

Tap the business potential of gender equality

Did you know that:

- Entrepreneurs see a skills shortage as a key barrier to their companies' progress? (European Business Survey 2007)?
- 59% of new university graduates and some 80% of students in business administration in Europe are women?
- Europe can expect to run short of 24 million people in the active workforce by 2040?
- Women are the driving force behind more than 70% of purchasing decisions?
- Gender equality programmes have a positive impact for employees' motivation, creativity and productivity? (NUTEK 1999)
- Firms with the best record of promoting women to high positions are between 18 and 69% percent more profitable than the median Fortune 500 firms in their industries? (Adler and Roy)

Skills have no gender

Do not give up half of your talents. Gender equality benefits companies as well as their employees. Companies survive and succeed because of their interaction with customers, investors, shareholders, employees, suppliers and partners. These are all women and men, with diverse talents, expectations and needs. The forward-looking business manager is aware of these dimensions.

Find the right person for the right job

Companies can't afford to waste talent. However, stereotypes related to what is more appropriate for men and women often act as barriers and may prevent companies from seeing and unlocking individual talent.

Distribution of workforce by sector (EU-27, 2006)

Sector	% M	% F
Industry	70.1	29.9
Construction	91.9	8.1
Non-financial services	55.7	44.3
Financial services	48.1	51.9
Total business economy	64.2	35.8

Source: EU Business, Facts and Figures, 2007.

The employed in the EU, by sex and occupational group (EU-25, 2006)

	M	F
Legislators, senior officials and managers	66%	34%
Professionals	50%	50%
Technicians/associate professionals	45%	55%
Clerks	30%	70%
Service/shop/market sales workers	31%	69%
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	75%	25%
Craft /related trades workers	89%	11%
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	82%	18%
Elementary occupations	48%	52%
Total employed	53%	47%

Source: Eurostat, ELFS, 2006.

In spite of their high educational attainments, half of the women in the EU work in low skilled or less valued jobs. Only 29% of scientists and engineers, and only 33% of managers working in the EU are women.

Conversely men are largely under-represented in the education, health and welfare sectors. In the private sector, the "anytime, anywhere" culture obliges men to cope with long working hours, stress and virtually no chance to reconcile work with family.

The cost for companies can be high: loss of human capital, difficult employee relations, high levels of stress and absenteeism.

When the talents of women and men are merged into a culture that puts skills, professionalism and profitability first, women and men working together can create a win-win situation.

Benefits include:

- Accessing and keeping a wider talent pool;
- More creativity, innovation and profit;
- A wider and more satisfied customer base;
- Better staff morale and minimum risk of litigation;
- Better public image and higher shareholder value.

Break gender stereotypes, give talent a chance.

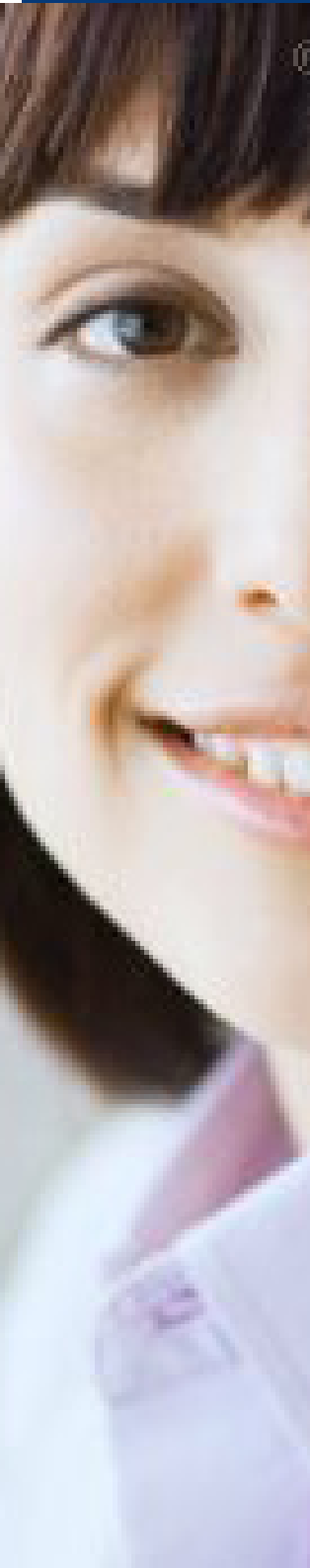
Discover the unexploited potential in your company.

This initiative aims at helping SMEs in Europe to maximize employee potential to boost productivity and competitiveness, beyond gender stereotypes.

It shows how gender equality actions can improve business performance and success through:

- a "toolkit" for better and full use of individual talents within a company. (also on line on www.businessandgender.eu)
- a practical workshop on how to gain competitiveness with gender equality action;
- consultancy and information;
- an opportunity for company visibility.

Activities target staff of chambers of commerce, business and professional associations, training bodies; businessmen and businesswomen; managers within small and medium-sized enterprises; human resource managers and all those who work to improve quality and competitiveness within SMEs.



**Break gender stereotypes,
give talent a chance.**

How to participate

There is no charge for participating in the workshops or the consultancy. However, places are limited and will be assigned on the basis of the company profile and that of potential participants.

To apply or for further information, please visit:

www.businessandgender.eu

or else contact the Secretariat for the initiative:

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This initiative includes action in cooperation with Chambers of Commerce and SME associations in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Spain. It is commissioned by the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities in the framework of the contract "Raising awareness of companies about combating gender stereotypes" managed by the International Training Centre of the ILO in partnership with the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry (EUROCHAMBRES).

This leaflet is supported by under the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (2007-2013). It was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment and social affairs area, as set out in the Social Agenda, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy goals in these fields. The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies across the EU-27, EFTA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

The programme has six general objectives:

- (1) to improve the knowledge and understanding of the situation prevailing in the Member States (and in other participating countries) through the analysis, evaluation and close monitoring of policies;
- (2) to support the development of statistical tools and methods and common indicators, where appropriate broken down by gender and age group, in the areas covered by the programme;
- (3) to support and monitor the implementation of Community law, where applicable, and policy objectives in the Member States, and assess their effectiveness and impact;
- (4) to promote networking, mutual learning, identification and dissemination of good practices and innovative approaches at EU level;
- (5) to enhance the awareness of the stakeholders and the general public about the EU's policies and objectives pursued under each of the policy sections;
- (6) to boost the capacity of key EU networks to promote, support and further develop EU policies and objectives, where applicable.

For further information, see:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html

The information contained in this leaflet does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.



Cut out stereotypes or you'll be cutting your resources in half.

