



РЕПУБЛИКА СРБИЈА
МИНИСТАРСТВО РАДА,
ЗАПОШЉАВАЊА
И СОЦИЈАЛНЕ ПОЛИТИКЕ



Управа за родну
РАВНОПРАВНОСТ



SWEDEN



COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELEVANT BUSINESS EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES PRACTICES

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*«No one can make you feel inferior without your consent»
Eleanor Roosevelt*

1. INTRODUCTION

Role of women and female labour in economic life of a country is equally important as role of men. In other words, economy of any country would be two times weaker and two times less efficient without activity of women. Despite this is irrefutably true, in underemployment circumstances female labour isn't equally appreciated as male labour and gender equality isn't achieved in the working world. According to existing data, half of women in Serbia that are capable of work are unemployed. At the same time, a significantly smaller number, about one third (30%) of men capable of work are unemployed. Probability of getting legal employment isn't the only inequality concerning position of women in business. Various research studies show that women are paid less than men for the same job. Data show that current pay gap in Serbia is 16% (Sekulić, 2012:11). Furthermore, despite the fact that in recent years more women than men have graduated from university in Serbia (e.g. in 2011, 8813 women compared to 6689 men), number of men in senior and managerial positions is significantly higher. Also, women are more often forced by the situation to take "under the table" jobs. Finally, share of women in self-employed category is much lower than the share of men in the same category.

These and similar data shows that major effort still has to be put to achieve gender equality in business domain. Especially since gender equality is one of the UN millennium goals and a high ranking EU priority. That also was one of the main goals of this project. One of project parts is a research study conducted in order to use its results as an input for round table conversations on equal opportunities in business practice.

In accordance with objectives set, results of the research study will be presented in following chapters. After presenting information on methodology, in chapter 3 we talk about maternity protection in companies. In the next part we talk about position of women in companies by analysing responses of female respondents employed in public and private companies. In chapter 5 we focus on balancing of work and private commitments. In chapter 6 we present results about respecting of human work rights. In chapter 7 we talk about ensuring of women safety in companies and in chapter 8 we discuss ways in which

companies promote professional development of women. In chapter 9 we present concluding observations including recommendations made by female respondents. Specific recommendations, which are based on the analysis discussed in some of the previous chapters, are presented in chapter 10.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology is always dependant on research objective. Because of that, in this part we summarized research objectives, research approach, selection and construction of instruments for data collection and analysis, research sample design and type.

2.1 *Research objectives*

Project framework of this research study is very wide, so it doesn't set specific research objectives. Instead of that, it was left to the researchers to operationalize instructions which were defined as follows: Development of comparative study on equal opportunities in business practice in ten public and ten private companies. The only specific guideline was reference to the study *Balancing private and business life – study on availability of local social services* (Sekulić 2012).

You can already tell from the title of the study that it is focused on local community, which is substantially different from working community. Because of that, the only dimensions from that study that were used were the ones that could also be tracked in working environment. The following dimensions were used:

- maternity protection;
- position of women in companies;
- balancing of work and private commitments.

By further reviewing relevant literature we found one more study that could be interesting for our project: *Gender equality in business* (UNWOMEN, 2012). This study mainly deals with views on gender equality from perspective of company management. On the other hand, we concentrate on the issue from the perspective of female employees. However, these two perspectives overlap in certain aspects. In an attempt to find connection between results from that study and our results, we will track dimensions which are common to both approaches. Three key dimensions are:

- fair treatment of women, respecting and supporting of their human and work rights;
- ensuring health, safety and well-being of all female employees;

- promoting education, training and professional development of women and placing them in decision-making positions.

In the following chapters, we tracked these dimensions by analysing respondents answers.

Taking into consideration both frameworks and all abovementioned dimensions, objective of this study can be defined as comparative analysis of differences between private and public companies in relation to specified dimensions.

2.2 Research approach

Methodology is always dependant on research objectives. Objectives of this project are, as mentioned before, scientific and practical at the same time. It means that, besides improving knowledge on position of women in business environment, this research study tries to change the existing situation. In literature this kind of approach is known as critical social science methodology. It means that researchers have clear value judgement concerning position and role of women in business environment. In short it can be explained as a tendency to achieve full equality between men and women in business environment including certain privileges for women considering family context. This doesn't imply deviating from scientific approach, but adjusting of positivistic attitude which closely focuses on basic research topics and often implies maintaining status quo for the sake of scientific objectivity.

2.3 Selecting data collection methods and instruments

Selecting of data collection method was influenced by this approach. Instead of a survey, based on standardized questionnaire, in this research we used in-depth interview. Researchers conducted interviews and later they analyzed collected data. Interview was based on semi-structured questionnaire which lets respondents spontaneously express their attitudes and emotions in relation to subject of the interview (Questionnaire/interview guide can be found in Appendix 1).

During preparation of interview guide we made sure that both work and family context of respondent were covered. We focused on work conditions and relations with environment, but when assessing those questions we took work and family context into consideration. Without that we wouldn't be able to achieve the research objectives.

2.4 Sample design

Project objective implied that research should be conducted in at least ten large private and ten large public (publicly owned, state controlled) companies.

So, two key criteria that we used were:

- *size of company* and
- *type of ownership of the company*.

According to World Bank criteria large company is a company that employs more than 300 people. In Serbia, on the other hand, company is considered to be large if it has more than 200-250 employees, so we used that criteria.

Because many companies in Serbia have mixed (state and private) ownership, we used majority ownership (51% state or private ownership) as a criteria.

Besides two abovementioned criteria, we used two additional criteria that we thought could affect research findings. Additional criteria that we used were:

- *the region in which company is seated* – because regional cultural characteristics define attitude towards women, not only in family, but in public and work environment also. Since specific culture has significant influence on attitude towards women, it was important to include companies from different in our sample. Bearing in mind that sample covered only small number of large, private and public, companies, we included companies from three, for this purpose constructed and used, areas – Belgrade, Vojvodina and Central Serbia.

- *sector of activity* – because there is still a pronounced division between so-called male and female jobs. Position of women in a company can be affected if companies' activities are considered to be predominantly male or if majority of employees are male. This mainly depends on company's sector of activity. Because official number of sectors of activity in Serbia equals total number of companies in our sample, we decided to include companies from 5 sectors of activity, specifically constructed for purposes of research:

Group I– agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining,

Group II – manufacturing, electricity, gas and water supply,

Group III – construction, traffic, motor vehicle sales and repairs,

Group IV – ICT, financial, science and innovations, hospitality industry, real estate, culture, art and entertainment,

Group V – administration, schools and education, health, social security.

Table 2 shows criteria and number of companies and Table 3 shows names of companies that were included in research.¹

Table 2: Criteria used for selection of companies into sample

¹ Note that during research sample had to be changed, since some of companies that were included in first sample didn't want to take part in the research.

| Criteria | | Number of companies |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| type of ownership | Private | 10 |
| | State | 13 |
| Area | Belgrade | 9 |
| | Vojvodina | 6 |
| | Central Serbia | 8 |
| Sector of activity | I | 3 |
| | II | 5 |
| | III | 3 |
| | IV | 8 |
| | V | 4 |

Finally, it is important to note that during sample design phase we made sure that both domestic and transnational private companies were included in the sample.

Table 3: List of companies included in research

| | Naziv preduzeća | Oblast | Sektor | Tip vlasništva |
|----|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------|------------------|
| 1 | EPS (Rudnici Kolubara, TE NT. EPS) | Belgrade | I | State |
| 2 | Elektrovojvodina | Vojvodina | II | State |
| 3 | Beogradput | Belgrade | III | State |
| 4 | Uprava grada BG | Belgrade | V | State |
| 5 | Telekom | Belgrade | IV | State |
| 6 | Pošte Srbije | Belgrade | IV | State |
| 7 | Strabag | Belgrade | III | Private |
| 8 | UniCredit | Belgrade | IV | Private |
| 9 | Belmedic | Belgrade | V | Private |
| 10 | NIS | Vojvodina | II | Private o/ State |
| 11 | ViktoriaGroup | Vojvodina | I/II | Privatno |
| 12 | Minakva | Uža Srbija | II | Private |
| 13 | Matica srpska | Vojvodina | IV | State |
| 14 | Univerzitet Novi Sad | Vojvodina | V | State |
| 15 | Saga a. d. | Uža Srbija | IV | Private |
| 16 | Srbijašume | Uža Srbija | I | State |
| 17 | Philiph Morris | Uža Srbija | II | Private |
| 18 | Fiat automobile Srbija | Uža Srbija | II | Private |
| 19 | Lasta | Uža Srbija | III | State / Private |
| 20 | Skijalista Srbije | Uža Srbija | IV | State |
| 21 | Filozofski fakultet NIŠ | Uža Srbija | V | State |
| 22 | Pošta Srbije | Belgrade /Uža Srbija/Vojvodina | IV | State |
| 23 | Telenor | Belgrade | IV | Private |

2.5 Type of sample

Finally, after selecting companies, we choose specific female respondents in every company that were employed in managerial, expert or operative positions. Total number of respondents in each company was 3, which makes 60 interviews in total.

Because our research study is qualitative, and its goal isn't detailed description of the situation nor determining prevalence of a specific phenomenon in observed area, sample doesn't need to be representative. Sample we used is a convenience sample designed by snowball method.

3. PROTECTION OF MATERNITY AND PARENTAL LEAVE

Currently applicable law, as well as draft Labour Law being prepared, provide maternity protection, i.e. rights of a woman during pregnancy and after childbirth. Applicable Labour Law has nine articles (articles 12, 18, 89, 90, 91, 92, 94, 157, 187) regulating maternity protection and parental leave. It is provided by this articles that pregnant women cannot be assigned to jobs that could harm hers and/or children's health. Night work and overtime work are also regulated by the law. Any form of discrimination against pregnant women is forbidden. Length of maternity leave is determined by the law and dismissal of employee during maternity leave is forbidden.

Review of the legislation shows that it undoubtedly and adequately protects and supports maternity. Draft Labour Law is also strict on that matter. But the question is to what extent companies comply with this law provisions and if there are some practices by which they force employees to waive the rights granted to them by the law.

In the course of research we talked on that subject with our female respondents. We asked the following question: **In your experience, what is company's attitude on using maternity or childcare leave?**, or if respondents didn't have children, and because we were trying to collect as many data as possible, we asked them about their **knowledge of their co-workers experience on the same subject**.

In *Balancing private and public life* study (Sekulić, 2012) many respondents stated that they had very bad experience concerning maternity leave. For example, one respondent stated that when she became pregnant, she wasn't allowed to take a day-off or be late for work if she had pregnancy checkups. At the end she was forced to quit her job (Sekulić, 2012:30).

With these findings in mind, we expected to encounter more of the similar experiences. But our findings were exactly the opposite. Almost all respondents said that while they were pregnant they had very positive experiences concerning use of maternity leave and with every other aspect concerning company and environment attitude towards their maternity as well.

This positive attitude ranges from some moderate assessments, for example:

"They respected the law, but I didn't have any additional benefits";
"This is a public company, they respect the law";
"Everything is regulated by the law and the collective agreement".

But we received almost equal number of answers that emphasized very benevolent attitude of management and of environment to pregnant women:

*"Their attitude was great, pregnant women are 100% supported";
"Whole work collective helps. I was protected even more than it is prescribed by the law";
"I gave birth to three children while working here, there is a high degree of tolerance";
"They respected all legislation, they even turned a blind eye from time to time".*

During interviews only one respondent said that she heard about colleague from the company that *"had her wages cut during maternity leave"*, but she didn't elaborate on that.

No respondents had negative personal experience. But in few cases respondents didn't use full maternity leave, which one of them explained in this way:

"I didn't use full maternity leave, but that was my "caprice". I had to return to work after ten months because there was some problem in Čačak. Actually, I didn't have to return, but I thought that I had to solve that problem. There's no "we don't want you to have children" attitude in the company, although it seems to be modern these days".

Some, conditionally speaking, negative experiences could be found in answers of respondents that talked about bad experiences their friends had in other companies. One of the respondents said:

"I only have positive experiences. This company respects the law, but some of my friends working for private employers are complaining."

or similar to that:

"Everything (concerning maternity leave) is fair here, but I don't think that situation is the same in small private companies".

Based on conducted interviews, main conclusion is that all large companies – both private and public, respect the legislation on maternity support and rights of pregnant women provided by the law.

The only difference to be seen between large private and public companies is that private companies treat women fairly within legal framework, and in some public companies there is additional level of tolerance, which means turning a blind eye from time to time and giving pregnant women more privileges than it is provided by the law. Some of those privileges include: exiting from work early and having short absences from work without written evidence, it is easier to get longer maternity leave etc.

On the other hand, there is relatively wide-spread belief that small private companies don't always fully respect the law. In that sense, it could be said that large companies in Serbia – both private and public, both domestic and international – show high degree of maternity protection. (See Box 1).

Box 1

PDP Victoria Group

In the Victoria Group company, incentive supporting young women not to be deprived of maternity is translated into concrete financial support, which proves great social responsibility of the employer. If a woman has to take sick leave due to pregnancy maintenance, her salary is paid in full amount, as well during regular maternity leave. Special help to her is a gift in the amount of approximately three average salaries in Serbia for every baby she gets.

Additionally it is important that her career development in the company is not in any way conditioned or jeopardized by her decision to have children.

The only limitation that exist are those which women impose to themselves, especially if they are in managerial positions. Some of them believe that business suffers while they are on maternity leave. Another danger comes from an emerging trend of avoiding maternity in order to make career advancements. Only one of the respondents talked about that, so it seems that trend still isn't prevalent – maybe because only small number of women hold high career positions.

4. POSITION OF WOMEN IN COMPANIES

Position is always an artificial category. Here it is examined from several aspects:

- situation on labour market examined through two indicators – employment waiting period and frequency of changing jobs;
- pay gap between men and women;
- flexibility of working hours examined through two indicators – possibility to leave job during working hours and obligation to stay at work until the job is done;
- working from home.

In this research, based on conversations with respondents, we tried to determine if there were differences between position of women in private and public companies. Following question covered that subject: **How long did you wait for your first employment; did you change jobs during your career, how many times and why; do you know if or do you have an impression that other people doing the same job as you have smaller or bigger salary than you? If yes, what do you think is the reason for that? If yes, is your salary amount affected by the fact that you are a woman? Does your company have strict working hours, can you leave early or be late for work due to family or private commitments and are you obliged to make it up in some way? Are you obliged to stay after working hours to finish your work? How often does it happen and how hard is it for you? Do you have to take work home sometimes? How often, what does it mean and how do you feel about that?**

4.1 Position on labour market – (waiting for employment, changing of jobs)

Considering that unemployment rate in Serbia is high, it is pretty surprising that most respondents said that they waited very short time for employment. In most cases they found job immediately after or during first year after graduation. Only few of them said that they waited for employment longer than two years.

Main reason for this positive image was the fact that most of women that were interviewed were highly qualified and employed in expert or managerial positions.

It can be noted that period of waiting for employment was shortest for respondents working in large international private companies. It shows that these companies have a developed system for hiring of high quality staff.

In light of wide-spread stereotype of job for life orientation, information that almost all respondents changed their job at least once on the course of their career is both interesting and surprising.

In that sense, there are certain differences concerning frequency of job changing and motivation for a job change.

Because our sample isn't representative, we can't make general conclusions, but we can still note that respondents working in private companies changed their jobs more often. Most commonly mentioned reason was career advancement, that is better conditions offered to them by other company. Once again we note that this can be explained by the fact that most of our respondents are highly educated women, employed in expert and managerial positions which involve constant career advancement. Typical answers were:

"I have changed job three times. First time because of master studies, and then in order to finish projects I was working on."

"Better conditions were offered to me, I mean bigger salary"

"I changed my job twice, because higher position was offered to me."

"I've changed my job four times. It is important for me to be happy at work, but when interpersonal relationships are deteriorated, there's no job satisfaction"

On the other hand, respondents working in public companies also changed their jobs but only once or twice. Besides that, range of motives that they stated was much wider.

"I changed job twice. Me and my husband had to move because of his job."

"In previous company conditions were fine, but I didn't have time for the children."

"This is my third job, before this job I worked for two private companies."

4.2 Pay gap

One of most common forms of gender inequality on labour market is pay gap. It is a difference between average salaries of men and women. Specific and especially problematic type of pay gap exists if there is a difference in salaries for the same job.

Data from EU shows that in last five years pay gap was around 17%². In the same period pay gap in Serbia, according to data from National Strategy for Improving the Position of Women, was 16% which was at the average European

² Reducing pay gap demands actions on several levels. and EU Commission and its members work on resolving of that issue. Last year, German government presented a software that enables companies to compare salaries of their employees. In Austria, companies are obliged by the law to publish annual reports on salary differences. Source: www.Euroactiv.rs 5.03. 2012

level. Example of best practice is founding of Committee for gender equality at work in Sweden 2011 (see Box 2).

Box 2

Swedish government decided to establish committee (delegation) for gender equality at work. This committee will examine different working conditions for women and men and propose measures to improve gender equality at work and to reduce salary differences between men and women. Committee will also call for debate and recommend spreading of information.

- In school, girls are more successful than boys, but salaries remain lower. It is time to make education of women equally valued as education of men. Reducing pay gap is important priority of gender equality, says minister of gender equality Nyamko Sabuni.

- In sectors dominated by women, career and possibilities of development are often limited, and that is a serious social issue. It is absurd to still have sex segregation of labour market in 2011, says minister of labour Hillevi Engström. Mikael Sjöberg, managing director of Directorate for work environment issues, is appointed to a position of president of Committee for gender equality at work.

Source: <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/119/a/177584>

Since there is statistical data on pay gap, we were primarily interested if respondents knew or had an impression that they are less paid for the same job than their male co-workers.

Information that most respondents think that differences in salaries don't depend on employee's gender is encouraging. But, truth be told, most of them said that they didn't know or that they couldn't assess. They usually used some of the following explanations:

*"I don't know, maybe through bonuses, but salaries are the same";
"Nobody knows that, but I think that there are no differences. If there are any, it is because men are more oriented to material goods";*

There are also those respondents, although they are rare, who think that men have better salaries:

„Men have higher earnings because they have more chance of getting a better job. In my profession they have better chance to get promoted, so their earnings are higher. I couldn't concentrate on my career. While my husband worked, and worked overtime, I took care of the children."

Last statement contains the essence of the problem – woman's attachment to home and family makes it difficult for her to commit to work and career advancement. More on this issue will be stated in chapter 8 of this report.

4.3 Working hours

Attitude towards working hours is one of key aspects of employee's position in the company. Although this aspect of work is regulated by Labour Law, flexible working hours have always been an indicator of special status. Flexibility of working hours, from gender point of view, is considered especially important for women, because it allows them to balance their work and family responsibilities more easily.

The Union of branch trade unions „Nezavisnost“(independence) gave its separated attitude on the flexible way of work in the following sense:

“ the juncture of flexibility in employment (which is recommended by the European employment strategy) and safety, quality and dignity of work, on which the trade unions insist, through an optimal combination of stimulating and punitive measures. According to this, in practice, to apply the term «Flexsecurity» which means that disregarding of the manner, form, time on which a person is employed (indefinite or definite time period, by service level agreement, on temporary or periodical jobs, with full or shortened or part-time working hours... through the National Employment Office or private employment agencies, in private, state-owned or public sector), the employer must observe the determined international standards (conventions, recommendations...) as well as domestic legal and other regulations that determine the rights from and on the grounds of work“;

The Union of employers supports and promotes flexible working hours, whereby they think that this should be determined more precisely through legal provisions.³

Previous studies show that employers have different attitude towards flexibility of working hours. They often don't object to flexibility, if it doesn't affect quality of work. But, more often than not, employers from various reasons don't show understanding for flexible attitude towards working hours and insist on strict respecting of prescribed working hours.

That conclusion is confirmed by our research results. In most cases employers tolerate flexible attitude towards working hours, but some companies demand respecting of prescribed working hours. Here are some characteristic answers that we got from people employed in private and public companies:

³ Research conducted in 2011 for purposes of European Commission Project «Exchange of best practices on gender equality -Flexible working time arrangement”, The Netherlands, 24-25 October 2011

"I can leave whenever I need, because I have an excellent relationship with my boss";
"I can leave whenever I want, but other employees must strictly respect working hours. When I had surgery, I could leave the job and not return for the whole day, we could agree on anything, if job was done"
"Working hours of other employees is strictly respected, but managerial staff, like me, doesn't have strict working hours, we stay until the job is done, but if there is a need we can leave"
„I can leave, I have no obligation to stay, but I respect that very much and because of that I don't leave"

It's interesting that, contrary to private companies, public companies more often have agreements on strict respecting of working hours. In one large company all respondents said that working hours are strictly respected.

Here are some more answers from various large public companies:

"There is no leaving before three p.m., except in extraordinary circumstances";
"I think that anyone can leave early if he makes it up later. I don't have an impression that discipline is strict, we don't have ID cards, but I would never leave early, if I didn't finish my job"
"It's hard to tell, theoretically you can leave, but I never do it, on the other hand, I often stay overtime, but since I'm an executive, it has no sense to count overtime hours for myself";
„In general, working hours are strictly respected, but in practice, I can leave whenever I want";
"Attitude towards leaving early is more than tolerant, you can leave early."

Analysis of these and other answers show that working hours flexibility mainly depends on position that women hold. If it is a managerial position, flexibility is something that is understood. But there are other factors that affect flexibility of working hours. Above all other factors there is sector of company's activities, because obviously there are production activities for which strict respecting of working hours is important.

Example of best practice is private company IBM from Slovenia (Box 3)

Box 3

The IBM Slovenia, an IT company, offers various forms of flexible working, like work from home permanently (5 days/ week) or partially (2-3 days a week), and the possibility to perform some urgent personal affairs during official working hours and then work later in the afternoon or from home, in agreement with an immediate manager.

Source : http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/exchange_of_good_practice_nl/si_comments_paper_nl_2011_en.pdf

In most answers respondents note that flexibility of working hours depends on making up for hours spent outside of company. But when asked if

they are obliged to or how often they stay overtime to finish work, we got various answers.

These are some of typical answers we got in private companies:

*„Of course I stay overtime, it has become my habit“;
„I sometimes stay overtime, but mostly because I feel it is my responsibility, and not because I’m obliged to.“;
„There are no working hours for managers, I stay on meetings“;
„I sometimes stay overtime for more than few hours, and usually up to one hour longer. It is not hard for me, because I have no choice“.*

On the other hand, situation in public companies is significantly different. Here are some typical answers:

*“I stay overtime two times a year – on company celebrations”
“No, I stayed overtime only once”
“Sometimes, but it isn’t so often and hard here as it was when I worked for private employer, I try to forget that”.*

Finally, there is a specific type of flexible working hours – working at home. Working from home is a specific type of work recognized by Labour Law and defined as work conducted outside of company’s offices. However, in this research working at home is defined as work that was started during working hours and finished at home. But if we define working at home in this way, then there are types of work that can’t be taken home. Because of that, we got fewer answers on this question. It seems that development of information and communication technologies led to increase of work that is conducted at home, after working hours. Because of the possibility to work on computer and over the internet, here is what respondents had to say on this type of work:

*“I take laptop home, at the expense of my free time” ;
“Since I’m in contact with people from abroad and from different time zones, I often work from home, usually late in the evening”;
“On daily basis”.*

However, there are some respondents that said that they don’t take work home *“as a matter of principle”*.

We observed no difference between public and private companies in this respect. It is typical that women in managerial position from both types of companies, as well as university professors take part of their job home and finish it after working hours.

Elektrovojvodina approach on this issue is used as an example of best practice (Box 4).

Box 4

PDP Elektrovojvodina on flexible working hours

Public company Elektrovojvodina introduced fixed working hours to its employees, which is mostly suitable to employed women with children of school age. Practise has been introduced that women who are on pregnancy or maternity leave be informed about situation in the company and at position they work, while they are absent.

5. BALANCING OF WORK AND PRIVATE COMMITMENTS

Many research studies on gender equality show that not being able to balance family and professional life is the biggest limitation that women have to face in working environment. Because of that most of the recommendations on improving position of women in business sphere are on balancing of family and professional life. Very important condition in relation to balancing of commitments is provision of adequate services in working environment. This particularly means provision of services that would help women with taking care of children and with other household activities – like preparing food which, in our country, is still seen as predominantly female activity.

Example of best practice, where problem of corporate responsibility for employees in Slovenia is resolved in a standardized way by awarding a *“Family-Friendly Enterprise”* certificate to companies (Box 5)

Box 5

The “Family-Friendly Enterprise” certificate was a significant novelty in the Slovenian business environment. The project launched a discussion in the Slovenian society about the corporate social responsibility towards the employees. It increased awareness of the need for solving the problem of reconciliation of professional and family duties of employees with (small) children in the context of the corporate responsibility towards the employees. Thanks to that project, the Slovenian enterprises gained better understanding of the relationship between family-friendly policies and productivity, loyalty and work efficiency. Positive consequences of family-friendly policies in enterprises were proven for all stakeholders.

The Slovenian enterprises were invited to participate in the certification process by a public call issued in October 2006 in the leading Slovenian business daily “Finance” (a media partner of the project). Certification was done under the auspices of the Slovenian Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and was financed through the Community Initiative Programme EQUAL (European Social Fund). Before engaging in the first round of certification, the methodology was tested in a pilot enterprise (insurance company Zavarovalnica Maribor). The first group certification process started in January 2007 and was successfully completed in April 2007 by 32 enterprises. The implementation of the “Family-Friendly Enterprise” certificate has continued. In November 2008 and May 2009 the second generation of basic certificates was awarded to 17 enterprises, and in May 2010 the third generation consisting of 11 enterprises joined them. In the third generation, an average of 13 measures will be implemented per awardee (Turk 2010). Measures in the area of working time are the most popular (flexible time of arrival to work and child time bonus in particular). It does not surprise that the measures related to working time (flexi-time, part-time, job sharing, paid absence on the first kindergarten or school day, etc.) have remained very popular. They ask for minor technical adaptation and minimum financial resources.

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-quality/files/exchange_of_good_practice_nl/si_comments_paper_nl_2011_en.pdf

In this research study we tried to find out to what extent large public and private companies have recognized this problem and offered services that can help women balance their work and family commitments. We asked four questions in relation to that subject:

- **are working hours set in accordance with family commitments? Describe the way in which these matters are balanced, and if they are not, which suffers more and how?**
- **are there organized children day care services in company?**
- **is there a possibility to buy food in company and take it home?**
- **is there any other way to make connection between private and work commitments and how?**

Our first observation is that of all the questions we asked, respondents most willingly and most extensively answered to these, which leads us to a conclusion that this subject is very important to them.

Our second observation is that all women employed in private companies pointed out that these two parts of their life aren't balanced and that "house" suffers more. On the other hand, most respondents employed in public companies said that these two fields are balanced, with exception of women in managerial positions.

As expected there is more pressure to women that have children of school age. Most women realized that they were under pressure, only when that pressure disappeared:

*"It's OK now, but when children were little, household suffered more";
„My sons have grown up. When they were little, it was horrible. I never had enough time for them".*

Women often state a few different ways they used to overcome that imbalance. The first thing mentioned is help from spouse and parents. Here are some typical answers that illustrate this solution:

*"I have fixed working hours, but I don't follow it, simply because my position allows me to do it, my husband helps me a lot, and my mother. My husband left his job because of my career and to be with our child. My son went to a kindergarten, but you know how it is – he's ill for 2 months, he's healthy for 2 months. So my husband didn't work, but he is still quite supportive, certainly I couldn't manage without it";
"My husband is a lawyer, he has flexible working hours, so he can support me";
"Now that children have grown up. I couldn't have manage anything earlier if I weren't living with an extended family";
"Husband does all the work around the house, company doesn't offer anything".*

Where there isn't possibility of such practice most common answer is that private and work commitments are balanced at the expense of woman's free time, the time women would and should devote to themselves. Here are some typical answers on that subject:

*"Neither house nor work suffer, but my free time does";
"I suffer the most";
„Everything is balanced, because I wake up early to cook and to iron";
"Nothing suffers, but I make personal sacrifice".*

In other words, it means that private and public companies in Serbia didn't develop mechanisms or services that could help women balance their private and public commitments. This problem is predominantly seen in private companies. All respondents said that their life is unbalanced and that, at the same time, companies didn't offer any services. At best, we got the following answers:

*"Luckily, there is a kindergarten near my company";
"The only possibility my company offers is yearly physical examination";
"I work in an international company and I know that in Bratislava there is a kindergarten in the company's facilities".*

On the other hand, in public companies, many women use flexible working hours and possibility to leave early from work so they can fulfil some of their personal needs.

*„For example, I can leave the job to attend parents meeting”;
"I can help my children over the phone, too, because I have enough time";
„Yes, you can get many personal chores done, like paying bills and so on. Especially if you do field work."*

In few public companies there is still a possibility to buy food in the canteen, as well as some other ways to private and public life. Although, our respondents' experiences show that there are some limitation to that too:

*"Yes, there is that possibility, but it isn't that cheap to buy food there every day";
"There was a possibility to buy food at the canteen, but it isn't possible any more";
„I can buy food in the company, and besides that we can attend yoga classes."*

Example of best practice from Slovenia and Ericsson company (see Boxes 6 and 7)

Box 6

Lek, a pharmaceutical company, provides benefits for employees under the Lek's collective agreement. These benefits include flexible working and childcare facilities on site in Ljubljana, with the aim to help women, in particular, to balance their private and professional lives.

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/exchange_of_good_practice_nl/si_comments_paper_nl_2011_en.pdf

Box 7

Ericsson company provides regular preventive medical examinations for their employees, one day off a month in case of minor problems, primarily for female employees, and full compensation during pregnancy/maternity leave. Relaxation after intense work day through various sport activities including: swimming, gym, football, tennis, everything financed by the company. Company also organizes team sport activities for co-workers and business partners, as well as sports day for all employees. Women with little children, who aren't in the position to travel, but want to improve their expert knowledge and develop their leadership skills, can attend many on-line trainings, that help them keep up with the progress at work. Multimedia conferences help women stay informed and in contact with distributed teams and have equal opportunities to successfully do their job.

Looking at the companies owned by the state, women employed at the university listed more problems about balancing work and private commitments than other respondents:

"I have to do everything myself. I stopped cooking when I was appointed to this position. My life collapsed at that time. Now I am alone and I don't have to cook, but if children were little, I don't know how would I manage everything. At that time I slept for 2-3 hours";
„My family suffers because I take my work home, but still it is different when mom is around, in the next room”.

As mentioned before, other women employed in public sector generally state that their private and work commitments are balanced.

6. FAIR TREATMENT OF WOMEN, RESPECTING AND SUPPORTING OF THEIR HUMAN AND WORK RIGHTS

In modern societies most companies regulate social relations in accordance with civilization norms under which fair and respectful treatment of others, i.e. members of their collective, is implied. However, in practice we still witness prejudice against members of certain social groups which is shown in lack of respect shown to them. It is an obligation of every company to develop an atmosphere in which no member of work collective is less respected because he belongs to certain social group. In that sense, companies should take special care about gender equality, which means elimination of all “potentially discriminatory practices”.

During interviews that we conducted we tried to find out to what extent did large public and private companies succeeded in reaching this civilization level. We asked the following questions:

- In general, how would you describe your position in working environment? Do you feel respected? Do you ever feel neglected or even threatened and how? Are you and to what extent allowed to express your opinion on different subjects... how would you best describe your position compared to other employees?

- Do you ever have feeling that your colleagues, especially male colleagues, think that you are not up to your job?

- Do you ever have feeling that male employees in your company think that some or all female employees are not up to their job, just because they are female?

- Does the way your superiors treat employees changes depending on employee's gender?

The most important conclusion that we made from interviews was that prevalence of discriminatory treatment of women isn't completely gone. However, based on our representative sample we can say that this practice is characteristic for small number of companies.

Second conclusion is that discriminatory practice isn't related to type of ownership of the company, but primarily with sector of activity and region. Here are some statements about experiences that our respondents working in forestry or traffic sector had:

*„A male colleague once said to me: Just scan (watch) and be quite! Forestry engineers think that women have no place in this company. They don't let me prove myself because male employees do all the field work". ;
“Most of employees in ski resort are male and women are only employed as cleaners and salespersons. There, in the mountain – maybe it's something about mentality of people living in the mountains – their wives are unemployed and don't travel alone, so when you move here from Belgrade, plus you are a woman, they look at you like: Who is this woman and what is she doing here?”*

Respondents working in traffic sector shared same experiences:

*“Women are not welcome in traffic industry, my director told me something like that”;
„That's male attitude in general, on all levels. When I say that I am technical director, they ask me: “And, what did you say your job is? Chief of technical preparations?”. “No, I am technical director”. I mean, it is a really big issue”;
„I had problems at construction site, because I was secretary, and that was a job that could also be done by a man. About all that questions you asked me, there probably was some man there that thought he could do a better job”.*

It is interesting, however, that women have different explanations for this type of discrimination. Most respondents don't think it is related to gender inequality, but that this kind of discrimination is linked with personal traits or something specific to the human nature:

*“There are always such moments, it's in human nature. There are all kinds of people...”;
„Yes, of course there are colleagues that show that kind of behaviour from various reasons, or maybe because they are inferior. It's all mixed together – their lack of confidence, their inferiority or some other complex, their upbringing, environment in which they grew up, not only family, but wider environment, companies they worked for”;
“There are some male colleagues that think they are smarter, but it's in the human nature”;
“It depends on what kind of man someone is. There were some comments, but those people treat male colleagues badly, too”.*

What worries us the most is that some women accept stereotypes about difference between male and female jobs. One of the respondents said:

„OK, it happens. But look, I spent two weeks in refinery and I think that there is no job for women there. They work in three shifts, work on heights, and you have to be dexterous to do all that stuff.”

However, most respondents have different opinion on that subject and it involves proving their worth. It is interesting that all respondents that have that opinion state that women have to push much harder to gain respect of men:

"You need to have at least 30% more knowledge and skill to be accepted by your male colleagues";
"I said to my daughters – In our line of work woman has to be twice better than anyone else to be accepted as equal by their male colleagues".

In a certain way, it is expected that management of companies takes key role in overcoming of gender discrimination. Although it usually is so, our research shows that there are still managers that don't treat both genders equally. Here are some statements that prove it:

"I don't know, I can't talk in general terms. But there are definitely bosses who hate women. It is up to me to prove that woman can do that job and to do it in such way that he can't make any complaints";
"Managers treat employees differently: Yes, they are always ready to say "That woman". If I were a man, my results would be much more appreciated."

One of the reasons that helps this attitudes be formed is that very small number of women hold managerial positions, i.e. positions in Supervisory Board or Board of Directors, in both public and private companies. When it comes to public companies and administration, research study *Gender equality in decision making positions* (Gender Equality Directorate, 2012) showed that "State and the Government have key role in promoting establishment of gender representation of men and women in political and public life and in decision making positions. " More on that will be said in concluding part of this research study.

Finally, speaking on treatment of woman by superiors, one respondent said that "it depends on beauty". That leads us to the next topic.

7. ENSURING SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF ALL FEMALE EMPLOYEES

During their lifetime, men and women spend a lot of time in working environment. Because of that companies are in obligation to ensure working conditions that make everybody feel safe, i.e. protected from harassment. Unfortunately, one form of intimidation that is still present is sexual harassment which sometimes can evolve to violence.

We didn't take our research that far. We were interested in answers on following questions:

- **can sexual stereotypes be heard in your working environment?**
- **did respondent experience any kind of mobbing (harassment of any kind or intensity) by male colleagues, and if yes, what kind?**
- **did they hear about similar experiences that their female colleagues had?**

It turned out that this questions were to uncomfortable for respondents, so we collected very little information on this subject. The most common answer was that they didn't have any unpleasant experiences and that they didn't hear about any unpleasant experiences of their female colleagues.

Second most common answer suggested that mobbing exists, but respondents didn't give us any more information about it:

*"I don't want to talk about it, but anyway it's not about me";
„I don't want to talk about it“;
"There were some cases, but they were legally prosecuted";
"Different types of pressure, that have nothing to do with job";
"There were some cases in my old company, but it was benign and director was accused without any evidence";
"It never happened to me. I overheard some stories but I wouldn't like to talk about it now".*

Only one respondent gave a specific answer on this topic that was about her personal experience:

"Everything is fine until I say that I am not married. Don't let me get started on things they were saying about me..."

Women employed at the university gave most open answers when we talked about experiences of other women:

„I think that there was mobbing. Some male colleagues placed female assistants in some unpleasant situations“.

“I heard all sorts of things. Sexual harassment exists, that I know. Gossiping, rumours spreading...”

Our respondents usually take sexist stereotypes as a joke.

Once again, what worries the most is the fact that some respondents accept the stance that women are actually those who provoke sexist remarks:

“Simply said, construction business always has been more of a men's job. I think that sometimes women themselves cause it. There are always exceptions. But if woman comes to work all dressed up and wearing mini skirt – of course people are going to look at her and make comments.”

“Maybe women contribute to that, you have heard about it, blondes, stupid blondes. Both man and woman are the same. Woman has to be servile even if she is more capable, because it is a part of her wisdom and her upbringing. I think that even today we raise our children in the same manner. My female friend once said: “Look at her! Stupid female driver!”. “There’s no man around to help us carry groceries!”

Instead of conclusion, we can say that we found no differences between private and state controlled companies in this respect. We can't say that mobbing or sexist stereotype are characteristic for any sector of activity in particular. They appear everywhere - in construction, banking sector, as well as in university etc. One of respondents employed at university said:

“It is present, when I talk with them I realize that their opinion on women is in a certain way limited and narrow-minded.”

8. PROMOTING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN

Previous studies show that very common type of gender discrimination is the inability of women to take part in company training while, at the same time, channels of professional development are more open for man. Because of that, the need to ensure equal access to training and education, so woman can progress to all levels and areas of work, is often emphasised.

As in previous chapters, we are interested in the extent to what our respondents recognize problems relating to their progress in a company, so we asked them the following questions:

Is there a significant difference between man and women in relation to their progress in a company?

Are there any positive incentives towards professional development of woman?

Is there a possibility to attend trainings, paid or not paid by the company (courses, seminars, other types of training) and did you notice any differences on that matter related to gender?

How often do you have the opportunity to go on a business trip and is there a difference between man and woman in this respect?

We were pleasantly surprised by the fact that our overall impression after conversations on this subject was that professional development is one of key aspects in almost every company. Director in one of private companies said:

"Professional development is the foundation of our company."

At the same time, a director in one of state controlled companies said:

"Although are financial capabilities are limited there is an opportunity for professional development."

The fact that no respondent said anything about drastic restrictions to professional development of women is also quite encouraging. In one public company, in which most of employees are women, we heard the following:

"There is even discrimination of male employees."

Similarly to that, one of respondents from public company that wasn't satisfied about incentives toward professional development said:

"There are no incentives towards professional development, but it is the same for everyone."

Female employees actually emphasize that there is a difference in incentives towards professional development, but that it doesn't depend on gender, but on the position and type of job.

But exactly there lies a possibility for hidden discrimination because most of the higher positions in companies are occupied by men which makes them privileged in respect of professional development. That is something that is not visible at first sight. One respondent told us an anecdote related to that matter:

We went at the fair in Paris, there were only men, I didn't even see the list! And then one of my colleagues from Finances saw that and asked me to go. I had to pack in a hurry! And he jokingly said to me "You are a woman – what are you doing at the fair?! I mean, you're not anyone's mistress..."

Second reason for women being less represented in professional development programmes, from the view point of our respondents, is their family commitments. One respondent illustrated that with the following words:

"But that's my choice. If I were 20 years old –it would make no difference if I were man or a woman. My husband could take care of the children, if I felt the need to do it. I personally think that I am not ready to live 6 months without my children".

Even among women there are some autostereotypes that are characteristic for male sexism. Trying to explain why women less frequently take opportunities for professional development, one respondent said:

"Women are less ambitious by their nature, they wouldn't take more responsibilities for a little raise"

But, once again we have to say that these are individual views. Most of respondents, both from private and public companies, think there are no significant differences in respect of possibilities for professional development. In some public companies, days for professional development are even provided by collective agreement.

Example of best practice on education of women is Philip Morris Serbia company.

Box 8

PDP Philip Morris

Since people are the biggest resource in Philip Morris company, there is a special department for monitoring and control of gender equality in the company . The programme for career development in the company is designed carefully in order to enable ambitious and hardworking women who see themselves at top positions in the company to become experts in their fields. Positive incentives for professional development either through company's trainings, courses and seminars, or through studies at regular faculties, as well as postgraduate diploma obtaining, the companies stimulate by paying all expenses and tuition fees. It is sufficient that a woman asks to professionally develop herself and immediately she gets the approval. Non-existence of any barriers in that field, makes a woman feel respected , she develops her career and returns that to company in multiple ways.

9. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

9.1 *Discrimination issue*

Analysis of different aspects of women's position in large companies, in general, gives brighter image of all employed women's position. It actually means that level of discrimination in large business systems is lower, and that solutions provided by the law in relation to position of women are respected to a significant extent. When asked if there is discrimination in their companies most respondents gave negative answers. Some of them even said:

*"There is no discrimination, I am a true example of that";
"In our company there is positive discrimination."*

However, as it was mentioned earlier, the purpose of this research and this approach wasn't assessing the current situation, but pointing out to problems or emerging problems. In that sense, much more important are relatively rare answers that indicate deviations from this rule. First of all, we must draw attention to the fact that discrimination, even in large systems, can be hidden in certain part of company. One respondent said:

"I wouldn't say that there is distinct discrimination. There is no discrimination in general, but it is present in some sectors".

Our second and even more important conclusion is that the most prominent type of discrimination is related to possibility of women to hold key or decision-making position in a company. Some of respondents employed in model companies said:

*"Top management is entirely consisted of man";
"Top positions are still reserved for men."*

This is clearly a global issue and only recently some countries tried to tackle it by introducing gender quotas. Basic idea is creating of business climate that encourages women and gives them an opportunity to take more responsibility and decision-making positions. Prerequisite for that is adopting measures that will help them along the way and including women in leadership development and improvement programmes. This approach is very important because it opens up the possibility of qualitative change, i.e. increased number of women in managerial positions. It would result in better understanding of the issue and adopting measures for general improvement in that area (see example of best practice that was adopted by famous French telecommunication company Orange France, box 9).

Box 9

ORANGE, France

In an interview with Delphine Ernotte, Executive Director, Orange France, Ms Ernotte draws out the potential benefits of a 35 per cent quota of female representation at all levels of management. She says, "While women make up 35 per cent of our employees overall, we want to reach this proportion at every management level, in all departments. For instance, 20 per cent of our executive positions, of which there are 300, are filled by women. This percentage is already high for a telecom company; however we are determined to push it to 35 per cent by 2015. This is why we've set up a Diversity Committee at executive level, which comes up with proposed solutions to improve recruitment policies, give equal access to training and career orientation, in addition to developing gender-friendly management practices. When asked how this would be achieved, Ms Ernotte's response is "First, we need to make sure that there is a gender mix beginning with the recruitment process. This is particularly critical for technical jobs, as we are competing with the whole industry to attract a scarce number of female graduates of technical studies. In that aim, we've set up partnerships with engineering schools so as to promote our career opportunities to young women, but also to work together towards bringing more girls into science classes. At this point, we can already notice a sort of bias against jobs with generally high responsibilities, driven by the fear of not being able to balance their professional and personal life. Our duty is to break these stereotypes and give a clearer picture of the diverse daily tasks in a telecom company. Second, management practices need to be adapted to different work styles. We are aware that women provide most of the family care in our society, a fact which compels them to have a different schedule than most men. Technology today enables us to adapt our working schedule to our other responsibilities; yet its usage is determined by the practices of each manager who can either put pressure on employees by setting up late calls/meetings, or set rules of work that are adapted to them".

Source: www.wileurope.org/articles/details/5-Minutes

Finally, there is one more type of hidden discrimination that is endemic and which shows that certain patriarchal decision making patterns survived to this days by changing their form. A respondent said:

"Decisions are made in bars, and you know who visits bars – men".

This is an interesting observation because it was made by a women employed in a public company. Our impression is that position of women in public companies has its advantages and disadvantages. Main disadvantages come from the fact that some forms of informal behaviour, including making sexist remarks, are more persistent. But we must be careful about making that conclusion and add that it mostly applies to public companies with work activities that are usually seen as male jobs. In private companies with same type of work activities sexism is also present.

On the other hand, in public companies women are more “protected” in terms of maternity protection, exactly because there is less worry about formal patterns of behaviour. Besides that in some public companies there are still institutions from socialist period, e.g. company canteen.

However, it is a paradox that some of these “relicts” of socialism are slowly being shut down because they are not profitable, and, on the other hand, our respondents believe that they could be important for overcoming of imbalance between their private and work commitments.

9.2 Respondents recommendations

In the end we asked the respondents to say what they think should be changed in their working environment in order to improve business position of women, that is which recommendations for overcoming gender inequalities they would give.

In short, received answers could be classified in 4 groups:

Change of awareness;

Change of self-awareness;

Change of system solutions;

Development of system services.

Great number of our respondents think that the problem is insufficiently developed social awareness of the importance of gender equality. In that sense, they propose measures directed towards education: lectures, round-tables; raising awareness of managers; education and conversations with women. The aim of this education would be raising awareness on non-existence of essential differences between women and men in the sphere of work. As one of the respondents say:

„Ninety percent of people think that civil engineering is for men, I don't see it that way, and it is not true.”

Specific subgroup of this viewpoint is the viewpoint on change of awareness. In other words, first of all women themselves should change the viewpoint on relationships between men and women. One respondent says:

“Firstly, colleagues have to regard themselves as equal to men”.

The attitude in the following two questions which emphasize the importance of individual change is similar:

“Women should be more ambitious and educated”

„Women should work on themselves in order to become more independent. And they must pay the price of being independent, which is not low”.

Different type of thinking is present in women who see the basic problem in the fact that women are marginalized in the sphere of decision making. They advocate for and propose more women to be at managerial positions. In that sense, some of them think that in the initial phase the state should give support and legally define the quota:

"Solutions are quotas, a rule would have to be imposed that at least one women be in top management, or even better 30% of women".

Best practices of system solutions and introduction of quotas are given in the abbreviated summary of the research study *"Women in the Boardroom: A Global Perspective"* conducted by Deloitte Global Centre for Corporate Governance and they are presented in Appendix 2.

Change of awareness and self-awareness indicate pressure directed at structural changes. Change of power relations in managerial structures represents system changes. However, the impression is that the most women think in practical way. In another words, they think less on structural and system changes and more on overcoming existing obstacles which make their everyday life difficult. This is the reason why the majority of recommendations relates to adjustments of business and family responsibilities. In that sense, efforts for flexible working hours, introduction of the system of various services within the company, such as kindergarten, facilities for cooking, laundries are present.

Reasons for such practical thinking are simple - women don't want to deprive themselves neither of private nor business part of their existence. What, in that sense, create the biggest problem are children. As one of the respondents notices:

„A woman is most vulnerable when the kids depend on her, that is when they are little. That is critical period. Concerning other things, I see no difference between women and men"

From that viewpoint, it could be said that it is the most important for a woman to have support during that period. Some women think that, in that sense, key support can and should be provided by the family, while others think that the responsibility lays on the whole society and the state:

„Frankly speaking, the state could possibly have little influence. Employees are only the consequence, I want to say that preventive activities should be done, children healthcare system should be more accessible, kindergartens cheaper and if possible situated inside the facilities of company".

10. LIST OF SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FROM RESEARCH STUDY

10.1 Recommendations to state authorities

1. Provision regulating the issue of percentage of women in boards of directors and their mandatory appointment until 2020 should be implemented in Law on Gender Equality.
2. Comply with standards achieved in most EU countries that 30% of underrepresented gender should be in high-level managerial positions, boards of directors and supervisory boards of companies, sports associations and similar entities;
3. Ensure that public companies fall within the scope of Law on Gender Equality and that they are obliged to employ a certain percentage of women as members of board of directors. Furthermore, public companies should be obliged to adopt a plan on implementation of gender equality and submit reports in relation to that matter, as well as to inform Gender Equality Directorate (hereinafter, GED) on percentage of women appointed to boards of directors of public companies;
4. Companies and directors failing to comply with obligation to submit programmes of measures and annual reports on gender equality should be sanctioned by the law;
5. Develop a strategy for encouraging women to achieve professional development and hold decision-making positions;
6. Raise awareness about importance of equal sharing of household and family-related responsibilities;
7. Ensure that permanent employees returning to work after maternity or childcare leave are fully protected by the law in terms of their right to the same job or alternative job with same terms and conditions;
8. Mandatory paternity leave should be prescribed by the law and sanctions for failure to comply with this provision should be set forth;

9. Companies that implement stimulating measures for achieving balance between professional and family life, as well as gender equality in all spheres, should be promoted in the media;
10. Encourage the media to promote model women through inspiring examples of women that achieved successful professional or managerial careers;
11. Penalize any kind of gender-based harassment;
12. It should be insisted that amendments to the Law on the Prevention of Workplace Harassment must contain penalty provisions for employers failing to comply with the obligation to provide healthy and safe work environment;
13. Inform all employees about zero-tolerance measures against mobbing.
14. Develop online course: “what is mobbing?” with illustrative examples.
15. Provide mechanisms for better cooperation between companies and Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy and GED, researchers and everybody dealing with the issue of gender equality.

10.2 Recommendations to companies

1. Define special company act which obliges the company to have compulsory quota for women in top managerial positions.
2. Comply with standards achieved in most EU countries that at least 30% of underrepresented gender should be in top management.
3. Women in decision making positions should be promoted in the media and within company’s advertising campaigns by presenting their business success and achieved balance between professional and family life.
4. All large companies should periodically conduct research on the state of gender equality within the company, from the view point of employees, and progress made on this matter.
5. Include principles of gender equality in processes of recruitment, development and retention of the staff.
6. Define company policy on career development mentoring of young staff.

7. Development of different forms of flexible working hours, especially for women with school-age children, should be introduced by companies, whenever it is possible.
8. Provide premises and staff that will take care of preschool children of employed women, especially in large public companies.
9. Improve employee support services for balancing private and professional life.
10. Ensure better cooperation between companies and Ministry of Labour, Employment and GED, researchers and everybody dealing with the issue of gender equality.

10.3 Recommendations to Project initiators/donors

1. In future research studies, men should also be included in the analysis in order to better examine balancing between private and professional life of employees.
2. This type of research should be extended in order to examine the situation in small and medium companies as well.
3. Perform analysis of impact of part-time and flexible working hours on balancing of women's professional and private life.

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Annex 1 – Guide for interviews/discussions

My name is _____. We are conducting a research on business situation of women in our companies and reconciliation of family and work life. I hope you can take the time to give your opinion on this topic. Please share quite freely and openly with me your ideas and experiences related to your situation. If you do not mind I would like to record the conversation because your answers will be very important for the analysis and recommendations to improve the business position of women in our companies.

I

| |
|--|
| To begin with, please give a brief information on your family situation: |
| 1 What is your marital status (married, divorced, widowed, unmarried cohabitation ...) |
| 2 Do you have children, if yes - the number and age? |
| 3 Does your household except close family members includes someone else, who? |
| 4 Does a person with special needs live in your household? Who and what kind of special needs are in question? |
| 5 Is your partner (spouse) employed and how much time on average he spends outside home in connection with the job? |
| 6 How would you describe your overall material and living standard? |
| 7 How much free time during a typical working day you can take just for yourself? |

II

| |
|--|
| Could we please move to talk about the situation in your work: |
| 8 On which position in the company you are employed, or what type of work do you perform? If you are a manager how many directly subordinates do you have? |
| 9 How long you have been waiting for their first job? |
| 10 Have you changed jobs during your career, how many times, why? |
| 11 How would you describe the scope of your job? How much time during the day you are effectively spending on doing business? |
| 12 Are you satisfied with your salary? |
| 13 Do you know or have the impression that others who do the same job as you have a higher or lower income than you? If yes, what is the reason for this in your opinion? If yes, is the amount of your income affected by the fact that you are a woman? |
| 14 Are your working hours in line with family responsibilities? Can you describe how these two things are harmonized, and if they are not, which side suffers more, or in what way? |
| 15 Does your company strictly follow the time schedule? That is, whether because of your family or personal obligations you can leave earlier or come later and whether you are required to make up for the time in some way? |
| 16 Are you required to stay at work and after the official working hours if the job duties require this? How often and is this hard for you? |
| 17 Do you sometimes have to "carry" business at home? How often, what does it mean and how do you feel in this regard? |
| 18 Does your company provide organized child care? |
| 19 Is there a possibility to buy food in the company and to take it home? |
| 20 Is there any way and possibility to tie your personal duties to the job you are performing in the company, which one? |
| 21 What are your experiences about the attitude of the company towards the use of maternity or sick leave to care for children? |
| 22 Do you have information about similar experiences of your female colleagues? |

III

Please describe your relationships with your colleagues both male and female, with your superiors and subordinates:

23 How would you generally describe your position in the business environment? Do you feel respected? Do you sometimes feel neglected or even threatened, in

what way? How free you are to express your opinion on various topics ... please tell me what best describes your position in relation to other employees.

24 Do you sometimes feel like colleagues, especially men, do not consider you to be up to the work you do?

25 Do you get the feeling that the men in your company believe that some or all of the women are not up to the job they do just because they are women?

26 Have you had experience with any type of mobbing (abuse of any kind or intensity) from your male counterparts? If yes, please describe what was in question?

27 Do you know of similar experiences some of your female colleagues have had? Briefly describe.

28 Can sexist stereotypes be heard in your environment?

29 Does the attitude of supervisors to employees vary depending on the sex of employees?

30 How subordinates within your company look to women in leadership positions?

31 If you are in a leadership position do you feel that the subordinates treat you differently than your male counterparts?

IV

| |
|--|
| Please tell us something about your experiences relating career advancement. |
| 32 Does your company offer career prospects? |
| 33 Are there significant differences in this respect between men and women? |
| 34 Are there positive incentives for training? |
| 35 Is there a possibility of paid or unpaid training (courses, seminars, study visits, trainings ...) and in this respect do you notice some differences depending on gender? |
| 36 How often do you have the opportunity to go on business trips, whether in this respect there are differences between men and women? |

V

| |
|---|
| 37 Generally speaking, would you say that in your company there is gender discrimination, if yes where is it most evident, and where is it only hinted at? |
| 38 What in your view should be changed in your work environment to improve the position of women in business? |
| 39 What are your recommendations for reducing gender inequality in your company/organization? |

VI

| |
|--|
| At the end, please provide some information about you and your company. |
| 40 Education |
| 41 Age |
| 42 Total working experience in years |
| 43 Working experience in years in the selected company |
| 44 Name of the company |

Annex 2 – Examples of women on the boardroom

The Deloitte Global Center for Corporate Governance had presented third edition of “Women in the Boardroom: A Global Perspective.” This research represents one of the most comprehensive and far-reaching surveys of recent efforts — legislative and otherwise — to increase the participation of women in boardrooms across the globe. In this study we presented the part of this report as a good practice for discussing the women’s position in senior and high level management.

http://deloitte.wsj.com/riskandcompliance/files/2013/05/Women_boardroom.pdf

| | COUNTRY | LEGISLATIONS AND QUATAS FOR WOMEN ON BOARD OR SENIOR POSITION | INITIATIVES/COMMENTS | Women serving on boards in observed companies in % | Women directors in largest observed companies in % |
|----|------------------|--|---|--|--|
| 1. | Australia | There are currently no gender quotas for women on boards or in senior management positions. | As of 1 January 2011, companies listed on the Australian Securities Exchange are required to: -Adopt and publicly disclose a diversity policy. -Establish measurable objectives for achieving gender diversity and assess annually both the objectives and progress toward achieving them. -Disclose in each annual report the measurable objectives for achieving gender diversity and progress toward achieving them. -Disclose in each annual report the proportion of women employees in the whole organization, in senior executive positions, and on the board. -Disclose the mix of skills and diversity the board is looking to achieve among members. | 15,4 | 17,3 |
| 2. | Malesia | Legislation in 2011: 30 % of boards and management positions of public and limited liability companies, in which there are greater than 250 employees, by 2016 | This legislation is extension of similar governmnet policy for civil services that resulted in incresed number of women working for government agencies from 18,8 to 32,2 % . | 6,0 | 7,8 |

| | | | | | |
|---|----------------|--|---|------|------|
| 3 | Canada | <p>In December 2006, a 50 percent quota for women board directors was passed in the province of Quebec for state-owned enterprises.</p> <p>In June 2011, a 40 percent quota for both genders was proposed in the Senate of Canada for the country as a whole. Boards comprised of eight directors or fewer would be required to have a gender differential of no greater than two. The proposed legislation would apply to publicly traded companies, state-owned enterprises, and financial institutions, with a compliance target date of 2018-19 depending on the fiscal year end date. Boards would be required to reach 20 percent of each gender by 2015-16.</p> | The Canadian government's 2012 budget proposed the formation of an advisory council of leaders from the private and public sectors to help increase the percentage and participation of women on corporate boards. | 13,1 | 14,5 |
| 4 | Israel | <p>-Part VI, Chapter 1, Article E(d) of the Israeli Companies Law states for all companies that if a board is composed of only one gender, any new appointments must be of the other gender.</p> <p>-A 1993 amendment to the 1975 Governmental Companies Law states that all government-owned companies must have an equal representation of women on their boards. -----Government Resolution No. 1362 from March of 2007 states that government-owned corporations must have an equal gender representation within two years of the resolution's date</p> | | 14,2 | n/a |
| 5 | Austria | The Austrian Council of Ministers implemented a quota for supervisory boards on 15 March 2011. The quota applies to companies in which the state's ownership equals or exceeds 50 percent. Companies meeting this criterion are required to have 25 percent of their boards represented by women by 31 December 2013, increasing to 35 percent by 31 December 2018. | The Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth, the Federation of Austrian Industries, and the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber have all been involved with providing women with proper trainings on leadership | 10,8 | 11 |

| | | | | | |
|---|----------------|---|---|------|------|
| 6 | France | <p>Law on quotas was introduced on January 2011 effective 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The proportion of women and men directors should not be below 40 percent in (1) companies whose shares are admitted to trading on a regulated market and (2) non-listed companies with revenues or total assets over 50 million euros employing at least 500 persons for three consecutive years. -When the board includes eight directors or less, the difference between the number of directors of each gender should not be higher than two. - Any irregular director appointment means that no directors' fees can be paid to anyone until the situation is regularized. | | 22,5 | 17,1 |
| 7 | Germany | There are currently no gender quotas for women on supervisory or management boards | In March 2010, Deutsche Telekom AG became the first DAX 30 company to introduce its own gender quotas, requiring 30 percent of management positions worldwide to be filled by women by the end of 2015. | 12,9 | 16 |
| 8 | Greece | On 12 September 2000, the Gender Equality Act implemented a one-third quota for the state-appointed portion of full or partially state-owned company boards. | The General Secretariat for Gender Equality and the Hellenic Network for Corporate Social Responsibility have signed an updated Memorandum of Collaboration. The memorandum seeks to "inform, sensitize, and mobilize Greek businesses on equal opportunities policies, and to promote good practices | 7,3 | 7 |

| | | | | | |
|----|--------|---|---|------|----|
| 9 | Norway | <p>In 2005, Norway became the first country to introduce board gender quotas when the Norwegian Public Limited Liability Companies Act was amended to state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the board of directors has two or three members, both sexes must be represented. • If the board of directors has four or five members, each sex must be represented by at least two directors. • If the board of directors has six to eight members, each sex must be represented by at least three directors. • If the board of directors has nine members, each sex must be represented by at least four directors. • If the board of directors has more than nine members, each sex must be represented by at least 40 percent directors. <p>Public limited companies had until 1 January 2008 to meet the requirements.</p> | <p>“Increasing female executive representation is an ongoing public debate in Norway. Approximately ten years after the affirmative action, there is not much controversy about the use of legal instruments to increase female board representation. Several studies based on this action point to the positive effect it has had on diversity.” — Endre Fosen, Director, Deloitte Norway</p> | 31,9 | 42 |
| 10 | Sweden | <p>There are currently no gender quotas for women on boards or in senior management positions.</p> <p>Section 4.1 of the Swedish code of corporate governance states (The Swedish Code of Corporate Governance, 2008) that the board should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit diversity and breadth of qualifications, experience, and background. The company is to strive for equal gender distribution on the board • The company must report in their corporate governance report if the rule is not followed, along with an explanation of what action was taken instead of following this particular rule | <p>The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth has initiated a national women's entrepreneurship program. The program will run from 2011–2014, with the core focus of stimulating both employment levels and economic growth in Sweden through the increased presence of female leaders at the top of businesses. Participating women will have access to the agency's ambassador network of 900 women business owners from various business sectors.</p> | 26,4 | 25 |