., contre la ségrégation verticale. Les dirigeants – souvent des hommes – doivent être convaincus des avantages liés à la présence de femmes dans l'encadrement et les employés masculins doivent accepter un chef féminin.

Comme les initiatives non législatives n'ont pas de fin en elles-mêmes, mais qu'elles veulent promouvoir et augmenter le degré d'égalité des genres, il est important que le concept des initiatives puisse être **adaptable à un environnement social changeant** et au progrès actuel de l'égalité des genres. Le développement continu de la focalisation thématique de l'initiative en général et spécialement de sa conception concrète en fonction des conditions requises, des critères d'évaluation et des groupes cibles (types d'entreprises et groupes d'employés) etc. est crucial. Une initiative adaptable est de même plus facilement transférable d'un pays à l'autre.





## Zusammenfassung

Die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern ist ein grundlegendes Recht, ein gemeinsamer Wert in der EU und eine notwendige Voraussetzung zur Erreichung der Europäischen Ziele zu Wachstum, Beschäftigung und sozialem Zusammenhalt. In der Tat haben die gemeinsamen Anstrengungen der Gemeinschaft und ihrer Mitgliedstaaten dazu beigetragen, die Situation der Männer und Frauen in Europa zu verändern. Dies spiegelt sich in einer kontinuierlich steigenden Beschäftigung von Frauen und einem höheren Bildungsniveau im Vergleich zu Männern. Nichtsdestotrotz sind Frauen nach wie vor am Arbeitsmarkt benachteiligt, da die Segregation am Arbeitsmarkt und Ungleichbehandlungen am Arbeitsplatz weiterhin bestehen.

Seit langem setzt die **Europäische Union** Maßnahmen und gestaltet ihre **Politik** mit dem Ziel dieses Ungleichgewicht zu verringern und die Vereinbarkeit von Beruf-, Privat- und Familienleben zu ermöglichen. Auch die **Europäischen Sozialpartner** waren und sind aktiv bei der Förderung der Geschlechtergleichstellung am Arbeitsmarkt.

Auf **nationaler Ebene** haben die Europäischen Bemühungen ihre Entsprechung gefunden. Nationale Rechtsvorschriften wurden auf Basis des gemeinschaftlichen Besitzstandes novelliert. Zudem haben nationale Behörden, Sozialpartner und andere Stakeholder (NGOs, Netzwerke etc.) eine Vielzahl an Programmen und Projekten zur Bekämpfung von Ungleichbehandlungen von Frauen und Männern am Arbeitsmarkt in verschiedensten Bereichen und mit unterschiedlichsten Ansätzen ins Leben gerufen. Ein Weg, Geschlechterdiskriminierung entgegenzuwirken, ist die Entwicklung von Instrumenten, die gute Praktiken von Unternehmen und Organisationen im Bereich der Geschlechtergleichstellung erfassen, bewerten, kommunizieren und honorieren. Unterschiedliche Typen von Instrumenten wie etwa Label, Preise, Chartas, Rankings und Publikationen wurden auf nationaler und regionaler Ebene entwickelt mit dem Ziel,

- gute Praktiken zu verbreiten,
- andere Unternehmen zu motivieren, ähnliche Maßnahmen zu konzipieren und umzusetzen,
- eine weitreichende Öffentlichkeit für die ausgezeichneten Unternehmen zu schaffen,
- ökonomische Argumente für Gleichstellungsmaßnahmen zu liefern.

Die nunmehrige Diversität der Instrumente verlangt nach einer systematischen Analyse der vorliegenden Ansätze und einer Zusammenschau der bis dato gewonnenen Lerneffekte. Vor diesem Hintergrund **zielt die Studie auf**

- die Erstellung einer Bestandsliste von nicht-legislativen Maßnahmen wie Label, Chartas oder Preise nationaler Behörden, Sozialpartner und anderer Stakeholder sowie von ausgewählten Initiativen, die Unternehmen individuell setzen,
- die Analyse und den Vergleich der verschiedenen Typen von Initiativen in Hinblick auf den Ablauf, die Ergebnisse, die Effektivität, die wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Auswirkungen im Allgemeinen und die Auswirkungen auf die Geschlechtergleichstellung im Besonderen sowie die Identifizierung der wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Argumente bzw. des wirtschaftlichen Nutzens, die Unternehmen zur Teilnahme an solchen Initiativen motivieren,
- die Identifikation und das Hervorheben guter Praktiken in diesem Bereich,



- die Ableitung von Schlussfolgerungen in Hinblick auf eine Weiterentwicklung dieser Initiativen, um Geschlechtergleichstellung am Arbeitsplatz zu fördern.

### Methodische Vorgehensweise

Im Rahmen der Studie wurde eine vollständige Liste aller wichtigen laufenden nicht-legislativen Initiativen (öffentliche und private), die die Geschlechtergleichstellung fördern, erstellt. Zusätzlich wurden die wichtigsten Initiativen, die frühestens 2004 beendet worden waren, in der Studie berücksichtigt. Der Schwerpunkt wurde auf Label, Chartas und Preise mit einem eindeutigen Genderfokus gelegt. Ferner wurden ausgewählte Rankings und Kompendia guter Praktiken betrachtet. Initiativen mit einem breiteren Fokus (z. B. CSR, Diversität) wurden nur berücksichtigt, wenn spezifische Teilbereiche Geschlechtergleichstellung zum Thema hatten (v.a. in Ländern, in denen keine genderspezifische Initiative identifiziert werden konnte). Initiativen aus dem Themenbereich Vereinbarkeit und Familie wurden nur analysiert, wenn dadurch keine Verstärkung traditioneller Geschlechterrollen erwartet werden konnte. Untersuchungsbereich in geographischer Hinsicht waren alle Initiativen auf nationaler Ebene sowie die wichtigsten regionalen Initiativen (insbesondere in Staaten mit föderaler Struktur). Europäische Initiativen sowie Beispiele internationaler Initiativen finden sich ebenfalls in der Studie.

Nationale Forschungspartner gewannen die erforderlichen Informationen zu den Initiativen durch Internetrecherche, Dokumentenanalyse und Telefon- bzw. persönliche Interviews mit Verantwortlichen. Die Informationen wurden anhand eines teilstrukturierten Leitfadens gesammelt und aufbereitet.

**133 Initiativen<sup>3</sup>** wurden identifiziert, analysiert und typisiert:

- **22 Label**
- **68 Preise**
- **11 Chartas**
- **19 Rankings**
- **19 Kompendia guter Praktiken**

Zusätzlich wurden die spezifischen **Herangehensweisen und Initiativen von 30 Unternehmen** zur Förderung bzw. Gewährleistung von Geschlechtergleichstellung am Arbeitsmarkt beschrieben und analysiert. Der Fokus lag auf multinationalen Unternehmen, aber es wurden auch Programme eines großen, nationalen Unternehmens sowie von 5 KMU untersucht. Die 30 Unternehmen sind in verschiedenen europäischen Ländern angesiedelt und in verschiedensten Branchen aktiv. Die Unternehmen wurden auf Basis der Empfehlung von ExpertInnen, Unternehmensrankings oder aus Preisträgern ausgewählt. Die KMU FORSCHUNG AUSTRIA übernahm die Feldarbeit mittels Internetrecherche, Dokumentenanalyse sowie telefonischer oder persönlicher Interviews mit Verantwortlichen innerhalb des Unternehmens (in erster Linie aus der Personalabteilung oder der Abteilung für CSR/Diversität oder die GeschäftsführerInnen).

<sup>3</sup> Da 6 Initiativen jeweils zwei Typen kombinieren (z.B. Ranking und Preis) und daher mehreren Typen zugeordnet wurden, übersteigt die Summe der Initiativen nach Typ die Gesamtanzahl der Initiativen.



Zudem wurden insgesamt **26 der nicht-legislativen und 7 Initiativen von Unternehmen** einer **detaillierten Analyse** unterzogen und waren Gegenstand von **Fallstudien**. Diese Fallstudien basieren auf einer genaueren Dokumentenanalyse und persönlicher Tiefeninterviews.

### Die Haupttypen nicht-legislativer Initiativen zur Förderung von Geschlechtergleichstellung am Arbeitsplatz

In vielen Ländern haben Unternehmen mit einem besonderen Engagement hinsichtlich der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern am Arbeitsplatz die Möglichkeit für ihre Bemühungen ein Zertifikat oder **Label** zu erhalten. Die Kennzeichnung ist meist als ein Prozess konzipiert, der auf einem Audit basiert und Elemente der Selbsteinschätzung und/oder externen Evaluierung, die Einbeziehung einer unabhängigen Jury und oftmals die Teilnahme an einem Beratungsprozess, der auf die Verbesserung der Gleichstellung der Geschlechter innerhalb der jeweiligen Organisation abzielt, beinhaltet. Die Label werden meist nur für eine limitierte Zeitperiode (z. B. für drei Jahre) verliehen und Voraussetzung für eine neuerliche Zertifizierung ist eine weitere Optimierung der Gleichstellungspolitik im Unternehmen. Daher ist die Zertifizierung nicht als das Ende eines Prozess zu verstehen, sondern als Zeichen dafür, dass das Unternehmen seine Unternehmenskultur der Verbesserung der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern widmet und in diesem Sinne laufend entwickelt.

Neben eher allgemeinen Label (z. B. "*Label Égalité (Professionnelle)*" (Gleichstellungslabel) in Frankreich, "Agrément Ministériel du Projet d'Action Positive" (Ministerielles Abkommen des Projekts Positive Aktion) in Luxemburg), die mehrere Themen in Hinblick auf die Geschlechtergleichstellung abdecken und Maßnahmen in unterschiedlichsten Bereichen ergreifen, gibt es spezielle Label zu Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Familie (z. B. "*Audit berufundfamilie*" in Deutschland), Label die im Rahmen von EQUAL geschaffen wurden (z. B. "*Šanca na rovnost*" (Chance für Gleichstellung) in der Slowakei) oder Label mit einem Fokus auf Diversität (z. B. *Label Egalité Diversité/Label Gelijkheid Diversiteit* (Label Gleichstellung Diversität) in Belgien). Außerdem sei ein Label aus der Schweiz, das einen entscheidenden Aspekt in Hinblick auf die Gleichstellung thematisiert und sich gerade in der Pilotphase befindet, erwähnt ("*equal salary – Zertifikation der Lohnleichheit von Frauen und Männern*").

**Preise und Auszeichnungen** stellen die zahlenmäßig bei weitem bedeutendste Kategorie nicht-legislativer Initiativen zur Förderung der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern am Arbeitsmarkt dar. Grundsätzlich sind die – meist jährlich vergebenen – Preise eher heterogen hinsichtlich ihrer thematischen Schwerpunkte und adressieren unterschiedliche Ziele / Zielgruppen, wie:

- Chancengleichheit von Frauen und Männern, z. B. "*Tasa-arvosuunnittelukipailu*" (Preis für den Geschlechtergleichstellungsplan) in Finnland;
- Vereinbarkeit von Familie und Beruf, z. B. "*Guldnappen*" (der goldene Schnuller) in Schweden, "*Firma roku: rovné příležitosti*" (Unternehmen des Jahres: Chancengleichheit) in Tschechien
- Frauen in Führungspositionen, z. B. "*Managerkam prijazno podjetje*" (Managerinnenfreundliches Unternehmen) in Slowenien, "*K2 prisnen & K2 næsen*" (K2 Preis & K2 Tadel) in Dänemark,



- Frauen in speziellen bzw. männerdominierten Sektoren, z. B. *“Investor in WISE award”* (Preis für den Investor in WISE – Frauen in Wissenschaft, Ingenieurs- und Bauwesen) im Vereinigten Königreich, *“amaZone”* in Österreich

Zudem gibt es Preise, die einen breiteren Themenbereich ansprechen aber auch Gleichstellungsagenden (explizit oder implizit) abdecken, wie

- Liste der besten Arbeitsplätze für Frauen – Spezialpreise im Rahmen des Great place to Work® (z. B. *“Melhor Empresa para Trabalhar para Mulheres”* (das beste Unternehmen für Frauen) in Portugal)
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Diversität

Um die Gewinner zu ermitteln wird meist ein zwei- oder mehrphasiger Entscheidungsprozess angewandt. In einem ersten Schritt müssen die teilnehmenden Unternehmen meist einen Fragebogen oder ein standardisiertes Formular ausfüllen und unterstützende Dokumente und statistisches Material liefern. Meist werden die Dokumente von einer Jury oder einem Komitee, die auch zusätzliche Informationen anfragen können, geprüft. Der Prozess zur Bestimmung der auszuzeichnenden Unternehmen beinhaltet dann oftmals auch Besuche im Unternehmen und Interviews mit ManagerInnen und/oder Beschäftigten.

In vielen Fällen ist es den Siegern möglich, sich zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt oder nach einer Zeitspanne von zwei oder mehr Jahren neuerlich am Wettbewerb zu beteiligen. In einigen Fällen kann aber eine neuerliche Teilnahme nur erfolgen, wenn Prozesse oder Projekte zur Förderung der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern substantiell gegenüber dem Jahr des Preisgewinns weiterentwickelt wurden.

Teilweise stehen solche Auszeichnungen in Zusammenhang mit Labels oder Rankings. Im Rahmen von Rankings werden dann normalerweise die bestgereihten Unternehmen ausgezeichnet.

Das Bekenntnis, Chancengleichheit zu fördern, kann durch die Unterzeichnung einer **Charta** sichtbar gemacht werden. Die Charta zeigt die gemeinsamen Werte der Unterzeichneten, die erklären, gemäß den Anforderungen und in Einklang mit der Zielsetzung der Charta zu handeln. Normalerweise werden die Aktivitäten und der Fortschritt der Mitglieder hinsichtlich des Kernkonzepts der Charta nicht extern bewertet und kontrolliert. Es ist an jeder unterzeichnenden Organisation, in welcher Weise sie die Ziele der Charta unterstützt. Oftmals werden die Chartas nicht nur von Unternehmen unterzeichnet, sondern involvieren auch andere Organisationen wie Ministerien, regionale Regierungen, Unternehmensverbände, Gewerkschaften, Arbeitsmarktverwaltungen, NGOs etc. Neben Chartas, die allgemein auf eine Gleichstellung der Geschlechter im Arbeitsleben abzielen, haben die meisten Chartas einen speziellen Fokus. So gibt es Chartas, die das Bekenntnis der unterzeichneten Unternehmen und Organisationen, Rahmenbedingungen für eine bessere Vereinbarkeit von Arbeits- und Familienleben zu schaffen, beinhalten (z. B. *“Charte de la Parentalité en Entreprise”* (Charta der Elternschaft im Unternehmen) in Frankreich). Ein anderes Thema für Chartas ist die Bekämpfung der horizontalen Segregation am Arbeitsmarkt und die verstärkte Partizipation von Frauen in Wissenschaft und Technologie (z. B. *“CEO Charter”* and *“Athena SWAN Charter for Women in Science”* (Athena SWAN Charta für Frauen in der Wissenschaft im Vereinigten Königreich) sowie der vertikalen Segregation (z. B. *“Charter for flere kvinder i ledelse”* (Charta für mehr Frauen im Management) in Dänemark).



**Rankings** von Unternehmen können als Ergebnis eines Vergleichs von Unternehmen, gegründet auf der Prüfung unterschiedlicher Kriterien, definiert werden. Oftmals sind solche Kriterien in einem Index konzentriert. Es können Rankings, die auf der Analyse von öffentlich zugänglichen Daten (z. B. aus Jahresberichten, Kommunikationsmaterial von Unternehmen wie Homepages) basieren, und solche, die die Zusammenarbeit der Unternehmen durch Beantwortung eines Fragebogens verlangen, unterschieden werden. Meist konzentrieren sich solche Rankings auf Großunternehmen oder berücksichtigen nur Unternehmen mit einer bestimmten Minimalgröße. So gibt es auf einem Index basierende Rankings, die ausschließlich börsennotierte Unternehmen analysieren oder die größten Unternehmen in einem Land beurteilen. Rankings beurteilen meist die Gleichstellungspolitik im Allgemeinen unter Berücksichtigung verschiedener Themenfelder, aber es gibt auch solche, die Unternehmen ins Rampenlicht stellen, die z. B. aktiv bei der Förderung weiblicher Führungskräfte sind. Ein Beispiel des Transfers einer etablierten Initiative aus den USA nach Europa ist *Bästa arbetsplatsen för kvinnor* (Bester Arbeitsplatz für Frauen) in Schweden. Die US Initiative genießt so hohe Anerkennung, dass es bereits verschiedene Listen wie die *“50 Best Law Firms for Women”* (50 beste Rechtsfirmen für Frauen) oder die *“Best Companies for Multicultural Women”* (Beste Unternehmen für Frauen ethnischer Minderheiten) gibt. Rankings können auch als Instrument zur Unterstützung neuer gesetzlicher Regelungen dienen. Beispielsweise wurde *“Top 5 de las empresas modelo de igualdad”* (Top 5 der Modellunternehmen der Gleichstellung) in Spanien ins Leben gerufen, um die Implementierung des Gleichstellungsgesetzes zu fördern und zu evaluieren.

Ein Produkt von Forschungsstudien, Netzwerkaktivitäten und Projekten, die mit Gleichstellungsthematiken befasst sind, ist oftmals ein **Kompendium von guten Praktiken**. In diesem wird eine Reihe von Unternehmen, die ein besonderes Engagement bei der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern am Arbeitsplatz zeigen, im Detail in einer Publikation und/oder im Internet präsentiert. Der Hauptgrund, solche Kompendia anzubieten, ist es, anderen Unternehmen praktische Beispiele zu übermitteln und Erkenntnisse zu verbreiten. Die Präsentation von guten Praktiken zur Geschlechtergleichstellung hat das Potenzial, eine Inspiration für andere Unternehmen und Arbeitsstätten zu sein. Sie können bei der Bewusstseinsbildung unterstützen und soziale Normen in Richtung auf eine Verringerung und/oder Beseitigung der Diskriminierung von Frauen ändern. Oft resultieren Kompendia von guten Praktiken aus Wettbewerben, in denen gute Praktiken von Siegerunternehmen oder teilnehmenden Unternehmen in einer Publikation integriert oder auf einer Internetseite gesammelt werden.

Die größte Gruppe sind Kompendia, die im allgemeinen Bereich der Chancengleichheit angesiedelt sind und Themen wie Rekrutierung, Weiterbildung, Karrieremöglichkeiten, Entlohnung sowie Vereinbarkeit von Arbeits- und Privatleben behandeln, aber es existieren auch Kompendia mit einem speziellen Fokus (z. B. *“Ligeløn”* (gleicher Lohn) in Dänemark).

### Wie Unternehmen Geschlechtergleichstellung fördern

Welche Maßnahmen ergreifen Unternehmen in den verschiedenen Bereichen der Geschlechtergleichstellung? **Multinationale Unternehmen (MNU) adaptieren ihre Strategien** und Zugänge gemäß dem rechtlichen und kulturellen Umfeld des Landes, in dem sie aktiv sind. Daher können die Maßnahmen im Detail von einem Land zum andern variieren. Des Weiteren scheinen manche der Unternehmensinitiativen einen eher branchenspezifischen Hintergrund zu haben, wogegen andere allgemeiner gehalten sind und dadurch leichter von einer Branche auf die andere übertragbar sein dürften.



Die Analyse hat folgende **sieben Interventionsbereiche** ergeben: Rekrutierung, Vereinbarkeit, MitarbeiterInnenbindung, Karrieremöglichkeiten, Weiterbildung, Netzwerken und Kommunikation. Da multinationale Unternehmen üblicherweise umfassende Strategien zu Geschlechtergleichstellung oder Diversität anwenden, welche Maßnahmen für einige, wenn nicht alle, der oben genannten Bereiche beinhalten, wurden die Strategien in ihre Bestandteile aufgegliedert, um eine strukturierte Analyse zu ermöglichen. Eine Maßnahme, die in einem bestimmten Bereich von einem Unternehmen angewandt wird, kann dadurch auch von einem anderen Unternehmen übernommen und auf andere Bereiche übertragen werden (z. B. während ein Unternehmen weibliche Rollenvorbilder als Anreiz für Bewerbungen von Frauen verwendet, könnte die Maßnahme „Rollenvorbild“ von einem anderen Unternehmen zur Förderung von Karriereschritten von Frauen verwendet werden). Die Praktiken der Beispielunternehmen können ebenso Inspiration für jene sein, die nicht-legislative Initiativen gestalten und organisieren.

**Rekrutierung:** Im Allgemeinen müssen Unternehmen ihre Stellenausschreibungen im Rahmen des Einstellungsverfahrens in einer Art und Weise formulieren, welche Frauen und Männer gleichermaßen anspricht. Dennoch gibt es Möglichkeiten, Bewerbungen des innerhalb des Unternehmens unterrepräsentierten Geschlechts positiv zu beeinflussen. Einerseits existiert eine solche Geschlechterungleichverteilung oft in bestimmten **Branchen**. So haben vor allem Unternehmen, die in technologieorientierten Sektoren tätig sind, Möglichkeiten entwickelt, um Frauen verstärkt anzusprechen (während Unternehmen, z. B. in der Kosmetikbranche, daran arbeiten, ihren Anteil an männlichen Mitarbeitern zu erhöhen). Andererseits kann eine Ungleichverteilung der Geschlechter auch innerhalb eines Unternehmens in **verschiedenen Betätigungsfeldern** (z. B. wenn Frauen dazu tendieren, in Verwaltungstätigkeiten zu arbeiten und Männer in der Produktion) oder in verschiedenen hierarchischen Ebenen auftreten. Viele der Unternehmen, welche in dieser Studie betrachtet wurden, haben Verfahren um mehr Frauen anzusprechen und anzustellen eingeführt, um eine ausgeglichene MitarbeiterInnenstruktur zu erreichen und um die verschiedenen Talente und Fähigkeiten besser zu nutzen. Die Initiativen und Maßnahmen gehen dabei über Quoten hinaus und reichen von einfachen bis zu recht komplizierten Verfahren.

In Branchen/Betätigungsfeldern, welche von Männern dominiert sind, haben einige Unternehmen begonnen, ein Pool von potenziellen BewerberInnen zu bilden und arbeiten damit gegen eine Geschlechterungleichverteilung lange **vor dem tatsächlichen Einstellungsverfahren**, z. B. indem Aktionen durchgeführt werden, damit sich mehr Frauen für das Berufsfeld interessieren. Es gibt **Maßnahmen für jede Phase des Einstellungsverfahrens**, beginnend von der aktiven Ermunterung von Bewerbungen durch Frauen in Stellenausschreibungen oder der Vorstellung von weiblichen Rollenvorbildern bei Jobmessen, bei denen sich ein Unternehmen präsentiert. Im Bewerbungsprozess wird ein neutrales Vorgehen durch die Verwendung von anonymisierten Bewerbungsformularen und Lebensläufen, welche keine Information über das Geschlecht erkennen lassen, erleichtert. Um verschiedene Meinungen im Bewerbungsprozess zu berücksichtigen, können weibliche und männliche Beurteiler in Assessment Centers eingebunden werden. Simulationsbasierte Einstellungsverfahren können verwendet werden, um Talente und Fähigkeiten zu beurteilen und Shortlists, welche einen bestimmten Anteil an Frauen vorsehen, können ebenfalls zur Anwendung kommen. Eine weitere interessante Herangehensweise ist der Versuch, die Quoten von männlichen und weiblichen UniversitätsabsolventInnen in einem bestimmten Fachbereich innerhalb des Managements zu reproduzieren.



**Vereinbarkeit:** Im Bereich der Vereinbarkeit sind eine **Reihe von Verfahren zur besseren Vereinbarkeit von Berufs- und Privatleben** (Work Life Balance) bereits Standard in multinationalen Unternehmen geworden. Ein wichtiger Faktor hierbei ist, dass Vereinbarkeitsmaßnahmen **an beide, männliche und weibliche MitarbeiterInnen gerichtet** sind.

Die Unternehmensinitiativen in diesem Bereich beziehen sich auf Vereinbarungen zum Arbeitsort (flexibler Arbeitsplatz, Telearbeit) und zur Arbeitszeit (flexible Arbeitszeiten, Teilzeit, Schichttausch), Jobsharing-Modelle und besondere Maßnahmen für Personen mit Betreuungsverpflichtungen (Kinderbetreuungseinrichtungen, Pflegevouchers). Die Initiativen der Unternehmen im Bereich Vereinbarkeit setzen sich im Allgemeinen aus einer Kombination dieser Maßnahmen zusammen. Nichtsdestotrotz geht Vereinbarkeit sogar noch über diese Aspekte hinaus und manche Unternehmen bedenken auch, dass Besprechungstermine für z. B. Personen in Teilzeit passend gewählt werden sollen oder halten virtuelle Besprechungen ab, um Anreizeiten zu verkürzen und die Teilnahme so zu erleichtern.

**MitarbeiterInnenbindung:** Dass Kompetenzen verloren gehen, wenn gut qualifiziertes Personal das Unternehmen verlässt, ist die wesentliche Motivation hinter Initiativen zur MitarbeiterInnenbindung. MitarbeiterInnenbindung wird vor allem dann besonders relevant, wenn wesentliche Veränderungen im Privatleben von MitarbeiterInnen Anpassungen ihrer Arbeitszeiten notwendig machen, insbesondere wenn ein Kind geboren wird.

Die großen Unternehmen, welche hier analysiert wurden, haben im Lauf der letzten Jahre relativ komplexe Strategien zur MitarbeiterInnenbindung für talentierte Frauen entwickelt. Diese Initiativen setzen sich meist aus Maßnahmen verschiedener Interventionsbereiche, z. B. Vereinbarkeit, Karriereentwicklung und Netzwerken, zusammen. Die Maßnahmen reichen von z. B. Unterstützungsprogrammen für Personen mit Betreuungspflichten bis zur Entwicklung von Karrierezielen oder Netzwerken. Obwohl Frauen im Zentrum der meisten Strategien zur MitarbeiterInnenbindung stehen, ist eine Voraussetzung für erfolgreiche MitarbeiterInnenbindung, dass auch Männer als Personen mit Betreuungspflichten wahrgenommen und behandelt werden.

**Karrieremöglichkeiten:** Über ihre **Berichtssysteme** können multinationale Unternehmen die Verteilung ihrer MitarbeiterInnen nach Geschlecht auf Geschäftsfelder und Tätigkeitsbereiche/Hierarchiepositionen beobachten. Die meisten der in dieser Studie analysierten Unternehmen haben relativ detaillierte geschlechterspezifische MitarbeiterInnendaten. Das Berichtswesen hat in vielen Unternehmen eine Lücke bezüglich weiblicher Manager aufgezeigt, was die Unternehmen zur Ausarbeitung von Initiativen zur Steigerung der Frauenanteile in verschiedenen hierarchischen Ebenen veranlasst hat.

Die Maßnahmen, welche im Bereich Karrieremöglichkeiten eingeführt wurden, reichen von Zielformulierungen für ManagerInnen als Grundelement zur Sicherstellung von Chancengleichheit im Rahmen der Karriereentwicklung über geschlechtsspezifische Beurteilung von Talenten/Potenzialen (unter Berücksichtigung der verschiedenen Verhaltensmuster von Männern und Frauen) zu umfassenden Karriereentwicklungsprogrammen als auch Systemen, um gleiche Bezahlung sicherzustellen. Neben einem Berichtssystem und der Beobachtung von Daten, finden die analysierten Unternehmen es entscheidend, die **Gründe hinter Karrierebrüchen** von Frauen zu erkennen und zu verstehen, um adäquat reagieren und gezielte Initiativen entwickeln zu können.



**Weiterbildung:** Vielfach verwenden Unternehmen Schulungen zu den Themen Diversität und Inklusion (welche auch Geschlechtergleichheit beinhalten), um neue MitarbeiterInnen mit der Diversitätskultur des Betriebs vertraut zu machen. Spezielle Trainings zu Geschlechterfragen für ManagerInnen können helfen, sich persönliche Befangenheiten bewusst zu machen und Strategien zur Überwindung dieser zu entwickeln. Viele der umfassenderen Initiativen zur Erreichung von Geschlechtergleichstellung in einem Unternehmen beinhalten solche Schulungen.

Ebenso gibt es **Maßnahmen**, welche in anderen **Bereichen der Weiterbildung** ansetzen, z. B. Schulungen so anzubieten, dass diese Chancengleichheit unterstützen. Einige der Unternehmen, die in dieser Studie analysiert werden, haben Mindesttrainingsziele für alle ihre MitarbeiterInnen gesetzt oder stellen sicher, dass ihre Traineeprogramme eine relativ gute Verteilung von Männern und Frauen haben.

Es wurde von den Unternehmen festgestellt, dass Schulungen oft in einer Art und Weise abgehalten werden, die Männern mehr entgegenkommt als Frauen. Unter den **Maßnahmen zur Trainingsgestaltung**, um sowohl den Anforderungen von Frauen als auch jenen von Männern zu entsprechen, finden sich z. B. die Berücksichtigung von sowohl „männlichen“ als auch „weiblichen“ Lernmustern, die Einbeziehung von männlichen und weiblichen TrainerInnen als auch die Gestaltung passender Trainingsmodi, Zeiten und Lernumgebungen. Schulungen werden auch verwendet, um Geschlechtergleichstellung in anderen Interventionsbereichen zu fördern, z. B. frauenspezifisches Training im Rahmen der Karriereentwicklung.

**Netzwerke:** Während sich in den meisten Unternehmen **interne Frauennetzwerke** bzw. Netzwerke von Frauen und Männern mit der Zielsetzung Geschlechtergleichheit zu forcieren, etabliert haben, gibt es auch Beispiele für Unternehmen, welche Netzwerkaktivitäten für Frauen starten, indem sie sich an **externen Frauennetzwerken** beteiligen.

Zu erwähnen sind vor allem Netzwerkkonzepte, welche sich auf eine bestimmte **hierarchische Ebene** konzentrieren (z. B. auf Frauen im Management bzw. auf Männer und Frauen im Management, welche Chancengleichheit unterstützen). Ebenso finden sich jedoch Netzwerke, welche Mitglieder aus verschiedenen hierarchischen Ebenen aufnehmen.

Netzwerke funktionieren vielfach als treibende Kraft für die Entwicklung von neuen Strategien zur Förderung von Chancengleichheit, sie haben sich als hilfreich erwiesen bei der Erhebung und Verbreitung von Informationen unter den Mitgliedern (z. B. über Bereiche, in welchen Handlungsbedarf besteht), zur Diskussion von Prioritäten und zur Entwicklung von Handlungsplänen. Einige relativ mächtige unternehmensinterne Frauennetzwerke werden in dieser Studie beschrieben. Netzwerken kann auch verwendet werden, um die Karriereentwicklung von Frauen zu unterstützen, insbesondere wenn verschiedene hierarchische Ebenen zusammengebracht werden. Einige Mentoringprogramme folgen diesem Zugang.

**Kommunikation:** Um ein verlässliches und nachhaltiges Bild der Kultur und der Werte eines Unternehmens zu vermitteln, ist eine klare und deutliche **interne und externe Kommunikation** über den Zugang zum Thema Chancengleichheit (in der Regel im Rahmen der Diversitäts- und Inklusionspolitik des Unternehmens) essenziell. Um dies zu unterstützen finden sich z. B. schriftliche Stellungnahmen der Unternehmensführung, welche deren Identifikation mit dieser Thematik zum Ausdruck bringen (die Identifikation der obersten Ebene des Unternehmens mit dem Thema ist entscheidend)





aber auch interne Verhaltenskodizes oder Verträge mit externen Einrichtungen (wie z. B. Gewerkschaften). In diesem Zusammenhang werden viele Unternehmen auch zunehmend sensibler bezüglich Geschlechtergleichheit im eigenen externen Auftreten (und der **Werbung**).

### Vergleich nicht-legislativer Initiativen

Das übergeordnete Ziel aller identifizierten nicht-legislativen Initiativen ist es, das Ungleichgewicht der Geschlechter zu bekämpfen und zur Gleichstellung von Frau und Mann beizutragen. Nichtsdestotrotz haben viele der Initiativen einen speziellen Fokus. Diese spezifischen Zielsetzungen der Maßnahmen sind **vielfältig** und reflektieren sowohl **spezifische Aspekte** des Ungleichgewichts zwischen Frauen und Männern als auch besondere **regionale Rahmenbedingungen**, wie z. B.:

- **Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Familie:** Da Frauen weiterhin die Hauptverantwortung für den Haushalt und die Kindererziehung innerhalb der Familie tragen, führt eine bessere Vereinbarkeit zu einer Verbesserung der Situation von Frauen am Arbeitsmarkt. All diese Initiativen beinhalten Elemente, die auf eine Änderung überkommener Einstellungen und der traditionellen Arbeitsteilung zwischen Mann und Frau und eine gerechte Teilung der Familienpflichten abzielen.
- **Horizontale Arbeitsmarktsegregation:** Die horizontale Segregation wird als ein Grund für die geschlechtsspezifischen Einkommensunterschiede angesehen, da weiblich konnotierte Berufe grundsätzlich niedriger entlohnt werden. Daher zielen einige der Initiativen auf eine Erhöhung der Teilhabe von Frauen in so genannten „männlichen Sektoren“, um einerseits zur Geschlechtergleichstellung beizutragen und andererseits den Fachkräftemangel zu bekämpfen.
- **Vertikale Arbeitsmarktsegregation:** Zudem besteht eine vertikale Segregation, die in der Unterrepräsentanz von Frauen in Managementpositionen resultiert und ebenfalls zu den geschlechtsspezifischen Einkommensunterschieden beiträgt. Daher konzentrieren sich einige Initiativen auf Maßnahmen zur Erhöhung des Frauenanteils in Führungspositionen.
- **Rückschlag in ehemals kommunistischen Ländern:** Die kommunistischen Regime zielten auf die Integration aller Personen in die Erwerbstätigkeit und Vollzeitarbeitsplätze (obgleich gering bezahlt) für Frauen waren die Regel. Der Staat stellte ganztägige Kinderbetreuungseinrichtungen für Klein- und Schulkinder zur Verfügung. Gemäß dem ideologischen Hintergrund wurde die Erziehung als öffentliche Aufgabe gesehen und Familien hatten nicht die gleiche Bedeutung wie in einer bürgerlichen Gesellschaft. Nach dem Fall des eisernen Vorhangs startete eine Gegenbewegung, die in einer Reorientierung zu einer traditionellen Rolle der Frau in der Gesellschaft führte. Zudem wurden soziale Dienstleistungen infolge begrenzter staatlicher Mittel in diesem Bereich gekürzt. Daher begann die Diskussion über Geschlechterrollen erst kürzlich und das Bewusstsein für Diskriminierungen am Arbeitsmarkt ist noch zu wecken. Initiativen die die Geschlechtergleichstellung in diesen Ländern fördern, legen das Augenmerk hauptsächlich auf die Vereinbarkeitsproblematik.
- **Unterstützung für weitreichende Gesetzgebung:** In gewisser Weise stehen die skandinavischen Länder genau im Gegensatz dazu. In diesen ist die Bekämpfung von Ungleichgewichten zwischen Frauen und Männern am Arbeitsmarkt politischer Mainstream, der zu einer weitreichenden Gesetzgebung in diesem Bereich geführt hat. Maßnahmen, die in vielen anderen Ländern auf



freiwilliger Basis gesetzt werden, sind z. B. in Finnland oder Island verpflichtend. Nichtsdestotrotz muss die praktische Implementierung der Gleichstellungsgesetze in einigen Bereichen verbessert werden. Daher existieren nicht-legislative Initiativen, die Firmen auszeichnen, die als Vorbild in Hinblick auf die Umsetzung der Gesetze dienen können.

Dementsprechend können die Initiativen auch hinsichtlich ihrer **Zielgruppe** unterschieden werden. Initiativen können sich an die gesamte Belegschaft, d. h. Männer und Frauen, alle beschäftigten Frauen im Unternehmen, Beschäftigte mit Familien oder spezifische Untergruppen der beschäftigten Frauen richten.

Die Initiativen zielen auch auf verschiedene **Gruppen von Unternehmen**. Initiativen mit einem breiten Fokus richten sich meist an alle Typen von Arbeitgebern, einschließlich privaten Unternehmen, öffentliche Einrichtungen und NGOs, wobei aber oftmals unterschiedliche Teilgruppen gebildet werden. Da öffentliche Einrichtungen meist strengeren Rechtsvorschriften in Hinblick auf Quoten, Vorgaben in Gleichstellungsbelangen etc. unterworfen sind, konzentrieren sich viele Initiativen auf den privaten Sektor. Diese privaten Unternehmen werden oft nach **Größe** in Teilgruppen eingeteilt oder die Initiative beschränkt sich auf Unternehmen einer bestimmten Größe. Initiativen, die die horizontale Segregation bekämpfen wollen, legen den Fokus ihrer Aktivitäten häufig auf Unternehmen in männerdominierten Sektoren.

Die Haupttypen der Initiativen unterscheiden sich in Hinblick auf die Zielgruppe und andere Charakteristika wie den Bewerbungsprozess, die Bewertungskriterien und den Prozess der Entscheidungsfindung sowie den Grad der Verbindlichkeit, den ein teilnehmendes Unternehmen eingehen muss. So bewerten Rankings zumeist große Unternehmen und auch Chartas werden eher von großen Unternehmen unterzeichnet. Chartas treten neben dem privaten Sektor vermehrt auch öffentliche Organisationen und NGOs bei. Im Gegensatz dazu adressieren Label und Preise meist alle **Unternehmenstypen**. Um einen fairen Wettbewerb zu garantieren und KMU sowie öffentliche und Organisationen des Dritten Sektors zur Teilnahme zu motivieren, werden Preise in verschiedenen Kategorien vergeben und die Anforderungen (und / oder die Gebühren) für kleinere Unternehmen sind geringer.

In Hinblick auf den **Bewerbungs- bzw. Teilnahmeprozess** ist zu erwähnen, dass sich Unternehmen für ein Label und einen Preis aktiv bewerben, während im Fall einer Charta die Unternehmen oftmals bereits bei der Formulierung und Einführung der Charta eingebunden sind oder diese sogar initiieren. Im Rahmen eines Rankings, das auf einer externen Evaluierung beruht, gibt es keinen Teilnahmeprozess oder gegebenenfalls nur eine Registrierung des Unternehmens.

Der **Bewertungsprozess** bei einem Label basiert normalerweise auf einem Audit, das Selbstbewertungsinstrumente, eine externe Evaluierung einer Jury und Workshops, in denen der Status quo festgestellt und Ziele formuliert werden, beinhaltet. Bei Preisen nominiert üblicherweise eine Expertenjury die Sieger nach einem zweistufigen Prozess mit Selbstbeschreibung, Interviews und Besuchen vor Ort. Da Chartas wesentlich auf freiwilliger Selbstverpflichtung basieren und daher vergleichbar mit von Unternehmen individuell gesetzten Maßnahmen sind, gibt es grundsätzlich keine externe Bewertung der unterzeichnenden Unternehmen. Rankings bewerten die Unternehmen in erster Linie auf Basis quantitativer Daten unter Zuhilfenahme vorab definierter Kriterien und haben einen stark vergleichenden Charakter. Ein Kompendium guter Praktiken unterstreicht eher die Beschreibung der Umsetzung der Maßnahmen als diese kritisch zu bewerten.



Der **Zeithorizont** der Initiativen variiert ebenfalls. Label werden grundsätzlich für einen begrenzten Zeitraum verliehen (meist drei Jahre), Preise werden jährlich vergeben sowie auch Rankings in regelmäßigen Abständen veröffentlicht werden. Die Unterzeichnung einer Charta unterliegt theoretisch keinem Ablaufdatum, während Kompendia guter Praktiken grundsätzlich eine einmalige bzw. laufende – im Fall einer Homepage – Initiative darstellen.

In Hinblick auf den **Grad der Verpflichtung** und den bindenden Charakter für die Unternehmen verlangen Rankings und Kompendia keine Verpflichtung der Unternehmen, die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter zu fördern, sondern beschreiben den Grad, mit dem sich die Unternehmenspolitik diesem Thema widmet. Da ein Preis den Status quo der Gleichstellungspolitik eines Unternehmens auszeichnet, bedingt dies theoretisch ebenso keine Verpflichtung, in der Praxis werden aber Zukunftspläne und Unternehmensleitlinien bei der Bewertung der Kandidaten herangezogen. Im Gegensatz dazu führen Label und Chartas zu bindenden Verpflichtungen, da alle Maßnahmen auf Unternehmensleitlinien, in der die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter als Unternehmensziel formuliert ist, basieren sollen.

### Erfolgsfaktoren und Hemmnisse

Eine Reihe von **Erfolgsfaktoren** tragen zur Akzeptanz der Initiativen bei und in Folge auch zur Erreichung ihres gesellschaftlichen Ziels.

- **Flexibler und maßgeschneiderter Ansatz:** Als Grundsatzprinzip kann gelten: je breiter die Initiative konzipiert ist, desto flexibler sollte sie hinsichtlich Bildung von Subkategorien für unterschiedliche Zielgruppen gestaltet sein. Die Anforderungen müssen an die Situation der Unternehmen angepasst werden, da Maßnahmen in KMU sich von jenen in Großunternehmen unterscheiden werden. Privatunternehmen stehen vor anderen Herausforderungen als öffentliche Organisationen.
- **Anpassung der Initiative:** Flexibilität sollte auch in Beziehung auf die Entwicklungen am Arbeitsmarkt und gesellschaftliche Veränderungen gegeben sein. In vielen Ländern kann beobachtet werden, dass sich der Fokus der Initiativen von der Vereinbarkeitsthematik zu Themen wie z. B. der vertikalen Segregation am Arbeitsmarkt verschoben hat. Eine Möglichkeit, Initiativen flexibel zu gestalten ist die Setzung jährlich wechselnder Schwerpunktthemen, um auf jüngere Entwicklungen und aktuelle Trends reagieren zu können. Zudem kann dies das kontinuierliche Bemühen der Unternehmen fördern, in verschiedenen Feldern aktiv zu werden.
- **Geschlechtergleichstellung als dynamischer Prozess:** Die meisten Initiativen bilden ihre Bewertungskriterien anhand des Konzepts von Geschlechtergleichstellung als dynamischem Prozess und nicht als statischem Zustand. Unternehmen sollten nicht nur ihre bisherigen Leistungen in Hinblick auf die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern beweisen, sondern sich zu einem kontinuierlichen Bemühen verpflichten, die Situation (weiter) zu verbessern. Geschlechtergleichstellung kann zudem nicht nur in Zahlen gemessen werden, sondern wird auch in einem Bewusstseinswandel in der Belegschaft und im Management manifest.



- **Professionelle Organisation:** Betreffend die Organisation der Initiative lautet das Postulat Serviceorientierung. Je klarer die Anforderungen und einfacher die Administration desto eher werden Unternehmen eine Teilnahme erwägen. Wenn Befragungen und Besuche vor Ort vorgesehen sind, sollte umfangreiche Unterstützung vorhanden sein, um die Unternehmen anzuleiten.
- **Klare Monitoring- und Evaluierungskriterien:** Um Glaubwürdigkeit und Vergleichbarkeit zu erreichen, ist Transparenz in Hinblick auf die Bewertungskriterien unabdingbar. Klare Indikatoren, die regelmäßige Überprüfung des Engagements durch verpflichtende jährliche Berichtslegung und die Prüfung von Selbstevaluierungen durch eine unabhängige Jury sind gute Praktiken in diesem Zusammenhang. Außerdem sollte der Auswahl- und Auditingprozess dokumentiert werden. Umfassendes und detailliertes Feedback an die ausgezeichneten und abgelehnten Kandidaten kann den gewünschten Lernprozess initiieren.
- **Öffentlichkeit:** Um die Relevanz der nicht-legislativen Maßnahmen zu unterstreichen sind adäquate PR-Maßnahmen erforderlich. Dies kann einerseits die Initiative selbst und ihre Anliegen ins Bewusstsein rücken, andererseits den Unternehmen in Hinblick auf ihr Image nützen.
- **Schaffung bindender Verpflichtungen:** Der Erfolg der Maßnahme ist stark abhängig von der Schaffung bindender Verpflichtungen für das Management des Unternehmens, da die Umsetzung der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern in erster Linie eine Top-Down Managementstrategie ist.

Diesen positiven Faktoren müssen die **Hindernisse und Herausforderungen** für die Initiativen gegenübergestellt werden:

- **Diversität der teilnehmenden Unternehmen:** Die Initiativen zur Förderung der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern sind im Kreis der Unternehmen, die sich der Wichtigkeit der sozialen Unternehmensverantwortung bewusst sind, bekannt. Daher sind die Teilnehmeraten unter den „üblichen Verdächtigen“, die auch in anderen Initiativen mit CSR oder Diversitätsfokus aktiv sind, hoch. Dies führt zu zwei Fragen: Wie können andere Unternehmen motiviert werden, neue Prinzipien in die Unternehmensorganisation einzuführen? Und wie kann eine „Wettbewerbsverzerrung“ verhindert werden, damit neue Teilnehmer eine echte Chance im Wettbewerb haben?
- **Teilnahme von KMU:** Viele der verantwortlichen Organisationen berichten von den Schwierigkeiten, KMU zur Teilnahme zu bewegen, da diese oftmals keine systematische Personalpolitik haben und sich daher nicht als Zielgruppe solcher Initiativen sehen.
- **Teilnahme in Zeiten ökonomischer Krisen:** Die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern und die soziale Verantwortung werden oftmals als zusätzliches Ziel angesehen, das angestrebt werden kann, wenn die betriebswirtschaftlichen Ergebnisse zufriedenstellend sind. In Zeiten der Wirtschaftskrise und negativer Unternehmensentwicklungen werden diese Zusatzziele vermehrt dem eigentlichen Unternehmenszweck geopfert.



- **Gleichgewicht zwischen Anspruch und Zugänglichkeit:** Nicht-legislative Initiativen sind auf die freiwillige Teilnahme von Unternehmen angewiesen und müssen daher ihre Organisationsprinzipien an den Erfordernissen der Unternehmen orientieren. Dennoch werden die Initiativen aus gesellschaftlicher Sicht nur als nützlich erachtet werden, wenn die Anforderungen an die Teilnehmer entsprechend anspruchsvoll sind, wenn die Standards und Praktiken kritische Bereiche ansprechen und nachhaltigen Wandel einleiten und wenn dies entsprechend evaluiert wird, damit die Unternehmen als echte Vorbilder dienen können.

### Nutzen und Herausforderungen aus der Unternehmensperspektive

Obwohl sich immer mehr Unternehmen zu CSR bekennen, wird ein verantwortungsvolles Management nur dann freiwillige Maßnahmen ergreifen, wenn das Unternehmen per se davon profitieren kann, d. h. wenn es betriebswirtschaftlich sinnvoll erscheint. Solche positiven Auswirkungen der Teilnahme an nicht-legislativen Maßnahmen zur Förderung der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern sind:

- **Anerkennung für das Unternehmen:** Die Teilnahme an solchen Initiativen initiiert nicht zwingend radikal neue Prozesse im Unternehmen, rückt aber bereits bestehende Aktionen in den Mittelpunkt. Da die KundInnen und Geschäftspartner von Großunternehmen zunehmend erwarten, dass diese sich in CSR/Diversität engagieren, stellt die Unterzeichnung einer Charta, ein Label oder die Auszeichnung mit einem Preis einen externen „Beweis“ für das Engagement dar.
- **Instrument für die interne Kommunikation:** Dieser externe Beweis ist ein perfektes Instrument für die interne Kommunikation, da er als Symbol für die Managementprinzipien gelten und das interne Marketing unterstützen kann. Die Teilnahme an bekannten Initiativen kann die Unternehmensleitlinien innerhalb der Belegschaft verdeutlichen.
- **Positive interne Effekte auf die Beschäftigten:** Die kommunizierte soziale Verantwortung des Arbeitgebers führt zu einer positiven Haltung der Beschäftigten dem Unternehmen gegenüber, da dadurch die Wertschätzung des Managements für die Belegschaft verdeutlicht wird. Motivierte und loyale MitarbeiterInnen resultieren in einer geringeren Fluktuation.
- **Instrument für die externe Kommunikation:** Die sichtbaren Zeichen des Bekenntnisses zur Geschlechtergleichstellung in Form eines Preises, Labels oder der Unterzeichnung einer Charta ist ein wichtiges Instrument zur Entwicklung eines positiven öffentlichen Images des Unternehmens.
- **Rekrutierung von Schlüsselpersonal:** Auf Schlüsselpersonal wirkt ein positives Unternehmensimage attraktiv. Die Teilnahme an nicht-legislativen Maßnahmen erhöht die Chance für ein Unternehmen der Arbeitgeber der Wahl zu sein, ein Vorteil im „Krieg um die Talente“.
- **Innovation und Kreativität:** Die Rekrutierung von Schlüsselpersonal ist eine Voraussetzung für Innovation und die Entwicklung innovativer Produkte. Die Erhöhung des Frauenanteils im Team bedeutet die Einbeziehung unterschiedlicher Perspektiven im Produktions- und Managementprozess. Da immer mehr Frauen die Kaufentscheidungen im Haushalt treffen, scheint es logisch, dass die weibliche Perspektive bei der Entwicklung neuer Produkte und Dienstleistungen berücksichtigt wird.



- **Bewertung des Personalmanagements:** Der Beurteilungsprozess stellt oftmals eine Möglichkeit dar, mit Hilfe externer Expertise die Personalpolitik kritisch zu beleuchten.
- **Netzwerke:** Die Teilnahme an einem Wettbewerb oder einem Zertifizierungsprozess, die Unterzeichnung einer Charta etc. bedeutet die Aufnahme in eine „Community von Unternehmen“, ein Netzwerk, das auf die Beseitigung der Diskriminierung von Frauen am Arbeitsplatz abzielt, und die Möglichkeit zum Erfahrungsaustausch.

Nichtsdestotrotz gibt es einige Herausforderungen, denen es zu begegnen gilt, um die Vorteile, die mit der Teilnahme an einer nicht-legislativen Maßnahme verbunden sind, in den Unternehmen optimal nutzen zu können.

- **Geschlechtergleichstellung als Top-Down-Strategie:** Die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern erfordert einen klimatischen Wandel der Unternehmenskultur. Unabhängig von der Qualität der gesetzten Maßnahmen ist daher das uneingeschränkte Bekenntnis des Managements erforderlich.
- **Interne Kommunikation:** Das Bekenntnis des Managements und die spezifischen Maßnahmen müssen adäquat kommuniziert werden. Obwohl Geschlechtergleichstellung eine Top-Down-Strategie ist, nimmt sie erst in der Interaktion mit den Beschäftigten Gestalt an. Daher ist eine interne Kommunikation, die die Möglichkeit der offenen Diskussion zwischen Management und Personal bietet, von großer Bedeutung.
- **Kosten:** Maßnahmen zur Förderung der Chancengleichheit kosten Geld. Dazu zählen direkte Kosten, wie die Investitionen in eine Kinderbetreuungseinrichtung, aber auch indirekte Kosten, wie z. B. die Arbeitszeit einer Person für die Koordination der Gleichstellungsmaßnahmen. Die Kosten scheinen sichtbarer und sind sofort schlagend, während im Gegensatz dazu der Nutzen der Initiativen schwieriger in Form von Zahlen abzubilden ist und erst langfristig erkennbar wird.
- **Klare Verantwortlichkeiten:** Der erfolgreiche Einsatz von Maßnahmen hängt mit der Bildung klarer Verantwortlichkeiten zusammen. Die bestens konzipierte Maßnahme wird scheitern, wenn niemand für die Umsetzung und Evaluierung verantwortlich zeichnet und überprüft, ob Ziele erreicht werden. Diese Person muss Zeit zur Verfügung gestellt bekommen, den Prozess zu managen, sowie die Macht zur Intervention haben.

### Vergleichende Bewertung nicht-legislativer Initiativen

Grundsätzlich haben nicht-legislative Initiativen für Unternehmen die folgenden Vorteile:

- Positive Anreize sind politisch leichter durchzusetzen als Systeme, die negative Sanktionen beinhalten.
- Die Implementierung von Gleichstellungsprinzipien stellt eine fundamentale Änderung der Organisationsstruktur im Unternehmen dar. Die Initiativen können dazu beitragen, die Unternehmen zu motivieren, sich diesem Veränderungsprozess zu unterziehen.
- Die Initiativen können den Nutzen aus der „Investition“ in die Förderung der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern für die Unternehmen erhöhen.



- Die Initiativen stellen eine Möglichkeit für die Unternehmen dar, die praktische Umsetzung ihrer Maßnahmen zu überprüfen und zu verbessern.
- Das Aufzeigen guter Praktiken, die im betrieblichen Alltag getestet wurden und sich bewährt haben, illustriert praktikable Lösungen.

Außerdem können solche Initiativen die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern auf die Agenda von Medien und der politischen Debatte setzen. Dies trägt allgemein zur Erhöhung des Bewusstseins für das Thema bei.

Nichtsdestotrotz haben die unterschiedlichen **Typen nicht-legislativer Initiativen** relative Vor- und Nachteile hinsichtlich Effektivität und Angemessenheit in unterschiedlichen Situationen.

**Label** können eine nachhaltige organisatorische Veränderung und eine kontinuierliche Verbesserung der Gleichstellungspolitik im Unternehmen initiieren. Der Bewertungsprozess beinhaltet klare Anforderungen und eine externe Überprüfung. Auf der Grundlage der Analyse des Status Quo werden mit Hilfe von externen Beratern Entwicklungspläne formuliert. Somit wird eine nachhaltige Organisationsreform unterstützt. Demgegenüber verursacht die externe Beratung oftmals Kosten und kann zeitintensiv sein. Da die Zertifizierung als Prozess konzipiert ist, scheint eine solche Initiative für Unternehmen geeignet, die sich einer Reform ihrer Organisationsstruktur unterziehen und eine nachhaltige Gleichstellungspolitik in der gesamten Organisation verwirklichen wollen.

**Preise bzw. Auszeichnungen** haben den Vorteil eines breiten Medienechos, sowohl für das Unternehmen als auch für die Förderung der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern im Allgemeinen. Da sie auf der Grundlage der Analyse des Status Quo basieren, stellen sie eher ein Instrument dar, die bisherigen Bemühungen des Unternehmens anzuerkennen, als einen Anstoß zu weiteren Entwicklungen. Daher sind sie auch ein probates Mittel, Unternehmen ins Blitzlicht zu rücken, die in anderen Initiativen aktiv sind (z. B. Preis für das beste zertifizierte Unternehmen). Zudem scheinen Preise auch eine gute „Einstiegsdroge“ für Unternehmen zu sein, die zwar schon Gleichstellungsmaßnahmen eingeführt aber noch nicht öffentlich gemacht haben bzw. sich noch keiner externen Evaluierung gestellt haben. Das Risiko einer Teilnahme ist für das Unternehmen gering.

Die Unterzeichnung einer **Charta** kann als missionarischer Akt interpretiert werden. Sie stellt ein starkes Bekenntnis des Unternehmens dar, im Einklang mit den Prinzipien der Charta zu handeln, die Teil der Unternehmensleitlinien werden, und beinhaltet implizit den Wunsch, andere zu motivieren, es dem Unternehmen gleichzutun. Es ist ein ideales Instrument für Unternehmen, die bereits die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter aktiv fördern und die ihre Aktivitäten vorantreiben wollen. Da eine Charta ein hohes Maß an Selbstinitiative erfordert und das Bekenntnis beinhaltet, die Prinzipien der Charta in konkrete, an die individuelle Situation angepasste, Maßnahmen zu überführen, kann sie als Mischform zwischen einer nicht-legislativen Initiative und einer eigenständigen Unternehmensinitiative gesehen werden. Diese Betonung der Selbstinitiative birgt zudem die Gefahr, dass die Charta als PR-Maßnahme gesehen bzw. als Feigenblatt benutzt wird, um das Unternehmen als sozial verantwortlich darzustellen, ohne dass konkrete Maßnahmen gesetzt werden.

**Rankings** haben den Vorteil, dass sie im Idealfall auf „harten Fakten“ und quantitativen Daten beruhen, die von externen Experten bewertet werden. Dies garantiert Neutralität, Prozesse und Entwicklungen werden aber nicht berücksichtigt. Zudem werden auch



schlechte Praktiken in den Vordergrund gerückt, was zu öffentlichem Druck führen kann, der die schlecht gereihten Unternehmen motivieren kann, ihre Personalpolitik in Hinblick auf Geschlechtergerechtigkeit zu überdenken. Rankings können als zusätzliches Instrument dienen, um den Grad der Gleichstellung bei bestimmten Unternehmensgruppen zu illustrieren, und als Monitoringinstrument. Sie bieten den Unternehmen keine Unterstützung bei ihren Aktivitäten.

Schließlich können **Kompendia guter Praktiken** als ein zusätzliches Instrument gesehen werden, um die praktische Umsetzung von Gleichstellungsmaßnahmen zu illustrieren. Da diese meist nicht auf einer „kritischen“ Bewertung basieren, handelt es sich um eine Beschreibung möglicher Wege, die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern zu fördern ohne weiterführende Prozesse in den involvierten Unternehmen zu initiieren. Nichtsdestotrotz können sie aber andere Unternehmen motivieren, ähnliche Maßnahmen zu entwickeln und umzusetzen.

### Schlussfolgerungen

Die verschiedenen Typen von Initiativen eignen sich für Unternehmensgruppen in unterschiedlichen Reifephasen in Hinblick auf die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern. Zunächst ist es entscheidend, einen Zugang zu den Unternehmen zu finden, um sie zu motivieren, Gleichstellung als Thema auf ihre Agenda zu setzen und ihr Personalmanagement extern überprüfen zu lassen. Initiativen, bei denen die Unternehmen „viel zu gewinnen, aber nichts zu verlieren haben“ und nicht gezwungen werden, sich zu stark zu verpflichten, scheinen in diesem Zusammenhang adäquat. **Preise und Auszeichnungen** haben den Vorteil, die Nicht-Gewinner nicht zu erwähnen, die Teilnahme verursacht keine Kosten und den Gewinnern sowie dem Thema Gleichstellung an sich ist ein breites Medienechos gewiss. Dieser motivierende Effekt könnte durch die Schaffung von speziellen Preisen für Neueinsteiger noch verstärkt werden.

Den nächsten Schritt könnte ein **Label** darstellen, da dieses auf eine nachhaltige organisatorische Veränderung abzielt und stark prozessorientiert ist. Ein Unternehmen, das den Zertifizierungsprozess startet, muss noch nicht einen umfassenden Gleichstellungsplan umgesetzt haben, sollte sich aber dazu bekennen, geeignete Maßnahmen zur Förderung der Gleichstellung zu konzipieren und einzuführen (im Rahmen eines solchen Gleichstellungsplans) und sich bereit erklären, sich einer Analyse des Status Quo zu unterziehen und mit der Hilfe externer Experten Gleichstellungsziele zu formulieren. Das Label stellt einerseits die Anerkennung für bereits gesetzte Bemühungen dar und verpflichtet das Unternehmen andererseits, weitere Gleichstellungsaktivitäten zu setzen.

Schließlich können Unternehmen, die bereits weitreichende, sich ergänzende Instrumente eingeführt haben, aktiv die Rolle als Modellunternehmen annehmen und andere Arbeitgeber „missionieren“ wollen, eine **Charta** unterzeichnen. Da eine Charta meist stark auf Selbstverpflichtung aufbaut und grundsätzlich weder externe Unterstützung noch externe Überprüfung beinhaltet, wird sie nur für eine Speerspitze von „fortgeschrittenen Gleichstellungsunterstützern“ adäquat sein.

Zusätzlich können **Rankings** als Monitoringinstrument dienen und ermöglichen es, auch schlechte Beispiele anzuführen, wenn die schlecht gereihten Unternehmen veröffentlicht werden. Dies kann öffentlichen Druck erzeugen, der möglicherweise zu einem internen Reflexions- und Diskussionsprozess bei den „schwarzen Schafen“ führt. Für die Unternehmen stellt das Ranking ein Messinstrument dar, wie ihre Aktivitäten im





Vergleich zu anderen bewertet werden. **Kompedia guter Praktiken** können eine ergänzende Maßnahme zur Illustration praktischer Erfahrungen sein, werden aber nicht direkt Änderungen in den Unternehmen bewirken. Daher können sie für Informationskampagnen oder im Rahmen von PR-Maßnahmen genützt werden.

In manchen Ländern werden **verschiedene Typen von Initiativen kombiniert**, um die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern zu fördern. Beispielsweise können die zertifizierten Unternehmen, die am erfolgreichsten Gleichstellungsinstrumente umsetzen, mit einem Preis bedacht werden. Es gäbe auch die Möglichkeit, den „besten Performer“ unter den Mitgliedern einer Charta auszuzeichnen. Diese Kombinationen profitieren von den Vorteilen der unterschiedlichen Typen von Initiativen.

In jedem Fall scheint es wichtig, dass die verantwortlichen Organisationen der verschiedenen Initiativen auf nationaler und europäischer Ebene eng kooperieren, um ein starkes und koordiniertes **Netzwerk** zur Förderung der Gleichstellung zu schaffen. Das Netzwerken sollte auch auf Ebene der teilnehmenden Betriebe gefördert werden, um den Erfahrungsaustausch zu unterstützen.

In Hinblick auf das **Design, die Implementierung und die zukünftige Entwicklung nicht-legislativer Initiativen** für Unternehmen zur Förderung der Gleichstellung am Arbeitsplatz, sollten einige Aspekte Berücksichtigung finden.

Betreffend den **Fokus und die Themenfelder der Initiativen** ist es entscheidend, die allgemeine Entwicklung der Gleichstellung im jeweiligen Land und die Interdependenzen zwischen den verschiedenen Interventionsbereichen zu beachten. Dies kann am ehesten von Initiativen mit einem breitgefächerten Themenspektrum geleistet werden, indem gesellschaftliche Entwicklungen durch die kontinuierliche Verlagerung des Schwerpunkts hin zu den aktuellsten Problemen berücksichtigt werden. Die spezialisierteren Initiativen haben den Vorteil, maßgeschneiderte Maßnahmen für spezifische Probleme zu fördern und eher umstrittene Themenbereiche zu betonen. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit gilt der Vereinbarkeitsproblematik: Als Voraussetzung zur Förderung vieler Aspekte der Integration von Frauen am Arbeitsmarkt ist es naturgemäß sehr wichtig, Initiativen zu unterstützen, die sich der Vereinbarkeitsthematik widmen. Aber dies birgt die Gefahr, dass Gleichstellung auf die Vereinbarkeitsdebatte reduziert und traditionelle Geschlechterrollen sogar verstärkt werden.

Um die Verstärkung von Geschlechterrollen und -stereotypen zu vermeiden, sollte mehr Aufmerksamkeit auf die Tatsache gelegt werden, dass **Gleichstellung beide Geschlechter, d. h. Frauen und Männer, betrifft**. Daher müssen Initiativen zur Förderung der Gleichstellung am Arbeitsplatz betriebliche Programme unterstützen, die beide Geschlechter einbinden. Dies gilt im Besonderen für Maßnahmen zur Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Familie. Eine verstärkte Einbindung von Männern in der Kinderbetreuung und im Haushalt wird einerseits den Frauen eine echte Wahlmöglichkeit geben, wie sie Berufs- und Familienleben kombinieren wollen und andererseits zum Aufbrechen von Geschlechterstereotypen führen. Die Einbindung von Männern ist auch entscheidend um z. B. die vertikale Segregation zu bekämpfen. ManagerInnen – meist Männer – müssen von den Vorteilen überzeugt werden, die Frauen in Führungspositionen mit sich bringen, ebenso wie männliche Kollegen eine weibliche Vorsetze akzeptieren müssen.

Da nicht-legislative Initiativen keinen Selbstzweck verfolgen, sondern die Gleichberechtigung fördern und den Grad der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern in einem umfassenden Sinn erhöhen wollen, muss sich das Konzept dieser Initiativen an



**das sich ändernde soziale Umfeld anpassen** können sowie an den Fortschritt, den die Gleichstellung verzeichnet. Diese kontinuierliche Entwicklung ist entscheidend sowohl für den thematischen Fokus der Initiativen im Allgemeinen als auch die konkrete Ausgestaltung in Hinblick auf Anforderungen, Bewertungskriterien und Zielgruppen (Unternehmenstypen und Gruppen von Beschäftigten) etc. Eine anpassungsfähige Initiative wird auch leichter über nationale Grenzen hinweg übertragbar sein.



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background and Aims of the Study

The present ‘Study on non-legislative initiatives for companies to promote gender equality at the workplace’ has its background in the Community programme for employment and social solidarity (PROGRESS). The aim of PROGRESS<sup>4</sup> is to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the area of employment and social affairs.

More specifically, the study has its context in the 2008 Annual Plan of Work<sup>5</sup> which is the strategic framework for the implementation of PROGRESS. One of the priorities set out in this plan is to give attention to gender-related issues in the field of the European Employment Strategy, including gender equality at the workplace, and of the OMC on social protection. PROGRESS supports the implementation of the policy objectives for the next five years in this area, as defined in the ‘Roadmap for equality between women and men, 2006-2010’<sup>6</sup>.

Gender equality is a fundamental right, a common value of the EU and a necessary condition for the achievement of the EU objectives on growth, employment and social cohesion. The combined efforts of the Community and the Member States genuinely helped to transform the situation of men and women in Europe. This is reflected in a steadily increasing female participation in employment and a higher level of education as compared to men<sup>7</sup>. Although female employment rates have risen strongly over recent years, women are still disadvantaged on the labour market, as labour market segregation and inequalities in working arrangements still persist. This is also reflected in a significant and continuing gender pay gap.

According to the Report on equality between women and men (2009), the employment rate, although rising and now close to the Lisbon objective of 60 % is still lower for women (58.3 % in the EU-27 in 2007) than for men (72.5 %), with major differences between Member States. Furthermore, in terms of sectoral as well as occupational segregation, the labour market is still compartmentalised because women still go into sectors and occupations already dominated by women. Public administration, education, health and social welfare are sectors dominated by women. Half of female workers have low-status and low-pay occupations. Thus, women’s high and increasing level of education is not yet reflected in their labour market positions.

There is also an under-representation of women in the decision-making process: Across the EU, in 2008, there was an average of 24 % women in all houses of the national parliaments, which is still below the so-called critical mass of 30 %, deemed to be the minimum necessary for women to exert meaningful influence on politics. At regional level, women have a stronger political voice than at national level, with reaching an average of 30 % representation in regional assemblies.<sup>8</sup> When examining the field of business, across Europe, women account for over 44 % of all workers but

<sup>4</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/progress/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html)

<sup>5</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/progress/docs/progress\\_005\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/docs/progress_005_en.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> COM(2006) 92 final

<sup>7</sup> European Commission (2009): Report on equality between women and men 2009.

<sup>8</sup> European Commission (2009): Women in European politics – time for action



they more often are employed in junior positions. For this reason, they comprise only 32 % of those considered as heads of businesses (chief executives, directors and managers of small businesses).<sup>9</sup>

Also in other aspects of work quality<sup>10</sup>, gaps between women and men persist, e.g. in reconciling professional and private life. The employment rate of women decreases by 12.4 %-points on average when they have children, while the rate for men with children is rising by 7.3 %-points. Also in the area of part-time work there is a persisting gender gap: While one woman in three (31.2 %) is a part-time worker, this is the case for less than one man in ten (7.7 %).

Since 2003, the pay gap has remained steady. In 2007 it was at 17.4 %, which means that in the EU, women on average earn 17 % less than men for every hour worked. Women's shorter, lower and less well-paid careers are also having an impact on their risk of falling into poverty.

For a long time, the **European Union** has taken **measures** and has responded with policies to reduce the imbalances in gender equality and reconcile professional, private and family lives of women and men.

The first measure which was explicitly aiming at the improvement of qualification and employment of women was the Community initiative 'EMPLOYMENT' (1994-1999) with its action programme 'NOW' (New Opportunities for Women)<sup>11</sup>. Since 1997, gender equality is an important part of the European Employment Strategy (EES). According to the Lisbon strategy<sup>12</sup>, one of its targets is to raise women's employment rate to 60 % in 2010 (from 57.2 % in 2006).

With the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005)<sup>13</sup> an integrative approach has been established aiming at coordinating the different initiatives and programmes under a single umbrella with clear assessment criteria, monitoring tools, the setting of benchmarks, gender proofing and evaluation. This marked an important change on the previous equality strategies as Community work towards gender equality has taken the form of a comprehensive strategy including all Community policies in its efforts to promote gender equality, both by adjusting their policies (pro-active intervention: gender mainstreaming) and by implementing concrete actions designed to improve the situation of women in society (reactive intervention: specific actions).

The 'Roadmap for equality between women and men (2006-2010)'<sup>14</sup> builds on the experience of the Framework Strategy on Gender Equality. Part I of the document refers to the priority areas of action for gender equality, i.e. is achieving equal economic independence for women and men, enhancing reconciliation of work, private and family life, promoting equal participation of women and men in decision-making, eradicating gender-based violence and trafficking, eliminating gender stereotypes in society, and

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<sup>9</sup> European Commission (2008): Women and men in decision-making 2007 – Analysis of situation and trends.

<sup>10</sup> European Commission (2009): Report on equality between women and men 2009.

<sup>11</sup> <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c10218.htm> (06.06.2008)

<sup>12</sup> European Commission (2004): Facing the challenge. The Lisbon strategy for growth and employment.

<sup>13</sup> COM(2000) 335 final

<sup>14</sup> COM(2006) 92 final



promoting of gender equality outside the EU. Part II deals with the improvement of governance for gender equality.

In 2007 the Commission launched the communication on 'Tackling pay gap between women and men'<sup>15</sup> to examine the causes of one of the persistent inequalities at the workplace (see above) and to identify possible ways to overcome it. In this document, the responsibility of the Member States and the social partners to close the pay gap is stressed. Different actions are foreseen such as the improvement of the legislative framework and its implementation, the exploitation of the European Strategy for Growth and Jobs, the motivation of employers to respect equal pay and the support of good practices exchange.

Since 2007, the European Union is establishing the European Institute for Gender Equality<sup>16</sup>, an agency which supports the EU institutions and the Member States in promoting equality between women and men and combating sex discrimination. The Institute will gather, analyse and disseminate reliable and comparable research data and information needed by policy-makers. It will have a documentation centre and a library which will be open to the public.

In 2008, female decision makers from around Europe launched the 'Network of women in decision-making in politics and the economy'<sup>17</sup>, a platform at EU level for successful strategies to improve gender balance in decision-making positions.

Besides the effort at Community level the **European social partners** have been active in tackling gender equality at the workplace. In March 2005 a Framework of Actions on Gender Equality was adopted. Its priority areas are 1) to address gender roles, 2) to promote women in decision-making, 3) to support work-life balance, 4) to tackle the gender pay gap. The follow-up reports provide an overview of initiatives that national social partners developed in the context of the objectives of the Framework.<sup>18</sup>

Last but not least, beyond gender equality, several broader initiatives shall be mentioned as they are tackling discrimination in a broader context impacting the situation of women at the workplace as well. The concepts of diversity management as well as CSR can be highlighted in this context. Furthermore, various projects and initiatives addressing gender inequality were launched in the framework of the European Year for Equal Opportunities.

At **national level** the European endeavours have found its counterpart. Many national laws have been adopted on the basis of the Community acquis. Moreover, the national authorities, the social partners and other players (NGOs, networks etc.) have launched various programmes and projects tackling gender equality at the workplace in different fields following a variety of approaches. One way of combating gender inequalities is the development of tools to manage measure, communicate and reward good practices of enterprises and organisations in the gender equality field. Different types of such tools have been developed at national and regional level such as labels, prizes and

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<sup>15</sup> COM(2007) 424 final

<sup>16</sup> Regulation No 1922/2006/EC

<sup>17</sup> <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/08/833&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en> (02.06.2008)

<sup>18</sup> ETUC/CES, BUSINESSEUROPE/UEAPME, CEEP: Framework of Actions on Gender Equality, Second follow-up report 2007



awards, classification of companies, charters and publications (see chapter 2 for more information) which aim

- to disseminate good practices
- to motivate other companies to adopt and implement similar measures
- to achieve a far-reaching publicity for the assigned enterprises
- to provide economic arguments for equality measures.

To put forward economic arguments to companies seems to be crucial to motivate them to sign up to such activities. Several studies have shown that activities to tackle gender inequalities and to foster reconciliation have a positive impact on the companies' economic performance.<sup>19</sup>

This shows that equality measures are not only essential to achieve better social cohesion, to fulfil the requirements of the European Commission, to achieve the Lisbon goals and to meet the macroeconomic logic of using the whole potential of the society but also follow microeconomic efficiency criteria. Therefore it seems to be crucial to further develop, disseminate and improve instruments for gender equality at the workplace.

In this context, the **study aims**:

- To create an inventory of label-type or related initiatives taken by national authorities, social partners and other stakeholders as well as of initiatives individually taken by companies,
- To analyse and compare these (types of) measures to gain better knowledge of their operation, results, effectiveness, economic and social impact and the impact on gender equality in particular, added value as well as insight into the economic and social arguments/benefits which motivate companies to sign up for label-type initiatives
- To identify and highlight good practices in the field,
- To disseminate the study results and practices by means of a conference and its proceedings

This final report gives an overview of the work carried out. It is structured as follows: The methodological approach is briefly described in chapter 1.2, chapter 2 gives an overview of non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality at the workplace and analyses the measures according to the main types. Individual company initiatives are presented in chapter 3. Chapter 4 is dedicated to a comparative analysis and assessment of the diversity of measures with a view to how they are designed, success factors and drawbacks, effectiveness, and scope of use. Conclusions on the added value of such initiatives, the appropriateness of the different types and lessons learned are presented in chapter 5. In the annex a list of all initiatives and selected in-depth case studies of initiatives and companies can be found.

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<sup>19</sup> See e.g.: Pecher Consulting GmbH (2008): Economic aspects of family-friendly measures in Austrian enterprises. Study on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Economy and Labour; Prognos AG (2003): Economic effects of family-friendly measures – cost-benefit analysis. On behalf of the Federal Ministry for Family, Seniors, Women and Youth (ed.)



## 1.2 Methodological approach

The study is structured around several interrelated working steps. The main steps and the related methodological approach are described briefly in the following.

### 1.2.1 Identification and analysis of non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality at the workplace

To promote gender equality at the workplace, public and private organisations throughout Europe have implemented tools and methods to activate enterprises to voluntarily engage in this subject, to support the implementation of gender equality initiatives at company level as well as to highlight outstanding commitments and business policies of enterprises and to disseminate good practices. In the framework of the study a focus is put on the following types of measures:

- Labels
- Prizes and awards
- Charters.

Additionally, initiatives which are based on an analysis and judgement of independent organisations but often do not require the co-operation of the respective companies, are as well taken into account, such as

- Classifications/rankings
- Compendia of good practices.

In the scope of the project an exhaustive list of all important initiatives (public and private initiatives) currently under way has been produced. Additionally, the most important initiatives having finished not before 2004 have been of relevance for the study. Emphasis has been put on labels, charters and awards with a clear gender focus. In addition, selected rankings and compendium of good practices have been included. Initiatives addressing a broader issue (e.g. CSR, Diversity) have been taken into account only if specific elements deal with gender equality or a positive impact on gender equality can be expected (mainly in countries where no specific gender related initiatives could be identified). Family-related issues have been analysed only if they do not reinforce traditional gender roles.

Concerning the geographical focus, all initiatives at national level have been analysed as well as the most important initiatives at regional level (in particular for countries with federal structures). Initiatives at European and examples of initiatives at international level have been incorporated in the study as well.

National research partners have, by means of internet research, document analysis and telephone/personal interviews with the responsible persons, gathered the required information on the relevant initiatives. The information has been collected and presented according to a semi-structured guideline (a separate completed guideline for each initiative identified). The national research partners have sent the various such files to the Austrian Institute for SME Research where the information has been checked and assessed whether the suggested schemes are relevant and match with the working definitions and the context of the study. In some cases the national partners were asked to collect further information on particular measures.



The collection process has been carried out in March and April 2009 and the results of 133 initiatives identified in the 30 European countries (including EU wide<sup>20</sup> and international<sup>21</sup> initiatives) are available and are incorporated in the analysis.

### **1.2.2 Identification and analysis of individual company initiatives**

Next to the measures mentioned above some examples of initiatives individually implemented in companies have been identified and analysed.

The interest has been focused on medium- to long-term approaches of companies comprising a set of measures and addressing equality in different fields (e. g. recruitment, training, reconciliation, etc.) rather than on isolated measures.

The companies have been selected on the basis of:

- Rankings of companies
- Publications or compendia of good practices
- References from the expert consultants in the research team
- Contacts of the national research partners.

Similar to the analysis of the non-legislative initiatives, the information has been collected according to a semi-structured guideline elaborated by the Austrian Institute for SME Research to ensure that all relevant information is gathered and that this information is delivered in a comparable way. This guideline has been adopted in a way that it contains the key information on the company but also displays similar categories as the one for analysing the general initiatives.

The focus of the analysis has been laid on multinational companies. Thus, the Austrian Institute for SME Research has carried out the field research (without involvement of national research partners). However, in the analysis of initiatives implemented by SMEs, the relevant national research partners have assisted in the field research. The field research has again been conducted by means of internet/document research and telephone/personal interviews with responsible persons at the enterprises (basically from the HR Department or CSR/Diversity & Inclusion Department respectively the owners in the case of SMEs).

A total of 24 multinational enterprises, 1 large national enterprise and 5 SMEs (the latter two categories only active at national or regional level) with outstanding activities to support gender equality have been identified and analysed. In the selection of the enterprises a balance between different sectors of activity as well as between different national backgrounds<sup>22</sup> has been accounted for.

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<sup>20</sup> Initiatives that are applicable in different countries of the European Union – not necessarily in all EU countries – have been subsumed in this category.

<sup>21</sup> Examples of initiatives that are (also) applicable in countries outside the European Union (e.g. the USA) or that are implemented by organisations located outside the EU have been subsumed in this category.

<sup>22</sup> Although the companies to be analysed are multinational, their origin traces back to national companies and reflects – at least to a certain extent – the national business culture.





### 1.2.3 In-depth analysis of selected initiatives

Out of the pool of non-legislative initiatives and of individual company initiatives examples for an in-depth analysis have been selected according to different selection criteria. Moreover, the application of balance criteria should guarantee that all types of initiatives are represented as well as different countries and different types of companies/industries.

A total of 26 non-legislative initiatives and 7 company initiatives have been analysed in-depth and are subject of case studies (see Annex 2 and 3).

The following methods have been applied for the in-depth analysis of the non-legislative initiatives:

- a detailed document analysis (e. g. programme reports, evaluation reports, application forms, articles in newspapers, business reports of participating companies which serve as examples)
- interviews (personally or by telephone) with:
  - the key players (managers of the initiative, monitoring bodies, jury members, responsible persons from involved authorities such as ministries etc.)
  - at least two companies participating in the initiative (responsible and involved persons e. g. HR manager, person responsible for gender mainstreaming or diversity issues, work council, concerned employees)

Similarly the company initiatives have been analysed in-depth through:

- a detailed document analysis (e. g. annual reports (especially the HR section or HR reports), CSR/Diversity & Inclusion Reports, company web sites, company presentations, articles in newspapers, information/reports of independent organisations)
- interviews (personally or by telephone) with:
  - the management/implementing bodies (relevant persons from the HR Department or the CSR/Diversity & Inclusion Department respectively the owners in the case of SMEs)
  - employees having participated in the initiative/one of the programmes/measures offered within the company

Also in this step of the research project, the Austrian Institute for SME Research has collaborated with its national research partners. The in-depth analysis of both the non-legislative initiatives and the company initiatives, has been conducted according to reporting templates (giving the research areas and the questions of interest for each area) to ensure a uniform procedure. Where necessary, the national research partners have been asked to raise and provide additional information. The approaches of the multinational companies have been analysed by the Austrian Institute for SME Research.





## 2 Non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality at the workplace – overview

### 2.1 Introduction

Gender equality is not only a key priority in the framework of the European Employment Strategy but also gains special interest from national authorities in the Member States of the EU and EEA. As gender inequalities persist despite the non-discriminatory legal regulations, a special focus of the active labour market policy is set on gender issues. One instrument in this context is the identification, highlighting and dissemination of good practices of companies and employers with an outstanding commitment and business policy fostering gender equality. For this purpose, different tools have been developed and initiatives have been created. In the framework of this study, initiatives are taken into consideration which measure, communicate and reward (good) practices of enterprises in fostering gender equality through using labels, prizes and awards, charters, rankings/indexes and compendiums of good practices.

**133 initiatives<sup>23</sup>** have been identified, analysed, and structured around the following five main types:

- **Label:** 22 labels have been identified in 14 countries, including 2 European ones.
- **Prize/award:** 68 prizes have been identified in almost all countries of the study, including 1 prize at EU-level and 3 prizes at international level.
- **Charter:** In 8 countries a total of 11 charters which are signed to promote gender equality at the workplace have been identified.
- **Ranking/Index:** 19 initiatives in 9 countries were attributed to the category rankings/indices. This figure includes 3 international and one EU-wide initiatives of this kind.
- **Compendium of good practice:** 19 initiatives in 12 countries are part of this category. This figure includes one EU-wide and 2 international initiatives.

Moreover, **26 initiatives** out of the 133 initiatives have been selected and analysed in-depth. The following presentation summarises key aspects based on brief descriptions of all initiatives identified as well as on those case studies of initiatives which have been selected for an in-depth analysis (the information in the boxes refer to the cases which have been analysed in detail and which are described in Annex 2).

In the following an overview of the identified and analysed initiatives is given according to the different types.

<sup>23</sup> A list of all initiatives can be found in annex 1. As 6 initiatives combine two types (e.g. ranking and prize) and therefore are attributed to more than one type, the amount of the initiatives according to type exceeds the total number of initiatives analysed.



## 2.2 Labels

In many countries, companies with an outstanding commitment for gender equality and having implemented measures promoting gender equality in the workplace are given the possibility to receive a certificate or label for their endeavour. The labelling is mostly conceived as a process and based on an audit involving elements of self-assessment and/or external evaluation, involvement of an independent jury and often the participation in a consulting process with the aim of improving gender equality within the organisation. The labels are often granted for a limited time period (e.g. for three years) and a precondition for a new labelling is the improvement of the company's equality policy. Therefore the labelling shall not be considered as the end of the process but as a sign that the company dedicates and changes continuously its corporate culture towards the enhancement of gender equality.

### Overall labels

In several countries companies are labelled if they cover a wide range of gender equality issues and take measures in various fields. Such labels with a long tradition exist in *Luxembourg* (since 1993), *Spain* (since 1994) and *Germany* (since 1997).

Many initiatives emphasise the process-related character of gender equality matters and therefore, as mentioned before, a relabeling is linked to a continuing improvement.

The German **“TOTAL E-QUALITY Prädikat”** (TOTAL E-QUALITY label) is based on a self-evaluation of the applicants via a checklist. As a basis, the application captures the current structure of the workforce and the general attitude of the employer towards equal opportunities. Furthermore, detailed information is gathered on seven fields of activities: gender specific collection of data, recruiting and hiring procedures, further training and human resource development, work-life balance, fostering equal partnership at the workplace, institutionalization of gender equality, and the public position of the employer on the topic. An independent jury consisting of experienced experts checks and verifies the self-evaluations and finally decides upon approval. Key for a positive evaluation is a successful and lasting consensus between the interests of the employer and the employees that is incorporated in the human resource policy. The principle behind the TOTAL E-QUALITY label is that equal opportunities are a matter of dynamic processes over time and not of a situation at a certain point in time. Consequently, the label is only granted for a period of three years. A sustainable and ongoing engagement of the label-carrying companies or organisations shall be ensured through the compulsory renewal process three years after the last certification. The new application has to document a constant performance or even further improvement.

A similar measure can be found in *France*. The enterprises are financially charged for the certification process which is implemented by an organisation that offers also other certifications and labels. Moreover, to foster networking among the enterprises, a club of firms which have been granted the “Label Égalité Professionnelle” (“Club du label égalité”) was created in October 2006. Following the French model, the European Fund for Professional Equality between Women and Men has been created in September 2009 by a European network of labelled enterprises to spread the vision and promote the labelling procedure as well as networking of enterprises engaged in such a process throughout Europe.



The “**Label Égalité (Professionnelle)**” (equality label) is granted at the end of the following process:

- AFNOR-Certification (an international private company) collects data from applying corporations and checks whether they meet the following requirements:
  - Integrating gender equality to the culture of the organisation, i.e.: informing managers, employees and their representatives about gender equality issues, carrying internal communication, signing an agreement on gender equality with social partners (“*Accord sur l’égalité professionnelle entre les femmes et les hommes*”).
  - Ensuring gender equality in general and HR management: i.e. to reinforce equality of access by women and men to training, and provide an analysis from indicators of working conditions and training for women and men. Organisations over 600 employees must take measures towards equal representation of women and men in governing bodies.
  - Parenthood must be accommodated with through at least two measures: organising time schedules and working conditions which are congruent with family life; jointly anticipating the departure and return of employees on parent leave.
  - Applicants must fill out reports accounting for their actions and commitments regarding those fields and enclose their “*rapport annuel de situation comparée des conditions générales d’emploi et de formation des femmes et des hommes*”<sup>24</sup> to their application.
- A division of the Ministry of social affairs (“*Bureau égalité professionnelle*” du “*Service des droits des femmes et de l’égalité*”, au Ministère du Travail, des Relations sociales, de la Famille, de la Solidarité et de la Ville) evaluates chances for the company to be awarded the label by the commission. The “*Bureau égalité professionnelle*” works together in an informal way with one or two representatives of social partners.
- A commission puts forward an opinion on whether or not the company should be awarded the label. The commission may make recommendations of improvements to companies which are granted the label. The commission consists of five representatives of the French government and social partners.
- AFNOR-Certification decides to grant or not the label to the applicant.

In *Italy* the ministry of labour has labelled organisations (enterprises, associations, NGOs, public sector organisations) with the “*Bollino Rosa – S.O.N.O. Stesse Opportunità Nuove Opportunità*” (pink stamp – S.O.N.O. same opportunities new opportunities) requiring activities in the areas of career opportunities, remuneration, work organisation and reconciliation after assessment of a commission of experts.

<sup>24</sup> In France, by law, every company with more than 50 employees must monitor their practices related to gender equality through a yearly report which is produced by social partners. For each occupation category (employee, executive, manager...) and on the basis of indicators, this report draws comparisons between the respective situations of male and female employees in terms of hiring, training, career development, qualifications, classification, working conditions and wages.



In *Luxembourg* enterprises receive the “**Agrément Ministériel du Projet d’Action Positive**” (Ministerial Agreement for Positive Actions) after having undergone an auditing process consisting of (i) an assessment of the current situation; (ii) the elaboration of an action plan; and (iii) the implementation of concrete measures (the so called positive actions) to promote gender equality at the workplace. Finally, an evaluation and follow-up takes place. The different phases of the process are:

- **Preparatory phase:** After the Committee for Positive Actions is informed on the willingness of an enterprise to engage in the initiative, information meetings are held and a collaboration convention is signed between the company and the Ministry for Equal Opportunities. A working group is established including representatives of the company management, HR, representatives of the employees, equal opportunity commissioner; of the MEGA as well as an external expert).
- The first project phase refers to an **analysis of the current situation** within the enterprise. The necessary information is – in co-operation with an external expert – collected in meetings of Ministry representatives, company owners, shop stewards as well as working groups of employees and also by means of a standardised questionnaire to be filled in by the management and all employees. The results of this analysis are presented to the jury who then decides upon eligibility of the enterprise.
- In the second phase, i.e. the **elaboration phase**, the external expert presents to the enterprise/the working groups the results of the previous analysis along the three priority spheres of Positive Actions: equal treatment of men and women, equality of women and men in decision making, work-life balance. Together with the working group the expert then elaborates an **action plan** (including a set of Positive Actions, ways for their implementation as well as time planning).
- In the **implementation phase**, the agreed Positive Actions are put into practice, the Ministerial Agreement for Positive Actions is given, and the company agrees to undertake an evaluation after two or three years.
- The last phase is the **evaluation and follow-up phase** where adaptations may be effected. The analysis of the current situation, as it had been carried out at the beginning of the auditing process, is repeated. The results are then compared and the progress is assessed.

The design and implementation of a positive action plan has been a prerequisite for being labelled in *Spain*, too. Meanwhile, such an equality plan is compulsory by law for large companies with more than 250 employees.

An example with sustainable success is the “**Entidad Colaboradora en Igualdad de Oportunidades entre Mujeres y Hombres**” (entity collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst women and men), being a part of the programme Optima in Spain. It was awarded to companies which aim at balancing the presence of women and men amongst employees, occupations and the management board, at facilitating the reconciliation of work/family, at avoiding sexual harassment and at avoiding gender non-neutral manifestation. The labelling process consisted of two elements:



- Firstly, the company had to undergo a diagnosis of its status with a view to gender equality issues in different areas (selection, training, promotion, reconciliation, salaries, etc.). This analysis process was accompanied by the Institute of the Woman, the main implementing organisation of the label, by providing a structured and detailed questionnaire. Furthermore, in order to get qualitative information and clarify the available data, a meeting between the Human Resources Department and representatives of the Institute of the Woman had to be held.
- Secondly, a “Positive Action Plan” had to be designed implemented. This plan should include training of managers on equality of opportunities, revision of the hiring, selection, promotion and training processes, work flexibility for workers with family responsibilities, and launching of awareness campaigns in order to promote gender equality. The Institute of the Woman offered all the required support, advice, training and tools so that the companies could design their own plans. Once the plans had been successfully implemented, the Institute of the Woman recognised the effort by awarding them the label “Entity collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst Women and Men”.

After being in force for twelve years, and with the publication of the Organic Law 3/2007 (known as “Equality Law”), the Optima was repealed as it was conceived as a precursor to the current Equality Law. According to the new regulation, companies with more than 250 employees are obliged to implement Equality Plans within their organisations and this is directly supervised by the Ministry of Equality. Concerning SMEs, the Ministry has put in place financial support to help those companies who are interested in applying Equality Plans voluntarily.

An example for a regional initiative is “EQ-Z-Län” (EQ-Z-County) which stands for equal opportunities in Jämtland County in Sweden. Regional companies labelled had to set up an internal working group on gender equality and have a goal-oriented work towards gender equality in working life and implement gender equality measures within several areas. Whereas this initiative finished in 2006, Malta is currently planning the launching of a label and a certification process is being developed under the initiative “Unlocking the female potential”.

### Labels for reconciliation of work and family

Based on the German “Audit berufundfamilie” (work and family audit) the “European work&family audit” has been launched in 2001 and can be also found in an adapted form considering the national framework conditions in Austria (“Audit berufundfamilie”), in Italy/South Tyrol (“audit beruf&familie – famiglia&lavoro”) and in Slovenia (“Družini prijazno podjetje”). Based on the experiences in these countries a similar label was designed and implemented in the framework of an ESF-funded project in Slovakia (“Rodina a práca - audit pre zosúladenie práce, rodiny a podpora rodovej rovnosti” – Family and Work – audit for balancing work, family and support of gender equality).



The **“Audit berufundfamilie”**, the best know initiative of its kind in Germany and with over 600 labelled companies highly successful, is designed as a dynamic process leading to sustainable improvements of the work-life balance in the audited company/organisation. The auditing process starts with a half-day strategy-workshop with the top management, followed by a daylong auditing workshop with employee representatives to capture the status quo as well as to develop concrete goals and activities to further improve the situation. The process finally leads to a written agreement signed by the top management, entailing specific activities and measures to further improve the work-life balance.

Basis for the discussions in the auditing process is a comprehensive list of around 150 criteria grouped into eight main themes. For a positive evaluation, the quantity of the offered measures is not of importance in the first place. Above all, the responsiveness of the management to identified problem areas and the corporate culture within the firm are assessed. The main themes are as follows: 1) working time: e.g. flexible working hours, adaptation of working hours to life stages, sabbaticals; 2) work organisation: e.g. team work, quality control, absence regulations; 3) work place: e.g. tele-working arrangements, job-ticket; 4) information and communication policy: e.g. internal communication policies, contact persons, family day; 5) management competences: e.g. evaluation principles, coaching, part-time management positions; 6) human resource development: e.g. individual development plans, support for re-entry after maternity or care leaves, maternity leave for fathers; 7) wage components and payments in kind: e.g. subsidies for child care, consideration of maternity leave; 8) services for families: e.g. child care, elderly care, child-friendly atmosphere.

Annual reporting and a re-audit every three years support the sustainable approach of the instrument. Outcome of the re-audit is a new set of goals and activities leading to an updated written agreement, which is reviewed at the end of the second three-year period. Once a year the audited companies are awarded in a formal ceremony.

In *Latvia* the label **“Dzimumu līdztiesības logotips”** (the logo of gender equality) has been implemented in 2007. The companies applying for the label must submit required documents to a commission which evaluates the company’s activities with a view to the following criteria: facilities for children, internal security, employees’ involvement in organisational development, availability of products and services to different customer’s groups, consideration of customer’s rights, support for events for children and families, measures for reconciliation of work and family life). The evaluation assesses the measures implemented in the different fields and if a minimum of points is achieved, the company is labelled. The status is assigned for two years and can be renewed by undergoing a new evaluation.

### Labels created in the framework of EQUAL

Sometimes labels were initiated in the framework of EQUAL-projects. In *Cyprus* **“Κανάλια Πρόσβασης”** (channels of access) focuses on women living in rural areas and aims at fostering flexible forms of employment for unemployed women. The certificate was awarded to companies after having gone through a process of self-assessment covering various issues such as policies and implementation of flexible forms of employment, benefits provided to employees, training of women, and working time arrangements. The labelled enterprises received consulting and a re-design of their employment procedures. A regional EQUAL-project in *Slovakia* **“Šanca na rovnosť”** (chance for equality) audited companies based on a survey among its employees and a management training concerning the implementation of gender equality policy, avoiding





gender stereotypes and creating a favourable working environment and atmosphere. The successful enterprises received an audit certificate.

In the *Czech Republic*, within EQUAL, the pilot phase of “*Genderové audity*” (gender audits) took place with the aim to develop a methodology of gender auditing for employers. The companies to be audited shall undergo an overall evaluation with regard to gender equality taking into account various issues such as recruitment, employment termination, male/female ratio, compensation and benefits, career opportunities, flexible arrangements, family friendly measures, workplace atmosphere and corporate culture. The current project is being implemented in Prague. Although there is no label developed by now, the procedure gives a basis for establishing one in the near future.

### Labels with a broader diversity focus

Apart from labels focussing on gender equality one label covering broader issues has been included in the analysis. The *Belgian “Label Gelijkheid Diversiteit – Label Égalité Diversité”* (label equality diversity) aims at the development of a corporate culture that fosters sustainable diversity management with focus on gender, age, ethnic origin, and political and religious conviction. As it was inspired by actions at European level and in neighbouring countries (such as the French equality label – see above), the label combines management and audit concepts and is conceived as a process. The organisations awarded with the label have to respect legislation in the field of equality and non-discrimination, develop and implement a diversity strategy, involve employees in the process of analysing and planning the diversity strategy and work on continuous improvement. The label is granted for a three-years-period after a committee has evaluated the application.

The ***Label Égalité Diversité/Label Gelijkheid Diversiteit*** (Label Equality Diversity) has been elaborated and implemented in reaction to a report by the Belgian Committee on Intercultural Dialogue that revealed discrimination in the fields of recruitment, salary and promotion.

Therefore, the objective of the label is to facilitate the development of a corporate culture that fosters sustainable diversity in terms of gender, age, colour of skin, and political and religious convictions. All types of organisations, public and private, small as well as large can apply for the label. In total, 11 fields of action within 3 areas are considered in the labelling process that is accompanied by independent consultants:

area 1 – pro-diversity culture of the enterprise/organisation:

- formulate and communicate, internally and externally, the engagement of the organisation to favour diversity and fight against discrimination;
- inform all employees about the diversity policy;
- implement a sensibilisation programme for the employees;

area 2 – pro-diversity in HR management:

- elaborate hiring procedures in favour of diversity;
- envisage specific reception procedures for new employees;
- ensure equal access to training for all employees;
- internal mobility: grant same possibilities to all employees, based on professional quality and motivation, focus on diversity in upraising procedures;
- adapt working conditions to allow persons of different target groups to perform at their best;
- analyse the reasons for voluntary and involuntary quits;



### area 3 – gender equality

- assure equal pay and equal definitions of functions;
- adapt the working conditions to ensure work-life balance

Engaging in the labelling process implies an effective and continuing investment into all these components. A success factor of the Belgian Equality Diversity Label is that the process is carried out in several phases that allow for concise planning and adaptations within the course of action where necessary.

### Labels with special focus

One example for a label focussing on one area identified as being crucial with regard to gender equality<sup>25</sup> has been launched in *Switzerland*<sup>26</sup> and is currently in the pilot phase (until the end of 2009). It aims to be applicable to any organisation around the world.

**“equal salary - Zertifikation der Lohngleichheit von Frauen und Männern”** (Certification of wage equality between women and men) provides an easy, practical and recognised analytical tool, which allows companies to promote their fair wage policy while encouraging them to test their equal compensation policies in total confidentiality. It is addressed to companies and organisations with a minimum of 50 employees and a minimum of 10 women.

The certification process is divided in two phases:

- **Phase I:** Salary evaluation by OUE (Observatoire universitaire de l’emploi) – University of Geneva

A statistical analysis of the company’s salary data is conducted in order to measure whether the wage policy of the company is fair and equitable on the basis of a so-called wage equation. The wage level of each employee can be statistically explained taking into account all those specific characteristics of the employee that are relevant in the company’s salary policy such as, for example, education, experience, seniority, function etc. If there is still wage discrimination despite taking in all the relevant variables, it can be concluded that there is a wage discrimination based on sex.

Subsequently, an “in-depth evaluation” provides the company with specific suggestions to improve its salary structure.

Once the analysis is done, OUE submits a report on the results. If the difference between the salary of men and women is smaller than 5 %, the certification process can proceed. If not, the company can improve its salary policy in order to apply for certification at a later stage.

<sup>25</sup> See e.g. European Commission (2007): Tackling the pay gap between women and men. COM (2007) 424

<sup>26</sup> Switzerland is not within the scope of this study but this initiative seemed to be of high relevance. Therefore, the initiative was analysed in-depth as a case study, but is not included in the list of initiatives in annex 1.



- **Phase II: Audit on site**

The second phase consists of an on-site audit that focuses on the company's management system. It includes an analysis at management and HR management level and interviews with employees. During the pilot phase, the audit is conducted by SGS (Société Générale de Surveillance), the world's leading certification company.

A monitoring audit takes place one and two years after the main audit. Companies have to request new certification before the expiry date of the certificate, which is valid for three years. If a certified company does not meet the standards anymore, it can lose the equal-salary label. Companies that do not renew their certification are taken out of the register and lose the right to carry the label.

## 2.3 Prizes and awards

Overall, 68 prizes and awards for companies promoting gender equality have been identified, most of them awarded annually. There are prizes in almost all European countries, there is one EU-wide award ("*European Business Award*") and there are two prizes at international level ("*Catalyst Award*", USA; "*Business Achievement Awards*"). The prizes and awards constitute by far the biggest category of non-legislative initiatives in terms of promoting gender equality in the workplace.

In general, the prizes are not homogenous with respect to their thematic focus; they rather address different targets / target groups as follows:

- Equal opportunities for women and men
- Reconciliation of family and work
- Women in leading positions
- Women in specific sectors / sectors traditionally dominated by men

Furthermore, prizes and awards have been identified which, in general, have a broader frame but are also covering gender equality issues (explicitly or implicitly) such as

- Lists of best workplaces for women – special awards in the frame of Great place to Work®
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Diversity

Many prizes use a two- or more-phases-process in order to identify the winners: In a first step, participating companies have to fill in a questionnaire or another standardised form enclosing further documents and statistical data. Usually, the documents are reviewed by a jury / committee, which may request additional information. Frequently, the process of identifying the winning company / companies includes on-site visits at the respective enterprises/organisations and interviews with the management and/or employees.

In many cases, winning enterprises are allowed to submit an application for the same prize again at a later date or after a time span of two or more years. Similar to the labels, in certain cases, enterprises are allowed to participate again if processes or projects in the field of gender equality have substantially enhanced since being awarded last time. In other cases, enterprises may submit their application again after several years, with a pre-condition of providing further development concerning the companies'



gender equality measures. In *Slovenia*, enterprises are not allowed to participate in the prize “*Managerkam prijazno podjetje*” (women managers friendly company) again if they were already once awarded with this prize. This might cause a challenge a few years later, when the pool of potential winners will have narrowed. If awarded once and not allowed to participate next time, enterprises might not pursue their measures concerning gender equality or might not enhance their processes for more gender equality in the workplace.

In some cases, prizes are also linked to labels or rankings / indices. In the frame of such rankings / indices, usually the top-ranked companies are also awarded. For instance, there is an international ranking called “*List of best workplaces*” which is applied in many countries of the world. It is conducted by the Great Place to Work® Institute, a research and management consultancy based in the USA with international affiliate offices throughout the world. In the frame of Great Place to Work®, each participating country compiles a list of the best workplaces. In some of these countries, there are special awards for listed companies which also show outstanding commitment with regard to gender equality matters.

In the following, measures in the different target areas as well as the “*List of best workplaces*” are being described in more detail.

### Equal opportunities for women and men

21 prizes throughout Europe have a strong focus on the provision of equal opportunities for women and men. This includes the elimination of traditional gender stereotypes, providing equal opportunities in the labour market, equal treatment in the workplace, equal working conditions, equal pay, equal recruiting and career opportunities / development for women and men as well as flexible working time arrangements.

In *Greece*, there is a contest “*Οι Καλύτερες 5 στις Ίσες Ευκαιρίες*” (the top 5 in equal opportunities) which is part of the Community Programme EQUAL and financed both by European and Greek public means. It identifies and awards companies which implement best practices for the promotion of equal opportunities for women and men in the workplace. Activities and measures awarded include specific practices and policies of affirmative action promoting equality, programmes for career development of female employees, programmes for the equalisation between work and personal life, committees and equality advisors, positive attitude from top-management, embodiment of equality in the existing Human Resource practices and affirmative corporate culture towards equality in the workplace. It addresses all companies operating in Greece of any size, sector or origin.

Further examples of prizes / awards addressing equal opportunities for women and men include the “*Prix Féminin de l’Entreprise in Luxembourg*” (female award for enterprises in Luxembourg) which has been awarded annually since 1993. Similar prizes can also be found in *Austria, Iceland, Hungary, Lithuania, Portugal* and *Slovenia*.

In *Austria*, since 2003 there is the “*Woman Award*”, named after the journal “*WOMAN*” which among others awards companies for special projects e.g. in the categories “equal opportunities” and “jobs and children”.

Another example is the *Cyprian* prize “*Νέοι Δρόμοι για τη Γυναικεία Απασχόληση στην Κύπρο*” (new routes for women employment in Cyprus) which focuses on integrating the principle of equality in enterprises, encouragement of women employment,



promotion of women in high ranking positions and combining family and professional life. This prize was part of the PANDORA Community Initiative EQUAL and ended in 2007.

Besides prizes / awards at national level, in some countries there are also regional or even local prizes / awards. In the *Flemish region of Belgium*, there is an “Award *Gendervriendelijke Bedrijven*” (gender friendly companies award) which is organised by COMEVA, a joint project of six Flemish magazines. It is an award for the most men-, women- and family friendly company. The choice for the most gender friendly company (profit or non-profit) is based on an internet poll. Around 2,000 people working for 600 different companies voluntarily participate in this poll. They are asked about the situation in their workplace (percentage of female managers, initiatives of management with regard to work-life balance, possibility of part-time work, flexibility etc.).

In *Germany* there are regional prizes in *Bavaria* and in *Baden-Württemberg*. In *France* there is a gender equality prize for enterprises of the region *Midi-Pyrénées* and in *Poland* there is one in the *Subcarpathian Voivodeship*. An example for a local prize is the gender equality prize awarded in the municipality *Kópavogur* in *Iceland*.

*Finland* constitutes an exception, as the country has a law (“Act on Equality between Women and Men”) stipulating that an organisation needs to have a gender equality plan if it employs at least 30 employees. The content of the Gender Equality Plan is predetermined by the law. The employer has to draw up a gender equality plan each year in cooperation with its staff and also has to implement the plan's measures each year. Even though the gender equality plan is drawn up on an annual basis, it may contain shorter or longer term objectives. The content of the gender equality plan and the implementation of its measures are primarily concerned with equal pay and other terms of employment such as working hours/times and leaves. The plan may be incorporated into the company's personnel and training plan or its occupational health and safety action plan. The gender equality plan must contain a gender equality assessment, measures for improving the situation, and a review of the results of the previous year's plan. Despite the Act, not all companies execute the Gender Equality plan. Since 2005, the content of the law was further specified and there was imposed a conditional fine if companies do not execute the plan. So far, the fine has not been imposed on any company.

In *Finland* there is a prize called “*Tasa-arvosuunnittelukilpailu*” (gender equality plan prize) which is given to companies which use outstandingly efforts in drawing up a gender equality plan. There is no other prize / award in Finland with a special focus on gender equality. In general, all companies having implemented the Gender Equality Plan are eligible for the prize, regardless of line of business. The two main criteria for the Prize are concreteness on planning and evidence that the company has met the targets.

The Gender Equality Plan must be based on the gender equality situation at the workplace. For example, it can cover the recruitment procedure, the employment of women and men in different jobs, career progress, working conditions, personnel training, reconciliation of work and family life, attitudes to gender equality as well as occupational safety and health. The plan can be drawn up by using statistical and qualitative methods, but it is also important to include information derived from practical experience.



The Ombudsman for Equality emphasises that a simple and short plan is enough if it provides concrete information about the targets and results of the company. As a whole, the awarded company needs to have enhanced gender equality in a creditable way. The most recent part of the Gender Equality Plan is the assessment of wages. This involves the examination of pay systems used and the ways they are applied. The assessment of wages is an issue which The Ombudsman for Equality pays special attention to evaluate the Gender Equality Plans.

It is also the case in other countries, that initiatives are closely connected with a special national law, although the nature of the prizes / awards is non-legislative.

Another example for such a prize is the *Icelandic Jafnréttisviðurkenningar* (Icelandic Equality Award). Every company willing to participate in the competition has to fulfil every law concerning gender equality, especially the recently approved (10/2008) “Jafnréttisáætlun” (Equality Rights Plan). Once a year, the Icelandic Gender Equality Council advertises the Gender Award. Enterprises, associations and institutes, as well as individuals, can apply directly or be indirectly suggested by third parties. The prize does not have a strict assessment protocol for measuring the most prominent efforts in solving gender equality issues, as the Icelandic Gender Equality Prize was not designed uniquely for enterprises. Therefore, there is no list of detailed criteria to attain, but rather a set of rules to follow when assessing the applications.

The first committee session is formed by about twenty members, and has the task to go through the first selection of the applications, following the above mentioned criteria. Then, a smaller committee meets in the following sessions, often asking for more information about the few applicants still in the competition. Afterwards, the committee chooses the one that clearly excels above the others. The initiators do not pursue a strict policy or very demanding criteria with a view to the participating companies, but have a more tolerant policy aiming at attracting a maximum number of companies.

The main criteria for the prize are:

- 1) The company, association or institute rigorously applies the laws related to gender equality in the workplace (individuals are exempted).
- 2) The committee prefers to award a company which achieves gender equality in all positions, including management.
- 3) The committee gathers information about the firm from third parties, associations or institutes in order to have a complete and impartial report on the applicant.
- 4) In the auditing process, the firm's culture, working time, management culture and services for families are taken into consideration.

In the frame of prizes with a focus on equal opportunities for women and men, there are also some which have a more general approach, dealing additionally with the reconciliation of family and work. One example is a Portuguese prize, which, although non-legislative, is also closely connected to a national law on gender equality (as it is the case also in Finland and Iceland).



In Portugal, the ***Prémio “Igualdade é Qualidade”*** (equality is quality prize) is a measure included in the National Employment Plan. Initially funded exclusively by the Government budget, since 2004, the prize is included in a multi-annual programme for employment, training and social development co-funded by the European Social Fund. The management of the prize is the responsibility of CITE - Comissão para a Igualdade no Trabalho e no Emprego (Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment), a tripartite body (government, employers, workers) created in 1979. Applicants are categorised into three sets, i.e. private and public companies, co-operatives and non-profit organisations, with the private and public companies classified into five categories: micro, small, medium, large and multinational firms. In each annual edition, applicants have to follow a formal submission system using a standard template and attaching a number of documents and statistical data. The general public may suggest organisations to be invited to participate in the contest and the organising commission may take the initiative of inviting entities at its discretion. There are numerous practices sought by CITE and used as criteria for awarding the prize:

- Quantitative and qualitative analyses of the circumstances of female and male employees, monitoring of development
- Non-discriminatory measures (e.g. correct non-discriminatory language, respect of human dignity of women and men in the workplace)
- HR policy promoting gender equality, equality plan
- Equal opportunities in the field of recruiting, training, pay of work of equal value
- Reconciliation of work and family life (e.g. flexible working arrangements, family support facilities, leaves, returners programmes)

The submissions are evaluated in a two-phases process. In the first phase, a team of technical evaluators checks if all required documentation (declarations concerning legal requirements, tax payments, payrolls, working time etc.) and statistical data (on employment, personnel management policies and practices, training, work conditions, etc.) are included in the submission and if the standard template is duly filled-in. The answers to the questionnaire are evaluated and a score is given to each candidate.

In the second phase, a detailed analysis of the data submitted by the applicants is performed. Concurrently, the evaluators visit the facilities of the candidates and interview the management and the workers’ representatives. The findings of these two phases are all summed up in a report which is delivered to the members of the jury. These may require additional information. The final decision is then made at a jury meeting (that may take one or more sessions). Besides the main prizes, the jury can also award honourable mentions to organisations that, though not fulfilling completely the awarding criteria, follow non-discriminating practices and use good gender equality practices which deserve public recognition. The prizes are awarded for a three-year period, after which awarded organisations can apply again. Winners and honourable mentions are entitled to use the logo.



Apart from these prizes in the field of equal opportunities for women and men, there are also special prizes in the frame of “Best Workplaces” conducted by the Great Place to Work® Institutes throughout Europe. See section below “Lists of best workplaces for women – special awards in the frame of Great place to Work®” for a detailed description.

### Reconciliation of family and work

There are 16 prizes which have its focus on reconciliation of family and work, including work-life balance, combination of parenting and working, family-friendly policies within enterprises, but also women- and family-friendliness as well as employee friendliness in the workplace.

Many of these prizes deal with the issue of reconciliation in a rather general way without explicitly addressing women to be the main target group. It is interesting to note that there are also some initiatives which directly address the issue of women and family and the problems in terms of compatibility with occupational obligations.

In *Austria*, there is a prize called **“Frauen- und familienfreundlichster Betrieb”** (women- and family-friendliest business) which awards private enterprises, non-profit organisations and public sector organisations regardless of sector and size implementing women and family-friendly measures on their own initiative. Initially being a regional competition which originated in the federal state of Styria, by and by, other federal provinces followed. In 1999, there was the first national competition. The regional competition is based on seven criteria covering all relevant measures referring to more women- and family-friendliness in the enterprise such as working time arrangements, training, maternity/paternity leave etc.. In Styria, there is an additional criterion regarding the participation of fathers. An expert jury rates the support and benefits offered by the companies.

The national competition is based on the result of the regional competitions. Only the winners of these regional competitions are eligible for participation in the national competition<sup>27</sup>. The national competition is based on a clear and transparent list of eleven criteria (that in total include 26 indicators). Each criterion is assigned with a priority level (I to III) that shall indicate the importance of the criterion for more women- and family friendliness. The criteria with the highest priority are the participation quota of women in further training, flexibility of working time, share of part-time jobs, quota of women returning to work after birth of a child, preparation of women’s return to work by the enterprise, measures of the enterprise in the field of child care and the position of women and families within the company’s philosophy and personnel policy.

An expert jury rates the support and benefits offered by the companies. There are also employee interviews in order to dispose of the employees’ point of view.

In the *United Kingdom* there are similar prizes called *“Opportunity Now”* and *“Employer of the Year”*.

<sup>27</sup> This will change in 2010, when the national competition will be upgraded into a „national award“. Then, not only the winners of the regional competition in 2009, but also all participants of the last regional competition are eligible to run for the new national award.





**“Opportunity Now”** in the United Kingdom was set up to help promote the business case for creating workplaces which fully tapped into the talents of women. There are now seven categories of Opportunity Now Awards for which organisations can submit an entry and three special awards. Any organisation within the UK can submit an application for the open awards. The seven categories of entry are:

- Advancing women in Public Service
- Advancing women in Education
- Advancing women in Business
- Champion Award
- Global Award
- The Santander Award (for 2009 the topic of this was Equality of Opportunity through Education & Learning)
- Innovation Award

The three special awards which are not open for general entry are the Female FTSE Award, the FTSE Executive Women Award and the Platinum Employer Award.

Participating organisations are required to complete an entry form and email it to Opportunity Now. There are some important criteria that employers must note in order to make their entry valid, such as a current membership of Opportunity Now or a programme/work aimed at addressing equality/diversity or inclusion with a particular focus on women. Winners of the previous years’ awards are eligible to enter providing that the entry concerns a significantly different programme/work or initiative or that the programme/initiative has significantly progressed and there is new evidence of impact.

A mandatory measure is that organisations are required to have their application endorsed by a senior representative within the business. Organisations are asked not to include their name or brand on the application form as it is important that the judging panel view each submission objectively.

The applying organisations have to provide ways how managers are accountable or made responsible for the programme and how information on the programme is communicated within the organisation. Furthermore, they have to provide information on the impact of the programme on the target group and on the organisation as a whole, evidence as to its sustainability and examples of lasting impact as well as evidence of individual and organisational learning resulting from the programme.

Once the closing date has passed, application forms are read by a short-listing panel which marks each entry against set criteria. The criteria are: clearly defined visions and goals, strongly developed business case, strong evidence of senior level commitment and demonstrable impact of the work or initiative on the business and women in the organisation. The top three entries in each award category are then asked to attend and present to a finalist panel. The winners are announced at a special gala dinner with over 500 attendees.

Both public and private sector organisations apply for the awards but the trend is for them to be larger organisations with thousands of employees. The initiatives themselves address all types of employees but popular projects are those with a theme of encouraging more women into less traditional career routes or offering more flexible working across the piece.



In *Sweden*, there is a prize which is unique insofar as it is a trade union that awards companies. When searching for relevant non-legislative initiatives to promote gender equality in the workplace in Europe, no such similar prize could be found.

In 2003, the *Swedish* prize “**Guldnappen**” (the golden pacifier prize) was initiated by Unionen, a trade union for professionals in the private sector. Guldnappen came into existence as a reaction to the fact that many of Unionen’s members had lost their jobs or been discriminated in other ways while on parental leave. The objectives of Guldnappen are to encourage companies that facilitate the combination of parenting and working, to ensure that there are no conflicting interests between work and family and thereby make workplaces family friendly. One important aspect of the project is to influence the public opinion in this matter. With Guldnappen, Unionen wants to help employers seeing opportunities instead of impediments. The prize addresses the 65,000 companies the trade union members are working in, which is within a broad range of areas in the private sector. Members of Unionen nominate their workplace on the trade union’s website where they fill in an application form. Formal requirements for participating are collective agreement and an equality plan, and the companies have to pursue workplace equality audits, and annual wage surveys to prevent differences in wage between men and women (which is an obligation of all firms in Sweden with ten or more employees).

When nomination is closed, a project team of internal experts from Unionen takes a closer look at all companies that fulfil the obligations. The team scrutinizes how the equality plan is handled, and how visible and trustworthy the gender equality work is in practice. The team inspects how close the work place cooperates with the trade union and the support of the management in the matter, and then presents a few potential winners to the management of Unionen who finally appoints first, second and a consolidation prize. All nominated companies are honoured with a diploma, and nominees that do not have a satisfactory equality plan are contacted by the management with the aim to help them in their work.

Every year, Guldnappen has a different theme related to actual issues within the work of Unionen. The theme of 2008 was the role of males in companies; in 2009 the theme was leadership, as business managements have much power when it comes to norm-setting in companies. It is worth mentioning that in 2008 there was no winner as the management did not consider anyone nominee a creditable winner.

In *Denmark*, the prize “*Balancedagen*” (the balance day) awards best practices concerning work-life balance. Enterprises to be considered for the prize have to describe their efforts in achieving a better work-life balance and have to focus on their work-life balance goals and policies as well as activities and results. The prize is awarded in three categories: family-friendly enterprise – best at work-life balance; family-friendly manager; and family-friendly enterprise – upcoming star. The prize is awarded by the Centre of Work Life Balance (CBAF) in Kokkedal.

Similar prizes addressing work-life balance can also be found in *Slovakia, Estonia, Spain, Hungary, Norway* and *Germany*. Some prizes are also supported / (co)funded by EQUAL and ESF, including *Cyprus*, as well as *Germany*.

A very interesting point regarding prizes for reconciliation of family and work are the prizes in some of the former socialist Central and East European countries. Full time employment for women was standard in socialist times, as education was seen to be a public duty due to ideological backgrounds. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, social



services were cut and women were relegated into traditional roles. In Hungary and the Czech Republic measures combating gender inequalities in the workplace are often connected with the reconciliation issue. There are the following prizes for companies which are active in the field of reconciliation of family and work.

In *Hungary*, by establishing the prize “**Családbarát munkahely díj**” pályázat (family friendly workplace award), the government realised that the fulfilment of work-life balance is not simply an individual goal, but also a societal target. The award was announced for the first time in the year 2000 by the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs. Since 2006, the working group ‘Reconciliation of family and work’, operated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and consisting of NGOs, is also actively participating in the evaluation and development of the competition. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour publishes the call for application each year.

The call for application concentrates on the following categories of companies and institutions: micro enterprises, small enterprises, medium-sized enterprises, large companies, public institutions and non-profit organisations. Until 2007, the following fields were evaluated by the experts: working time, training, reintegration (women) after parental leave, subsistence of childcare institutions, available allowances, and employees’ security. In 2008, the call for application became more comprehensive, and now includes gender (in)equality in the workplace.

The questionnaire for the applicants is about the enterprises’/institutions’ family friendly measures in the following areas: employee-related information, equal opportunities in the workplace (e.g. knowledge of legal duties, use of affirmative actions), family friendly policies and practices (flexible organisation of work, measures for creating work-life balance), organisational strategy for setting up family friendliness and appearance of family friendliness in the company communication. The submission of the application is completed by an examination on the spot that entails an interview with the (top) manager of the company or the leader of the organisation, and also with employees. An independent team of experts selects the best enterprises/institutions. Final decision is made by a committee, and since 2008, local monitoring is also part of the decision making process. A detailed list regarding the evaluation process and dimensions is downloadable together with the application form. The winners of the competition are entitled to keep the ‘Family-friendly workplace’ title and award for a year.

The *Czech Republic* seems to face similar challenges like Hungary, as child care facilities were disappearing in the 1990s and it became common for women to spend many years on maternity leave which until now has an enormous effect on their professional careers.

The *Czech* prize is called “**Firma roku: rovné příležitosti**” (company of the year: equal opportunities). It addresses both work-life balance but also women in management (see the following section regarding women in leading positions). The initiative is supposed to motivate companies to start implementing equality measures especially targeting work-life balance for both parents, but also the representation of women in management. At a more general level, it also targets to influence discourses about women and motherhood and work, since it is still the prevailing opinion that women have to choose either children or career and that a mother has to stay home with her child at least for three years.



The main organiser is Gender Studies, a public non-profit organisation. An open call for applications is announced at the beginning of the year and it gives companies over half a year to consider participation and fill in the mandatory questionnaire. Some companies are approached actively by the Gender Studies team and they are offered on-site presentation on the working principles and possible benefits.

There are no minimum criteria for companies to participate. It gives opportunity for everybody to try and receive feedback on how they are doing. Also there is a special award called “good start” which is supposed to motivate companies which recently started with their programmes and activities.

Fields which are evaluated include company environment (gender audits, statistics, surveys, programmes for women – mentoring etc., targeted recruitment), position of men and women (female/male ratio at different levels), work-life balance strategies and their development over time, marketing, Corporate Social Responsibility (until 2008) and processes of dealing with complaints, fair remuneration, women in management (since 2009). There are also cross-cutting themes such as innovative character, female representation in managerial positions in relation to all female employees, measurability of initiatives in place, communication within the company about their equality programmes, gender diversity and transferability to other companies.

In a first step, the company sends the completed questionnaire to the Gender Studies team. All information from the questionnaire is verified by a personal interview. If there is a comparison possible with a questionnaire from the previous year(s), companies need to show significant progress. In a second step, a short-list of eligible companies is presented to the jury, which changes every year and consists of representatives of different fields (gender experts, social scientists, PR experts, HR experts). The jury identifies the winner by taking the following aspects into account: development of equality policies, innovativeness, transferability to other companies, communication within the company, measurability of results and level of gender diversity.

Apart from these prizes in the field of reconciliation of family and work, there are also special prizes regarding this matter in the frame of “Best Workplaces” conducted by the Great Place to Work® Institutes throughout Europe. See section “Lists of best workplaces for women – special awards in the frame of Great place to Work®” below for a detailed description.

### **Women in leading positions – breaking the glass ceiling**

A special category among prizes / awards recognising efforts on gender equality in the workplace is awarding enterprises which implement initiatives in order to increase the number of women in leading positions. In contrast to the above described initiatives on reconciliation of family and work, this category stresses the support of women in the workplace. Overall, the five prizes identified cover fields like women in management, leadership and board positions as well as increasing the share of female managers.



In *Denmark*, *Germany* and *Slovenia* there are several prizes awarding enterprises which have made outstanding efforts to increase the number of women in management positions.

In *Slovenia*, there is a prize called **“Managerkam prijazno podjetje”** (women managers friendly company) which is part of a larger programme of activities carried out by the Managers’ Association of Slovenia. As a part of this association, the Section of Women Managers is conducting the competition for this prize. The main objective of the initiative is to highlight the importance and role of women leaders and managers, both in the company and in society in general.

Each year, the Section of Women Managers sends out a call for applications in the MQ Magazine, the Managers’ Association e-news, and on the Women Managers Section website. Managers’ Association members who potentially meet the selection criteria are directly asked to participate. A candidate for the award may be any company in the group of medium or large enterprises that is doing business in the Republic of Slovenia. Exceptionally, the award may also be given to professional, scientific, educational, or similar institutions that are, through their achievements, contributing to the promotion of women in management positions.

A candidate company must meet the following conditions: It has to employ females for more than one third of its managerial and leadership positions (General Director, Management Board, Executive Director), it must have at least 50 employees, it has to show a trend of growth over the previous three years and it has to demonstrate successful business results according to indicators used in their financial statements. The candidate companies must fill in an extensive questionnaire that consists of both quantitative and qualitative elements of business assessment. The quantitative data in particular include operating financial results for three years. Qualitative data are based mainly on the description of the career development of three to five females in managerial and leadership positions in the company. These individuals need to respond to the questionnaire by themselves, describing the development of their professional careers in the respective company. The qualitative part of the questionnaire is set in a manner that identifies potential problem areas of gender inequality (e.g. wage gap). The company has to describe how it creates conditions for optimum development of female managers’ careers.

Some companies participate year after year and express a high degree of persistence in their efforts to achieve the award. However, competition is rigorous. Once a company receives a prize, it cannot apply again. The evaluation commission consists of six members. For the assessment process, they receive comparative analyses of the nominations. It is important to stress that the evaluation process is secret; only the commission receives the information, and it is not known which companies are candidates for recognition. The Governing Board of The Section of Women Managers then decides on prize recipients based on the commission opinion. The prize is awarded at the spring meeting of the Managers’ Association to draw attention to those companies who recognise the important role that women managers play. In addition to the award, which is given to the company’s general managing director, each individual female candidate (three to five candidates from the winning company) receives her own miniature prize.

*Norway* has a prize called **“Landbrukssamvirkets likestillingspris”** (gender equality prize of the Federation of Norwegian Agricultural Co-operatives) which has the objective to award companies which have good results in gender equality, especially regarding the



number of women in management and board positions. This concerns organisations / companies within the Federation of Norwegian Agricultural Co-operatives (FNAC).

Another way to publicise the issue of gender equality in the workplace, is to not only award companies with a high commitment in implementing positive measures, but to also reproach companies which do not pursue gender equality in the workplace and make this public.

In *Denmark*, there is a very remarkable prize called “**K2 prisen & K2 næsen**” (K2 reward & K2 reproach). The K2 reward and K2 reproach is an integrated part of the K2 network’s efforts to increase the number of women managers in the Danish media sector. The K2 network is a network of women in journalist or journalist-like jobs that are or wish to become managers in the media sector. The background for establishing the network in 2006 was the gender gap in management, especially in top management, in the Danish society in general and in the media sector in particular. Moreover, the founders of the K2 network perceived managerial practice in the media sector as outdated and out of sync with the professionalization of management.

The K2 reward/reproach consists of two awards. The K2 reward is awarded to a person or media enterprise that has put extraordinary efforts into promoting women in top management. The K2 reproach is awarded an enterprise that has done nothing or the opposite of promoting women in management, and/or has taken actions or submitted statements discouraging equal representation. Candidates for the reward/reproach are suggested by the members of the K2 network. Thus, the background for nomination is experience at first hand by female journalists in the Danish media sector. The nominators remain anonymous. The candidates suggested and the reasons and arguments for nomination are evaluated by the K2 network steering committee, and the names of the nominated are published in a press release.

The K2 steering committee then selects a total of six candidates, three for each award. The reward is a sculpture and the reproach is a diploma and a placement on the “K2 observation-list”. Candidates are invited to participate in the award ceremony. To stress the responsibility of management, the reward/reproach is presented to top managers of media enterprises. Following the presentation of the reward/reproach, the winner/loser is invited to thank/excuse/explain/discuss the granting of the award. This is followed by a debate on the unequal distribution of gender in management in the media sector.

The reward/reproach is not awarded solely on the basis of strict criteria. One of the purposes of the reward/reproach is to have a direct or short term impact on the representation of women in management. The strategic element is, of course, especially taken into consideration when K2 presents the reproach. Therefore, in practice the reward/reproach is presented according to the criteria mentioned in point one below in combination with a more “soft” qualitative assessment based on the issues mentioned in point 2 to 4.

1) The reward/reproach is granted to enterprises and top managers that have done the most/least for a more equal representation, have/have not taken action, have created results/have developed in the “wrong” direction, recognise/do not recognise equal representation as important or have submitted statements promoting/discouraging a more equal gender representation in management, especially top management.



- 2) The documentation of the survey on the gender representation in the management of Danish Media enterprises is taken into consideration in nominating candidates.
- 3) The reward/reproach is awarded on the basis of coherent reasoning and arguments.
- 4) The presentation of the reproach takes the importance of the media enterprise into consideration, aims at highlighting possible double standards (whether conscious or unconscious), should spark debate and increase the chances for more women in top management in the short term.

### Women in specific sectors / sectors traditionally dominated by men

There are ten prizes awarding companies which explicitly support women in sectors where they are underrepresented, including technology, IT, science, research and finance. It is interesting to note that especially the *United Kingdom* and *Austria* have prizes covering this thematic issue.

In the *United Kingdom*, there are four awards covering different sectors of the economy being traditionally “male” dominated. The “*GCS Women in IT Award*” recognises the efforts of organisations which enhance opportunities in IT roles. It mainly addresses organisations having a large number of employees. Furthermore, the “*Working Families and UKRC Women in SET Award*” is specifically designed for employers in science, engineering, technology and the built environment who understand and are addressing the issues and work-life balance barriers faced by women who are underrepresented in this sector. The prize is implemented by the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology. Another prize which is planned to be coming into existence is the “*UKRC Quality Mark*” which will be launched in late 2009. The purpose of the prize is to help organisations (enterprises, research councils, institutes etc.) to make progress towards good gender equality practice for women in science, engineering and technology. Participating organisations are expected to have management commitments to gender equality, equitable recruitment, pay and promotional processes and evidence of social responsibility in practice.

Furthermore, the *United Kingdom* has a prize called “*Investor in WISE award*” which is implemented by the organisation WISE (women into science, engineering and construction). WISE was founded in 1984 following a call by the Engineering Council for more girls to consider an engineering career. Among others, the main aims of WISE is to promote science, engineering, technology (SET) and construction as suitable career choices for girls and women and to encourage young women of 19 and under to value and pursue science, engineering, technology, maths or construction related courses in school or college. WISE collaborates with government, educators, industry and the armed forces in those objectives and innovates and pilots models, tools and approaches. The investor in WISE Award is made to a national company or organisation most supportive of WISE and the promotion of women in science, engineering and construction in the UK.



The invitation to apply runs in a window between April and November. There is a formal application form including the following questions:

- Give details of activities within your organisation which promote science, engineering and construction to young girls and women generally.
- Give details of activities to encourage women to join your company or organisation.
- Give details of activities specifically supportive of women engineers and scientists you employ i.e. mentoring, networking etc.
- Give details of how you support the WISE campaign (providing role-models, sponsorship, help-in-kind etc).
- If your organisation were to win the Investor Award, how would you publicise it?

The awardee is selected on the strength of the application form. The decision is reached by the Executive Director of WISE in collaboration with a small committee of representatives from companies supporting the award. These individuals change with each award and each year. No one is turned away based on the criteria and there is a more tolerant policy for entry. WISE prefers to have a wide appeal and to attract a maximum number of companies. The Investor in WISE award attracts larger companies. Large companies are better at raising the profile of WISE and are considered to have more cutting edge initiatives.

The awards participants are judged on the quality of the bid and the initiative. At the very core of the criteria is that the organisation must give evidence of providing a positive working environment for women but the activity which acts as a vehicle could be wide ranging. The application is assessed and then the applicant interviewed if necessary.

In *Austria*, there are three prizes awarding enterprises or institutes in the fields of R&D, technology and IT: The “*Staatspreis für Chancengleichheit in F&E*” (state prize for equal opportunities in R&D) will be awarded for the first time in 2009. The goal of the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology (BMVIT) is to highlight measures at enterprise level which contribute to an improvement of equal opportunities in R&D. Among others it aims at the improvement of the framework conditions for women and men in R&D and changing the culture of R&D in favour of equal opportunities. The special prize “*Gelebte Chancengleichheit in der IT*” (“Living equal opportunities in the IT sector”) is awarded in the framework of the “ebiz e-government award”. It awards enterprises, institutions and initiatives in Austria which are providing equal opportunities for women and men, eliminating gender stereotypes in the IT sector and meeting the needs of women and men by providing tailored measures.

The most renowned prize in *Austria* concerning gender equality in non-traditional professions is the prize “*amaZone*” (amazone). Established in 2000, the motives to create the prize are to award enterprises which are training girls in non-traditional professions and to support girls who want to get trained in technical professions. The prize is intended to create a win-win situation both for enterprises and girls. One of the main objectives is to present outstanding firms where female apprentices are trained. One further objective is to convince industrial and technical enterprises that it is a profitable step to train women.





The amaZone prize is awarded by the association sprungbrett. The main objective of sprungbrett is to support girls during the process of occupational choice in order to broaden the spectrum of possible careers. By doing that, sprungbrett helps to reduce the impendence of unemployment and to increase the chance of adequately utilising the girls' qualifications in the labour market. amaZone is an award for enterprises in Vienna and the bordering districts. The prize is awarded once a year. After interested enterprises have filled in the application form, sprungbrett identifies eligible enterprises. Two consultants and two trainers are visiting the training places and interview both trainers and female apprentices. A female jury consisting of experts in the fields of economy, politics, labour market policy and media is deciding on the ranking, nomination and winners by taking into account interview transcripts with all involved enterprises and persons. The day of awarding the prize is divided into two parts: In the morning, enterprises present their company and interested girls have the possibility to attend workshops. In the afternoon, there is the award ceremony which in 2009 was held in the City Hall of Vienna.

The prize is addressed to SMEs (up to 150 employees), large scale enterprises (150 employees and more) and public enterprises as well as enterprises financed or controlled by public funds (e.g. educational institutions, municipalities, chambers, ministries). They must train one or more female apprentices in non-traditional girls' professions (according to a list of professions provided by sprungbrett). The prize also addresses female apprentices in professions which do not correspond to traditional vocational career choice of girls. These are professions which have a share of female apprentices lower than 40 %. In general, firms have to fulfil the promotion and quality standards of vocational training for girls in technical professions and have to provide an adequate working atmosphere, in particular as assessed by the female apprentices.

Prizes are also found in the Northern countries *Norway* and *Sweden*: In *Norway* there is the "*Kunnskapsdepartementets likestillingspris*" (Ministry of Education and Research gender equality award) which is awarded to an institution, faculty, department or (private) research institute that has adopted action plans for gender equality and made significant achievements to improve gender equality in their workplaces. In *Sweden*, there is "*Annas Jämställdhetspris*" (Anna's equal opportunities prize) which addresses good practices in gender equality and opportunities in enterprises in the banking and financial sector.

### **Lists of best workplaces for women – special awards in the frame of Great Place to Work®**

Six prizes (five national prizes/rankings and the international initiative as such) have been identified which are awarded in the frame of Great Place to Work®. The Great Place to Work® Institute is a private research and management consultancy based in the USA with international affiliate offices throughout the world, including the European countries *Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands* and *United Kingdom*. The Great Place to Work® Institute Europe is committed to support its European affiliates in their efforts to help enterprises and other organisations across all sectors to achieve lasting improvements in their workplace relationships that produce measurable business benefits. In each participating country, a list of best workplaces is organised each year.



In some countries, such as *Austria*, *Portugal*, *Denmark* and *Germany*, there are special prizes / awards for gender equality issues. Companies listed as “Best Workplaces” are additionally awarded when they show outstanding commitment concerning the promotion of gender equality in their workplaces.

In the process of identifying “Best Workplaces”, there are two instruments used for the evaluation of applying companies in each country:

- The Trust Index© is an employee survey tool that measures the level of credibility, respect, fairness, pride, and camaraderie within the workplace, i.e. the five dimensions that correspond with the Great Place to Work model. Employee responses to this instrument comprise the majority of an organisation's score for the Best Workplaces lists.
- The Culture Audit© is a management questionnaire that is utilised to gain a better sense of the overall culture of the organisation. It also includes a series of open-ended essay questions designed to show the distinctive, unique or unusual aspects of the company's workplace and culture. This part also includes a specific question on gender equality. Applicants are asked to present the way in which gender equality is supported in the context of payment, professional development of women and work-life-balance.

The company selection process is primarily based on the employees' responses to the Trust Index©. In addition, support materials submitted by the company are evaluated, including the company's response to the Culture Audit©, as well as information gathered from other reputable sources such as media stories about the company.

In *Austria* and *Portugal* there are special prizes awarding companies that are great workplaces for women: In *Austria* this special prize is called “*Bester Arbeitgeber für Frauen*” (best employer for women).

In *Portugal*, there is the prize “***Melhor Empresa para Trabalhar para Mulheres***” (the best company to work for women). As already mentioned, it is part of the broader initiative “Best Workplaces in Portugal” in the frame of the Great Place to Work® listings. The latter started in 2000 when the originator of the initiative in the USA decided to extend it to Europe. Actually, Portugal was the first European country to inaugurate the initiative, followed by Denmark, the UK and Italy in 2001 and the other western countries in the following years.

In Portugal, a list of 30 “Best Workplaces” is organised each year. Since 2006, within the listed companies, a special prize for the “Best Company to Work for Women” has been established. The application process is open to all companies and registration is available on the internet. The organisations submit their application spontaneously or after being recommended by one of their employees. Each year, eligibility criteria are checked and registration is formally accepted for a maximum of 100 organisations. The selection process is primarily based on the employees' responses to the survey mentioned above. In addition, support materials submitted by the company are also evaluated, including the company's response to the Culture Audit©, as well as information gathered from other reputable sources such as media stories about the company. The level of trust, pride, and camaraderie within the workplace is measured on the basis of the survey tool and a score is given to each of the participating companies. This score is used to rank the companies. Every company participating in “Best workplace in Portugal” automatically also participates in “Best workplace for women”, as the questionnaire includes special questions regarding gender equality.



In the frame of the Great Place to Work® listings of “Best workplaces”, there are also other special prizes: *Denmark* has a special prize concerning the reconciliation of family and work called “*Specialpris: Work-life balance*” (special award: work-life balance). In *Germany*, there is the award “*Chancengleichheit der Geschlechter*” (equal opportunities for women and men), which points out convincing and effective commitment in the fields of compatibility of family and work and the support of the professional development of women.

### Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and diversity

Apart from prizes directly addressing companies’ activities in the field of gender equality in the workplace, there are also eight prizes in a broader context, such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or diversity. Prizes described in this section may meet one of the criteria as follows:

- Although having a broader context these prizes are featuring specific elements directly referring to gender equality in the workplace.
- Although having a broader context and not addressing gender equality in the workplace directly, the activities of companies awarded with these prizes may as well have an impact on gender equality.

The latter is mainly relevant for countries where prizes for companies specifically targeting gender equality do not seem to exist like in *Ireland*.

In the field of **CSR**, there are prizes in *Ireland*, *Austria*, *Slovakia*, *Lithuania* and *Liechtenstein*. Except of *Ireland*, in all these countries there are special categories addressing gender equality directly: In *Austria*, “*TRIGOS – Die Auszeichnung für Unternehmen mit Verantwortung*” (TRIGOS – the award for enterprises with responsibility) includes the category “workplace” which criteria are in line with gender equality issues. Additionally, within TRIGOS there is also a special prize sponsored by Microsoft which for the year 2009 has been dedicated to “equal opportunities for women and men” (including gender equality, work-life balance, facilitate women’s access to professions dominated by men, further education etc.). In *Slovakia*, there is the prize “*Via Bona Slovakia Award*”, which has one category “award for responsible approach to employees” including aspects of gender equality. *Liechtenstein* has a prize called “*Chancengleichheitspreis*” (equal opportunities prize) awarding among others also projects in areas of gender equality. Between 2003 and 2005, there was a focus on awarding the “women and family friendliest enterprise”.

There are also CSR-prizes which address activities in the field of gender equality in the workplace in a more indirect manner: In *Lithuania*, there is the category “enterprise of the year” in the framework of the prize “*Nacionalinio atsakingo verslo apdovanojimas*” (“national responsible business award”), which awards enterprises providing safe, healthy and attractive working conditions for example concerning compatibility of family and professional duties, equal opportunity policy and its implementation as well as clear remuneration systems. In *Ireland*, there is the “*President’s Award for Corporate Social Responsibility*” where in the category “workplace” recognition is given to best practices by employers for CSR projects in relation to HR policies on work-life balance, staff diversity etc.



In the field of **diversity**, there are also two prizes which have a focus on gender related issues: In the *United Kingdom* there is the “*MX Award for Diversity and Inclusion (Manufacturing Excellence Awards)*” which specifically focuses on gender equality in occupations where women are currently underrepresented. It includes monitoring procedures in the field of work-life balance and equality and diversity training. Furthermore, in *Denmark*, there is “*MIAPRISEN - Mangfoldighed i Arbejdslivet Prisen*” (MIA Award - diversity in the workplace award) which awards companies promoting diversity, including gender matters. The prize is co-funded by the PROGRESS programme and is seen to be the most important and recognised award regarding workplaces and quality of work in Denmark.

## 2.4 Charters

The commitment to promote gender equality can be shown by signing a charter. The charter states the common values of the signed who declare to act according to the requirements of and in line with the goals of the charter. Normally, the activities and progress of the members concerning the core concepts of the charter are not assessed or controlled by external bodies. It is up to each signing organisation in which way it supports the charter’s aim. In many cases the charters are not signed by enterprises only, but involve key stakeholders like ministries, regional governments, business organisations, trade unions, public employment services, NGOs etc. Apart from general charters aiming at gender equality in working life in general, most of the charters have a special focus.

The **reconciliation of private and family life** is the concern of the signed enterprises of the *German* “*Gemeinsame Erklärung Erfolgsfaktor Familie*” (charter of success factor family). The enterprises have to be member of the “Network Success Factor Family” and declare by signing the charter that a family friendly management is part of their corporate culture, that they make efforts for a better work-life-balance and that they promote the positive effects of family friendly measures. Launched in 2008, more than 800 enterprises support the initiative up to now and are listed on the internet.

In *France*, the “*Charte de la Parentalité en Entreprise*” (charter for parenthood in the workplace) has been signed by 120 companies, public administrations and non-profit organisations with the aim to change perceptions and behaviour towards pregnancy and parenthood in the workplace. By signing the Charter, organisations make commitments:

- to change perceptions by informing managers and HR staff on parenthood challenges and by communicating towards employees about the commitment of the organisation;
- to allow work-life balance and ensure adequate working conditions to childbearing employees;
- to ensure the absence of discrimination related to career development in HR and managing practises.

The charter is mainly signed by big companies, HR consultants and companies whose activity is connected to parenthood. Although the charter relies on a “self-censorship” from the signed companies, in 2009 the initiators decided to launch a barometer which is meant to be updated every year. Employers are asked about their concrete actions taken in favour of work-life balance and employees shall consider to which extent their needs in terms of work-life balance are met by the companies.



In the *UK*, two charters deal with **women in science and technology**. The approx. 70 “CEO Charter” signatories demonstrate a commitment from the CEO and top management to implement a positive culture change to increase the participation and progression of women in science, engineering and technology (SET). This entails to actively support the increase of women in SET, to develop and communicate the business case for gender equality within their company, to promote their approach and to develop clearly defined strategies and implement practices. To this aim, the enterprises have set measures such as taking part in benchmarking surveys, assessing their company culture, setting up mentoring and networking schemes and offering gender equality staff training. 35 universities and research institutes have signed the “*Athena SWAN Charter for Women in Science*”, an initiative originally developed in the framework of EQUAL, and include therefore six principles in their action plan: to address gender inequalities, to tackle the unequal representation of women in science, to examine the implications of absence of diversity at management level, to address the high loss rate of women in science, to recognise the negative consequences of the system of short term contracts for women and to consider the structural obstacles to women in an academic career. A similar memorandum signed by different stakeholders (among them business organisations, trade unions and individual companies) in *Germany* supports the increase of women in the fields of mathematics, informatics, sciences and technology.

Besides these initiatives tackling the **horizontal segregation of the labour market**, in *Denmark* five private and five public employers drafted a charter dealing with the **vertical segregation**. The ministry for gender equality launched the charter as no consensus on gender quotas had been reached in parliament and the political majority seemed to favour measures supporting initiatives which can be followed by voluntary means.

The “*Charter for flere kvinder i ledelse*” (charter for more women in management) has been signed by 64 mostly large enterprises who commit themselves to undertake concrete efforts to bring more women into management positions, more specifically

- to prepare a plan or strategy to attract more women into management positions or maintain an equal balance and to launch initiatives to this end;
- to develop and set goals and/or target figures for the number of women in management, for the proportion of women at selected executive levels to be achieved within a fixed time period or for the proportion of women in talent pools or in the management pipeline;
- to support a human resources policy that promotes equal career opportunities for women and men;
- to ensure that appointment and recruitment procedures help identify women with leadership potential and thus attract both women and men candidates in internal and external recruitment drives;
- to set a minimum number of women candidates if the company uses head-hunters for management recruitment;
- to create conditions for women to develop their careers through networks, mentoring programmes and other targeted initiatives;



- to share experience and results of initiatives launched on the basis of the charter, for example, by submitting contributions to the Minister for Gender Equality's theme page on women and management on the Internet.

The charter should be both flexible and binding for enterprises; therefore, every enterprise has to set specific goals. Targets and the means to reach these targets are formulated by the enterprise, in collaboration with the Department of Gender Equality, and described in a baseline-report. The enterprise is expected to submit a report on the progress of its activities every second year. Thus, the enterprises having signed the charter are obliged to initiate programmes promoting more women in management and to evaluate the measures set.

A **regional initiative** in Bourgogne in *France* resulted from EQUAL and addresses various gender equality aspects. Several organisations took part in a reflection which resulted in the elaboration of several charters: public administrations for employment, career advice and training; universities; local authorities and employer organisations.

The *French "Chartes régionales égalité et mixité professionnelles"* (regional charters for gender equality and gender-mixed work) are regional networks of charters aiming at promoting equality between women and men in the labour market as well as gender-mixed work. By signing one of the charters, organisations become part of a network which works in favour of gender equality. The regional charters have been initiated by a non-profit organisation, Féminin Technique (FETE). FETE was founded in 1991 to promote gender equality on the labour market and in the workplace and to help labour market actors to achieve this. One of the main axes of this objective is the promotion of gender diversity in education, training and job positions.

The "Charte égalité et mixité professionnelle" was the outcome of an EQUAL project and was launched in May 2005. FETE aims at involving all organisations having an impact on career design and job searching: private corporations, trade unions, schools, universities, job training organisations, career advice or counselling organisations, public job centres, private temp agencies, local government authorities.

Before an organisation signs the Charter, FETE conducts an interview with the person in charge of HR in order to make an account of actions which were settled by the company so far. Commitments taken in the signed charter can be adapted to the signing organisation. A specific model of charter was designed for trade unions in order to address their specific issues. Organisations designed a particular text for their charter with FETE as they were not satisfied with existing models of charters. Some of them suppressed the engagement about work-life balance of employees which was suggested in their model: they considered that work-life balance is not an issue which must be addressed by employers.

Signing organisations may also conduct their own promotion actions about their signing the charter. For example, the commitment of a city in favour of gender equality through the charter was mentioned in the media as it signed the charter in a public and formal context: the charter was signed at the end of the first "Techni'Femmes"<sup>28</sup> which took place in the city with other signing organisations.

<sup>28</sup> FETE organises "Techni'Femmes", an event which targets women looking for a job or wishing to change careers as well as female students. During this event, corporations from industrial sectors open their doors to women so they can discover technical job positions which are traditionally held by men.



Examples of regional charters with a **broader approach** are the “*Charte de la Diversité de la Région Wallonne*” (diversity charter of the Walloon Region) in *Belgium* and the “*Antidiskriminačná dohoda*” (antidiscrimination charter) in two regions of *Slovakia*. Almost 100 Walloon enterprises have signed the charter which includes commitment to diversity management and non-discrimination principles and actions supporting this. The Slovakian initiative was co-financed by ESF and the enterprises followed gender equality and antidiscrimination trainings and signed the charter to take responsibility to implement the appropriate measures within their organisation.

## 2.5 Rankings

Rankings of companies can be defined as the result of a comparison of enterprises based on the assessment of different criteria. Often such criteria are concentrated in an index. It can be distinguished between rankings which are based on the analysis of publicly available data (e. g. extracted from annual reports, communication materials of companies like websites) and ones which require the co-operation of the companies by answering a questionnaire. Often such rankings focus on large enterprises or only take into account enterprises with a certain size.

In *France* and *Sweden* exists a ranking based on an index analysing exclusively **companies quoted on the stock market**. The “*Baromètre annuel Capitalcom sur la mixité*” (Yearly Capitalcom barometer on gender-mixed work) assesses the situation in 40 major *French* corporations by applying a 40-criteria analysis grid to communication material of the companies investigating key data such as the proportion of women in staff or in management boards and the number of agreements on gender equality and goals which are communicated about in the area of pay gap reduction, the existence of follow-up indicators, career development etc. The results of the barometer are published in newspapers and magazines. The *Swedish* “*Folksam's Jämställdhetsindex*” (Folksam's equality index) reviews and rates enterprises listed on the OMX Stockholm Index annually with a view to the number of women on board of the parent company, in management positions in the parent company and the number of women in the group based on the companies' annual reports. In order to achieve the maximum rating the same proportion of men and women is necessary in all three categories. Companies are only listed if they attain a minimum average rating. The existence of an equal opportunity plan and its communication can improve the rating.

In *Iceland* the “*Jafnértiskennitala*” (Icelandic Equality Index) published from 2005 to 2008 informs on gender equality among the 100 **largest enterprises** in *Iceland* based on the analysis of the annual reports and interviews with the companies' directors. The initiative was part of a project aiming at the publication of the number of female board directors and chairmen and of women among the highest-ranking executives in these companies. Additionally, criteria were developed for evaluating the achievements in the field of gender equality. The number of women in management and board positions is also analysed for “*Likestillingsbørsen*” (Gender index regarding board positions) of the Federation of *Norwegian* Agricultural Co-operatives. Co-operatives with more than 1000 members are included in the list ranking the co-operatives with the highest female share on top.

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“TechniFemmes” was inspired by “girls' day” events which are organised in several European countries and promoted by EU institutions. In order to organise “TechniFemmes”, FETE relies on a whole network of actors of employment: corporations, Pôle Emploi (French public employment agency), training centres, etc., as well as industrial cities which offer a majority of traditionally male job positions (e.g. the city of Le Creusot).



The Times in the UK launched the “*Where Women Want to Work TOP 50*”, an alphabetically ordered list of the **largest (more than 1000 employees) and most progressive employers** in terms of gender equality and work/life balance. The assessment is based on an online entry the interested organisations have to submit. Five sections including the organisation’s biggest external and internal achievements, the next big gender challenge and the proposed strategy, five female case studies and the organisation’s competitive gender-related unique selling point have to be described.

Based on the US experience and initiative “*Working Mother 100 Best Companies*” one of Sweden’s biggest business magazines has recently started “**Bästa arbetsplatsen för kvinnor**” (best workplace for women). To participate, companies themselves sign up at the website of the magazine Veckans Affärer, where they fill in a comprehensive web-survey examining gender policies, how benefits are divided between men and women, attitudes on parental leave, the inclusion of females networking, various indicators on the climate in the company and how much human and financial resources are put into gender equality work. A project team from the magazine then analyses the competitors according to the assessment criteria company profile, workforce profile, child care facilities, work arrangements, family friendly programs etc. and makes a list of the 100 best workplaces for women in the country, where the top ten companies receive a prize, and all listed companies get far reaching publicity. In order to be considered on the list the companies need to have a minimum of two women on the board of directors and have at least 200 employees. Having started in 2009, it is the aim to gain all companies listed on the stock-exchange as participants within three years. This seems realisable as the project in the US has attracted so many companies that there now exist different lists such as the “50 Best Law Firms for Women” or the “Best Companies for Multicultural Women” etc.

The German “*genderdax – Top Unternehmen for hochqualifizierte Frauen*” (Genderdax – top companies for high qualified women) lists companies that support the employment of women **especially in management positions**. The companies can apply for being listed in the genderdax through a **standardized application form** and must be active in offering flexible working conditions, measures for a good work/life-balance, special consideration of highly qualified women in the recruitment process and human resource development for career-oriented women. Although the index distinguishes three categories with respect to company size most of the listed enterprises are large. In the framework of the Community Initiative EQUAL the “*Gender index – Firma Rownych Szans*” (Gender Index – equal opportunities firm) was implemented in Poland. The companies willing to participate were assessed in seven areas of human resource management (recruitment, access to promotion, protection against redundancy, access to training, remuneration, reconciliation of work and family life, protection against sexual harassment and mobbing). The first ten companies were entitled to use the label “Equal Opportunities Firm”.

The “*Jämställdhetsindex Jämix®*” (Equal opportunity index) in Sweden analyses participating companies with at least 50 employees according to nine criteria. The companies finally receive an annual report with 20 to 40 indicators including comparison between the participating organisations and the development of the indicators over time. A tool for **self-assessment** can also be found in the Netherlands. “*Glazen Plafond Index*” (glass ceiling index) offers a checklist available via internet. Companies fill in the online-questionnaire and receive their “score” in gender issues. An online self-evaluation tool with special focus on family-friendliness is offered in Germany. The “*berufundfamilie-Index*” (work and family index) is calculated on the basis of the responses to questions in three major areas (dialogue between management and





employees, performance with regard to family friendly measures and activities, family friendly corporate culture). The responses are consolidated into an index value between 0 (“not family friendly at all”) and 100 (“very family friendly”). Although the index is mainly used for the internal evaluation of enterprises it is part of the auditing process of the work and family audit (see chapter 2.2 labels).

In Spain “**Top 5 de las empresas modelo de igualdad**” (Top 5 of model companies in equality) has been created to promote and evaluate the implementation of the “Equality Law”, launched in 2007 with the aim to install equality plans in all companies and foreseeing compulsory equality plans for companies with more than 250 employees. The initiative is part of a project with the aim to analyse the implementation of the law by the means of a qualitative (interviews and discussions with experts, lawyers, HR managers) and quantitative (survey among enterprises with more than 50 employees) study. The ranking presents five **model enterprises** in the field of gender equality and is based on the HR managers’ opinion which company except its own is a role model in implementing the equality law. The information was gathered via interviewing more than 100 companies and the results of the study can be downloaded. Besides highlighting role model enterprises the questions in the survey have been assessed by the interviewed enterprises as being a “guide” for applying the law and understand its principles.

## 2.6 Compendium of good practices

In the framework of research studies, network activities and projects dealing with gender equality, sometimes one outcome is a compendium of good practices. This means that a number of enterprises which have an outstanding commitment in terms of gender equality in the workplace are presented in detail in a publication and/or on a website. The main reason for providing such compendia of good practices is to set examples for other enterprises and to share knowledge. Presenting good practices in terms of gender equality in the workplace have the potential to be an inspiration for other enterprises and workplaces. They may help to raise awareness and change social norms in order to minimise and/or eliminate gender inequalities. Frequently, compendia of good practices arise from competitions for prizes / awards, where good practices of winning or participating enterprises running for a prize / award are integrated in a publication or success stories are collected on a website.

16 initiatives could be identified: Among these, the largest group are compendia in the field of **equal opportunities for women and men**, including thematic issues such as recruitment, training and career opportunities, salary as well as combining work and private life.

Portugal has a guide called “*Boas Práticas de Conciliação entre Vida Profissional e Vida Familiar. Manual para as Empresas*” (good practices for reconciling work and family life. Guide for companies) published by the Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment. The guide lists a range of principles and practices that promote gender balance by allowing women to allocate more time to their careers and men to devote more time to family life. The enterprises included in the guide are selected from those awarded with the prize “*Prémio Igualdade é qualidade*” (equality is quality).



One of the most crucial issues within gender equality – equal pay (see chapter 2.2) – is addressed on the website “*Ligeløn*” (equal pay) in *Denmark*, facilitated by the Ministry of Employment. The website collects information and research on equal pay on the Danish labour market and offers a compendium of good practices. The compendium includes fifteen cases of good practices. The information provided is based on semi-structured interviews with the relevant persons in the enterprises. For the purpose of the interviews a standard checklist was drafted and used in all interviews. In order to participate in the compendium of good practices, companies have to promote equal pay at the workplace according to three criteria: the enterprise has to 1) display at least one of the aspects related to the overall theme of equal pay, 2) have inspirational value for others, and 3) follow some sort of systematic approach. The compendium is seen as necessary element of the website as it provides concrete tools to other enterprises. The website is a main source of information on equal pay in Denmark.

In *Estonia*, *Belgium* and *France*, there are also collections of good practices having a thematic focus on recruiting, wages, working conditions, training, career development and work-life balance. In *Austria* there are also two compendia of good practices implemented in non-university (technical and natural science) research organisations.

The second largest group has its focus on **reconciliation of family and work**, including work-life balance, flexible working, childcare provision and maternity/paternity policies. *Denmark*, *United Kingdom*, *Liechtenstein* and *Ireland* (the latter in a broader context) are providing good practices in this field.

In the field of **women in management** there is one compendium of good practice: *Italy* has a compendium called “*Vademecum delle buone pratiche*” (Vademecum of good practices) which provides good practices regarding policies and strategies for equal opportunities for women and men in human resource management. The compendium deals with equal opportunities for women and men in employment on the one side, and with career advancement of women in human resources management on the other side. The initiative has been co-funded by the ESF.

In *Hungary*, the initiative “*Nő az esély*” (Women’s chances are growing) contains a compendium of good practices in the fields of using new methods in enhancing the employment of women and increasing the labour culture and success-oriented attitude of women who are assisting their family businesses. The focus is mainly on **small villages and rural areas**. The compendium wants to contribute to the decrease of gender segregation on the labour market, and to the promotion of disadvantaged women’s employment in the county of Zala. It was co-funded by EQUAL.



## 2.7 Additional information

Apart from collecting information concerning objectives, target groups, operating principles, starting dates or benefits for participating/winning enterprises of non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality in the workplace, it was also analysed how such initiatives are promoted and monitored/evaluated. Regardless of the type of initiative (label, prize/award, charter, compendium, ranking), there are some elements which are similar throughout all kinds.

### Promotion of the initiatives

All collected and analysed initiatives are promoted via **internet** in terms of special websites or on websites of the initiating/implementing organisation(s). Apart from general information about the initiative, they also include application forms and questionnaires (either downloadable or to be filled in online). Frequently, the websites provide good practice examples and press reviews of past awards/rankings/publications in order that interested enterprises get a clearer picture of the contents of the initiative but also the benefit from participating in the initiative. The initiating/implementing organisations might also make use of **e-mail** campaigns by using their own databases.

Apart from own press work and **public relations**, initiatives also use **media partnerships** in order to promote their initiatives, especially when the initiative is not only covering a small geographic area but is nationwide. Media partnerships generate a win-win-situation both for the implementing organisation and the media. While the implementing organisation is able to promote its initiative (advertisements, press articles etc.), the media has the newsworthiness, respective presentation space on-site (e.g. at the award ceremony) and the supply of interesting contact persons.

Besides the initiating or implementing organisations, also **other involved organisations** promote the initiatives. This refers to special interest groups such as chambers, public employment services, sectoral agencies or other associations. In order to inform their clientele or members, usually, these organisations use their own address databases. Furthermore, they use their own newsletters, magazines or brochures to promote the respective initiatives.

Furthermore, the initiators often compile **reports**, **brochures** and **good practice examples** which shall motivate other companies to participate e.g. in the labelling process, award, charter, ranking or compendium. In many cases, initiatives are also promoted via regional television, newspapers and websites of the national ministries or regional governments which often have a funding role.

The events where winning companies are awarded with prizes and labels are also of importance. In the majority of cases, such an **awarding ceremony** is a representative and gorgeous event, attracting attention to the public eye which accounts for raising the awareness among other enterprises or society as a whole.



## Monitoring and evaluation

Usually, the **monitoring** of non-legislative initiatives for the promotion of gender equality in the workplace is an internal procedure at the implementing organisation. They have available the numbers of participating and winning enterprises. In the field of prizes, labels and charters, it can be generally asserted that the number of participating enterprises has been increasing over time. This demonstrates that public interest and attention towards the initiatives is rising. Only a few initiatives saw a decrease of numbers, which might have its causes in a limited target group (e.g. enterprises in a specific sector or in a specific geographic area) or also with a rising number of competing initiatives in the field of gender equality in a certain country.

In the field of **evaluation**, it has been observed that in many cases there is no formal evaluation in a strict sense. Regarding the **content of initiatives**, in order to show what has been done, there are often annual reports and brochures presenting the outcomes of a special initiative. Frequently, the term “evaluation” is connected with the improvement of ongoing processes and with the adaptation of contents of initiatives to account for changing conditions in the corporate landscape or in society. These aspects lead to the adaptation of the initiative’s criteria, number of categories, adjustment of questions or to the change of the focus or additional content. In terms of the **structure of initiatives**, many initiatives state to have annual or recurring internal reflections, which might lead to structural and organisational changes regarding the whole application and awarding processes.



### 3 Individual company initiatives promoting gender equality at the workplace

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the initiatives fostering gender equality at the workplace as developed and implemented by the 30 companies that have been analysed in the course of this research project. In contrast to the non-legislative initiatives by public and private organisations, that have been discussed in the previous chapter, these company **initiatives have their origin within the company**, i. e. they have been elaborated and implemented by companies as a reaction to their specific situation. Nevertheless, some of these company initiatives have been reckoned and honoured by public or private organisation (e. g. have received a prize/award or the company has achieved a good position in a company ranking).

By implementing such gender equality initiatives the companies of course adhere to, but also go well beyond legislative obligations. Although companies develop their own approaches to **react to their specific situation** of gender equality, the initiatives that are described and analysed in this chapter can be transferred between companies and adapted. The analysis revealed that many companies with their initiatives react to similar problems and there are very similar initiatives that could be identified in different companies. Obviously, there already is an exchange of ideas that shall be promoted further with this study.

As can be seen from Table 1 below, the focus of this study was on **multinational enterprises** (24 companies), but 1 large Bulgarian company and 5 SMEs (located in Austria, Greece, Hungary, Norway, and Spain) have also been investigated concerning their practices. These 30 enterprises are active in different industries.

**Table 1 Complete list of companies analysed, in alphabetical order**

name of the company	headquarters/size (employees world wide)	industry
Accenture Ltd.	Ireland, Dublin approx. 186,000 employees	professional services (consulting, outsourcing, technical support)
Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A.	Italy, Trieste approx. 84,000 employees	finance & insurance
Bulgarian Telecommunication Company (BTC) plc	Bulgaria, Sofia; approx. 7,000 employees	telecommunications (fixed line telephony, internet services, mobile telephony (as Vivatel))
BP International Ltd.	United Kingdom, London; approx. 90,000 employees	oil business (exploring and producing oil, natural gas and alternative fuels; delivering a wide range of energy solutions and petrochemicals; retail)



<b>name of the company</b>	<b>headquarters/size</b>	<b>industry</b>
Deakon Degen GmbH	Austria, Hart; 20 employees	electronics (production of customised cable connections)
Dell Inc.	USA, Round Rock (Texas); approx. 80,000 employees ( <i>Female Talent Strategy as developed in Ireland</i> )	electronics & IT hardware (desktops, servers, notebooks, netbooks, peripherals, printers, televisions)
Deutsche Bank AG	Germany, Frankfurt approx. 79,000 employees	banking & finance
Deutsche Post DHL AG	Germany, Bonn approx. 310,000 employees (DHL); approx. 190,000 employees (Deutsche Post AG)	logistics
Eli Lilly Corp.	USA, Indianapolis; approx. 40,000 employees (global); 7,000 (Europe)	pharmaceuticals
Exodus SA	Greece, Athens; 105 employees	IT
Formastur S.A.	Spain, Oviedo; 30 employees	professional services (consultancy & education)
Henkel AG	Germany, Düsseldorf; approx. 55,000 employees	chemicals, consumer products (detergents, cosmetics and body care, adhesive technologies)
IBM Corporation*	USA, Armonk (New York); approx. 386,000 employees ( <i>EWLC: European countries</i> )	IT & consulting services (computer hardware, computer software)
IKEA	Netherlands, Delft; approx. 120,000 employees	furniture and home products
Intesa San Paolo S.p.A.	Italy, Milano and Turin; approx. 60,000 employees	banking & finance
KPMG LLP UK / KPMG Europe LLP*	United Kingdom, London; KPMG Europe LLP: Germany, Frankfurt (partnership with KPMG in Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland and Spain); KPMG Europe LLP: approx. 23,000 employees	professional services (audit, tax & advisory)
L'Oréal SA	France, Paris; approx. 65,000 employees	cosmetics



<b>name of the company</b>	<b>headquarters/size</b>	<b>industry</b>
Manpower Inc.	USA, Milwaukee (Wisconsin); approx. 30,000 employees ( <i>Strategy "Inclusive": Sweden</i> )	human resources
Microsoft Corp.	USA, Redmond (Washington); approx. 90,000 employees ( <i>Women@Microsoft and Career Development: Austria</i> )	electronics & IT (computer software, consumer electronics)
Motorola Inc.*	USA, Schaumburg, Illinois; approx. 60,000 employees ( <i>(Gender) Diversity Project: Poland, Krakow</i> )	telecommunications (embedded systems, microprocessors, mobile & satellite phones, two-way radios, networking systems)
Procter & Gamble Corp.	USA, Cincinnati (Ohio); approx. 138,000 employees	production of consumer goods
PSA Peugeot Citroën SA*	France, Paris and Sochaux-Montbéliard ; approx. 208,000 employees	automobile and truck manufactory
Polgár-Társak 2000 Kft.	Hungary, Törökszentmiklós; 15 employees	stationary retail (paper & office products)
Royal Dutch Shell plc	Netherlands, The Hague; approx. 102,000 employees	oil & gas (petroleum, natural gas, and other petrochemicals)
PWC LLP	United Kingdom, London; approx. 146,000 employees	professional services (assurance, consulting, financial advisory, tax)
Siemens AG*	Germany, Berlin and Munich; approx. 430,000 employees	conglomerates; electronics & IT (development, production and sale of a large variety of goods and services related to electronics and IT)
Sodexo S.A.*	France, Issy-Les-Moulineaux approx. 355,000 employees	Food and facilities management services & service vouchers and cards
Stormberg SA*	Norway, Kristiansand; 99 employees	retail sales (sportswear)
Toyota Motor Europe NV/SA	Belgium, Brussels; approx. 80,000 employees	automobile and truck manufactory
TUI AG	Germany, Hannover approx. 70,000 employees	travel & tourism

Legend: \* Company has been selected for in-depth analysis

Source: Austrian Institute for SME Research, 2009



Out of these 30 companies, **6 multinational enterprises and 1 SME** have been selected for further in-depth analysis. The following presentation summarises key aspects based on brief descriptions of all initiatives identified in the 30 companies and on the case studies of companies selected for an in-depth analysis (the information in the boxes refers to the initiatives of companies which have been analysed in detail and which are fully described in Annex 3).

The **companies have been carefully chosen**. The choice was mainly based on expert recommendations, company rankings or award winners in (a category related to) gender equality at the workplace. A statement such as “most of the companies follow a certain approach”, therefore has to be understood in that context, i. e. the underlying sample is not a random one but one that has specifically been chosen to gain insight into interesting and innovative practices in the promotion of gender equality at the workplace.

It also has to be borne in mind that the initiatives described in the following sections of this chapter are **examples of what companies can do** in a certain field or – for the more comprehensive approaches – throughout these fields. When stating that a certain approach is pursued by one specific company, that does not necessarily mean that other companies within this analysis do not implement the same or a similar initiative. It means that the company/initiative described here has been chosen as an example.

The **choice of initiatives** has been based on the innovativeness of the approach and on what the interview partners at the companies found important to highlight, i. e. which of their company’s approaches they consider most important and effective. For example, companies with a comparatively long-standing tradition in the implementation of flexible work schedules would not have spoken about these practices as their main approach, but have rather presented their more recent approaches with specific focus on gender equality.

Although the companies are active in **different industries**, there are some issues in relation to gender equality at the workplace that are not industry-specific (e. g. retention of women after the birth of children). Other issues, such as too few applications from women are a typical problem of technology intensive industries; while to the contrary the cosmetics industry appears to hardly receive applications from men as has been experienced by *L’Oréal*, for example.

From the analysis of the multinational enterprises it has been interesting to learn that, although there are strategies, programmes, etc. that apply throughout all countries these are in most cases adapted to the **specific situation within a country**. On the one hand, this is necessary to comply with e. g. national labour legislation while on the other hand the company has to take national culture into account.

Out of the multinational enterprises that have been analysed in the course of this study 7 have their headquarters in the USA. It has been sought to give an “European” example in these cases, i. e. to describe **how the global strategy has been enriched or adapted** to suit the framework conditions of a specific country in Europe.





To achieve sustainable results, many of these initiatives combine a range of measures in various fields of intervention. In the following, the initiatives are described along 7 important **fields of intervention**, which are:

- recruitment;
- reconciliation;
- retention;
- career opportunities;
- training;
- networking (incl. mentoring);
- communication

As many of the initiatives are **rather comprehensive**, the attribution to one of these fields has been done according to the main elements of the initiative, but there may also be interdependencies, especially when the latter three fields are used as means that may serve the first four fields. Nevertheless, the attribution is helpful as it facilitates the exchange of experiences and the transfer of certain approaches or parts of initiatives among companies.

### 3.2 Reasons for launching gender equality initiatives at company level

In the past decade, the issue of gender equality at the workplace has, along with the raising importance in the public discussion gained importance among companies and especially multinational companies explicitly address this topic. As employee data of many companies reveal that there are gender biases throughout hierarchical levels or job positions, companies have started to investigate the reasons for such biases and to work on balancing their teams.

The companies analysed in the course of this research project have been asked about their reasons for launching initiatives to promote gender equality within their enterprise. There is consensus that such initiatives have to make economic sense, but there is a range of motivations that act as drivers. To give an overview on why companies engage in gender equality issues, some important external and internal drivers are summarised in the following.

#### External drivers:

- political and legal framework in order to increase employment rate to ensure financial viability of social model including pension schemes: Treaty on European Union, Gender Equality Pact, EU Strategy for Growth & Employment (Lisbon Strategy), national legislation & initiatives (rising need to react to societal expectations)
- recognition that the working population is changing, ageing and becoming more reliant on women - there is a need to respond to this by ensuring to attract and retain the most talented persons (attract female talent as well to ensure a competitive position)
  - shortages in the workforce due to ageing society;



- societal changes in education and labour market: the success rate of women in tertiary studies is high, the biggest growing population on the labour market are women;
- societal changes have to be reflected to raise commitment of the employees;
- changes in expectations of the younger generation: growing rate of dual earners, changing roles in families - importance of work-life balance, flexibility in work organisation (rising family obligations also for male employees);
- research findings show that organisations that have women in senior positions are more likely to prosper.

**Internal drivers:**

- philosophy of gender equality is an integral part of the company, since the start of the business;
- internal statistics show the discrepancy that while women are representing half of the workforce, their shares in higher positions are relatively low;
  - analysis of internal statistics and figures reveal that women are not progressing in the firm in the way that the company would expect them to;
  - observation that within the company women's careers are progressing clearly slower than men's;
- sustainability of the workforce: attract, retain and develop workforce by guaranteeing access to skills, ensuring succession and loyalty as well as keeping personnel costs in control;
  - avoid the cost and competence loss when a well qualified (female) employee quits;
- feeling that not all of the employees' potential is being used in order to have maximum profit (both intrinsic and extrinsic) for the company;
  - take advantage of all different qualifications and talents of the employees;
  - skills and abilities of the employees can only be used to a maximum effect when the company helps to master the challenge of combining career and private life/family;
  - ameliorate the working climate and be a company where all employees feel valued and can develop competencies;
- male and female customers (marketing analysis shows that women in many cases carry out or influence purchase decisions);
  - industry specific motive: company operates in e. g. software engineering that is dominated by men; but the clients are men and women – the company therefore seeks to better understand the needs of their female clients;
  - company is more competitive when the structure of the customers is reflected (easier to meet the customers' needs).



**Digression: Personal reasons of the employer – a small enterprise case**

The small enterprise *Deakon Degen GmbH* can serve as an example of what can happen, when a company does not show interest in the retention of a talented workforce: Ms. Degen lost her job after having given birth to her second child. Her former employer considered her as a risk factor for she might have taken nursing leaves. She set up the company *Deakon Degen GmbH* that has grown steadily and has become a recognised apprenticeship enterprise and competitor. Due to the experiences of the management, special attention is paid to the specific needs of female employees at *Deakon Degen GmbH* and the success of the company has convinced Ms. Degen that responsible treatment of employees pays off.

**3.3 Recruitment**

Throughout Europe, in general, companies have to formulate their job advertisements in a way to attract both genders. Where practical requirements of the job dictate the need of an employee of a particular sex, this must be supported by valid reasons. Unless there are such practical requirements, it appears to be common practice among the companies analysed in the course of this research project to **formulate job advertisements in a way that equally attracts male and female applicants.**

Many of the enterprises considered in this research project have implemented procedures to attract and employ more women in order to achieve a better balanced employee structure and benefit from the diverse talents and skills. The initiatives and measures go beyond quotas and **range from simple to rather sophisticated procedures.**

There are **measures for every phase of the recruitment procedure**, starting from actively encouraging applications by women in the job advertisement or presenting female role models at job fairs in the first phase when the company presents itself. In the application process, the utilisation of anonymous application forms or CVs that do not reveal information about the gender of the applicant facilitate neutral procedures. To take into account different points of view in the selection process, male and female assessors can be engaged for assessment centres; simulation based hiring procedures may be used to assess talents and capabilities and shortlists that foresee a certain percentage of women. Another interesting approach is the attempt to reproduce the quotas of male and female alumni of a certain study subject among the managers. Some details of these approaches are given in the following.

To **ensure non-discriminative recruiting**, some companies have implemented recruitment procedures that (at least in the first steps of the procedure, i. e. until the personal job interview) do not disclose information on gender or age of the applicant. IKEA, e. g. has implemented an e-recruiting system that allows for applications without providing information on gender and/or age. The utilisation of anonymous CVs (i. e. without information on the gender of the applicant) is also common practice at *PSA Peugeot Citroën SA*.

In industries, where there is a **very low share of women** (such as electronics & IT, automobile construction or oil & gas), for technical jobs or for departments/ hierarchical levels within a company where men appear to be overrepresented, practices to positively discriminate applications by women have been implemented by a range of companies.



*Dell Inc.* e. g. **actively encourages applications from women** (by highlighting the company's work-life policies). *IBM Corporation* has achieved good results in attracting a diverse workforce (also in terms of gender) and positive feedback for its approach to present female **role models** when attending recruiting fairs (e. g. at universities).

*Accenture (UK) Ltd.* pursues graduate recruitment activities in order to recruit the best female as well as male talent. For instance, this includes campus events, allocation of female buddies, **advertising in women targeted career publications** and sponsoring of various women's clubs and societies.

While *Exodus SA* states to **give priority to women applicants** for technical positions within their company, given that there are more equally qualified candidates, the opposite approach is practiced at *L'Oréal SA* (that is one of the rare companies where more than half of the management positions are occupied by women). As *L'Oréal SA* operates in an industry that appears to be particularly interesting for women, the company is currently thinking about ways to ensure gender equality by hiring more men.

Two interesting approaches have been detected among the SMEs analysed: *Stormberg AS*, e. g., deliberately recruits **pregnant women or persons with young children** to ensure an enterprise culture where work-life balance is accounted for. At *Polgár-Tárasak 2000 Kft.* women or men may **suggest a person** to work as their substitution **when taking parental leave**.

*TUI AG* has the policy to **favour applications from former employees** who once decided to give up their job to care for their children and then wish to work for the company again.

**Recruiting targets** are another option to account for gender imbalances. *PSA Peugeot Citroën SA* e. g. has, within its current Action Plan concerning gender equality at the workplace, set the commitment to recruit more women in each business line and at all hierarchical levels. *Royal Dutch Shell plc* reports to have set a target of 50 % for recruiting women for commercial roles and one of 28 % for recruiting women for technical roles (which, according to the company, appears realistic concerning the choice of studies among men and women). Although *Henkel AG* does not explicitly set recruiting targets, the company has elaborated a **benchmarking system** where the Board considers quotas of male and female university graduates of the previous year in subjects that are relevant for the company. *Siemens AG* strives to **equate the shares** of women among new hires with the share of female applicants.

The Recruiting Guideline of *Henkel AG* e. g. also foresees that the **shortlist** with the final 3 candidates for any job has to reflect diversity in terms of age, gender and nationality. Similarly, when (internally) recruiting for positions in upper management, there has to be at least one woman on the shortlist at *Royal Dutch Shell plc*.

The investigation of the initiatives designed and implemented by individual companies to ensure gender equality at the workplace has also revealed some interesting practices concerning the **selection process**. *PSA Peugeot Citroën SA* uses **simulation based hiring procedures** that allow for judging the applicants according to their abilities rather than their diplomas or experiences. Such a procedure may also be indirectly beneficial for female applicants, as it has been noticed that women tend to pursue different professional formation paths than men. Nevertheless, female applicants may have the same aptitudes to fulfil a job in the automobile industry as male applicants with a traditional technology oriented educational background.



*Siemens AG* relies on assessment centres with **assessors of both genders** to avoid gender biased results and to give male as well as female applicants the feeling that they may succeed. At *Royal Dutch Shell plc*, interesting persons may be **recruited although there might not be a specific position** available for them at that point in time. Nevertheless, these persons can benefit from getting acquainted to the company and as soon as an adequate position is available (or has been created) they can take over responsibilities. The company has noticed that such a procedure that values the qualifications and aptitudes of a person and that is conducted without the time pressure to fill a specific position has proven beneficial to recruiting more women.

To conclude this section on recruitment, **an outstanding approach that** is pursued by *Motorola Inc.* in Poland shall be presented; although it **starts well before actual recruitment**. Having realised that they are not able to recruit the share of women they would be willing to for software engineering positions within the Motorola Software Development Centre in Poland, the company in 2000 started their Diversity<sup>29</sup> Programme that consists of a competition among high school teams of mixed gender on a technical subject and of online training. In the past years the share of women who chose technical studies in Poland has continuously been rising and *Motorola Inc.* perspectives to recruit well educated female software engineers are ameliorating.

When the manager of the Krakow Software Centre realised that despite the clear commitments to a (gender) diverse workforce and to support women at the workplace with careers, they were **not able to recruit as many qualified women** as they wanted to, the company sought to go one step further and tries to solve the cause of this lack of women in IT education (i. e. the traditional barriers preventing young Polish women from pursuing software engineering or other technical careers).

Therefore, the Krakow Software Centre elaborated and introduced the Diversity Project, an **educational programme and competition** aimed at increasing gender diversity among future software engineers. The project is designed to encourage young people, and girls in particular, to consider pursuing computer studies and to show them the advantages of work in this field. *Motorola Inc.* is collaborating with school boards and technical universities in the implementation of the project.

The Diversity Project is launched on an annual basis. Every edition is created, prepared and maintained by *Motorola* employees. The **task of the project is to create a web page**, each year on a different subject. The project is based on the competition between schools, actually between teams of pupils. **Women have to make up for at least half of the team**, but there also has to be at least one man per team. The best projects are awarded according to 3 categories (interface, graphic design and content); a fourth award comes from internet voting of all those who have participated. The jury does not reward the utilisation of expensive photography, etc. on the web pages.

<sup>29</sup> The term „diversity” is used as synonym for „gender diversity” in Poland.



**To make sure that all interested pupils are able to attend** e-learning, online tutorials and support are provided free of charge. Especially in the beginning of the project this was an important help for the young women and men working on the technical projects, because there were not so many lectures available for free on-line as they are now. Motorola Inc. stresses that it is important to provide free and time flexible training to ensure that everyone and especially those who cannot afford to invest much money in their education or who have other responsibilities besides school (traditionally women) can attend training.

### 3.4 Reconciliation

Meanwhile, especially with regard to multinational companies (with USA origin) some **work-life procedures have become common practices** throughout their European branches as well. Most of the companies analysed in the course of this research project offer the following reconciliation possibilities (which also impact significantly on the retention of female staff):

- Telecommuting / flexible work place
- flexible work time
- part-time working / job-sharing
- child care facilities

As the **extent to which these policies are implemented** in the branches of the multinational companies in various European countries is subject to national legislation, the approaches pursued may slightly differ between countries. Moreover, these policies require a position/job modalities that enable them (e. g. telecommuting is not possible for a cashier) and positive assessment of the employee's will and ability to perform (as the company to a certain extend gives up control over employees).

Reconciliation measures are in most cases (when appropriate) targeted at men and women. **Whether in fact men or women benefit** more from such reconciliation policies to a large degree depends on the perception of society, the company culture and the individuals themselves; e. g. in the Nordic countries, child care is rather regarded as obligation of persons/employees within a certain age group (male and female), whereas in other European countries child care still appears to be more or less attributed to women. For the latter countries it is indeed true that women who are mothers are given the chance to work through reconciliation measures.

*Procter & Gamble Corp.* uses to the term "gender diversity" when talking about gender issues at the workplace. The **gender diversity measures** which *Procter & Gamble Corp.* provide **address the field of reconciliation** and basically include: location free roles; flexible work arrangements (reduced work schedule/part-time); working from home/teleworking; personal leave of absence (e. g. three months sabbatical due to personal reasons); family leave up to 12 months in order to look after family dependents (children, partner, parent or other family relatives) or care of dependents when travelling (information resources and financial support to care for dependents in case of non-routine business demands/travelling). These measures are available for male and female employees.

*Eli Lilly* has as well implemented a range of programmes to allow for flexibility at the workplace, e. g. flextime, flexweek, part-time, job sharing or telecommuting. Participa-



tion in these programmes (that are primarily applicable for “office” jobs) is subject to approval, in order to combine personal and work requirements best. Employees in manufacturing jobs may have **opportunities for shift-trading** and other flexible options.

Multinational companies that are active in Europe, such as *Motorola Inc.*, in general report that, whereas flexibility in work place and in work time is used by men and women in a similar degree, it is **mostly women who work part-time** and who take longer leave periods due to the birth of a child.

**Job-sharing** can be regarded as a very specific way of part-time working, i. e. two persons share one job and these two employees negotiate and agree upon their competencies and working time themselves. The possibility of job-sharing exists (for certain positions) e. g. at *IBM Corporation*, *IKEA* or *Polgár-Társak 2000 Kft.*

Some companies also pay special attention to set **meetings at times when it is possible for everyone to attend** (i.e. not in the late afternoons), e. g. *Formastur SA* or *IKEA* (moreover, in the latter company it is common practice that male or female employees may quit meetings due to child care responsibilities). Stormberg demonstrates that not only large companies can hold **telephone conferences/“meetings”** on telephone – and thereby reduce travel time of employees and allow home based employees to attend.

Stormberg AS is a Norwegian company in the **retail sales business** (sportswear). It started in 1998 and has had a very positive development both in number of employees and economic numbers. There are about 100 employees, where 45 are women and 55 are men. In the board 2 out of 5 are women and in the leader group 3 out of 8 are women.

It is important to underline that the initiatives that have been implemented to support gender equality at Stormberg are not seen as a strategy or programme by the company, but rather as an **incorporated way** in how Stormberg wants to operate as an enterprise. It could be said that the measures are an internalised part of the business culture.

Stormberg has implemented several concrete **measures**, among these are:

- flexible working time arrangements;
- shift arrangements;
- telephonic meetings (to reduce travel time);
- possibility to work from home (home office);
- children are allowed to come to work if day care is closed, etc.;
- men are motivated to take parental leave.

Stormberg underlines that focusing on family oriented/work-life balance measures, has not only been welcomed by the employees but has indeed also **benefited the company** in several ways. First, it has created stability among the employees. Second, the level of absence due to sickness has been at around 5.2 % of total working time per year in the last few years, which is very low for companies in the retail business. Third, Stormberg has been an attractive workplace both for men and women. Forth, the enterprise has also created good economic results and this is partly assigned to the good balance between family/work-life.



Most of the large multinational companies are offering **crèches or day care centres** to the children of their employees. This is an initiative that in many European countries still predominantly supports women, who might otherwise opt for quitting their jobs to raise the children. This makes sense especially in countries, where public child care facilities are insufficient (concerning the availability of places, the starting age as well as opening times) and where private child care is expensive. As the opening hours of these company kindergartens are in line with the working times of the employees, companies benefit because employees can better concentrate on their work and need to spend less time on arranging the bridging of kindergarten schedules/holidays and working time.

Besides offering a child day care centre *TUI AG* within its comprehensive initiative **family friendly activities**, among others, **financially supports child care activities** for the children of its employees. Thereby, the employees may chose to bring their children to the child care facilities at the company premises or to employ another kindergarten and receive financial support.

Nevertheless, especially smaller companies may not have the possibility to run a crèche or kindergarten for their employees (due to financial constraints and/or lack of adequate space at their premises). *Formastur S.A.* therefore decided to give monthly **nursery vouchers** over a specific amount to employees with children younger than 3 years. At Stormberg children are allowed to accompany their parent at work when no day care is available.

*Polgár-Társak 2000 Kft.*, another small company, gives children of employees, who have already reached working age and are on (summer) holidays from school, the opportunity to do an **internship** at the company for this period of time. Thereby the children get to know the work of their parents and on the other hand have the opportunity to earn some money during their vacation from school.

Within its Social Programme, the Bulgarian Telecommunications Company (BTC) offers **targeted initiatives for children** of their employees, such as foreign language or drama courses, etc. These targeted initiatives for children are in fact seen as big assistance for female employees, because, according to the observations of BTC, child care is very much attributed to women in Bulgaria.





### 3.5 Retention

The basic **motivation** for a company to engage in retention initiatives is the observation that competences are lost when well qualified personnel are leaving. Retention becomes especially relevant when major changes in the private life of employees make adaptations of their work schedule necessary, notably when a child is born.

The large companies analysed are in general aware of the range of possibilities that exist to react and keep their female personnel (as, especially in the first period, birth of a child leads to an interruption of the work process of women). They have over the past year elaborated rather sophisticated **retention strategies** for talented women. These initiatives are often composed of measures from different fields of intervention, e. g. reconciliation, career development and networking. The measures range from e. g. support programmes for persons with caring responsibilities to developing career objectives or networking. Some company approaches in the field of retention are described in the following.

Based on the analysis of statistics (that showed a lower share of women in senior management positions while the shares of men and women in lower management positions were equal) and on the perception that the company is losing talented workforce as women tended to stay at home after having given birth to a child, *KPMG LLP* in the United Kingdom has elaborated a comprehensive programme **to retain and promote women** on their way to senior management positions. To find out about the barriers that prevent women from reaching senior level, an on-line survey among all managers (male and female) has been conducted.

The 3 most important barriers according to this survey lie in balancing work and family, the perception of the role of a senior manager, and a lack of respectively too few female role models. In the next step, a specific training programme that consists of 3 modules (comprising reconciliation measures, several training and coaching modules as well as networking) has been elaborated with the help of internal and external experts. This programme is continuously being monitored and adapted where and when necessary.

Back in 2005, the then CEO of KPMG in the UK expressed **concern about the drop-off in representation of women after middle management grade**, especially in client-facing roles. In 2005, women made up approx. half of the UK workforce at manager level but only about one third at senior manager level. As research clearly shows that organisations which have women in senior positions are more likely to prosper, this fact did not make good business sense.

Given these circumstances, a decision was made to launch the **Retaining Talented Women strategy**. The **objective** was twofold – to understand the reasons behind the observed drop-out in figures of women on the one hand, and to take action in response, on the other hand. To ensure high quality of the outcome, the implementation of this strategy has been **based on extensive research**.

By means of an internal **online survey**, which was completed by men and women (in different management levels), the respondents were asked to identify the main barriers for career progression for women. The **3 top barriers** that were identified thereby were balancing of work and family, the perception of women as less committed due to family commitments as well as a lack of senior or visibly successful role models.



The identification of these 3 main barriers provided the basis for a sustained programme of action to address the gender imbalance at senior levels. The Central Diversity Team shared the research outcome with the Heads of Functions (i. e. the Head of Audit, the Head of Tax, the Head of Advisory) and a **Retaining Talented Women Steering Group** was developed to co-ordinate the action plan and provide directions; i. e. to be a centre for co-ordination and implementation across the firm.

Two **national conferences** have been organised in cooperation with the Heads of Functions, in order to gather delegates' views of career progression for women in the firm, to share their experiences, and also for them to suggest, which steps KPMG in the UK could take to enable all women to reach their full potential within the firm and to address the barriers identified.

From the findings of the online survey (providing information on the areas for action) and the outcome of the national conferences (providing information on how to react), the **3 elements of the Retaining Talented Women strategy** have been designed: "My Family Matters" (dedicated to support people with caring responsibilities); "REACH" (a women's only development programme at the core of the strategy); "KNOW" (a network). Alongside action to support women to progress, the strategy includes action to address the culture of the firm via training for leaders and managers.

In reaction to the observation that the company is losing highly qualified staff when women do not return to work after giving birth to a child, *Microsoft Inc.* has also elaborated a detailed **retention strategy**. Each employee on parental leave (men are addressed as well) receives support from a personal mentor, who regularly informs the absent employee about current issues at the company.

Another important tool to keep contact and to give the feeling to still be part of the team is that the absent employee may **keep their company computer**, business cell phone (and can continue to do private calls), as well as their entry codes to the systems. At a quarterly held so called **Stay Connected Breakfast**, men and women on parental leave as well as their mentors and managers are invited to informally discuss current issues; a member of the executive management joins the discussions and presents latest developments.

The **Re-entry Concept** of *Siemens AG* (as conducted in Austria) combines similar measures as the retention strategy of *Microsoft Inc.*. For women (and men) in higher positions and on parental leave this concept also offers the so called OASE workshop. This information and networking event is dealing with the new role of the employee in the family and with methods to balance job and family. Within this workshop, and as a follow-up, a professional and individual supervision can also be attended.

A **re-entry concept** has been designed to ensure a fast and smooth re-integration for persons who have taken (parental) leave:

- close contact is kept with women who are on maternity protection or with persons on parental leave;
- a personal mentor is nominated to support these employees before, during and after parental leave;
- approx. 1 month before the leave is taken a check up talk is held between the employee, the mentor and the responsible manager (optional with HR); a personal development plan is then elaborated (possible fields of work during parental leave and after re-entry are one of the topics);



- approx. 4 months before the intended re-entry, another check up talk is held to clarify the details of re-entry;
- trainings can be taken during parental leave (many trainings are also offered on e-learning basis) and the utilisation of the “education cheque” (*Bildungsscheck*) is promoted;
- possibility to work some hours during the leave with flexible timing.

Women or men (in higher positions) who are taking parental leave can also attend the so called **OASE workshop**, a 2 day information and networking event that is dealing with their new role in the family and with how to balance job and family. Within this workshop, and as a follow-up 6 months and 1 year later, also a professional and individual supervision can be attended.

A **specific return programme**, to support all employees who wish to return to their jobs after having spent time with their families is offered at *Deutsche Post DHL AG*. Already during their absence, these employees are invited to participate in information events and training sessions. Temporary assignments and fill-ins for employees who are on vacation or ill are also possible. Upon return, a specific return seminar informs employees about the company’s current direction. Once the employee is back in the job, flexible working time arrangements and assistance in organising child care shall ensure balance of professional and family life.

At *Dell Inc.* a so called “**maternity toolkit**”, which allows line-managers to understand and communicate effectively with pregnant employees before and during their maternity leave, has been developed. *IKEA* currently elaborates a “**parental leave compass**” that follows a similar purpose but goes beyond the period of giving birth to a child and addresses both genders. In nearly all companies specific tools to address the issue of **maternity protection and parental leave** have been developed and implemented.

A large number of companies report to have implemented measures to ensure that **close contact is kept with their employees on parental leave**. This may happen rather informally (e. g. at *IKEA*) or in a well-defined and structured way (e. g. at *Henkel AG*, *Microsoft Inc.*, *TUI AG* or *Siemens AG (Austria)*).

When an *IKEA* employee expects a child, he/she is asked by his or her manager when and for how long he/she intends to take parental leave; i.e. both men and women are asked this question as the **issue of raising a family is attributed to both genders** according to the corporate philosophy (and there actually are men at *IKEA* who are taking parental leave). Men are also motivated to take parental leave at e.g. *Assecurazioni Generali s.p.A.* or *Stormberg AS*.

There is a **Father’s Workshop** at *Accenture (UK) Ltd.*. Sessions are aimed at new and expectant fathers; there they get an opportunity to gain first aid knowledge, hear first hand from a maternity nurse on what to expect, learn what support is available to them and share knowledge and experiences with others.



### 3.6 Career Opportunities

Besides consulting the reporting system and monitoring the figures, the companies analysed find it crucial to detect and understand the **reasons behind career breaks** of women in order to react adequately and elaborate targeted initiatives.

This section summarises the approaches that are pursued to open up respectively enlarge career opportunities for women within a company. Trainings that are held with the main purpose to advance women within the enterprise are also presented here. There are rather comprehensive career development programmes but there are also small aspects, that can facilitate career progression of women (given that this is necessary) or even enable women to work in a traditionally “male environment”.

The **initiatives described in this section deal with:**

- formulating objectives for managers as basic requirement to ensure gender equality in career progression;
- workplace adaptations to enable women to start or proceed in their career;
- measures to increase diversity in teams;
- monitoring systems to observe shares of women throughout the hierarchy;
- assessment of talent/potential (accounting for different behavioural patterns of men and women);
- systems to promote women (when they lack in higher levels);
- systems to ensure equal pay;
- comprehensive career development programmes

To underline the importance of gender equality in career procedures, company boards formulate objectives for their managers. At *Eli Lilly*, for example, the **senior leaders** must meet diversity work force performance objectives (they focus on mentoring and career path planning for women and diverse employees in the global workforce).

First, in the **area of workplace adaptation**, an example of the automobile industry by *PSA Peugeot Citroën SA* is presented. This company has used technology to facilitate “heavy” work that before required physical strength.

In the Automobile Division of PSA Peugeot Citroën SA, the priority is to **reduce the number of workstations rated as “heavy.”** Production line workstation ergonomics are being improved using the METEO method. This process, which is being led by multidisciplinary teams of occupational physicians, engineers, safety technicians, ergonomists and managers, is helping to significantly reduce the hardship of certain workstations. Light workstations foster the employability of people with less physical strength (e. g. women, older employees or employees with medical restrictions). Thereby, the number of jobs available to women but also their employability in production is increasing.



In the Automobile Division, between 1999 and year-end 2008, the percentage of **workstations rated as “heavy”** declined from 35 % to 11 % of the total, while the percentage of “light” workstations increased from 26 % to 49 %. At PCA France, in the same period, the share of women employees could be raised from 13.6 % to 17.4 %; the share of women operators augmented from 13.4 % in 2003 to 16.2 % at the year-end 2008 while the share of women in management also rose from 16.0 % to 18.2 % in that period. The share of women in the workforce at PCA France has continuously been rising in that period.

At *Motorola Inc.*, in fields where the company sees a lack of gender distribution, e. g. when pure male organisational units are detected, the **managers are fully supported to increase diversity** in these teams. The programme Inclusive that is operated at *Manpower Inc.* in Sweden has a similar purpose by aiming at equal shares of men and women throughout the company and in particular in managerial and higher positions.

As many other multinational companies, *Toyota Motor Europe NV/SA* has developed and implemented a **monitoring system to observe the share of women in different hierarchical positions** over time. The company then seeks to ensure gender equality by training and promoting women for internal career advancement (target quotas for women have been set for a range of positions). The so called Diversity Cockpit that has been elaborated at *Henkel AG*, is a monitoring tool to examine gender, age and nationality distributions within the company and within management positions.

*Royal Dutch Shell plc* **assesses the potential** of all their employees (men and women) according to the 3 main characteristics (internally the approach is referred to as CAR): capacity (intellectual capacity/"thinking"), achievement ("doing") and relationships ("people"). Although the same assessment process is used for men and for women, **different behaviour of men and women is accounted for** and people become aware of their potential biases.

Every year *BP International Ltd.* goes through a **talent review process** that considers issues such as women and minorities on succession plans (are there some/enough, why/why not, in which positions are they, what development plans were put in place for them, etc.). To improve the careers of female and minority employees, BP focuses on training managers and also HR in helping to understand some of the unconscious biases that can come into decision making, e. g. about whom to promote or whom to recruit. *BP International Ltd.* has the opinion that particular attention needs to be paid to spotting good women and giving them opportunities to progress; as it has been noticed that, in general, women to a lower extent than men network and push themselves forward in an organisation.

Similar to what has been described in the section on recruiting *Sodexo S.A.* has also recognised that in many cases there is a gap between aptitudes and educational background of a person. Therefore the company, rather than promoting only persons with adequate educational background, has developed a specific **Skills Training Programme** to equip high-performing women in operations (e. g. working in canteens) who lack the relevant formation with additional skills that prepare them to be promoted as site managers.



This **Skills Training to become Site Manager** has been developed at Sodexo S.A. in France and it is **addressed to high-performing women employees in operations** to give them additional skills and prepare them to be promoted to site managers.

The programme is **based on the observations** that kitchens are to a large extent led by men and that in catering at Sodexo, less than 20 % of the leading employees are women. A reason behind this might be that, in general, catering is very demanding and hardly compatible with private life (due to shift work and working long hours). Nevertheless, at Sodexo work-life balance and working in higher positions in catering can be combined quite well, as work in company restaurants usually takes place between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.

The skills training **challenges the stereotype** that men are cooks and chefs while women work in supporting functions as well as the cultural tradition that one has to have a cook background to become site manager. Sodexo **re-thought job descriptions in operations** and found that there is no clear reason behind such modes. To give the large number of women without (complete) cook education who are working in Sodexo restaurants the possibility to become site manager, clear curricula about the skills of applicants have been formulated. In fact it is important that restaurant managers are close to clients and customers.

For these non- or less-skilled employees (not only for women, but a huge majority of these employees are women) a specific training programme to become site manager has been developed. This **gives women the possibility to reach the first level of management**; and Sodexo will then also be able to help them grow further step by step.

One of the objectives of *PSA Peugeot Citroën SA's* Agreement on Gender Equality and Employment for Women is to ensure that **individual pay raises and promotions are awarded to women in the same or higher proportion as their percentage in the workforce** (i. e. the share of the budget for individual raises and promotions for women is equal to or more than the share of women in the workforce).

By 2010, pay gaps between men and women shall be overcome. Moreover, the company also aims at **increasing the number of women employees in higher positions/in technical jobs** through training and further improving working conditions and adapting the structures of professional life.

*Siemens AG* (Austria) has developed the **programme women ahead!** that bundles measures and initiatives to promote an open and gender neutral feed-back culture within the company. An enterprise culture where family issues are understood and persons with family are supported (i. e. employees – men and women – shall not fear to experience a break in their career or a decline in status because they want to take parental leave or have child care responsibilities) shall be achieved. Among others, at the annual appraisal interviews, a special focus is put on the further career development of persons who are working part-time (i. e. training possibilities are discussed, etc.). In the annual pay reclassifications and when bonuses are shared, equal treatment of men and women (and part-timers) is ensured.

The **Women's Career Development Programme** of *Royal Dutch Shell plc* is a 3 day residential course given by women (who are predominantly staff of Shell). The course consists of several modules that cover the business case (Shell's D&I policy and the reasons behind), gender cultures (as analysed by Dr. Pat Heim; to understand invisible cultural gender issues or negotiation styles/conflict solving styles of men and women,



etc.), and career development tools (networking, coaching, sponsorship, etc.). In its methodology, this course takes into account the learning concepts of women.

Under the initiative of *IBM Corporation's* European Women Leadership Council (EWLC) the **Blue Talent Programme**, a new development programme for high potential women, has been launched. The programme is aimed at IBM's top cadre of women managers who are recognised by their Senior Leadership Team as having the potential and ability to contribute strongly to the business's future success. The purpose of the programme is to recognise, motivate, develop and promote the company's high potential women. Blue Talent is a rotational programme that is not prescriptive, but a framework enabling individuals to develop and manage their own career. Activities include professional training, building relationships & influencing, authentic leadership programme, executive shadowing (accompanying a senior executive), personal coaching sessions as well as networking opportunities (both within-company and externally). Group sessions are scheduled quarterly, with coaching and executive shadowing sessions being organised at a time most suitable for individuals. The progress and advancement of the women is monitored throughout the length of the programme and also tracked once they have departed Blue Talent.

At *Dell Inc.* and *IBM Corporation*, a number of development programmes encourage female workers respectively employees to advance in the organisation. Through the **Taking the Stage** initiatives, both companies offer communication and confidence-building training to women in junior management, while mentoring programmes are also in place for high-potential women employees. These trainings are given by women.

### 3.7 Training

Before sending (new) employees to job specific training most of the multinational companies have implemented procedures to familiarise their new employees with their diversity culture (including gender aspects) or provide persons who have reached management level with **specific training on diversity and inclusion** (D&I) issues. Besides getting acquainted to corporate values, such diversity trainings also have the purpose to raise the individual's awareness on prior unconscious behavioural patterns that might have to be re-thought.

*L'Oréal SA*, e. g. has decided to focus its action in the area of diversity on the six priority points of nationality, ethnic origin, social origin, gender, disability and age. The overall idea behind such a diversity approach often is that the company wants to reflect, in their teams and at every level, the diversity of their clients. *L'Oréal SA* has elaborated a specific **Diversity Training for Managers** that aims to involve, give responsibility to and help managers in implementing the Group's diversity policy by clarifying the diversity concept, by helping participants identify barriers on a personal and organisational level and by providing participants with tools to construct an action plan. The Diversity Training for Managers is obligatory for all employees working in management positions as well as for future managers. The training also includes a module that deals with (unconscious) gender stereotypes strategies and individual approaches to overcome these are developed; based on theory (definitions, legal context, etc.) and using situational approaches (case studies, role playing, etc.).

A discrimination sensitivity training (that also deals with gender issues) is as well offered at *PSA Peugeot Citroën SA*, where this training is mandatory for all employees.



Concerning job specific training, *Formastur S.A.* has set **minimum targets for the training of all its employees** (also including those who are on parental leave or working part-time) as, in general, companies tend to train men more than women. Therefore, a certain number of hours per employee and year is being reserved for training purposes to ensure continuous education of each employee. *Formastur S.A.*'s internal continuing training programme is also gender balanced.

*Toyota Motors Europe NV/SA* makes sure that their **graduate trainee programmes** have a fairly good distribution of men and women to work against the tendency of hiring and training men in the technical/automotive industry.

Besides raising awareness on diversity (and gender) issues, setting general minimum training targets and ensuring gender equality within training courses, there are some further **aspects to take into account** in the context of gender equality and training. From the company examples it can be seen that in the field of training it is crucial to:

- attract and reach women  
(women's networks of various companies – as described in the section on networks below – appear to serve this purpose well);
- provide training in a form that suits women  
(considering “male” and “female” learning patterns as e. g. *Royal Dutch Shell plc* does within its Women's Career Development Programme);
- consider male and female trainers  
(it appears to be important that there are male and female trainers or role models; nevertheless in specific courses targeted at women solely female trainers are considered as adequate; e. g. within the Taking the Stage initiative of *Dell Inc.* – see section on career opportunities);
- determine appropriate time and place (and cost for the employees)  
(especially persons on part-time or on maternity/parental leave benefit from flexible training resp. training at places and times that are acceptable for them);

At *IKEA*, trainings are in general held in the **form** of workshops (to promote self experiencing and comprehension), which appears to be a training form that suits both, men and women, equally well.

In the framework of its Diversity Programme, *Motorola Inc.* offers **free on-line lectures and tutoring**. Especially in the beginning of the project this was an important help for the young men and women working on the technical projects, as there were not so many lectures available for free on-line as they are now. *Motorola Inc.* stresses that it is important to provide free and time flexible training to ensure that everyone and especially those who cannot afford to invest much money into their education or who have other responsibilities can attend training.

*Siemens AG* (Austria) e. g. offers a wide range of trainings to their employees that can be taken during parental leave as many trainings are, besides being offered at the company's premises, as well **available on an e-learning basis**.

Attending trainings (personally rather than virtually) often has an important side effect, as they also allow for networking.





### 3.8 Networking (incl. mentoring)

As could be seen in the previous sections, career development respectively creating and adopting career opportunities, training and networking (including mentoring) are closely linked to each other. Networking may in turn lead to the elaboration of specific training programmes, when needs are articulated and identified. More or less formal (women's) networks exist in many multinational companies.

Networks often **act as drivers** for the development of new strategies to promote gender equality, they have proven very useful to raise information among members, discuss priorities and develop action plans. Some rather powerful company internal women networks are described in the following.

Networking may also be applied as means to support career progression of women, e. g. when different hierarchical levels are matched. Several **mentoring** programmes follow this approach.

Companies may have their **internal networks and/or participate in external ones**. *Sodexo S.A.* for example started their networking activities for women by participating in an external network to try it out before establishing their own network.

Networks of or for women may serve **various purposes**, ranging from getting connected; presenting role models to exchanging experiences; raising information and building an opinion on e. g. training needs for women or mentoring. Networks can become a powerful tool to initiate changes within corporate environment, especially when all hierarchical levels are involved.

The **European Women Leadership Council (EWLC)** at *IBM Corporation* has the objective to provide a forum through which all IBM women can connect: It creates opportunities to grow and develop through networking. It drives personal development activities and encourages women to take ownership of their career, thus positively impacting IBM's business performance.

Women Leadership Councils (WLCs) at *IBM Corporation* are an **interdepartmental network**. Practically all fields within the company are touched by WLCs (e. g. recruiting, training, reconciliation, career opportunities communication etc.). Under the umbrella of the European Women Leadership Council (EWLC), the concept has been copied and National Women Leadership Councils (NWLC) have been established **in most of the countries** where IBM is active. Each country has an EWLC representative. In the countries where there is no National Women Leadership Council, there is at least an IBM Women Network that takes over most of the tasks and responsibilities of the Council.

To achieve its objective, each year the EWLC defines a specific **action plan** where activities and actions are defined. The NWLCs implement action plans adapted to the local situation and labour environment. The different members of the EWLC each hold responsibilities for certain actions and ensure that within their countries (via their National Women Leadership Council) the execution takes place. Furthermore, the EWLC is also informed on national activities by their members.

The **European Women Leadership Council (EWLC)** expects their members to:

- ensure two-way communication between EWLC and local IBM Women Networks and Councils;
- promote IBM as an employer of choice for women both internally and externally;



- give back to the IBM Women community by sharing their personal experiences and insights;
- engage in discussions and actions on how to increase the contribution and numbers of women in IBM.

Women who participate in the Leadership Councils can draw immediate **benefits** from their engagement. Engaging in the WLC strengthens their position as they are part of a network. Moreover, each woman can draw her individual benefits for her career from participating in mentoring programmes.

Ms. Isabelle Welton who is leading the EWLC in IBM's North Eastern Integrated Operating Team (covering Austria, Germany, Ireland, the Nordic Countries, Switzerland and UK) stresses **challenges** that have to be considered when implementing such a network: *"It is very important to act in line with the culture of the specific country. A crucial success factor of the National Women Leadership Councils is that they are adapted to the national situation."* Another crucial issue is to position the WLC in the right way, as *"often this is connected with being feminist or against men, which is clearly not the intention behind the WLC. To the contrary, men also have the possibility to engage in the activities of the WLC (e. g. in supporting equality issues or acting as mentors)."*

**Women at Microsoft (WAM)** works within the *Microsoft Inc.* corporate environment on a number of initiatives and programmes. These include a mentoring programme, diversity initiatives and the elaboration of development strategies for female employees. An annual women's leadership and development conference for female Microsoft employees from around the world is organised and held.

Women's Networks are as well in place within *Dell Inc.*. The networks host information evenings, talks from women in senior management, and **encourage women to promote their achievements**.

*Motorola Inc.'s Women Business Council Network* is a network where every employee (men and women) can join and support women not only in their networking activities but also in having a voice within the company and having a formal infrastructure that can be used to make their needs being understood and their voice being heard.

*Siemens AG* recently (in spring 2009) announced the start of its **GLOW-Network (Global Leadership Organisation for Women)** that has the objective to leverage support of women, to expand presence of female talent and to create visibility of their contribution. Furthermore, GLOW wants to expand mentoring and network interaction for women, to care about on-ramping after parental leave and support realisation of flexible working conditions.

At *Accenture (UK) Ltd.*, there are also networks and events that deal with gender issues or directly address women, e. g. Accenture's **gender network**, International Women's Day, "Girl's Night in" events (after work meetings of women from every level of the organisation), networking externally with Aurora Job Network as well as sponsorships of Women University Events.

The **support groups** at *Eli Lilly Corp.* also have some networking functions, e. g. when employees with similar personal needs meet for information sharing and support.



Existing support groups include those for new mothers, for parenting as well as for employees caring for the elderly.

**Mentoring** is in this context regarded as a special form of networking that mostly includes only two persons, the mentor and the mentee, that come from different hierarchical levels within the company.

*Deutsche Post DHL AG* has established an **International Mentoring Programme** to actively promote equal opportunities among its male and female employees and to support the career development of high-performing employees. Within the framework of the Programme, young female employees are “taken by the hand” by experienced managers and given individual coaching. Applicants have to be with the company for at least two years to be accepted to the programme and need certain personal characteristics such as business acumen, resilience, creative drive, openness to criticism and strong commitment. With a share of 2/3 female and 1/3 male participants, *Deutsche Post DHL AG* opens the way for women to assume managerial positions.

The **Cross-Mentoring programme** “In eigener Sache” at *Deutsche Bank AG* aims at identifying employees suited for a high power career and, via the scheme of a mentor-mentee relationship, enable those employees to develop further qualifications in order to be prepared for a leading position. Although the objective is to help achieve a higher number of women in top positions, basically this programme is open to all employees.

In the **Reciprocal Mentoring programme**, *Sodexo S.A.*’s senior leaders and high-potential women participate in a mentoring initiative that provides reciprocal growth and development opportunities. The women gain professional insight and guidance while senior leaders build their understanding of the challenges women are facing at the workplace.

The Reciprocal Mentoring programme is **addressed to managers**. *Sodexo S.A.*’s senior leaders and high-potential women thereby participate in a mentoring initiative that provides reciprocal growth and development opportunities. While the women gain professional insight and guidance, senior leaders (approx. 90 % of these executives are men) build their understanding of the challenges women are facing at the workplace.

This programme is one of the key components of *Sodexo*’s initiatives in the area of gender equality. There is a CEO for Europe with an **executive committee** with 12 members. Each of these members became **mentor to a woman in middle management** from another place in Europe. This is a one-year programme that is managed by the Human Resources Department with the help of external consultants. Mentors and mentees do not closely work together and in general they are in different countries; they communicate frequently by telephone and e-mail and have meetings once a month.

Ms. Norberg-Francille, a director at *Sodexo On Site Service Solutions* in France, **describes the Reciprocal Mentoring process** as “*a real valuable exchange on professional business matters within the group. It gives a broader vision of the organisation and teaches me experiences I would not know about otherwise. Also, my mentor challenges me on my own business cases and makes me dig deeper and consider different aspects of the topic. That helps me to think about how I can proceed better and faster.*” Her expectations have been met so far and she is looking forward to the second stage of the Reciprocal Mentoring Programme, when mentor and mentee got to know each other better and they will talk more about career profiles and possible career paths within the company.



At *PWC LLP* in Luxembourg, at each career level, **employees are accompanied by a coach** (who can be from the same or another department or external).

### 3.9 Communication

Within multinational companies (in **internal communication**) the commitment for gender equality and gender mainstreaming as well as the non-acceptance of discriminatory behaviour is in general clearly communicated (structured approaches, including codes of conduct, have been implemented to ensure such communication). Sensibility and gender mainstreaming training is in many cases offered to (all) employees, while managers may receive specific and/or more detailed training due to their role as referral for employees.

When a company wants to demonstrate, that an issue (such as gender equality) is taken seriously besides a transparent strategy that is adhered to at all hierarchical levels, **clear communication**, as well as the introduction of **committed and responsible bodies** (that ensure a two-way communication between hierarchical levels) are necessary.

*BP International Ltd.*, as many other multinational companies, has incorporated D&I into the company Code of Conduct that is valid throughout all business units and wherever the company operates in the world. There is a Global D&I Council that is chaired by BP's chief executive and that sets the tone for the organisation to provide leadership and critically holds line management accountable for delivering progress on D&I. Besides the Global D&I Council, there are Councils in the two key business segments, which are both chaired by the heads of these business segments.

The D&I Councils and the heads of the businesses agree upon the group level and segment level strategies. Each business unit puts together a D&I Plan that is relevant for their particular business area, with 2 or 3 clear goals that they can be measured against. While in some parts of the business the focus might be on gender (e. g. progressing women's careers), in other parts of the business there might already be a very good gender representation, so the focus of the D&I Plan there will be different.

*Procter & Gamble Corp.* also **regularly develops Diversity Action Plans**; in each region of the world to reflect the greatest opportunity for advancement of local diversity strategies.

Several companies stated that, to make a strategy work internally, it takes real commitment and **clear communication from the Board** (gender equality is regarded an issue for the top management) and acceptance of/engagement for the strategy among the employees.

Also in **external communication** the commitment for gender equality and gender issues are visualised by almost all of the companies. Nevertheless, there are still relatively few that make detailed results available to the public (e. g. in business reports, CSR or D&I statements as well as on the company web site). A considerable number of companies that have been interviewed in the framework of this study stated to only share most of their gender sensitive data on internal level. The regular publication on detailed gender statistics that is shared with the unions by *PSA Peugeot Citroën SA* and that is also directly available to the public via the company web site is a positive exemption.



PSA Peugeot Citroën SA has in 2003 signed an Agreement on Gender Equality and Employment for Women together with 6 relevant French Unions. In 2007, this Agreement has been renewed.

PSA Peugeot Citroën's **social policy** since 2002 has been based on five principles: social dialogue, respect for human rights at the workplace, an efficient organisation with good working conditions, an international employment base, and equal pay. This seven-year period has been marked by a number of key achievements and innovations.

The group's commitments to gender equality were first expressed in the **Agreement on Gender Equality and Employment for Women** (*Accord d'Entreprise Relatif au Développement de l'Emploi Féminin et à l'Égalité Professionnelle entre les Femmes et les Hommes*) of November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2003. This agreement has been signed by the company together with the 6 French unions; in November 2007 it has been renewed for the period from 2008-2011, demonstrating a commitment to remaining a benchmark in this area and to pursuing the innovations undertaken to support jobs for women.

PSA Peugeot Citroën has opted for this **voluntary cooperation with the unions** to ensure that their policy is agreed upon on a broad basis and also because this is a demanding procedure that leads to very good results. The Agreement on Gender Equality and Employment for Women is embedded into the group's Sustainable Development Approach.

In 2008, the group has **implemented an auto-evaluation process**, since then PSA reports on their sustainable development performance on an annual basis, following the third generation (G3) Sustainability Reporting Guidelines issued by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) in 2006. Monitoring indicators have been set to assess progress. With regard to the Agreement on Gender Equality and Employment for Women, **Progress Reports are submitted to and negotiated with the unions** at least twice a year (i. e. each site has to report to the group level before).

Besides sharing progress data, external communication also includes information events (at schools, universities, etc.) that are tailored to women and the companies may **participate in awareness raising initiatives** (e. g. girls' day at *Siemens AG*, role models at recruitment events at *IBM Corporation*).

With regard to **marketing**<sup>30</sup>, the companies questioned reported to take this issue seriously and to avoid the utilisation of gender stereotypes. *Formastur S.A.* e. g. explicitly states to detect and correct discriminatory language and images. There also are a number of companies that, similarly to the internal code of conduct among employees, have implemented codes of conduct for marketing that explicitly deal with gender issues and with avoiding the reproduction of stereotypes.

The internet and document analysis that has been carried out to gather information on the company initiatives give the impression, that multinational companies have already made a big step in **avoiding misleading and gender discriminating communication** and images in their external communication.

<sup>30</sup> It shall be noted, however, that the issue of gender-sensitive marketing of products and services was outside the main focus of this study and therefore was not investigated in-depth.



### 3.10 Benefits for companies

To conclude this analysis of company initiatives that promote gender equality at the workplace, some of the main benefits for the companies themselves shall be highlighted. In general, the promotion of a diverse workforce (and of gender equality in particular) is said to also lead to better economic performance of the company; there are studies that support this. In the following are some statements experiences **from the point of view of the companies** that have been questioned in this research:

- **Intangible assets**, such as motivation, employee pride and societal awareness help the enterprise to become a high-performance business. Therefore it is worth investing in these intangible assets.
- It is not only about gender equality, but about creating an environment where everyone can deliver at their best; **people perform best** when they feel valued, included and respected.
- **Relationships** are strengthened and trust is built but it is essential that gender equality is a real value to the Board as only with absolute commitment (action instead of words) beneficial results can be achieved.
- Investing in gender equality measures **raises employee satisfaction** (of men and women) which **reduces fluctuation**, sickness leaves, etc. (and therefore cost for the enterprise).
- The **working climate** in (gender) mixed teams and with both, male and female managers ameliorates and employees/managers tend to be **more productive and innovative** and the **quality of the work** improves.
- **Different opinions** are brought in which is believed to make a company more successful.
- A mixed team/employing diverse persons facilitates delivering individual **solutions to the diverse customers**.
- The **pool of applicants** is enlarged when a company appeals to men and women. This is essential in competitive industries where there is a shortage in skilled persons.
- The (external) **reputation of the company** rises which on the one hand helps to keep respectively attract customers/clients and on the other hand makes talents wish to work for the company.



## 4 Comparative analysis and assessment

Based on the descriptions of the various approaches and types of non-legislative initiatives in chapter 2 and initiatives individually taken by companies in chapter 3, the present chapter is devoted to a comparative analysis of the diversity of measures with a view to how they are designed, success factors and drawbacks, effectiveness, and scope of use.

### 4.1 Comparing types and themes of initiatives

The overall aim of all the initiatives identified is to tackle gender inequalities and to contribute to more gender equality. Nevertheless, many of the initiatives have a more special focus. Concrete **aims** for implementing such measures are **manifold** and reflect both **specific fields** where gender inequalities are visible and/or particularly challenging as well as particular **regional conditions**. So, the most important areas of intervention include:

- **Reconciliation of work and family:** As women remain the main responsible person in the families to organise the household and to care for the children, a better reconciliation leads to an improvement of the situation of women in the labour market. Therefore, some of the initiatives focus on the double burden of women through supporting and highlighting of good practices of enterprises in reconciling work and family. All these initiatives include elements which aim at changing the common attitude and traditional division of labour among the genders and fostering the role and responsibilities of fathers in the long run to arrive at an equal sharing of family duties.
- **Horizontal labour market segregation:** In all European countries, women are overrepresented in certain industry sectors and underrepresented in others. There are typical “female sectors”, such as education or personal services, and there are also typical “male sectors”, mostly technical and industry-oriented. This horizontal segregation is seen as one of the reasons for the gender pay gap, as female connoted jobs are regularly lower compensated. Thus, some of the initiatives aim at increasing women’s participation in so-called “male sectors” and economic fields to contribute to more gender equality and to tackle companies’ skills shortages at the same time.
- **Vertical labour market segregation:** There also persists a vertical gender segregation which results in an underrepresentation of women in decision-making and management positions and contributes to the gender pay gap as well. Thus, some initiatives explicitly focus on measures to increase the share of women in decision-making bodies and management positions and to highlight enterprises active in this field.
- **Backlash in former socialist countries:** The former socialist countries are confronted with a specific situation. The socialist regimes aimed at integrating all persons into the workforce and full time employment for women was the normal case (albeit poorly paid). The state provided childcare institutions and full-time day-care for children in school. Due to ideological backgrounds, education was seen as a public duty and families did not have the same importance here as in civil society. After the fall of the Iron Curtain a backlash started which resulted in a re-orientation towards a very traditional model of the



family and the female role in society. Moreover, social services were cut due to the limitation of state subsidies in this field. Thus, the discussion on gender issues has only recently emerged and the awareness of gender inequalities in the labour market is still to be risen. Initiatives to foster gender equality put much emphasis on the reconciliation theme in these countries (see above).

- **Support for broad legislation:** In a way, the Scandinavian countries represent the opposite case. There, the discussion on gender equality has a long tradition and the importance of tackling gender inequalities in the labour market is political mainstreaming which led to extensive legislation in the field. Measures which are of a voluntary nature in many other countries are actually compulsory e.g. in Finland or Iceland. Nevertheless, in some fields the practical implementation of gender equality law needs to be improved. Thus, there exist non-legislative initiatives aiming at highlighting enterprises which can serve as role models in implementing the law.

Since the initiatives have different thematic foci, they can also be distinguished along their target group. The target groups can be understood, on the one hand, with a view to the groups of employees addressed and, on the other hand, with a view to groups of enterprises. Initiatives may address the following **employee groups**:

- **All employees:** Some of the initiatives avoid a special focus and, in principle, intend to address all employees, thus men and women. This is often the case for initiatives which have a broad scope and foster measures with a view to diversity or CSR in general, even though in the framework of such broader initiatives special emphasis is put on women.
- **All women:** The initiatives with a general focus on gender equality and covering various intervention fields normally address all women within the workforce of the participating enterprises.
- **Employees with family duties:** Initiatives which aim at a better reconciliation of work and private life target at employees with family duties. Although in practice mostly women are addressed by such measures, it is crucial that all employees with family duties are taken into account to not enforce the traditional roles. Some initiatives even emphasise the importance of supporting and motivating fathers to take over daily responsibility for their children as this is seen as a precondition for reaching gender equality in the labour market. For example, within the “*Frauen- und familienfreundlichster Betrieb*” (women and family-friendliest business) competition in *Austria*, in the regional pre-selection in Styria a special prize is awarded to enterprises which are extraordinarily engaged in paternal participation.
- **Women with specific characteristics:** Initiatives tackling the horizontal or vertical segregation in the labour market aim at reaching specific subgroups of women. Concerning the horizontal segregation women already active in male-dominated sectors or aiming at these sectors (e.g. female students in technical-oriented subjects) are targeted at. With a view to the vertical segregation women in management positions or women having the ambition or the ability to advance into a managerial job are addressed. In both cases, initiatives do not limit their target group to women who have already entered male-dominated jobs but do also consider potential candidates.





Initiatives also address different **groups of enterprises**:

- **All employers:** Initiatives with a broad scope mostly address all types of employers including companies, public organisations and NGOs. As these organisations act under different framework conditions they are not directly comparable, so often different subgroups are created. Mainly prizes are awarded in different categories (in some cases the names of the prizes even differ), e.g. separately for public organisations and enterprises, private enterprises and NGO or third sector organisations such as social enterprises. Among private enterprises there is often an additional distinction with regard to firm size (see below). Moreover, the inclusion of all types of employers is often a way to foster networking and co-operation among the key players on the labour market.
- **Private enterprises:** As public organisations are often subject to a more stringent legislation as regards quotas, equality requirements etc. many initiatives concentrate their efforts on the private sector and target at private employers where gender equality initiatives are more often the result of voluntary actions than of legal requirements. These private enterprises are often divided into subgroups following **size criteria**. This makes possible adapting the requirements for participation as e.g. SMEs will not be able to present a gender equality plan covering as much areas as a large enterprise. Some initiatives also limit their target group to enterprises of a specific minimum size. This is the case for initiatives which focus e.g. on the vertical segregation which are mainly relevant for larger enterprises.
- **Enterprises active in specific sectors:** Initiatives targeting at the horizontal segregation often focus their activities on enterprises active in male-dominated sectors, such as technical- and technological-oriented industries or enterprises active in research activities.

The different aims and target groups cannot easily be associated to a specific type of initiative. Nevertheless, slight differences between the types of initiatives can be identified in terms of the target groups and other characteristics such as the application process, the assessment criteria and procedure as well as the degree of commitment a participating enterprise is bound to.

Thus, rankings mainly assess large enterprises and also charters are more likely to be signed by large organisations. As far as charters are concerned, beside the private sector many public authorities and NGOs tend to join. On the contrary, labels and prizes more often address all **types of enterprises**. To guarantee a fair competition and to motivate SMEs and public or third sector organisations to participate, different prizes in different categories are awarded and the requirements (and/or fees) for smaller enterprises are reduced.

Concerning the **application process**, enterprises *apply* for participating in a label or an award, whereas in the case of charters enterprises are often already involved in formulating and launching the charter or even initiate it. A ranking based on an external evaluation knows no application or just a registration of the enterprise. For the inclusion in a compendium of good practice enterprises are asked to provide information.



The **assessment process** in a label initiative is normally based on an audit consisting of self-assessment tools, external evaluation by a jury and workshops in which the status quo is identified and targets are formulated. As regards prizes, a jury of experts usually nominates the winners after having passed a two-phases process including self-description, interviews and on-site visits. As charters have strong elements of self-commitment and therefore are comparable to measures individually taken by companies, there is basically no external assessment of the signing enterprises. Rankings assess the enterprises mainly on the basis of quantitative data with the help of predefined criteria and have a strong comparative element. A compendium of good practice emphasises the description of the practices rather than assessing them.

The **time horizon** of the initiatives varies as well. Labels are usually granted for a limited period of time (usually three years), prizes are awarded yearly as well as rankings are published periodically. The signing of a charter is theoretically unlimited whereas compendium of good practices are basically a one-time initiative or ongoing in case of websites.

Concerning the initiative's **degree of commitment** and the binding character for the companies, in principle, rankings and compendia require no commitment from the enterprise to promote gender equality but describe the degree to which the company's policy is currently dedicated to it. As a prize awards the status quo of the gender equality policy of an enterprise no commitments are required theoretically, but in practice future plans and mission statements are taken into consideration when assessing the candidates. Labels and charters, on the contrary, entail a strong commitment of the enterprise as all measures should be based on a mission statement dedicated to gender equality.

The following table shows the differences and common denominators of the different types of initiatives along the various characteristics in a more structured and detailed form.



**Table 2 Comparison of non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality: set-up and procedures**

	<b>Label</b>	<b>Prize/award</b>	<b>Charter</b>	<b>Ranking/Index</b>	<b>Compendium of good practice</b>
<b>Which organisations are involved?</b>	Initiated or supported and promoted by public authorities (relevant ministries) Often implemented by specialised consultants or NGOs active in the field Often supported or promoted by social partner organisations	Public authorities (ministries, public employment services) Social partners NGOs Private organisations	Enterprises, public authorities, social partners, NGOs as signing partners Network of signed organisations as implementing organisation	NGOs, private organisations, academic institutions	Public authorities NGOs etc.
<b>Which group of enterprises is targeted?</b>	All enterprises Requirements are tailored to the size of the enterprise: More severe requirements for larger enterprises Slight differences in requirements for the public sector	All enterprises Different prizes for different groups of enterprise as regards size or form of organisation (e.g. public and private employers)	Charters are not only signed by (mainly large) enterprises, but also by key stakeholders (ministries, regional governments, social partner organisations, NGOs etc.)	Mainly large enterprises	All enterprises
<b>What are the application procedures?</b>	Companies apply for the label Companies declare their interest in the labelling process	Enterprises fill in an application form Sometimes prizes are an additional outcome of a label or a ranking process (the best labelled or highest ranked enterprises are awarded)	No application but launching of a charter by the initially signing companies, which are often involved in formulating the charter By signing the charter organisations become part of a network	No application (in case of external evaluation) or Registration of the interested enterprise	Enterprises are asked to provide information



	<b>Label</b>	<b>Prize/award</b>	<b>Charter</b>	<b>Ranking/Index</b>	<b>Compendium of good practice</b>
<b>How are the companies assessed?</b>	Based on an audit involving elements of self-assessment and external evaluation (jury of experts) Often workshops (for capturing the status quo, for formulating tailored goals for the enterprise, e.g. equality plan) led by an external expert are held	Often based on a two-phases process A long-list is constituted based on a self-description The winners are nominated based on on-site visits and interviews a jury of experts nominates and decides about the winners	Usually the signing of the charter represents the self-commitment of acting in line with the goals of the charter Some charters require reports	based on publicly available data or on a questionnaire (self-assessment) usage of pre-defined criteria (mainly quantitative data) involves comparison of enterprises	On the basis of quantitative and qualitative data Interviews with HR managers etc.
<b>What is the period of validity?</b>	Labels are granted for a limited period (usually 3 years), new labelling possible, but often with more demanding criteria and the prove of further development	Usually "new" winners are awarded every year, thus the companies are winners in a specific year	In principle unlimited, as long as the company is willing to be partner of the charter and the network	Often periodically (e.g. yearly) the ranking is published	Mainly one-time initiative (in case of publication) Ongoing (in case of websites)
<b>What is the degree of commitment?</b>	Due to external evaluation by experts and regular renewal of the label the commitment to improve gender equality policy must entail concrete measures	The current status of an enterprise's gender equality policy is assessed No binding commitments of the enterprises required, but usually the plans for the future are considered when choosing a winner Often a positive development is one of the assessment criteria	Ranges from very high (obligation to set plans and report on development) to very low (self-censorship) Organisations set their goals with a view to gender equality by themselves By signing employers commit themselves to participate in surveys etc.	No commitment from the enterprise as an external organisation assesses the status quo with a view to gender equality	No commitment of the enterprise but illustration of good practice as example for others

Source: Austrian Institute for SME Research



The initiatives can also be distinguished according to the **aspects of gender equality** they address. The emphasis of a specific aspect or a broader approach has implications concerning the concrete design of the measure, although, basically, any type of initiative can be used to address each of the following aspects of gender equality.

### **Gender equality in general (broad approach)**

As gender equality in the labour market is a manifold field with a wide range of different subthemes many initiatives have chosen a rather broad approach. In these cases, highlighted enterprises have to be active in different fields and implement a comprehensive mix of measures. The subthemes mainly pertain to the fields specialised initiatives are dealing with (see below). The advantages of broad initiatives are that they tackle the gender discrimination with its different forms and emphasise an approach of complementary elements. A more general initiative gives enterprises the opportunity of implementing basic principles to promote gender equality in all relevant fields and initiating an organisational change. However, a broad approach can also be unfavourable as the lack of a main focus entails the danger that only superficial measures are initiated or principles which are common practice are highlighted and rewarded. Moreover, among the subthemes the ones which are easier to be implemented and are less controversial often are spotlighted.

Therefore, to avoid only superficial changes in participating enterprises these broad initiatives often stress specific thematic areas (which also can change over time). This is also to ensure a continuous progress in the discussion and implementation on the specific aspects of gender equality.

### **Reconciliation**

The most traditional subtheme of gender equality is the reconciliation of work and family. As women remain the main responsible for childcare and household, all measures to reconcile these two areas and to enable women to enter or stay in the labour market contribute to an increase of women's employment. Women are given the possibility not to choose between family and work but to combine them.

Though, the focus on reconciliation holds the danger that family duties remain a female problem which consolidates the traditional gender roles and can hamper further developments towards gender equality in all areas. Thus, reconciliation is often seen more as a necessary precondition to arrive at gender equality rather than a target in itself. Initiatives emphasising reconciliation will represent an adequate measure in countries where gender equality is a rather new topic or in combination with other initiatives emphasising other aspects. Most importantly, initiatives which focus on reconciliation have to put much effort in addressing both women and men to break stereotypes and further develop gender roles.

### **Women in management**

Management boards remain a male domain although women have closed the gap with respect to the levels of qualification. Against the background of a shortage of skills and the necessity to use the best talents the economic rationality demands a neutral promotion system which is in contrast to a traditional understanding of gender roles. Thus, enterprises have to be convinced of the advantages of promoting women in decision-making positions and women have to be motivated to actively aspire for management jobs. Several initiatives of different types focus on tackling the vertical



segregation. As such initiatives aim at a fundamental organisational change and career development is a long term issue the effects will be of a more mid-term or long-term character. The challenge in this area is to motivate enterprises to set measures which entail immediate costs (e.g. training, career development programmes) while the results will become visible only in a more long-term perspective.

### **Women in male-dominated sectors**

Another area of a rather long-term perspective is the horizontal labour market segregation. Several initiatives target at an increase of women's participation in male-dominated sectors, especially in technological-oriented sectors or in research activities. Here enterprises which are confronted with skills shortages often try to encourage women in choosing a career in the sector by launching or joining a charter. Alternatively, public authorities award enterprises having programmes to support women's career in research and technology.

As the horizontal segregation is based on an early segregation in the educational system where boys and girls choose different schools and fields of studies, most of the initiatives include measures with a target group beyond enterprises. They also approach schools and universities and foster co-operation between enterprises and these educational institutions.

### **Equal pay**

A relatively new aspect in the debate on gender equality is the gender pay gap. It is, on the one hand, a consequence of gender in-equality (resulting from the horizontal and vertical segregation and the reconciliation problem) and constitutes on the other hand a specific domain where women can be discriminated. A few initiatives concentrate on tackling this aspect of gender equality. The measures usually include an analysis of the gender pay gap and suggestions on how it can be narrowed.

## **4.2 Success factors and barriers**

Basically, measures are assessed against the achievement of their objectives. The more concrete targets are set the better the achievement of such measures can be judged. This means that it is much more difficult to assess whether broader targets are reached. Moreover, the more globally objectives are formulated the more parameters influencing the result exist. As mentioned before (see chapter 2.1.) most of the non-legislative initiatives supporting gender equality aim at tackling gender equality on the labour market in general or the vertical or horizontal segregation in particular or at a better reconciliation of work and family life. The initiative itself is one measure affecting gender equality in interaction with other measures (e.g. other non-legislative measures, legal requirements) and is embedded in permanently changing framework conditions (e.g. economic situation, demographic change). Therefore, it is almost impossible to assess the direct impact of the initiatives with a view to their societal objectives in terms of figures.

Nevertheless, there are some indicators which can show the acceptance of the initiatives and the appropriateness of their conception and content. Firstly, **participation rates** seem to be an adequate indicator to judge whether the initiative meets the needs of the target groups (enterprises and employees). Secondly, the **echo in the media** is a sensor to appraise whether the content of the initiative is in line with



the priorities in society. Based on these indicators, most of the analysed initiatives could be judged as being successful, as they generally report increasing participation rates and growing interest in the media.

An initiative can also be regarded successful if **other countries adapt the concept** and implement a similar measure (see e.g. “*Audit berufundfamilie*” (work and family audit)) or if main elements of the initiative are **transferred into law** because they have been evaluated as crucial for the support of gender equality (see “*Entidad Colaboradora en Igualdad de Oportunidades entre Mujeres y Hombres*” (entity collaborating on equality of opportunities amongst women and men), as part of the Optima programme in Spain). This example shows also the limitation of non-legislative initiatives though. Thus, some countries decide to not rely exclusively on the voluntary commitment and participation of enterprises.

Beyond dispute, non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality at the workplace contribute to the **awareness** of gender issues in the labour market. They unfold crucial fields where gender inequalities persist and offer solutions how companies can change their organisational structures to foster gender equality. Besides, addressing gender inequalities in the labour market and appealing to the responsibility of companies in this context can have positive side effects to other issues related to **CSR** or **diversity** as it shows that equal treatment can have positive effects for the enterprise itself (see 4.3).

#### 4.2.1 Success factors

Despite the difficulties in assessing the initiatives with a view to the achievement of their overall societal objective, some success factors could be identified which seem to contribute to the acceptance of these initiatives in the companies and therefore indirectly foster the achievement of more gender equality. These principles can be found in many initiatives and can be classified as good practice.

- **Flexible and tailored approach:** A basic principle is that the broader an initiative is designed the more flexible the approach should be in terms of creating sub-categories of different target groups. The requirements have to be adapted to the situation of the companies as the measures implemented in SMEs will differ from those in large companies. Private enterprises face other challenges than public organisations. Therefore, e.g. most of the prizes know different awards taking into account the framework conditions of their target groups and to not discourage the participation of companies which are motivated to participate but do not have sophisticated gender equality plans yet.
- **Adaptation of the initiative:** Flexibility of the initiative should not only be given with a view to the target group but also in relation to developments on the labour market and social change. In many countries it can be observed that the focus of the initiatives has shifted from reconciliation issues to e.g. issues concerning the vertical segregation on the labour market. Such adaptations reflect the discussion in society, i.e. that gender equality is not only about family friendliness but concerns many domains. A possibility of keeping the initiatives flexible is the setting of yearly changing themes to react on recent developments and actual trends. In addition, this can foster the continuous efforts of companies to become active in various fields.



- **Gender equality as a dynamic process:** Most of the initiatives set their assessment criteria based on the concept of gender equality as a dynamic process rather than a status quo. Enterprises do not only have to prove achievements with regard to gender equality but commit themselves to a continuous effort to ameliorate the situation. Gender equality can not only be measured by figures but also becomes manifest in a change of consciousness among the companies' staff and management, and initiatives can be seen as being part of that process. Thus, e.g. many labels foresee an auditing process and are only granted for a limited period of time.
- **Professional organisation:** Concerning the organisation the postulate is service orientation. The clearer the requirements and the easier the administration the rather companies will consider the participation. If questionnaires or on-site visits are foreseen, there should be substantial support to guide the companies. The implementing organisations have to ensure that the application or participation process proceeds as smooth as possible.
- **Clear monitoring and evaluation criteria:** Transparency with a view to the assessment criteria is crucial to reach credibility and comparability. Clear indicators, the regular review of commitments by requiring annual reports, the assessment of self-evaluations by an independent expert jury are good practice examples. Moreover, the selection or auditing process should be documented. Comprehensive and detailed feedback to the accepted and rejected candidates can initiate the desired learning process.
- **Publicity:** To underline the relevance of a non-legislative initiative adequate PR measures are required. This can, on the one hand, increase the awareness of the initiative itself and its issues and, on the other hand, benefit the enterprises with a view to their public image (see chapter 3.3.1). Prestigious locations for the awarding ceremonies or the sponsorship and mentoring of celebrated persons emphasise the public interest.
- **Creation of binding commitments:** All these factors can contribute to the success of the initiative which is highly dependent on the creation of binding commitments of the management as the success of all gender equality measures highly depends on the engagement of the management and is mainly a top-down management strategy.

#### 4.2.2 Challenges and obstacles

Non-legislative initiatives can indeed contribute to gender equality in the labour market and particularly in participating enterprises and various positive impacts in companies could be identified. Nevertheless, these pros have to be contrasted with the obstacles and challenges for the initiatives:

- **Diversity of participating enterprises:** Initiatives promoting gender equality are well known among companies which are aware of the importance of a positive corporate culture and their corporate social responsibility. Thus, participation rates are high among the “usually suspects” and it can often be observed that awarded or labelled companies are also active in initiatives with another CSR or diversity focus. This entails two questions: How could other enterprises be motivated to dare the “adventure” and the risk of being assessed externally and of bringing new principles into the company's organisation? And how can a





“distortion of competition” be avoided so that new participants have a real chance to compete?

- **Participation of SMEs:** The diversity of participating enterprises also concerns the size of the companies. Many responsible organisations report on the difficulties to recruit SMEs as they often lack a systematic HR policy and therefore are not able to answer questionnaires or set measures in all fields required. Even if SMEs are active in these fields they seem to be too self-critical to call such measures gender equality or CSR-activities etc. and thus, do not see themselves as a target group of the initiatives.
- **Participation in times of economic crisis:** Gender equality and social responsibility is often seen as an additional target which can be aimed at if the company’s results are satisfactory. In times of economic crisis and negative business performance these additional targets are often sacrificed for the core business issues. Equality measures are regarded as a cost factor which could be reduced easily as the financial value of gender equality is difficult to measure and often shows its positive impacts more in the long than in the short run.
- **Balance between quality and accessibility:** Non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality rely on the voluntary participation of companies and therefore must orient their procedures, services and organising principles to the requirements of the companies. However, the initiatives will only be assessed as valuable in societal terms if the requirements for participation are sufficiently demanding and go beyond lip services, if standards and practices address crucial areas and induce sustainable change, and if this is actually evaluated so that the companies can serve as real role models.

### 4.3 Benefits and challenges for the enterprises

Impacts of non-legislative initiatives on gender equality are easier to identify at the level of the participating enterprises as compared to the societal level. It shall be noted however that these initiatives certainly interact with other measures taken by the companies’ management. As gender equality has to be considered a dynamic process the impact of the initiatives can be shown by a change in the companies’ corporate culture rather than in terms of figures.

Although more and more enterprises commit themselves to corporate social responsibility and set their goals beyond profit maximisation, a responsible management will only implement voluntary measures if the enterprise itself can benefit from such measures. Thus, the participation in non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality will only be attractive if gender equality can be seen as a business case, i.e. if the participation has positive impacts on the company. The analysis of the initiatives and the participating enterprises revealed several of these **positive impacts**:

- **Recognition for the company:** The participation in such initiatives often does not initiate totally new processes in the company but puts spotlight on actions already existing. Thus, the initiatives support and enhance management principles already on the way and serve to confirm the efforts made. Enterprises can present themselves as role models. As large enterprises are nowadays requested by customers and business partners to show engagement in CSR/diversity initiatives the signing of a charter or being awarded is an external “proof” of the engagement.



- **Tool for internal communication:** The external proof is a perfect tool for internal communication as it is a symbol for the managements' principles and can support the internal marketing. Employees can be better informed and the participation in (well-)known initiatives can make commitments within the staff clear. The external assessment of implemented measures increases the credibility.
- **Positive internal effects on employees:** The communicated social responsibility taken by the employers leads to a positive attitude of the employees towards the enterprise as it shows the esteem of the management towards its staff. This increases the employees' satisfaction which in turn enhances their motivation. Motivated and loyal staff will lead to a decrease in fluctuation.
- **Tool for external communication:** The visible signs of the commitment to gender equality via awards or labels or the signing of a charter is one important instrument to contribute to a positive public image of the company. As more and more customers take into account social and environmental arguments in their buying decision, such symbols represent a comparative advantage for the company.
- **Recruitment of key personnel:** Not only customers base their decisions on social arguments but also key personnel are attracted by a company with a positive corporate image. A company's equal opportunities policy is signalling to potential candidates that they can count on equal and transparent pay conditions, career development and a work-life-balance which becomes more and more important also for men. The participation in non-legislative initiatives enhances the chance of an enterprise to be the employer of choice, an advantage in the "war for talents".
- **Innovation and creativity:** The recruitment of key personnel is a prerequisite to become and stay innovative and create innovative products. Moreover, the implementation of gender equality policies will lead to an increase of women within the team which entails the insertion of different perspectives into the production and management process. As more and more women take the buying decisions in households it seems logical that a female perspective is integrated when creating new products and services.
- **Revision of HR management:** Many non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality include the analysis of the companies' culture by external experts. This is an opportunity for the company to be assessed externally free of charge or financially supported and to benchmark the work against others. The participating process also includes the assessment of the staff's satisfaction and represents the possibility of reviewing the HR policy based on and with the help of external expertise.
- **Networking:** The participation in an awarding or labelling process, the signing of a charter etc. represents the entry into a "community of companies" aiming at tackling gender inequalities at the workplace. This gives the companies the possibility of networking and the exchange of experiences.



However, there are several **challenges** to overcome in order to fully utilise the advantages connected with engaging in a non-legislative initiative:

- **Gender equality as a top-down strategy:** Gender equality assumes a climatic change in the enterprise's culture. Regardless of which quality the implemented measures are, they require the unrestricted commitment of the management. Moreover, managers should act as role models to illustrate this organisational change.
- **Internal communication:** The manager's commitment and the measures have to be communicated accurately. Although gender equality is a top-down strategy it takes shape in the interaction of the whole staff. Thus, internal communication offering the possibility for an open discussion between management and staff will be crucial. It will not be sufficient to just emphasise that gender equality has become one of the company's principles.
- **Costs:** Measures for increasing gender equality entail costs. There are direct costs such as the investment for childcare services, the implementation of teleworking stations, or training activities. But there are also indirect costs as e.g. a person will dedicate his/her working time for the co-ordination of gender equality measures and the recruitment process could be longer if women are explicitly required in male-dominated sectors etc. The costs seem to be much more visible and occur immediately while, in contrary, the benefits of gender equality initiatives are more difficult to be assessed in terms of figures and normally are only visible in a long-term perspective.
- **Clear responsibility:** The successful implementation of measures often relies on the creation of clear responsibilities. The best designed measures will fail if nobody is in charge of the implementation and evaluation and would assess whether targets are achieved or not. Such a person must have time to manage the process and the power to intervene if misguided developments occur or if the commitment lacks concrete actions.

#### 4.4 Comparative assessment of non-legislative initiatives

In the previous chapters important success factors and challenges of non-legislative initiatives have been summarised and impacts in participating enterprises have been identified. Although these arguments are more or less true for all types of initiatives, there are still some differences in effectiveness and appropriateness.

Looking closer at **enterprise benefits** resulting from the participation in non-legislative initiatives it becomes obvious that prizes have broad marketing effects as awarding ceremonies usually provoke a wide echo in the media. The same is true for rankings which, in addition, are recognised as being very objective since based on quantitative data. In contrast, labels and charters give enterprises the opportunity to clearly communicate their mission statement respectively their commitment for gender equality and to present themselves proactively as a forward-looking organisation. The participation in a labelling process gives the enterprise the possibility to analyse and review its HR policy with the help of external consultants. Signing a charter often entails the possibility to enter a network of likeminded enterprises. In contrast, compendia of good practices have positive side effects for other enterprises as they illustrate good practices on how to promote gender equality at the workplace.



An important criterion when assessing a measure is its **sustainable and long-term effect** with a view to realising gender equality principles in the participating companies. In our context, the question is whether a certain type of non-legislative initiative promotes gender equality in a more sustainable way than others do. Labels and charters seem to emphasise the enterprise's future management practice and reflect an organisational change towards the promotion of gender equality. Moreover, the signing of a charter aims not only at proclaiming the enterprise's principles but also at motivating others to follow. In the case of a label, the limited time period of granting the label and the requirements of a re-labelling - which entail a further improvement of the gender equality - fosters sustainable change. A prize and rankings basically assess the status quo of an enterprise's gender equality performance. Nevertheless, within the awarding process the existence of a sustainable gender equality policy (e. g. the existence of gender equality plans) may still constitute an important assessment criterion. And worst ranked enterprises could be driven to change their practices to avoid repeated negative publicity.

Each type of initiative has its advantages and disadvantages and can be seen as an appropriate measure for different situations.

**Labels** can initiate a sustainable organisational change and continuous improvement of the enterprise's gender equality policy. The assessment process includes clear requirements and an external evaluation. Based on the analysis of the status quo development plans are formulated with the help of external consultants. Thus, sustainable organisational change is fostered. In contrast, such external consultancy often entails costs and could be rather time consuming. As the labelling is constituted as a process such an initiative seems to be appropriate for enterprises willing to change its organisational structure and implement a sustainable gender equality policy throughout the whole organisation.

**Prizes or awards** have the advantage of a wide media echo, for the enterprises as well as for the promotion of gender equality in general. As it is based on the analysis of the status quo it is an instrument to recognize the efforts an enterprise has already made rather than initiating further developments. Thus, it seems to be an appropriate additional instrument to highlight those enterprises which are active in other initiatives (e. g. prize for labelled enterprises), too. Furthermore, prizes seem to be a good "starter drug" for enterprises that have started to implement gender equality measures but have not yet publicised their efforts or undergone an external evaluation. The enterprise does not risk much when participating.

The signing of a **charter** can be interpreted as a missionary act. It represents a strong commitment of the enterprise to act in line with the charter's principles which become part of the mission statement and include implicitly the wish to motivate others to follow. It is an ideal instrument for enterprises which have already started to support gender equality and want to promote their activities. As it requires much self-initiative and includes the commitment that enterprises implement the charter's principles in concrete measures tailored to the specific situation it can be seen as a hybrid between non-legislative initiatives and initiatives individually taken by companies. This stress to self-initiative entails the danger that the charter is seen as a public relations measure to position the enterprise as a socially responsible one without concrete measure to follow.

**Rankings** have the advantage that they are ideally based on "hard facts" and quantitative data which is assessed by external experts. This guarantees neutrality but



processes and developments are not taken into account. Moreover it highlights also bad practices which can lead to public pressure and motivates the worst ranked enterprises to review their HR policy with a view to gender equality aspects. Rankings can serve as an additional tool to illustrate the level of gender equality among a certain type of enterprises and as a monitoring instrument. They do not provide support to the enterprises' activities.

Finally, a **compendium of good practice** can be seen as an additional tool to illustrate the practice of gender equality measures. As it is normally not based on a "critical" assessment it is a descriptive way of showing possible ways of promoting gender equality at the workplace without initiating further processes in the involved companies. Nevertheless, it can motivate other enterprises to design and implement measures to promote gender equality.

The following table shows the differences and common denominators along several assessment criteria in a more structured and detailed form.



**Table 3 Comparative assessment of non-legislative initiatives promoting gender equality**

	<b>Label</b>	<b>Prize/award</b>	<b>Charter</b>	<b>Ranking/Index</b>	<b>Compendium of good practice</b>
<b>Which benefits for the enterprises are emphasised?<sup>1</sup></b>	<p>Diagnosis of the companies gender policy and practice</p> <p>External Consultancy to improve organisation (restructuring), tailored solutions</p> <p>Label as sign of commitment for gender equality (for internal and external marketing)</p>	<p>Broad marketing effects (as normally awarding ceremonies gain much attention in the media)</p> <p>The enterprise has “nothing to loose”</p>	<p>Possibility of emphasising the enterprise’s principles</p> <p>Be part in a network</p> <p>Public image as proactive and forward-looking organisation</p>	<p>Judgement is seen to be objective as initiative and assessment from external organisation</p> <p>wide media echo</p>	<p>Described enterprises gain publicity</p> <p>Practice on how to implement gender equality is illustrated for other enterprises</p>
<b>How sustainable is the initiative with a view to the promotion of gender equality?</b>	<p>Labelling is conceived as a process targeting at an organisational change</p> <p>Often recommendations for further development are given</p> <p>Precondition for a new labelling is often the improvement of the company’s equality policy</p> <p>“Gender equality plan” is implemented</p>	<p>The prize in itself is not sustainable, but often the existence of a sustainable gender equality policy is an assessment criteria</p>	<p>As the principles of the charter should represent the principles of the enterprise’s (gender equality) policy the signing of the charter should entail the sustainable commitment to the charter’s principles with implications for the organisation’s development</p>	<p>Worst ranked enterprises gain negative publicity and could be driven to change their practice</p>	<p>Describes the status quo</p>



	<b>Label</b>	<b>Prize/award</b>	<b>Charter</b>	<b>Ranking/Index</b>	<b>Compendium of good practice</b>
<b>What are the main advantages of the specific type of initiative?</b>	<p>Clear requirements (standards)</p> <p>External evaluation whether requirements are met</p> <p>Aims at organisational change and implies further development</p> <p>Equality plans are implemented</p>	<p>Very good instrument for public relations</p> <p>Recognition for already implemented measures</p> <p>Very popular tool to promote gender equality in the media</p>	<p>ideally based on self-initiative and strong commitment of the enterprise</p> <p>signing a charter as a missionary act to motivate other enterprises to follow</p> <p>instrument to support societal developments which seem to be favourable to the enterprise</p>	<p>Most neutral instrument based mainly on quantitative data</p> <p>Shows also bad practices (the worst ranked enterprises)</p>	<p>Low-threshold initiative, as rather based on a description than on a formalised assessment</p>
<b>What are the main disadvantages of the specific type of initiative?</b>	<p>Requires initiative of enterprises</p> <p>Consultancy entails often costs</p> <p>Rather time consuming</p>	<p>Analysis of a given moment in time</p> <p>Processes are not assessed, only former developments and plans for the future</p> <p>Only limited number of winners</p>	<p>as the charter relies more on self-commitment than on external assessment there is the danger of using it as a mere lip service</p> <p>probably reflects public goals to a lesser extent, as often based on the companies' initiatives only</p>	<p>often based only on externally available and quantitative data</p> <p>Lack of information on processes and developments</p> <p>Does not directly support any self-initiative of enterprises</p>	<p>Only as additional measure</p> <p>No "critical" assessment</p>
<b>When is the measure most appropriate?</b>	<p>For enterprises willing to sustainably implement gender equality throughout the whole organisation</p>	<p>It is a good "starter drug" as the enterprise does not risk anything when participating</p> <p>As an add-on to recognize efforts of enterprises active in other types of initiatives</p>	<p>For self-initiative enterprises which want to support societal developments</p> <p>For enterprises which want to promote their activities (hybrid between non-legislative initiative and initiative individually taken by companies)</p>	<p>As additional tool to illustrate the level of gender equality among a certain type of enterprises</p> <p>As monitoring instrument</p>	<p>Supporting measure</p> <p>To illustrate the practice of gender equality measures</p>

<sup>1</sup> Here only benefits are mentioned which are especially true for the specific type of initiative in comparison to the other types. For more information concerning the benefits in general see chapter 4.3







## 5 Conclusions

Gender equality is a fundamental right and a common value of the EU. Although being a basic principle of the European legal framework its practical implementation differs considerably across countries and is, in general, hampered by a lack of information on how gender equality can work at enterprise level. Thus, many European countries have created or supported the establishment of non-legislative initiatives for companies where a company's practices in promoting gender equality are assessed and highlighted. This includes labels, prizes and awards, charters, rankings and compendia of good practice. These non-legislative initiatives have several **advantages**, e. g.:

- Positive incentives are easier to be enforced politically than punishment systems.
- The implementation of gender equality represents a fundamental change within the organisational structures of an enterprise. The initiatives can contribute to motivate companies to undergo this process.
- The initiatives can increase the benefits of the enterprises' "investment" in promoting gender equality.
- The initiatives represent a possibility for enterprises to assess and improve their practices.
- The highlighting of good practices illustrates practicable solutions which have been tested and approved in the enterprises' daily business.

Moreover, such initiatives can move gender equality on the agenda of the media and public debate. Thus, they contribute to raising awareness of the issue in general.

For the companies the participation in non-legislative initiatives can enforce the positive effects of implementing gender equality measures and establish **gender equality as a business case**. Winning a prize, being labelled or signing a charter represents recognition for the enterprises' efforts to increase gender equality and can serve as a communication tool internally within the company and externally with business partners and costumers. The communicated social responsibility taken by the employer will increase the motivation of the staff and decrease fluctuation. Moreover, it is easier to recruit key personnel for an employer of choice. Motivated and mixed staff is a prerequisite for innovation and creativity. The participation in a non-legislative initiative gives the company the opportunity to revise and further develop its HR management assisted by external experts. And finally, the participants can be part of a network of likeminded companies.

Through the different types of initiatives business communities in different stages of maturity in terms of gender equality can be addressed (see chapter 4.4). Initially, it is important to find an easy access to motivate a company to put gender equality as a topic on its agenda and to have its HR management externally assessed. Initiatives where enterprises "have much to win and nothing to loose" and are not forced to commit themselves too strongly seem to be adequate in this context. **Prizes and awards** recognise the efforts already done, have the advantage to not mention the non-winners, the participation, in general, entails no costs and a broad media echo is



promised to the winners and to the subject of gender equality. However, this motivational effect could and should be better enforced especially for enterprises which are interested in gender equality only recently or which have no systematic approach to the subject. This could be done by creating prizes for “newcomers”, which have put in practice equality measures only recently and in specific areas and which have not yet implemented a sophisticated equality plan. This is to avoid an unequal competition where these firms would have to compare with enterprises which are traditionally active in the field. Such prizes could also be suitable to motivate SMEs for participation as they often cannot implement gender equality measures in such a broad and formalised way as large enterprises.

The next step can be made through a **label**, as it aims at a sustainable organisational change and is highly process-oriented. An enterprise starting the labelling process does not need to have implemented a broad equality plan but should express its commitment to design and implement appropriate measures to promote gender equality (in the framework of such an equality plan) and its willingness to undergo an analysis of its status quo and to formulate equality objectives with the help of external experts. The label represents, on the one hand, recognition of the efforts and, on the other hand, commits the enterprise to further improve its gender equality activities.

Finally, enterprises which have already implemented a broad range of complementary instruments and actively aspire to act as role models to “evangelise” other employers may choose to join a **charter**. As the charter is often strongly based on self-commitment and basically does not include neither any external support nor external assessment it will only be appropriate for a spearhead of “advanced gender equality promoters”.

Additionally, **rankings** could serve as a monitoring instrument and also allow for highlighting bad practices when publishing the lowest ranked enterprises. This can produce public pressure towards “black sheep” and probably initiates an internal reflection and discussion process with a view to gender equality among the management. For enterprises the ranking means a barometer on how their activities are evaluated in comparison to others.

**Compendia of good practice** can serve as complementary measure to illustrate practical experiences, but do not directly initiate a change in the enterprises. Thus, they could be used for information campaigns or in the framework of PR measures.

In some countries **various types of initiatives** are combined to promote gender equality. For example, among labelled enterprises those most successful in implementing instruments to promote gender equality may be awarded a prize; or the winners of an award are presented in a compendium of good practice. There would be the possibility of awarding the “best performer” among the undersigned of a charter, too. These **combinations** can profit from the advantages of different types of initiatives and information and data does not need to be gathered for each initiative separately.

In any case, it seems to be important that the responsible organisations of different initiatives co-operate closely at national and European level to create a strong and coordinated **network** of organisations for promoting gender equality. Moreover, the networking should not only be fostered at the level of the responsible organisations but also at the level of the participating enterprises to support the exchange of experience which will be an additional benefit to the participant.



With a view to the **design, implementation and further development of non-legislative initiatives** for companies to promote gender equality at the workplace, the following aspects should be taken into account:

- **Thematic focus:** When designing and developing an initiative it is important to choose a thematic focus considering the general development of gender equality in a particular country (Which problems have to be addressed? Which fields lack gender equality the most?) and the problem of interdependences between the different fields of intervention. This could best be addressed by initiatives with a broad thematic scope while developments within society can be considered by continuously shifting the focus towards the most topical problems. The more specialised initiatives have the advantage of promoting best tailored measures to a specific problem and putting emphasis on more controversial issues. The assessment of the enterprises, the progress measured by concrete data and the benefits for the enterprises can probably better be illustrated when concentrating on a specific field of intervention. Special attention has to be put on the field of reconciliation. Being a precondition for fostering many aspects of women's equal labour market participation it is naturally very important to promote initiatives which focus on reconciliation, especially in countries where childcare institutions are not provided adequately or reconciliation as such is controversial. But there is a danger that gender equality is reduced to the reconciliation debate and traditional gender roles are even reinforced.
- **Target group:** To avoid the reinforcement of gender roles and gender stereotypes, more attention should be paid to the fact that gender equality addresses both, women and men. Thus, initiatives promoting gender equality at the workplace must target at both genders and support programmes and measures of enterprises which involve women and men. This is mainly true for measures supporting the reconciliation of work and family life. Men should be motivated to further participate in childcare and household – on the one hand to give women a real choice on how to combine work and family life and on the other hand to increase the share of men responsible for the family which will entail the breaking of gender stereotypes. But also in other fields, the participation of men is crucial. E. g. to tackle the vertical segregation managers – mainly men – have to be convinced about the advantages of women in managerial boards or male co-workers have to accept a female boss.
- **Development:** As non-legislative initiatives for companies have no end in themselves but want to promote and increase the level of gender equality in a broad sense the design of these initiatives must be adaptable to the changing social environment and the progress gender equality registers. This continuous development is crucial for both, the thematic focus of the initiative in general and the concrete design with a view to requirements, assessment criteria, and target groups (groups of enterprises and employees) etc. in particular. From an international perspective, such adjustable initiatives will also be transferable from one country to another.

