



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

**Toolkit for SME Advisors
and Human Resource Managers**



Prepared by the International Training Centre of the ILO in partnership with the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry (EUROCHAMBRES) in the framework of the contract "Raising the awareness of companies about combating gender stereotypes" commissioned by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.



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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.

This publication has been commissioned by the European Commission in the framework of the contract "Raising the awareness of companies about combating gender stereotypes" managed by the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation (ITC-ILO) in partnership with the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry (EUROCHAMBRES).

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS TOOLKIT

The Toolkit is designed for trainers and advisors, human resource managers, and in general for all those who work to improve quality and competitiveness within SMEs.

It offers information and practical guidance on how SMEs can reap the benefits of overcoming gender stereotypes on optimizing human resource management practices and tapping the full potential of all their employees, both women and men.

Its contents can be used in various ways: to set up an awareness-raising workshop, to enrich and complement training programmes on human resource management and business organisation, and to give practical ideas on how a small and medium enterprise can undertake gender equality measures and rationalise its work organisation systems.

Section 1, Raising the Issues is divided into 4 Chapters and brings together arguments, evidence, tips and good practice examples.

Section 2 is a **Handbook**, which gives guidance on how to use the information provided to set up training and advisory sessions, or to introduce human resource management practices to overcome gender stereotypes.

This Toolkit was produced in the framework of the Contract “Raising the awareness of companies about combating gender stereotypes” commissioned by the European Commission to the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation (ITC-ILO) in partnership with the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry (EUROCHAMBRES).¹

Further information and resources in 14 EU official languages are available at www.businessandgender.eu.

¹ Countries included are: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain.

SECTION ONE: RAISING THE ISSUES

Chapter 1. Give Talent a Chance: The business case for gender equality

1.1 Overview

“Women have become probably the greatest neglected resource in business, both in their market potential as consumers and in their productive potential as employees. (...) It is a fundamental weakness of business models that were designed for a male-dominated world. (...) We need a revolution in thinking.”

The Financial Times – 26th February 2008

Today, all the key players in the economic and political world stress the importance of women as essential economic actors. Their role and status as citizens, consumers, leaders and employees is an indicator of welfare, maturity and economic viability.

In Europe, women’s growing participation in employment is offering an important solution to the challenges of an ageing workforce, declining birth rates and skill shortages.² Countries and companies are in urgent need of concrete policies to enable women to fulfil their potential.

Leading investment banks such as Goldman Sachs have come to using the term ‘womenomics’, to refer to women as one of main engines of growth. Many economists say that women are one of the three emerging forces shaping the 21st century, the three “Ws”: Weather, Women and the Web.³

Yet, business remains largely a world created by males for males.⁴ Women represent only 10% of board members of the largest companies listed on the stock exchange, a figure which falls to 3% for women at the very highest decision-making level in these companies.⁵

This chapter brings together the evidence that proves the business case for gender equality. It presents the arguments and supporting research which demonstrate that better diversification of women and men in occupations and an enhanced gender balance in decision making in SMEs can bring competitive advantage, improve staff productivity and creativity, and attract more customers.

² Carone, C., Costello, D., “Can Europe Afford to Grow Old?“, *Finance and Development*, September 2006, No. 43.

³ Quoted in: Wittenberg-Cox, A., Maitland, A., *Why women mean business: Understanding the emergence of the new economic revolution*, Wiley & Sons, Chichester, 2008.

⁴ As stated by Jeremy Isaacs, Chief Executive Officer, Lehman Brothers in Europe and Asia, at the Opening Speech of the Lehman Brother Research Centre for Women in Business, London Business School, January 2006. More information at: <http://www.london.edu/womeninbusiness.html>.

⁵ Data source: European Commission, *Women and Men in decision-making 2007. Situation and trends*. Can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/2008/ke8108186_en.pdf.

1.2 The business case for gender equality

1.2.1 Gender is a business issue, not a women's issue.

“The optimisation of women’s talents will boost business performance. Taking action to achieve this will require sustained courage and commitment from today’s corporate leaders. This is an opportunity not to be missed. It is time for CEOs to get serious about sex.”

Why women mean business. Wittenberg–Cox & Maitland, 2008⁶

Setting aside for a moment due considerations of equal opportunities, why should we radically enhance women’s integration into the business world, in both management positions and non-conventional jobs?

The reason is that business competitiveness is at stake.

SMEs in Europe are the main engine of growth and employment and they harbour enormous potential for job creation. There are 23 million SMEs in Europe, accounting for more than 75 million jobs and over 80% of employment in certain sectors, such as textiles, construction and furniture.⁷

Globalisation, the reorganisation of the value chain, increased competition, liberalisation of markets, demographic changes, the ever-growing demand for better skills and qualifications are some of the driving forces to which SMEs must be able to respond.

These are major challenges for SMEs today, particularly for the smallest, which have limited financial and human resources. SMEs more than any other need to be able to recruit personnel whose skills better match their needs and who will be more productive and capable of adapting, resulting in increased innovation and competitiveness.

Gender stereotypes are pre-conceived generalisations on women’s and men’s supposed lesser or better professional abilities or ambitions. Some employers may think it safe to rely on stereotypical judgements about women and men when hiring new employees, re-structuring or deciding a promotion on.

But reality is different: many of the “old” myths about women’s supposed inabilities in certain jobs, lack of leadership, low technical competence or scarce loyalty to work have been widely proven to be wrong and outdated.

On the contrary, women today are:

- **much of the talent** – women represent up to 60% of university graduates in Europe;
- **much of the market** – women make up to 80% of consumer goods purchasing decisions, including on “traditionally male” goods such as cars;
- **an ingredient for profitability** – companies with higher gender balance in leadership outperform those with fewer women at the top;
- **crucial to demographic challenges** – countries with policies that support women’s work tend to have higher birth rates and higher growth.

The following section will provide evidence that achieving a better gender balance, both in managerial jobs and within occupations, makes good business sense.

⁶ Source: Wittenberg–Cox, A.; Maitland, A. (2008).

⁷ Source: EUROSTAT, *European Business: Facts and Figures, 2007 edition*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 2007. Available at: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>.

1.2.2 Six excellent reasons for having more gender equality in business⁸

Reason 1. Accessing the full talent pool

The first reason for a SME to look carefully at gender issues is self-interest: how to win the fierce competition for talented people.

"SMEs capacity to innovate and succeed depends on a complex palette of skills, networks and processes. To innovate, SMEs need more than ever to pool their resources, create networks and cooperate at local or branch level to establish effective policies to develop their human capital" – said EU Commissioner Vladimir Spidla during a recent forum for European SMEs.⁹

The shortfall of European workers is expected to increase in the coming decades, especially for the most highly-qualified jobs. Europe can expect a shortfall of 24 million people in the active workforce by 2040; if, on the other hand, the female rate of labour participation can be raised to the same level as that of males if, then the projected shortfall drops to 3 million.¹⁰

In recent years girls' educational attainments have tended to outperform boys', and more and more young women are graduating in technical and scientific subjects. Studies on leadership behaviour found that, despite some differences in leadership styles and practices between male and female managers, gender differences do not have an impact on overall leadership efficiency capacities.¹¹

Tapping the underutilised pool of skilled women (and older people) can thus play a major role in the "war for talent". Hiring women as managers or in non-traditional positions allows companies to use the knowledge, experience and creativity of all the population, rather than just half of it.

⁸ The classification into six reasons is drawn from the results of the project "Women to the Top" (W2T) funded by the European Commission within the framework of the EU Programme relating to the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005). More info: <http://www.women2top.net>.

⁹ "Adaptation of SMEs to change". - Speech given by Vladimír SPIDLA, member of the European Commission with responsibility for employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, during the "Restructuring" Forum: Brussels, 26 November 2007 (SPEECH/07/746). More information at: <http://www.europa.eu>.

¹⁰ McKinsey & Co., *Women matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver*, 2007. Can be downloaded at: <http://www.mckinsey.com>.

¹¹ Peters, H., Kabakoff, R., *A new look at the glass ceiling: the perspective from the top*, MRG Research report, 2002. Can be found at: <http://www.mrg.com>.

Reason 2. Investing in gender diversity

The long-standing belief that the best way to integrate women is to treat everyone in the same way is now being challenged: companies recognise that a lack of understanding of diversity is too expensive a risk to take.

The benefits that differences between female and male employees can bring have too often been ignored. It is well known that in business you need to carefully plan and realise investments and then monitor and evaluate the return. Employers who want to capitalise on their investment in “human capital” will seek to create cultures that value and appreciate gender differences.

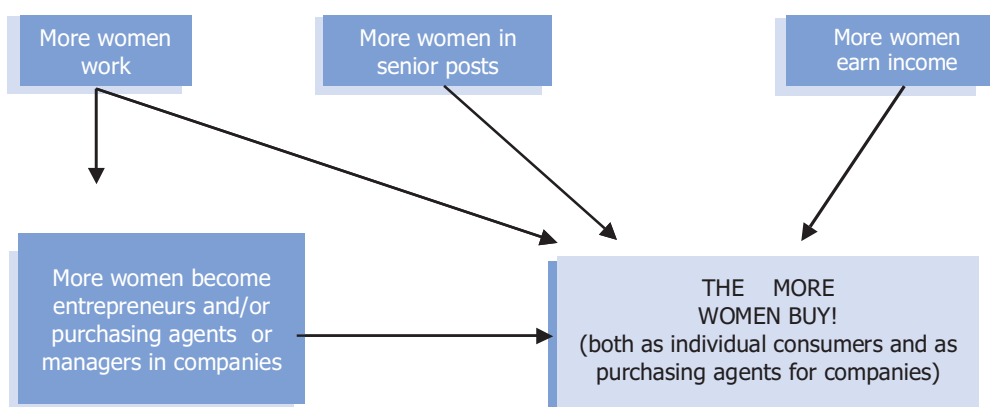
Valuing differences means recognising that men and women have different social roles and work in different social areas and positions, and therefore have different experiences, values, and perspectives that benefit the business. At the same time, it means to be able to see and value their individual capacities and skills, beyond gender stereotypes.

SMEs do business in a multicultural, heterogeneous and unpredictable world and need high creativity and skills. Correctly managed gender equality can promote creative tension and an open-culture more reactive to the new challenges. Research has demonstrated that this is far more easily achieved if the expertise of those at work is diverse.¹²

Reason 3. Customers' perspective

To adapt to changing social and consumption trends, companies increasingly need to integrate women into their decision-making processes.

Women now have a major influence on purchase decisions: in Europe, they are the driving force behind more than 70% of household purchases although they account for only 51% of the population.¹³ Even in industries where buyers are traditionally male, women represent a growing proportion of the consumer base: for example, women influence 60% of new car purchases in Japan and make up about 47% of PC users in Europe. Nonetheless, the majority of women feel under-represented and negatively portrayed in marketing and advertising.¹⁴



¹² The Lehman's Brothers Centre of Women in Business, *Innovative Potential: Men and Women in Teams*, London Business School, London, 2007. This research looks at the role of gender in innovative teams and offers useful recommendations on how companies can build and enhance their innovative capacity through team gender composition.

¹³ McKinsey & Co. (2007).

¹⁴ To know more about marketing to women: Cunningham J., Roberts, P., *Inside Her Pretty Little Head: A new theory of female motivation and what it means for marketing*, Marshall Cavendish, 2006.

Similarly, women's massive entry into higher education and in the workforce means a corresponding increase in their available incomes.

A survey by the UK advertising agency Saatchi & Saatchi calculated that consumer electronics manufacturers and retailers missed out £600m in 2007 by "failing to connect" with female customers. It found that nearly one out of three women did not consider technology advertising relevant to them. Only 9% felt it was important that gadgets looked feminine (in a stereotyped way). "This is supported by qualitative feedback from opinion leaders and consumers who feel 'patronised' and 'offended' by the abundance of pink products available at the expense of the sleek and beautifully designed and packaged products they want to see"¹⁵.

Companies must recognise that women today represent a myriad of market segments. The status of women has changed so much and dramatically over the past 30 years there is no single "women's segment" of the overall consumer market. Many campaigns and products directed at women still feature women in a far more limited role than it is in reality, rather than recognising and representing the many roles that women enjoy today.

Companies that seek to be innovative in addressing and serving women (and consequently make more profit), need to understand women as they are now, at every age and stage, beyond stereotypes.

Reason 4. Minimising risks and costs

Lack of equality can be seen as part of a company's risk profile.

As pointed out by the Kingsmill Review,¹⁶ the failure to properly utilise or manage human capital exposes a company to the same type and scale of risk as failure to manage financial or other resources. Key areas of risk and cost to business are:

- The risk and cost of reputation damage, resulting in:
 - loss of investor or shareholder confidence;
 - loss of consumer base.
- The risk and cost of potential litigation against unequal pay or unfair employment practices.
- The risk and cost of inability to recruit highly skilled employees, due to poor reputation as an employer.

The point is that SMEs' capacity to obtain support from financial institutions and attract investment is key to survival and growth. Gender equality can also become an asset particularly for medium-sized enterprises, as capital markets and investors are paying more and more attention to corporate performance in terms of gender diversity. For instance, investment funds such as Calpers in the US or Amazone in Europe include this indicator among their investment criteria, while rating agencies (Core Rating, Innovest, Vigeo) are now developing tools to measure gender diversity.

¹⁵ "Retailers told, ignore 'Lady geeks' at your peril!", September 2007. Results of an Internet poll conducted in UK by advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi in 2007. The article is available at: <http://www.saatchi.com> (<http://www.cmwpg.com/worldwide/newsdetail.asp?nid=77>).

¹⁶ Kingsmill, D., *Report on Women's Employment and Pay*, London, 2001.

Reason 5. Being “the employer of choice”

Becoming known as an equal opportunity employer can attract the prime source of competitive advantage: people. To be competitive it is crucial to recruit the right people from the start and to be able to keep them.

Studies¹⁷ on young managers show that both women and men are critical of the image and conditions of modern management. They both expect flexible work options and family-friendly policies. They are the “**Generation Y**” and, according to predictions of researchers:¹⁸

- they will move not only among jobs, but also among careers through their working lives, reinventing themselves many times over;
- for them, technology is not a tool but a part of what they are (as shown by their use of social networking and web 2.0 technologies);
- they want challenges and development opportunities from work, but also choice and flexibility in order to accommodate their personal lives;
- they value employers who demonstrate a responsible approach to society and to environment.

SMEs that adapt to women and make them feel truly welcome, will be able to draw on the widest pool of talent from all sources. To do this, they need to:

- understand that everyone’s work priorities change at different life stages;
- recognise that the linear, unbroken career model is no longer applicable;
- broaden narrow definitions of the career path to the top;
- abolish age limits for spotting and developing high potential people;
- treat flexibility and work-life balance as issues for everyone;
- measure performance by results, not hours.

¹⁷ Various cases are quoted in Kingsmill, op. cit..

¹⁸ “Generation Y. The Millennials: ready or not, here they come”, NAS insights, 2006. Available at: <http://www.nasrecruitment.com/talenttips/NASinsights/GenerationY.pdf>.

Healy, R., “10 Ways Generation Y Will Change the Workplace”, *Work/Life, Generation Y*, May 23rd, 2008. Available at: <http://www.employeeevolution.com/archives/2008/05/23/10-ways-generation-y-will-change-the-workplace/>

Balderrama, A., “Generation Y: Too demanding at work?”, *Careerbuilder.com*. Available at: <http://www.cnn.com/2007/LIVING/worklife/12/26/cb.generation/index.html>.

Forrester Consulting, *Is Europe Ready For The Millennials? Innovate To Meet The Needs Of The Emerging Generation*, Cambridge, 2006. - Available at: <http://www.ffpress.net/Kunden/XER/Downloads/XER87000/XER87000.pdf>.

Reason 6. Gender equality correlates with profitability

The Swedish Business Development Agency NUTEK has found a correlation between equality and profitability.¹⁹ The promotion of women is also an important step in **obtaining the right leadership team**, as an increasing number of studies points to a correlation between greater gender equality in top management and profits.²⁰

A Finnish study²¹ showed that a firm with a female CEO is on average slightly more profitable than a similar company with a male CEO. A separate study²² of the 100 largest companies on the London Stock Exchange found that 18 of the 20 companies with the highest market capitalisation (2003) had at least one woman director.

These results do not mean that there is a causal relationship between female leadership and profitability but do help clarify that leadership is not necessarily a male prerogative.

Other research²³ indicates linkages between gender balance in management teams and innovation capacity. And the performance grows where there is a “critical mass” of women on board.

Taking female employees into account will help organizations understand and respond to the upcoming changes in the way we work: from the evolving expectations and roles of men, to the flexibility and adaptation needed by an ageing workforce and required by a generation now entering the workforce.

1.3 Business: gender matters

The following are examples of relevant research in this area, which supports what was stated in the first part of this Chapter. A broader list of useful references is given under “Further reference” at the end of this Toolkit.

1.3.1 “Women in the Executive Suite correlate to High Profits” (Adler, 1998)²⁴

Roy Adler, Professor of Marketing at Pepperdine University, performed a 20-years long research study (1980-1998) of **Fortune 500 companies**. He found a strong correlation

¹⁹ The Swedish Business Development Agency (NUTEK) carried out in 1996 a study to examine whether there is a clear link between gender equality and profitability in enterprise. The text is available in Swedish – “Jämställdhet och Lönsamhet” at <http://www.nutek.se>. An extract in English: “Gender and profit” is available at: http://www.femtech.at/fileadmin/femtech/be_images/Publikationen/femtech_nutek_aaagenderandprofit.pdf.

²⁰ Adler, Roy D., *Women in the Executive Suite Correlate to High Profits*, Glass Ceiling Research Center, Pepperdine University, 1998. Available at: http://www.equalpay.nu/docs/en/adler_web.pdf. *This information is made possible by Roy D. Adler, Executive Director of the Glass Ceiling Research Center. Prof. Adler is a Fulbright scholar and Professor of Marketing at Pepperdine University and one of the very few people awarded the distinction of Designated Fellow by the Academy of Marketing Science.*

²¹ Kotiranta, A., Kovalaine, A., Rouvinen, P., “Female leadership and firm profitability”, *EVA analysis*, No.3, September 2007. Available at: <http://www.eva.fi>.

²² Vinnicombe, S., Singh V., *The 2003 Female FTSE Index*, Centre for Developing Women Business Leaders, Cranfield School of Management, 2003. Available at: <http://www.som.cranfield.ac.uk/som/research/centres/cdwbl/downloads/FTSEIndex2003.pdf>.

²³ McKinsey (2007), op. cit. See also Chapter 1.3.2.

²⁴ Adler, Roy D. (1998), op. cit.; the executive summary of the study provided in this chapter is taken from: Simosko, N., “Want Higher Profits? Smash the Glass Ceiling”. - Can be found at: <http://www.fastcompany.com/user/nina-simosko>.

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between women in the executive suite and high profitability. In fact, of the 25 *Fortune 500* companies with the best record of promoting women into high positions, profits were higher by between 18% and an astounding 69% when compared to the median *Fortune 500* firms within their same industry!

Since different industries use different measures of profitability, the study included three measures of profitability to evaluate each of the firms' profits as a percent of:

- Revenues;
- assets;
- stockholders' equity.

Revenues

Considering profits as a percentage of revenues, the 25 firms outperformed the corresponding industry medians by 34%. The women-friendly firms averaged 6.4% while the average of their industry medians was 4.8%. Almost two-thirds of these firms outperformed their median counterparts.

Assets

Considering profits as a percentage of assets, the 25 firms outperformed the industry medians by 18%. The women-friendly firms averaged 6.5% while the average of their industry medians was 5.5%. When taken individually, 62% of the firms outperformed their median counterparts.

Stockholders' equity

Considering profits as a percentage of stockholders' equity, the 25 firms outperformed the industry medians by 69%. The women-friendly firms averaged 26.5% while the average of their industry medians was 15.7%. When taken individually, 68% of the firms outperformed their median counterparts.

Slicing the data

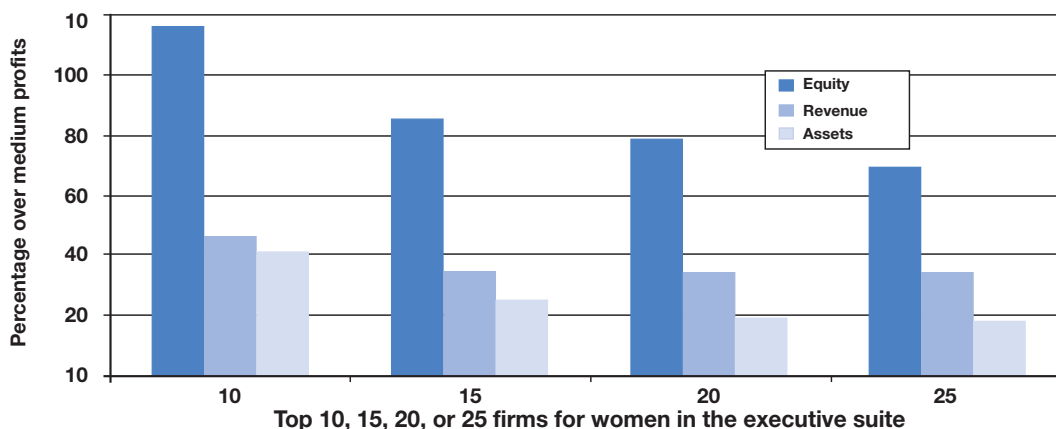
These results are even more interesting when the "slice of data" is modified from the top 25 firms to the top 10, 15 etc. as shown in the table below:

Percentage by which women-friendly companies exceed the industry median in terms of ...			
Profit as a percentage of >>	Revenue	Assets	Equity
Top 10 firms	46	41	116
Top 15 firms	35	25	85
Top 20 firms	34	19	78
Top 25 firms	34	18	69

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In other words, the results of the “top 25 firms” featured in this study are quite conservative. The results are even more dramatic when a smaller “slice” which includes the most women-friendly firms is highlighted.

- **Percentage by which women-friendly firms exceeded their industry median of profits as a percentage of equity, of revenue, and of assets.**



Source: Adler, Roy D., “Women in the Executive Suite Correlate to High Profits”, *Harvard Business Review*, November 2001, p. 30.

Of course, “correlation” does not indicate or prove “causality.” There may be any number of reasons why the study results are as indicated.

However, despite the subjective interpretation of the data, no doubt there exists a positive correlation between the existence of larger numbers of women in the executive suite and higher-than-normal profitability within an industry.

1.3.2 “The Bottom Line: Connecting Corporate Performance and Gender Diversity”, (Catalyst, 2004)²⁵

Catalyst works globally with businesses and the professions to build inclusive environments and expand opportunities for women and business. In 2004, Catalyst presented the study, *The Bottom Line: Connecting Corporate Performance and Gender Diversity*, sponsored by the BMO Financial Group. The study analyzes five years of data for 353 *Fortune* 500 companies in order to determine whether there is a link between gender diversity and corporate financial performance.

²⁵ Catalyst, *The Bottom Line: Connecting Corporate Performance and Gender Diversity*, Catalyst, New York, 2004. Can be found at: <http://www.catalyst.org>.

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Methodology:

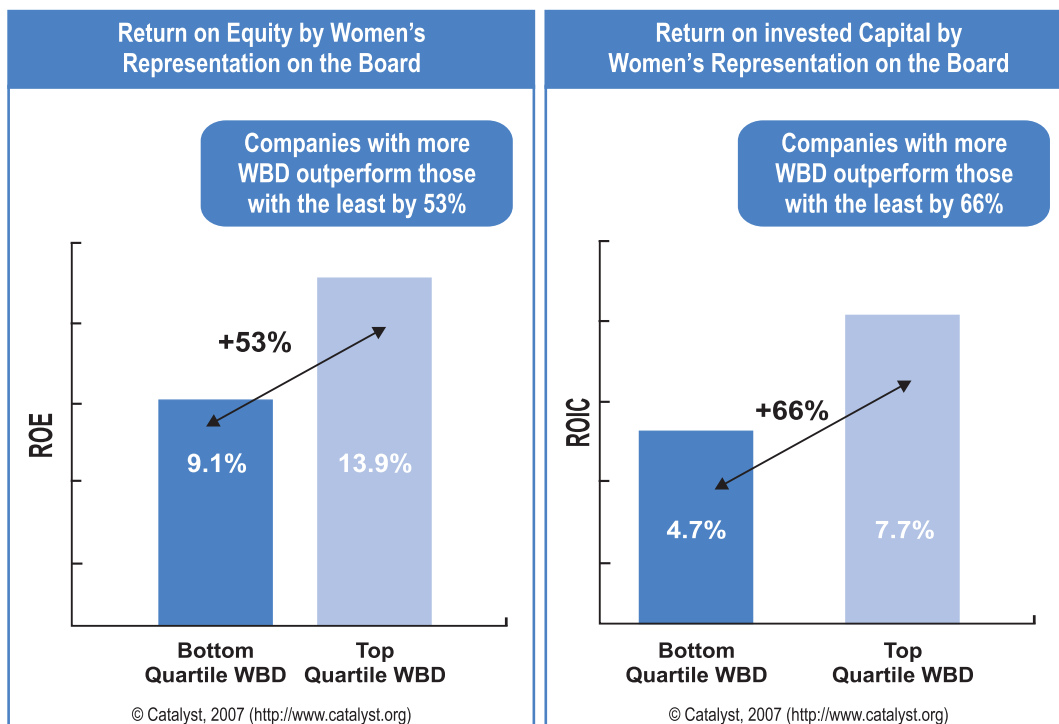
- A list of all companies that appeared in *Fortune 500*²⁶ from 1996 to 2000 was compiled (with adjustments for name changes and merger and acquisition activities). This list was narrowed to include only those companies for which there existed at least four years of data on financial performance (return on equity and total return to shareholders), as well as the gender diversity of the top management team. The final sample included 353 companies.
- The 353 companies were divided into quartiles — with roughly equal numbers of companies in each quartile — based on women’s representation within the top management team.
- The financial performance of top and bottom quartile companies was compared.
- The 353 companies were divided into 11 industry sectors, which allowed researchers to compare the financial performance of top and bottom-quartile companies by industry. Of the 11 industries in this study, there was enough data (enough companies in a particular industry) to conduct analysis within five industries – consumer discretionary, consumer staples, financial, industrials, and information technology/telecommunications services.

Findings:

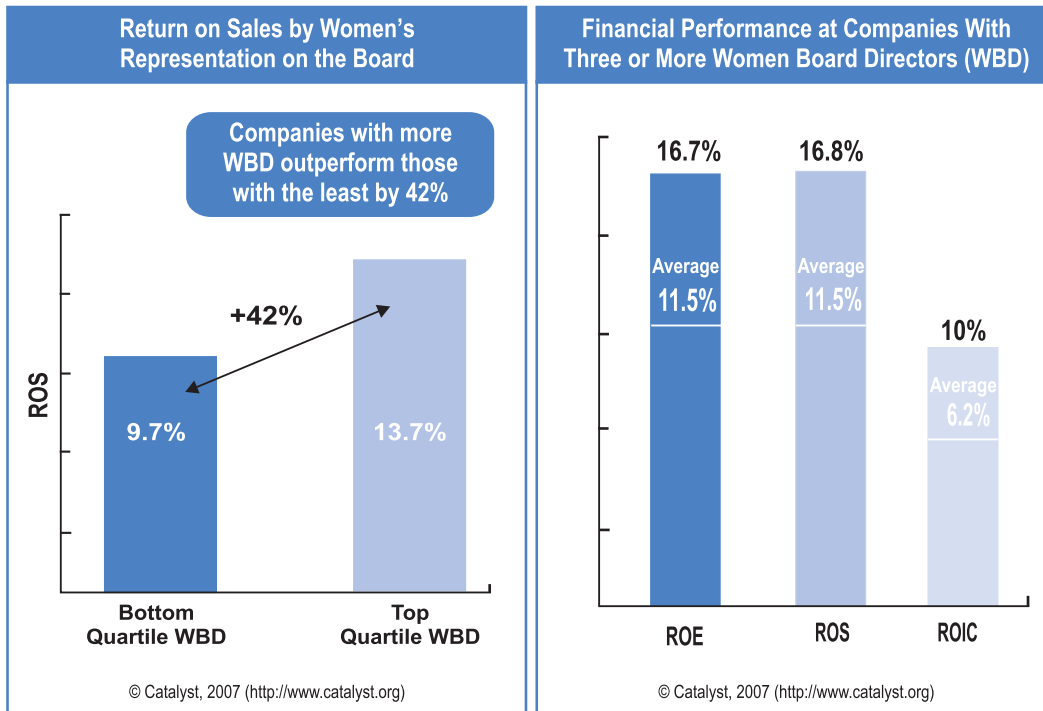
Companies with the highest representation of women in their top management teams experienced better financial performance than companies with the lowest women’s representation. These findings are valid for both financial measures analyzed: Return on Equity (ROE), which is 35% higher, and Total Return to Shareholders (TRS), which is 34% higher. In each of the five industries analyzed, the companies with the highest women’s representation in their top management teams experienced a higher ROE than the companies with the lowest women’s representation. In four out of five industries, the companies with the highest women’s representation in their top management teams experienced a higher TRS than those with the lowest women’s representation.

Source: Catalyst, 2004 (<http://www.catalyst.org>)

• “The Bottom Line: Corporate performance and Women’s Representation on Boards”, (Catalyst, 2007)



²⁶ “Fortune 500” is an annual list compiled and published by Fortune magazine that ranks the top 500 American public corporations according to their gross revenue. Can be found at: <http://www.fortune.com>.



1.3.3 “Women Matter” (McKinsey, 2007)²⁷

Women Matter presents the results of a two-step research undertaken by McKinsey to assess the impact of gender diversity on company performance. *Women Matter* demonstrates that the companies where women are most strongly represented at board or top-management levels are the companies that perform best with respect to both organizational and financial measures.

The research took place in two subsequent steps.

First, a proprietary McKinsey diagnostic tool (Organisational Performance Profile) was used to measure the **organisational excellence of a company against nine criteria**: leadership, direction, accountability, coordination and control, innovation, external orientation, capability, motivation, work environment and values.

With this tool, McKinsey experts examined the evaluations of 115,000 employees of 231 public and private companies, as well as non-profit organisations, and demonstrated a correlation between a company's level of excellence in these nine organisational dimensions and its financial performance. The companies ranked most highly according to these organisational criteria tended to have operating margins and market capitalisation twice as high as those of the lower-ranked companies.

Then they selected 101 companies that publish the composition of their governing bodies, mainly large corporations in Europe, America and Asia, across a range of industries, from energy to distribution and financial institutions.

They analysed the answers of 58,240 survey respondents and then compared the results for these companies in relation to the proportion of women on their governing bodies.

²⁷ McKinsey (2007), p. 12-14.

Give talent a chance:
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It emerged that **“companies with three or more women in senior management functions score more highly, on average, for each organizational criterion than companies with no women at the top”**. Indeed, performance increased significantly once the proportion of women on a board of around ten people reached at least three.

Correlation is not necessarily cause, but the correlation between organisational excellence and women’s participation in management bodies is nonetheless impressive.

The second step set out to determine whether companies with women top managers also performed better financially. To this end McKinsey experts conducted a study jointly with Amazone Euro Fund. They selected the 89 European listed companies with the highest level of gender diversity in top management posts. The companies were selected from all European listed companies with a stock market capitalisation of over €150 million, on the basis of the following criteria: the number and proportion of women on the executive committee, their function (a CEO or CFO having greater weight in corporate decisions than a Communications Manager) and, to a lesser extent, the presence of more than two women on the board, or statistics on gender diversity in the annual report.

McKinsey then analysed the financial performance of these companies relative to the average for their sector. **There can be no doubt that, on average, these companies higher than average in their sector in terms of return on equity (11.4% vs an average 10.3%), operating result (EBIT 11.1% vs. 5.8%), and stock price growth (64% vs 47% over the period 2005-2007).**

These statistically significant studies show that companies with a higher proportion of women on their management committees are also those that perform best. While the studies do not demonstrate a causal link, they do, however, give us a factual snapshot that can only argue in favour of greater gender equality.

Finally, having identified work environment and changes in personal aspirations as the main barriers to female representation on management bodies, *Women Matter* suggests ways, based on good practices, to *“reinvent the model”* and increase women’s participation in business, as well as in top executive positions.

Chapter 2.

Do jobs have a gender?

2.1 Overview

This Chapter provides information on gender segregation and how it impacts on business performance.

It first presents the current situation as to how women and men are differently distributed in the EU labour market and reveals how this situation can be attributed to the persistence of gender stereotypes. It then moves on to showing how these stereotypes are far from today's individual talents, capacities and ambitions of both women and men. It offers some examples of how these prejudices can be overcome through practical action in companies which can bring about benefits not only to women but also to men and to company productivity.

2.2 The current situation

Gender and the employment rate in the EU-27²⁸

- Average rate of employment in 2007: 71.6% for men and 57.2% of women.
- Average rate of unemployment in 2007: 9% for women, and 7.6% for men, with an average difference of 1.4%.
- The average rate of part-time work in 2007: 31.4% for women and 7.8% for men.

- The European Strategy for Jobs and Growth set the target of reaching an employment rate for women of 60% by 2010. In recent years, female employment has witnessed continuous growth at a rate that was consistently higher for women than for men reaching an average 57.2% for the EU27 in 2007.
- Despite this positive trend, women's employment rate is still lower than men's in all EU countries, albeit with great variations. In 2007 the employment rate gap between women and men ranged from less than 5 percentage points in Finland and Sweden to more than 25 percentage points in Greece and Malta.
- The average rate of unemployment tends to be higher among women. In 2007 the largest differences to the detriment of women were found in Greece (8) Spain (5.3), and in Italy (3.4). In seven countries the rate of men's unemployment was higher than that of women (Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and the UK).

²⁸ European Commission, *Report on equality between women and men 2008*, COM(2008)10 final. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/2008/keaj08001_en.pdf.

- The majority of part-time workers are women. In 2007 the share of women employees working part-time was 31.4% while the corresponding figure for men was 7.8%. The share of female part-timers exceeded 30% in France, Ireland, Denmark and Luxembourg, 40% in Sweden, Austria, Belgium, United Kingdom and Germany and even reached 74.9% in the Netherlands. Conversely, the share of part-timers among female workers was very low in Bulgaria, Slovakia, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Latvia.

Source: European Commission, Report on equality between women and men 2008, COM(2008)10 final. (Data Eurostat 2007)

Gender and graduates²⁹

- Men represent only 20-27% of graduates in occupations related to the social services, health and education sectors.
- Women represent between 60% and 70% of graduates in occupations relating to the training of teachers, and the behavioural and social sciences.
- Men are between 70% and 85% of those graduates in occupations concerned with commerce and administration, the manufacture and treatment of materials, mathematics, statistics, and transport.

Gender and sectors of employment³⁰

- 77% of those employed in education and social services are women.
- 62% of those employed in agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing are men.
- 34% of those employed in manufacturing industry are women.

Gender and socio-professional categories³¹

- Women make up 75% of regular employees in the administration and 65% of personnel in the services sector, and of sales assistants in shops and markets.
- Men represent the vast majority (79%) of those regularly employed in the operation or installation of machines, and of assembly workers, and 85% of craft workers and those employed in craft occupations.
- Some 2.6 % of men in employment in the EU work as computing professionals or as computer associate professionals (ISCO categories 213 and 312), almost four times the proportion of women (0.7%). This difference is more than 3 to 1 in nearly all countries and over 5 to 1 in the Netherlands, Austria and Portugal.

²⁹ Eurostat, *The life of women and Men in Europe. A statistical portrait 2008*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 2008. Can be found at: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>, pp. 36-37 (Source: Eurostat, UOE, 2004)

³⁰ Eurostat, *The life of women and Men in Europe. A statistical portrait 2008*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 2008. Can be found at: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>, pp. 55-56. (Source: Eurostat, LFS).

³¹ Eurostat. *The Life of Women and Men in Europe, a statistical portrait*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 2008. Can be found at: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>, pp. 63-64. Data source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey, 2005 and 2006

- On average, sectoral segregation persists and has been increasing in the EU.
- There is a broad similarity across Member States both in the degree of concentration of employment and in the composition of the top six sectors employing women. In half of the EU Member States, health and social work is the largest employer of women, as it is also in Iceland and Norway.
- Men dominate in sectors such as construction; production and distribution of electricity, gas and water, land transport; and in manufacturing industry. In 2005, women made up just 8% of the work force in construction and only 14% of that in land transport.
- Men are much more represented than women in the industrial sector, whilst women predominate in services.
- The degree of concentration in a limited number of occupations is also much higher among women than among men. In 2005 almost 36% of women in work in the Union were employed in just six of the 130 standard occupational categories whereas the top six occupations for men were responsible for just over 25% of all men in work. The occupations concerned were markedly different for women and men.
- The proportion of women among managerial staff is much lower than for men (only one third), and the higher up one goes in the hierarchy of functions, the greater the difference.

Source: Franco, A. The concentration of women and men in sectors of activities. Eurostat Statistics in Focus. Population and Social Conditions 53/2007). Office for Official Publications of the European Communities: Luxembourg, 2007.

2.3 Horizontal and vertical labour market segregation and the “meta-stereotypes”

Horizontal and vertical labour market segregation by gender can be found, even if in different degrees, in all EU countries.³²

Horizontal segregation: Women tend to be found in similar occupational groups and economic sectors, whatever the country or culture concerned. The same happens for men, but they are distributed across a wider range of occupations.

The choice of study fields certainly impacts on gender segregation in the labour markets. It is however difficult to assess whether this is a cause or an effect: the choice of study fields determines professional choices, but the existing gender division of labour certainly influences vocational and educational orientation.

Vertical segregation: Women are concentrated at the lower or intermediate levels of hierarchies and professions, and are represented significantly less than men at senior level.

³² European Commission, *Report on Equality between women and men 2008*, op. cit.

Vertical segregation, often illustrated by the metaphor of the glass ceiling, is the second pillar of the division of work by gender. For instance, in 2007 only three managers in ten in Europe were women.

Whatever the specific historical, political and cultural realities of the member countries of the European Union, horizontal and vertical segregation constitute the two mechanisms organizing the division of labour between women and men. Differences in remuneration between men and women are often a result of the conjunction of this double segregation.

Two “meta” stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are generalisations on what is expected of men and women in a specific social context. They are over-simplified ideas of the differences between women and men, their skills, psychological attitudes, ambitions and behaviour. Judgments based on these generalizations may initially appear to help save time and energy. In reality they fail to capture the richness of individuals’ traits and abilities. The EU has identified the persistence of gender stereotypes as a root cause of gender imbalances and of labour market inefficiencies.³³

The EU-funded project STERE/O³⁴ analysed the linkages between occupational segregation by gender and the persistence of gender stereotypes in six EU countries. The conclusion is that vertical and horizontal segregation have a two-way relationship with gender stereotypes:

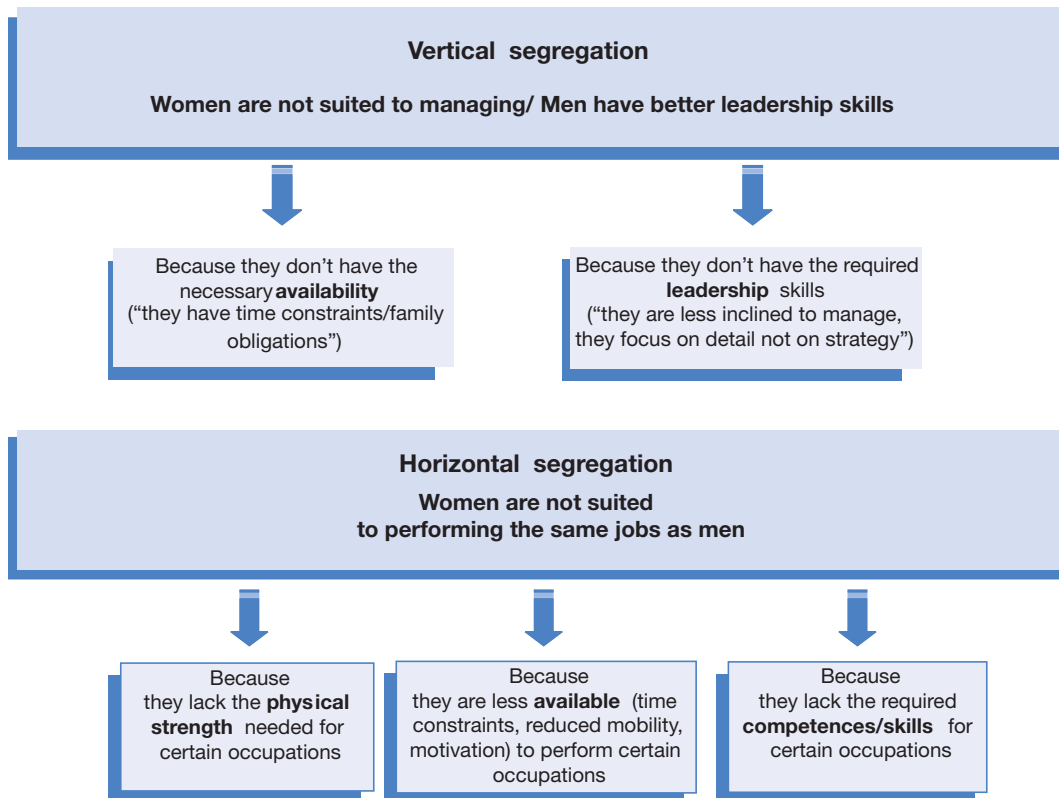
- there is vertical segregation (i.e. there are many more men in decision-making positions than women), therefore women are not suited to managing and men have better management and leadership skills;
- there is horizontal segregation, therefore women are not suited to performing the same jobs or tasks as men and men are not suited to doing the same jobs or tasks as women (e.g. there are more women than men nurses because women are naturally better suited for care work).

The fact that women and men do not have equal status in the labour market tends to reinforce these stereotypes, which have no foundation in reality, that is in women’s or men’s real abilities.

³³ For further information see *A Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006 - 2010* COM(2006)92.

³⁴ Source : STERE/O : *Faire la chasse aux stereotypes de sexe agissant sur la division du travail dans l'Europe élargie*. See http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/gender_equality/project_en.cfm?id=198.

RAISING THE ISSUES



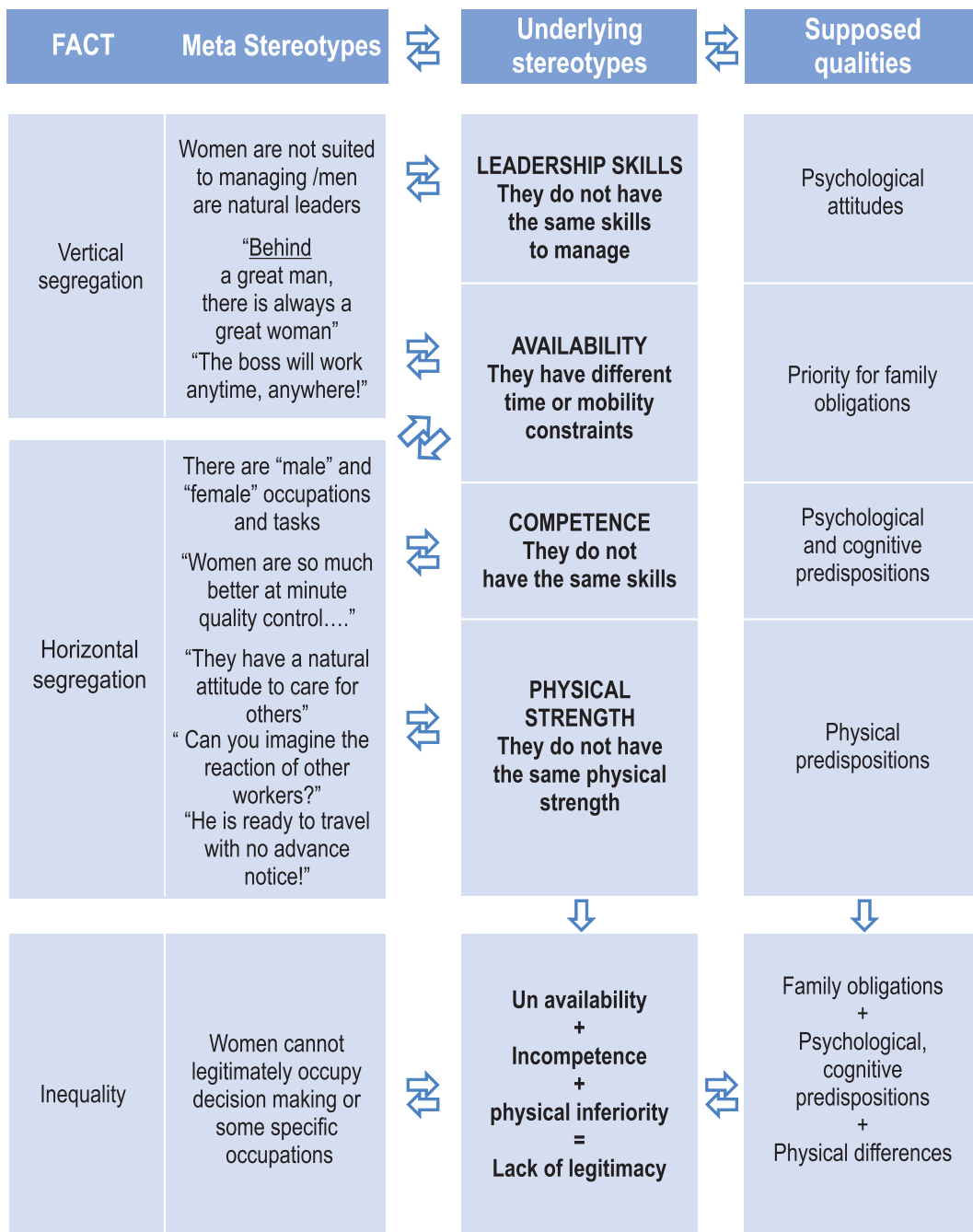
The vicious circle of stereotypes

Opinions that women cannot legitimately exercise power reveal the same stereotyped logic as opinions which hold that women cannot legitimately be employed in a fairly wide range of occupations.

These include views such as: “women have time constraints while men are always available”; or: “women are less committed to work because of their family obligations, men are more committed despite or even because of their family responsibilities”; or: “women and men have psychological, or even cognitive predispositions that preclude them from certain occupations or tasks within this or that occupation”.

These stereotypes arise because we are ready to enter into a self-referential logic. The opinions which underpin the current division of occupations and professions are mechanically accepted and are not opened to discussion. The existing gender division of labour becomes the object of an almost fatalistic acceptance.

The following chart depicts “the vicious circle” of stereotypes:



2.4 The deconstruction of stereotypes

Figure 8 above shows how the two “meta-stereotypes” are based on a set of underlying generalisations about the differences between women and men in terms of:

- physical ability;
- skills and competencies;

- attitude to leadership;
- availability of time and mobility.

The following paragraphs illustrate how these stereotypes can be identified, analysed and eventually overcome, to benefit women, men and companies.³⁵

2.4.1 “Physical differences”

The stereotype at work

Certain occupations have been inaccessible to women for a long time because of their physically demanding nature: the degree of physical effort, resistance or endurance needed to carry them out was considered to be incompatible with female physiology.

Analysing the stereotype

It is true that men are generally taller and heavier and therefore potentially stronger than women. This is however no more than a statistical difference: there are slender men as well as strong women. Women have always performed physically demanding work (in agriculture, in laundries, in manufacturing...), and many typically female occupations (nursing, domestic service, midwifery...) often require physical effort and endurance.

But more important, technological progress is allowing mechanisation of a number of tasks which formerly required considerable physical effort (carrying and lifting loads, drilling, applying pressure...). The criteria for physical difficulty are therefore no longer relevant to the division of labour between men and women.

The Court of Justice of the European Communities, when required to rule on differences in treatment between men and women in professional classifications, in relation to the criterion of physical strength, replied in a ruling of 1st July 1986:

*The fact of accepting values corresponding to the average performance of workers of only one sex to determine to what extent a job requires effort or causes fatigue, or is physically difficult, constitutes a form of discrimination based on gender*³⁶

Breaking the stereotype and generating business benefits

Physical differences do not matter as much as they used to. In many situations technology applied to work ergonomics can eliminate or minimize physical effort.

Looking for ergonomic solutions that improve efficiency by accommodating more workers is an intelligent approach to productivity challenges, and can minimize or eliminate health and safety risks.

Ergonomic solutions can be found by asking expert advice from occupational safety and health (OSH) physicians, from labour inspectors, from the national agency for improving the conditions of work, or from OSH consultants.

³⁵ The follow-up reports of the *EU Social Partners Framework of Actions on Gender Equality* provide a wealth of information on the many initiatives taken by employers' and workers' organisations, and enterprises, to tackle gender stereotypes and promote gender equality in the workplace. The Reports are available at http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_dialogue/docs_en.htm.

³⁶ Judgment of the Court (Fifth Chamber) of 1 July 1986. Case 237/85 Gisela Rummler v Dato-Druck GmbH. ECR 2101. Available at: http://curia.europa.eu/en/content/juris/index_tab.htm.

Complying with OSH legislation, or taking steps to improve the conditions of work, can become an entry point for breaking gender stereotypes and widening the company's pool of possible employees.

For example:

In the plastic manufacturing industry, the job of injection moulding setter has always been a "men's job"; women tending to be found in other jobs such as that of press operator. The physical effort involved seems to justify this division of work, as a setter needs to lift very heavy moulds, using a gantry on wheels. This job is physically very demanding for the workers. The development of new technology has allowed the production of new types of gantry which can be operated with much less effort. Using this new tool, industries can tap into a wider pool of possible workers, including women, while improving the quality of work for everyone.

In France, legislation on gender equality provides for a range of different measures to promote gender equality and occupational diversification. It also includes financial assistance to cover part of the costs that the enterprise has to meet to make certain jobs accessible for women.³⁷ Measures allow payment for technical advice and purchase of new equipment. Some enterprises have successfully taken advantage of these facilities and, through seeking specialist advice from ANACT (the French national agency for improving conditions of work), they have improved working conditions for everyone whilst at the same time promoting women's access to new jobs.³⁸

2.4.2 "Women and men have different competencies and skills"

The stereotype at work

The control and use of technology has for a long time been considered a male prerogative. This cultural environment determines girls' and boys' choice of study field. In fact, the OECD PISA 2006 survey³⁹ very clearly shows that there is a gap between boys' and girls' self-perception and their actual performance in scientific and technical subjects: "While overall gender differences in science performance were small, differing attitudes to science among males and females can potentially affect whether students go on to further studies in science and whether they choose a career in science. (...) of the attitudes measured in PISA, the largest gender difference was observed in students' self- concept regarding science. In 22 out of the 30 OECD countries in the survey, males thought significantly more highly of their own science abilities than did females."

A large majority of girls choose careers in the social and human sciences (80% of those employed as psychologists for instance), while they remain in a minority in many scientific and technological careers, including information and communication technologies.

³⁷ These measures and their legal basis are illustrated at the official site of the French Ministry of Labour: http://www.travail-solidarite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Les_aides_financieres.pdf.

³⁸ Conseil Supérieur de l'Égalité Professionnelle, Secrétariat aux Droits des femmes et à la formation professionnelle, Service des droits des femmes et de l'égalité, Service de l'information et de la communication, *Guide d'appui à la négociation*. Available at : <http://www.travail-solidarite.gouv.fr>. presents many examples of successful case studies in French enterprises.

³⁹ OECD, *PISA 2006: Science Competencies for Tomorrow's World*, OECD, Paris, 2007. Can be found at <http://www.oecd.org>.

Women made up only 29% of those employed as scientists and engineers in 2004, and only 18% of researchers in the business and enterprise sector.⁴⁰

Breaking the stereotype and generating business benefits

Skills have no gender. Industrial sectors which have been traditionally dominated by women, such as the textile industry, health and others have seen impressive advances in the technological content of the work. Women have widely proved that they can acquire the necessary skills when the technical content of their jobs increases.

However “the introduction of new technologies in training and at the work place has taken place without any modification in the professional status of such careers and without any change in the status of those employed”.⁴¹

Women constitute the majority of university graduates in Europe (59%), and their presence in non-traditional subject areas is gradually increasing.⁴² “Overall, statistical trends in educational attainments reveal a narrowing of the education gap between women and men: (...) a significant under-representation of men will arise in the group of higher-educated people in the future.”⁴³

More and more companies are considering the entry of women into a “male” universe as a positive factor of change and evolution.

For example

“MuT in German language stands for “Girls in Technology”. It also means courage. In 2007 the company Stihl, a leading chainsaw and garden power tools producer, took part in a regional MuT project in Germany. In collaboration with the local public employment service, a training programme was implemented to inspire girls to seek careers in technical fields. Information events were organized to attract female applicants attending university and trainee fairs. The company also agreed to offer female trainees jobs in technical occupations and manual trades.”⁴⁴

The company website states: “Our employees are the reason we produce high quality products.” (www.stihl.com), and this may be one of the reasons for deciding to attract talented young women to apply for occupations which are mostly dominated by male employees.

On-the-job and lifelong training in companies should be offered to women as well as to men, to strengthen their competences in the scientific, technical and technological domains. The legislation of many EU countries provides for special measures to train and

⁴⁰ European Commission Directorate-General for Research, Science and Society, *SHE Figures. Women and Science, Statistics and indicators 2006*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 2006. - ISBN 92-79-01566-4. Can be found at: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>.

⁴¹ Donial-Shaw G., Junter-Loiseau A., “La formation des femmes aux nouvelles technologies: une mauvaise réponse à un vrai problème”, *Les Cahiers du MAGE*, 1/97.

⁴² Eurostat, *The life of women and Men in Europe. A statistical portrait 2[008]*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 2008. Can be found at: <http://www.eurostat.eu>.

⁴³ European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, *Working in Europe: Gender differences*, Dublin 2008. p. 3. Only available in electronic format at: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2008/34/en/1/ef0834en.pdf>

⁴⁴ Source: EU Social Partners. *Framework of Actions on Gender Equality*. Second follow-up report, 2007. p. 30. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_dialogue/docs_en.htm

re-train workers. The European Social Fund (ESF),⁴⁵ which is managed by Member States at national level, is dedicated to improving workers' adaptability to the changing needs of the labour markets, and provides for specific support to vocational training for reducing inequality between men and women.

Over the last few years the ESF and the EU-Equal initiative have provided support to professional associations, vocational training institutions and employers' organisations for programmes to train women in non-traditional occupations, and at the same time assist enterprises, particularly SMEs, in removing the obstacles that may hamper women's participation.⁴⁶

To meet skills shortages, many measures have been adopted to increase women's presence in the construction sector. For instance, in Italy the EU-funded project "A.CANT.O"⁴⁷ (Architects-Site managers for Equal Opportunities) has established a network of gender equality resource centres within existing construction sector training and support institutions. The centres offer specialized advice to companies wishing to attract women, and training opportunities for women architects and site managers.

The EU Social Partners Framework of Action on Gender Equality and its two Follow-up Reports⁴⁸ provide many examples of measures taken by business organisations, by the social partners, and companies to promote a better gender mix in occupations. This includes:

- campaigns to raise girls' awareness of the opportunities offered by technical trades and facilitate their contacts with enterprises (e.g. websites for employers and for prospective women applicants; career fairs and "Girls days" in enterprises);
- training and employment programmes (development of dedicated apprenticeship schemes; training of unemployed women in non-traditional occupations in the construction, communication and transport sectors; support for men's access to care-related occupations).

2.4.3 "Men are natural leaders"

The stereotype at work

Women are still largely under-represented in managerial positions, particularly in top-level, strategic decision-making. The imbalance is particularly marked in the private sector. 97% of the presidents and 90% of the members of highest decision-making bodies of the largest publicly-quoted companies in Europe are still men. Even in those sectors where women are a majority (health, social work, education), men tend to dominate at the higher managerial levels.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ The European Social Fund is available through Member States or Regions. Participants in ESF projects can be of many different types: public administrations, NGOs and social partners active in the field of employment and social inclusion, enterprises and other relevant stakeholders. More information on the ESF can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf.

⁴⁶ EU-Equal "Establishing a culture of gender equality in the business world", 2007 offers a description of many initiatives in this field. The document can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/data/document/etg4-pb07-busiwor_en.pdf.

⁴⁷ <http://www.raedes.eu/acanto/index.htm>.

⁴⁸ The EU Social Partners Framework of Actions on Gender Equality and its Follow-up reports can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_dialogue/docs_en.htm

⁴⁹ Source: EC Database on women and men in decision making. Can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/women_men_stats/out/measures_out438_en.htm.

Breaking the stereotype and generating business benefits

In many countries – particularly where systems for breaking barriers to women’s participation have been put in place – increasing numbers of women can be found at the highest levels of decision-making in government, public administration and the judiciary.

“At the time the Beijing Platform for Action was launched in 1995, women accounted for only just over 10% of members of parliament worldwide. Since that time, there has been a steady, if slow, improvement so that by July 2007 women accounted for over 17% of members of national parliaments globally. (...) There has been significant progress in promoting women within the central administrations of EU member states where they currently fill nearly 33% of positions in the top two levels of the hierarchy compared to around 17% in 1995.”⁵⁰

Also in the private sector, women’s participation is gradually increasing, particularly in middle and junior management: in 2007 32% of those considered heads of businesses in the EU 27 were women.⁵¹

McKinsey’s report *Women Matter*⁵² brings evidence that companies with good records of women in top management positions tend to have much higher operating margins and market capitalization than those with lower gender balance.

Mixed gender teams have the advantage of having better ideas and results, according to many forward-looking human resource managers.⁵³

Companies can greatly benefit from addressing directly the stereotypes and the barriers that hinder full deployment of women’s managerial potential. Owing to the predominance of men in top positions, informal networks and channels of communication may exclude women. There have been few mentors or female role models. Moreover, the corporate culture demands ambition and continuous availability, while women are too often perceived as passive or timid and limited by their family responsibilities. Non-transparent methods of selection, lack of career planning and the macho behaviour of co-workers may also be potential barriers.

Innovative solutions and transparent management practices to address these obstacles can benefit not only women, but improve overall work organisation and staff wellbeing.

Legislation in some EU countries provides for negotiation to improve professional equality at branch or company levels, and inclusion of this subject in negotiations on training or job classification. For instance French law allows social partners to adopt measures to encourage women’s careers and so provide a balanced representation of women and men, especially at management level. In Italy and Spain companies may apply for funding to implement gender equality action plans.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ European Commission, *Women and men in decision-making 2007. Analysis of the situation and trends*. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities : Luxembourg, 2008, p. 5.

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 7. “Heads of businesses” comprises chief executives, directors and managers of small businesses.

⁵² McKinsey (2007), op. cit.

⁵³ Andrew Gould, CEO and president of Schlumberger (Germany) concluded the keynote session on “Waking Up to the Need for Women in Science and Technology” at the international conference “Women in Industrial Research—Speeding Up Changes in Europe” in Berlin, on October 10–11, 2003, introducing a commitment by several CEOs from research and development (R&D) companies active in Europe. For studies proving the linkage between female leadership and positive company performance see also Chapter 1.

⁵⁴ Examples of good practice in collective agreements are provided at: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/gender/caseequal.htm>. The *2nd Follow Up Report on the Social Partners’ Framework of Actions on Gender Equality*, 2007, op. cit. offers other examples of good practice implemented by the social partners or by individual companies.

Some employers' associations and enterprises have set up schemes to promote women's access to decision-making positions. In these schemes women are entitled to a personal counselling service. This can be used to give specific information (coaching) for example, on how to prepare for a recruitment interview, or it can provide more long-term help (mentoring). Several networks for experience-sharing between junior and senior staff have been set up which help women to develop their self-esteem and learn how to evaluate their own abilities. Training programmes to build management skills and self-confidence among women leaders, or to sensitize supervisors and co-workers, are also organised.⁵⁵

"In January 2007, the Confederation of British Industry's Deputy Director General announced that more than 100 companies and organisations had signed up to an Exemplar Employer scheme. (...) This scheme, run by Opportunity Now, gathers employers who are doing innovative work to address occupational segregation, equal pay and opportunities for women in the workplace."⁵⁶

2.4.4 "Women have time constraints and reduced mobility"

The stereotype at work

According to a survey carried out in 2000 by Ipsos-Rebondir⁵⁷, "nearly one woman in five has been asked during an employment interview if they might hypothetically 'have one or more children soon'; a question that only 9% of men were asked. In parallel, 15% of the women were asked to describe how their children were being looked after: twice as often as men (7%)."

Also in relation to geographical mobility, women are generally considered to be less available for posts involving the need for a transfer.

Moreover, it is commonly admitted that women normally follow their partners if a transfer is required, while the converse is exceptional. The Colmou report found out that "the necessity to transfer is sometimes linked to promotion, and constitutes an obstacle for women. Given the present attitudes, in practice men often hesitate in following their partners"⁵⁸.

Breaking the stereotype and generating business benefits

Reconciliation of work and private life must be seen from a new, broader perspective.

The evolving family structures require that all workers, women and men, can effectively enjoy their right to reconcile work and private life. Women are absent from their work for reasons of maternity on an average of only two four-month periods during the 37-40 years of their professional lives. Only interruptions linked to pregnancy and childbirth cannot be shared with the father.

⁵⁵ The EU Social Partners' Framework of Actions on Gender Equality, *Second Follow-Report*, 2007, op. cit.

⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 71. "Exemplar Employers' " good practice and case studies are presented at www.opportunitynow.org.uk.

⁵⁷ "Une minorité de femmes a été victime d'une discrimination à l'embauche", survey carried out by IPSOS for Rebondir on a sample of nearly 500 people in April 2000. Can be found at: <http://www.ipsos.fr>.

⁵⁸ Colmou, A. M., *L'encadrement supérieur dans la fonction publique : vers l'égalité entre hommes et femmes. Quels obstacles? Quelles solutions?*, La Documentation Française, Paris, 1999, p. 52. Report commissioned by the Minister for the Civil Service, State Reform and Decentralisation, 1999. Can be found in French at: <http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/rapports-publics/994000782/index.shtml>.

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Most EU countries have established new rights for fathers (educational leave, parental leave) and provisions needed to achieve a better balance in the sharing of family responsibilities.

Men are increasingly asking to spend more time with their families but they are often denied this opportunity. Research⁵⁹ shows that men wishing to take advantage of the provision for parental leave have to face the prejudice of employers and co-workers. Better knowledge of these rights among employers and employees, and a different attitude towards their application, would allow much better sharing of social, professional, family and personal responsibilities.

New, more flexible, forms of work organisation can also meet these new needs.

Laboratoires Boiron (Lyon)⁶⁰, a French group that produces and distributes homeopathic remedies, has implemented a policy of greater working flexibility. By means of several collective agreements, the organisation has sought to strike a balance between the interests of the company and the needs of the workers. Social concerns are particularly evident in the forms of work organisation that the company has selected – forms which explicitly aim to reconcile flexibility and workers' interests. The company's efficiency depends mainly on the efficiency of the workforce, so this choice is also a rational one: for instance, the freedom to switch from full-time to part-time work was granted in recognition of the needs of workers' needs – particularly relevant in the light of the fact that 77% of the employees are women. The same applies to the measures that the company has implemented to reduce working time.

Many companies have found out that investing in childcare and other services to help their staff balance work and private life is a sound business practice.

Some companies hire external providers to offer child-care, summer holiday play schemes or help for elderly relatives. Others set up workplace nurseries or support the establishment of nurseries in industrial districts. Household services (laundry, ironing, food catering, etc.) and support in moving and re-locating the family are also considered.

Certifications for "gender-friendly enterprises" are in place in various Member States. In Hungary the National "Family-friendly work place" award is gaining more and more popularity and the number of applications grows yearly (400 applications were received in 2006, including many from several small and medium enterprises). Those who had already won such recognition consider it a business success.⁶¹

As work-life reconciliation issues gradually find their place in the Social Partners' collective bargaining agendas, a new perspective should be adopted. Forward-looking employers' associations have started to raise the awareness of their members on the need to target work-life reconciliation policies on both men and women, to understand the business benefits of family-friendly workplaces, and to take measures to enable women returning from maternity leave to develop their full productive and creative potential.⁶² Overcoming stereotypes of "who should care for the family" means acquiring a realistic view of today's families, meeting the needs of all workers, retaining the best talents, and improving work organization for all.

⁵⁹ See for instance European Commission, *Reconciliation of work and private life: A comparative review of thirty European countries*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2005, p. 42.

⁶⁰ Source: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/qualityofwork/betterjobs/cases/fr05laboratoiresboiron.htm>.

⁶¹ EU Social Partners' Framework of Actions on Gender Equality, Second Follow Up Report, 2007, op. cit. p. 43.

⁶² For instance, the Czech employers and trade union organisations, and various employers' organisations in the chemical sector in Germany. EU Social Partners' Framework of Actions on Gender Equality, Second Follow Up Report, 2007, op. cit. , pp. 18 and 34.

Chapter 3.

The rules of the game

3.1 Overview

Today globalisation is no longer a choice but a reality. To maintain its levels of prosperity the EU must ensure that its economies are well positioned to take advantage of the new opportunities offered by the global markets. The EU Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs⁶³ aims to make the EU a dynamic and competitive player in the global arena. In this context, investing in “human capital” so as to adapt workers and enterprises to the new challenges is a key area of concern for the EU.

The EU promotes a model where economic and social progress are mutually supportive. The European Union Social Agenda complements the Lisbon Strategy and identifies measures which should be taken at both European and national levels to meet the new challenges of globalization.

Equality between women and men in the labour market is one of the pillars of the European growth and employment strategy. First, the EU considers equality between women and men as a founding principle, an objective and a task. Gender equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex are fundamental human rights. Second, equality between men and women is a pre-condition of sustainable socio-economic development. An increase in the quality and quantity of women’s employment is a key element in increasing the flexibility and adaptability of the labour market to global economic and demographic changes.

This Chapter illustrates how equality between women and men plays a key role in the achievement of the European strategy for growth and employment, from both economic and social perspectives. It then offers an overview of the European policies and legal instruments promoting the principle of gender equality in the world of work. Finally, it gives information on the overall commitments taken on by the international community in favour of gender equality in the world of work.

3.2 The EU values in a globalised world

3.2.1 Gender equality as an element of Europe’s competitive advantage

Europe has historically had a high level of prosperity, social cohesion, environmental protection and quality of life based on the common values of solidarity and justice. However, new technologies, mobility, an ageing population and global competition are posing real challenges. The emergence of new economic giants such as China and India puts the European economy to the test more than ever, in terms of trade, investment, technology, energy and production costs. The EU must make sure that its economies are well positioned to take advantage of the opportunities offered by globalization.

⁶³ More information on the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs can be accessed at http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/index_en.htm.

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Infrastructure and technology are important, but a key factor in the productivity of European companies is the availability and adaptability of highly skilled workers.

At the Lisbon Summit in March 2000 European Union leaders set out a new strategy, based on a consensus among Member States, to make Europe more competitive and moving towards full employment. This became known as the **Lisbon Strategy**. After initial moderate results, the Lisbon Strategy was simplified and re-launched in 2005.⁶⁴

The strategy rests on the three pillars of sustainable development:

- an economic pillar preparing the ground for the transition to a competitive, dynamic, knowledge-based economy;
- a social pillar designed to modernize the European social model by investing in human resources and combating social exclusion;
- an environmental pillar, drawing attention to the fact that economic growth must be decoupled from the use of natural resources.

The “renewed” Lisbon Strategy launched in 2005 focuses mainly **on growth and jobs**.

More jobs are needed for two reasons: first, because far too many people’s lives are still blighted by unemployment; second, because only by putting more people into work can societies cope with demographic change. Older populations mean higher pensions and health care costs and those need to be financed by taxes and contributions paid by the working population and by business. This is one of the reasons why the promotion of **women’s employment** is an important objective for the Lisbon Strategy.

Growth is not an end in itself, it is a prerequisite for being able to maintain and increase Europe’s prosperity, thus preserving and enhancing the EU social model. The Lisbon Strategy ultimately is about ensuring that Europe can maintain and enhance the quality of life of all its citizens– and that of their children and grandchildren – in the context of globalisation, demographic change and environmental challenges.

This is why the **EU Social Agenda**⁶⁵ naturally complements the Lisbon Strategy. The EU social values are an integral part of the EU’s response to globalization.

The EU Social Agenda aims to continue to promoting a social Europe in the global economy, by creating more **opportunities** for EU citizens, improving **access to quality services** and demonstrating **solidarity** with those affected negatively by change. It brings together a range of EU policies to be implemented by the Member States, in partnership with the EU, to guide and support action in seven priority areas:

- children and youth;
- investing in people: more and better jobs, new skills;
- mobility;
- longer and healthier lives;
- combating poverty and social exclusion;
- **fighting discrimination and promoting gender equality;**
- opportunities, access and solidarity on the global scene.

⁶⁴ Presidency Conclusions of the Lisbon European Council, 23 and 24 March 2000.
 Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council, 22 and 23 March 2005.
 Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/european-councils/index_en.htm.

⁶⁵ “Renewed Social Agenda” COM(2008) 412 final, adopted by the European Commission on 2.07.2008.
 Available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/index.htm>.

In relation to gender equality, the Social Agenda recognizes that, over the last half century, impressive progress has been made in the EU. However, it also recalls that inequalities persist, as reflected in gender pay differentials and in women's under-representation in economic and political decision-making processes.

To address these gaps, the EC will:

- strengthen the integration of a gender perspective ('mainstreaming') in all EU policies and activities;
- report on the implementation of the EU Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men⁶⁶ and present a follow-up strategy;
- propose legislation for setting up stronger measures to improve the reconciliation of private and professional life (improving parental leave arrangements and strengthening protection for pregnant women);
- further tackle the gender pay gap⁶⁷ by both improving the legislative framework and encouraging employers to commit themselves to equal pay;
- issue a report on the availability of child-care facilities;
- focus the Open Method of Coordination on the need to reduce the at-risk-of-poverty rate for women, particularly older women;
- take action to reduce the gender gap in entrepreneurship (currently only 31% of entrepreneurs in Europe are women).

One of the main instruments for implementing the Social Agenda is the **European Employment Strategy (EES)**.⁶⁸

The EES relies on the following main lines of action:

- increase the adaptability of workers and enterprises;
- attract more people to enter, and remain in, the workforce;
- invest more, and more effectively, in workers;
- ensure real implementation of reforms through better governance.

In line with the Lisbon Strategy, the guiding principles for success of the European Employment Strategy are:

- employability;
- entrepreneurship;
- adaptability;
- **equal opportunities.**

The European Social Fund (ESF) offers the resources for national action towards the achievement of these goals. The ESF is the EU Structural Fund aiming to help Member States make Europe's workforce and companies better equipped to face new, global challenges.

⁶⁶ A EU Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010" (COM/2006/0092 final). See below at Chapter 3.3.1.

⁶⁷ In accordance with Communication "Tackling the pay gap between women and men" COM(2007) 424 final, 18.07.2007. Available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0424:FIN:EN:PDF>.

⁶⁸ More information available at http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_strategy/index_en.htm.

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The EES focuses specific attention on the **quality of jobs** as a specific productive factor. Job quality is related to:

- high standards of health and safety in the workplace. Poor or unsafe working conditions cost the EU economy some 3% of GNP;
- flexible working patterns allowing people to balance work and home life;
- facilities such as crèches to help workers with families;
- in-service and continuing training and re-skilling;
- adequate social cover;
- good dialogue between workers' and employers' representatives.

The EU Employment Policy Guidelines (2008-2010)⁶⁹ give the Member States specific orientation on how full employment, job quality, labour productivity and social cohesion should be pursued. They highlight important factors relating to gender equality, for example:

- Gender mainstreaming and the promotion of gender equality should be ensured in all actions taken.⁷⁰ Particular attention must be paid to reducing substantially all gender-related gaps in the labour market, in line with the European Pact for Gender Equality;
- Policies should contribute to achieving an average employment rate for the European Union (EU) of at least 60% for women. Special attention should be paid to reducing substantially the persistent employment gaps between women and men and the gender pay gap (Guideline 17);
- A lifecycle approach should be promoted through better reconciliation of work and private life the provision of accessible and affordable childcare facilities, and care for other dependants. The target for childcare is coverage of at least 90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under 3 years of age by 2010 (Guideline 18);
- The promotion and dissemination of innovative and adaptable forms of work organisation, with a view to improving quality and productivity at work, including health and safety (Guideline 21);
- The gender pay gap should be substantially reduced. Particular attention should be given to explaining and addressing the reasons for the low wage levels in professions and sectors which tend to be dominated by women (Guideline 22).

⁶⁹ The Employment Guidelines (2008-2010) are available at <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/08/st10/st10614-re02.en08.pdf>.

⁷⁰ European Commission (2007). *Manual for gender mainstreaming of employment policies*, gives guidance in this respect. http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/docs/2007/manual_gend_mainstr_en.pdf.

3.2.2 SMEs at the heart of the Lisbon Strategy

During the 2006 Spring European Council, Member States agreed on four priority areas for advancing the Lisbon Strategy, including creating a more dynamic business environment by unlocking business potential, particularly of SMEs.⁷¹

SMEs are at the heart of the Lisbon Growth and Jobs Strategy.⁷² Most jobs in the EU are provided for by companies of 250 employees or less. Small businesses are one of the main driving forces in the economy, but they often face specific problems along with enormous bureaucratic hurdles and obstacles.

The EU, through The Small Business Act for Europe (SPA)⁷³ is working to ensure that European SMEs are assisted in fully unlocking their potential for long-term sustainable growth and more job creation. It proposes concrete policy measures to be undertaken by both the Commission and the Member States.

The SBA aims to promote entrepreneurship, make legislation SME-friendly and help SMEs to grow. It sets out ten principles which should be adopted at the highest political level and concrete measures that will make life easier for small businesses.

The Small Business Act re-affirms the necessity of investing in women's talent and entrepreneurship potential as an untapped source of SME growth. It also supports development of new legislation in four areas that particularly affect SMEs: SME creation, VAT procedures, payments and State aid.

In compliance with the SBA, a new General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER)⁷⁴ was adopted on State aids in August 2008. The GBER simplifies the treatment of State aid measures, clearly favouring job creation and boosting competitiveness – that is the objectives promoted by the Lisbon agenda – and measures in favour of SMEs. The Regulation authorises aid in favour of SMEs, research, innovation, regional development, training, employment and risk capital. It allows different types of aid to SMEs: aid for investments in machines or for hiring additional workers; aid in the form of risk capital; innovation aid; and aid contributing to intellectual property rights costs.

⁷¹ Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council (23/24 March 2006). 18 May 2006. Available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/89013.pdf.

⁷² "Implementing the Community Lisbon Programme – Modern SME policy for Growth and Employment", COM(2005) 551 final, 10.11.2005. Available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/index.htm>.

⁷³ "Think Small First" - A "Small Business Act" for Europe. Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - COM/2008/0394 final, 25.06.2008. Available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/index.htm>.

⁷⁴ "General block exemption Regulation." Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008. OJ No. L 214 of 09.08.2008. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/comm/competition/state_aid/reform/reform.cfm.



More information

On Growth and Jobs:

http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/index_en.htm

SME Portal

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sme/index_en.htm

On the Social Agenda:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social>

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_policy_agenda/social_pol_ag_en.html

On the European Employment Strategy (EES):

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/publications/publication_en.cfm?id=112

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_strategy/index_en.htm

European Commission (2007). Manual for gender mainstreaming of employment policies.

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/docs/2007/manual_gend_mainstr_en.pdf

On the pay gap

"Tackling the pay gap between women and men" COM(2007) 424 final, 18.07.2007

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0424:FIN:EN:PDF>

3.3 The EU and the principle of gender equality

Equality between women and men is one of the fundamental values of the European Union. The EC Treaty⁷⁵ establishes that equality between men and women is a principle and a task for the Community:

Relevant articles from the EC Treaty (consolidated version 2002)

Article 2

The Community shall have as its tasks, by establishing a common market and economic and monetary union and by implementing common policies or activities [...] a high level of employment and of social protection, equality between men and women, sustainable and non-inflationary growth, [...]

Article 3.2

In all its activities, the Community shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality between men and women.

Article 13

[...] may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Article 141

1. Each Member State shall ensure that the principle of equal pay for male and female workers for equal work or work of equal value is applied [...]
3. The Council [...] shall adopt measures to ensure the application of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation, including the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value.
4. With a view to ensuring full equality in practice between men and women in working life, the principle of equal treatment shall not prevent any Member State from maintaining or adopting measures providing for specific advantages in order to make it easier for the under-represented sex to pursue a vocational activity or to prevent or compensate for disadvantages in professional careers.

⁷⁵ More information at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/12002M/htm/C_2002325EN.000501.html and <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/index.htm>.

The principle is re-stated by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union⁷⁶ of 2000.

Relevant articles from the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

Article 21 – Non-discrimination

Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic and social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.

Article 23 – Equality between men and women

Equality between men and women must be ensured in all areas, including employment work and pay.

The principle of equality shall not prevent the maintenance or adaptation of measures providing for specific advantages in favour of under represented sex.

3.3.1 The EU Roadmap for equality between women and men

The EU policy on equality between women and men takes a comprehensive approach, which includes legislation, mainstreaming and positive actions. Financial support is also available through the PROGRESS programme (see below).

In this framework, on 1 March 2006, the Commission adopted a Roadmap for equality between women and men for 2006-2010⁷⁷. The Roadmap represents the Commission's political commitment to driving the gender equality agenda forward.

The Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men (2006-2010)

The Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men. It outlines six priority areas for EU action on gender equality:

1. Equal economic independence for women and men
2. Reconciliation of private and professional life
3. Equal representation in decision-making
4. Eradication of all forms of gender-based violence
5. Elimination of gender stereotypes
 - 5.1. Elimination of gender stereotypes in education, training and culture
 - 5.2. **Elimination of gender stereotypes in the labour market**
 - 5.3. Elimination of gender stereotypes in the media
6. Promotion of gender equality in external and development policies.

⁷⁶ 2000/C 364/01. This is a non-binding declaration signed at the European Council meeting in Nice on 7 December 2000. Available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf.

⁷⁷ COM (2006) 92. More information at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/gender_mainstreaming/roadmap_en.html. All the EU documents related to gender equality mentioned in this Chapter can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/index_en.html.

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In line with the Roadmap, the European Pact for Gender Equality⁷⁸ was approved by the European Council of 23 and 24 March 2006.

The Pact expresses the Union's and the Member States' commitment to enhancing women's participation in the labour market, particularly in terms of job quality, and to fostering measures to improve the work-life balance for women and men.

European Pact for Gender Equality (2006)

Encourages action at Member State and Union level in the following fields:

- measures to close gender gaps and **combat gender stereotypes in the labour market** (particularly in the sex-segregated labour markets and in education);
- measures to promote a better work-life balance for all;
- measures to reinforce governance through gender mainstreaming and better monitoring.

All these recent policy documents identify gender stereotypes and cultural barriers as one of the root causes of the persistence of inequalities and inefficiencies in the EU labour market. All social actors are called to take action to tackle this problem seriously and ensure freedom for European citizens, women and men, to develop their individual talents and ambitions.

The EU Report on Equality between Women and Men 2008⁷⁹ re-affirms the following:

Tackling Gender Stereotypes

- It is necessary to remove cultural barriers in order to facilitate access for women and men to non-traditional occupations, including decision-making jobs, and to fully support individual choices.
- Approach to ongoing training, professional development and vocational guidance should disregard all stereotypes. Training and vocational guidance professionals should be made more aware of these issues.

The PROGRESS Programme for 2007-2013⁸⁰ is the EU employment and social solidarity programme. The programme is divided into five policy areas: employment (supporting the implementation of the Lisbon strategy); working conditions; social protection and social inclusion; non-discrimination; and diversity and gender equality.

The section on gender equality supports the implementation of the Roadmap for equality between women and men.⁸¹

According to article 2, gender mainstreaming shall be promoted in all activities under the programme.

⁷⁸ More information at: <http://europa.eu/bulletin/en/200603/i1013.htm>.

⁷⁹ Report on Equality between Women and Men 2008, COM(2008)10. See in particular para. 3.3 "Tackling stereotypes, support for individual choices.

⁸⁰ For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html.

⁸¹ See also EQUAL Initiative at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/index_en.cfm.

PROGRESS: financial resources for gender equality (2007-2013)

The section on gender equality supports effective implementation of the Commission Roadmap for equality between women and men (2005-2010) by:

- contributing to achievement of equal economic independence for women and men [...];
- enhancing the reconciliation of work, private and family life through exchanges of experiences and analysis;
- promoting equal participation of women and men in decision-making;
- **eliminating gender stereotypes in society;**
- improving gender legislation implementation [...].

3.3.2 The EU social partners “Framework of Actions on Gender Equality (2005-2010)”⁸²

In 2005 the EU Social Partners made a specific commitment to enhancing gender equality in the labour market and in the workplace. The Framework of Actions on Gender Equality set the priority lines of actions for the period 2005-2010:

- addressing gender roles;
- promoting women in decision-making;
- supporting work-life balance;
- tackling the gender pay gap.

In terms of addressing gender roles, the document suggests a number of practical measures that can be taken by employers, trade unions and governments to overcome gender stereotypes. The annual follow-up reports⁸³ on implementation of actions taken in each country under the above four broad headings offer a rich overview of the initiatives undertaken and of the benefits gained by all parties involved.

3.3.3 The EU legislation on equality between women and men

The principle of equal treatment of men and women, enshrined in the EC Treaties since the establishment of the European Economic Community in 1957, has been implemented in a number of fields by EU legislation over the past 30 years, and developed in extensive case law by the European Court of Justice.

The Commission monitors the application of this legislation and, where appropriate, proposes new laws.

Legislation in the field of equal treatment of men and women, currently covers the following directives in the area of employment, social security and goods and services:⁸⁴

⁸² http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/news/2005/mar/gender_equality_en.pdf.

⁸³ http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_dialogue/docs_en.htm.

⁸⁴ In addition to directives, the non-binding decisions, recommendations and communications which have been adopted, as well as proposals for new legislation, may be consulted at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/legislation/legalacts_en.html.

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- Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast).
- Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services.
- Directive 2002/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2002 amending Council Directive 76/207/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions.
- Council Directive 98/52/EC of 13 July 1998 on the extension of Directive 97/80/EC on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- Council Directive 97/80/EC of 15 December 1997 on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex.
- Council Directive 97/75/EC of 15 December 1997 amending and extending, to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Directive 96/34/EC on the framework agreement on parental leave concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC.
- Council Directive 96/97/EC of 20 December 1996 amending Directive 86/378/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in occupational social security schemes.
- Council Directive 96/34/EC of 3 June 1996 on the framework agreement on parental leave concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC.
- Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (tenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC).
- Directive 86/613/EEC of 11 December 1986 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity, including agriculture, in a self-employed capacity, and on the protection of self-employed women during pregnancy and motherhood.
- Council Directive 86/378/EEC of 24 July 1986 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in occupational social security schemes.
- Directive 79/7/EEC of 19 December 1978 on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for women and men in matters of social security.
- Council Directive 76/207/EEC of 9 February 1976 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions.
- Council Directive 75/117/EEC of 10 February 1975 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women.

3.4 The international dimension

The EU fully supports implementation of the gender equality commitments made by the international community, as these provide a broader and universally agreed framework for action at global level.

3.4.1 The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)⁸⁵

Adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, the Convention is the most comprehensive and detailed international agreement on women's human rights. It establishes rights for women in areas not previously subject to human rights provisions, most notably in personal and family life.

The CEDAW establishes binding principles for women's equal participation and equal rights in the labour market, with specific reference to the need for equal remuneration and provision for equal opportunities to enter the workforce.

As of February 2008, 185 countries - over 90% of the members of the United Nations - are party to the Convention, including all EU Member States.

3.4.2 The Beijing Platform for Action

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PfA)⁸⁶ was the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women, which took place in Beijing in September 1995. The PfA expresses the agreed commitment to foster women's empowerment of the 189 Governments and 2,100 non-governmental organizations that took part in the event.

The PfA indicates that persisting inequalities between men and women are among the root causes of poverty and social vulnerability for all. Sustainable economic and social development need to be founded on equal access to economic structures and productive activities, equal participation in decision-making at all levels and the overcoming of gender stereotypes.

UN member countries, including all EU Member States, have produced National Programmes for Action (which are subject to a monitoring mechanism). Two special global sessions of the UN took place in 2000 and 2005 to undertake a global review of the progress achieved.

3.4.3 The Millennium Development Goals⁸⁷

The Millennium Declaration and Development Goals (MDGs) were the outcome of the Millennium Summit of September 2000, when world leaders met at the UN in New York.

The MDG framework outlines the central concerns of the global community – peace, security, development, environmental sustainability, human rights and democracy – and sets out a set of mutually reinforcing goals for social development.

The eight MDGs form an ambitious agenda agreed by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions for reducing poverty and improving lives worldwide.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ More information at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>.

⁸⁶ More information at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/index.html>.

⁸⁷ More information at: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.

⁸⁸ More information at : <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Default.aspx>.

Millennium Development Goals (2000)

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
 - **Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women** and young people
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. **Promote gender equality and empower women**
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development.

3.4.4 The ILO Decent Work Agenda for All Women and Men⁸⁹

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is devoted to reducing poverty, achieving fair globalization and progress in opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. As a tripartite organization the ILO works with governments, employers and workers' organizations to promote a) employment creation, b) rights at work, c) social protection and d) social dialogue and tripartism.

Since its establishment in 1919, the ILO has been committed to promoting the rights of all women and men at work and achieving equality between them, through the adoption of numerous Resolutions of the International Labour Conference and International Labour Standards.⁹⁰

ILO Key Conventions promoting gender equality

- N. 100 - Equal remuneration (1951)
- N. 111 - Discrimination (employment and occupation) (1958)
- N. 156 - Workers with family responsibilities (1981)
- N. 183 - Maternity protection (2000)

Conventions 100 and 111 are also among the eight fundamental Conventions of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998).

Resolution concerning the Promotion of Gender Equality, Pay Equity and Maternity Protection, adopted in June 2004.

⁸⁹ For more information on the ILO Decent Work agenda, see: <http://www.ilo.org>.

⁹⁰ Besides its standard setting measures, the ILO offers assistance on labour issues to national and international actors. The Gender Coordination and Non-Discrimination Programme of the ILO Training Centre in Turin (<http://www.itcilo.org>) runs regular training courses in gender mainstreaming in the world of work. See also: <http://gender.itcilo.org>.

The ILO recognizes the importance of gender equality not only as a fundamental human right, but also as intrinsic to its global aim of “Decent Work for All”. Promoting gender equality makes good economic sense, as it improves efficiency and productivity in the labour markets and in the workplace. Empowering women goes beyond the value for women themselves, and has profound impacts on families, communities and national economies.

Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves: opportunities for work that is productive, freely chosen and delivers a fair income; security in the workplace and social protection for the worker and his/her family; better prospects for personal development and social integration; freedom for people to express their concerns, organise and participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

The EU has fully adhered to and is one of the main proponents of the ILO Decent Work Agenda in both its internal and external action. In many European countries the ratification of International Labour conventions has paved the way to harmonisation and national-level enforcement of EU provisions.

Key ILO documents on Gender Equality

Global Report: "Equality at work: Tackling the challenge" (2007).

The Report highlights the role that gender inequalities play in constraining productivity, growth and prosperity. Improving women's earnings is a key element in tackling poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Publications/Officialdocuments/lang--en/docName--WCMS_082607/index.htm

Chapter 4.

Building gender equality into the Business Model

4.1 Overview

Employees are a company's most valuable asset. But they are often also its biggest expense. Salaries and benefits may account for between 35% and 40% of an enterprise's total operating expenses. In short, employees hold the success or failure of a company in their hands. When companies are able to understand the different needs, cultural backgrounds and skills of their employees, and treat them fairly, they are best placed to recruit and retain staff in an increasingly competitive labour market.

A recent survey has found that gender stereotyping continues to be a key barrier to the advancement of women in corporate leadership and leaves women leaders with limited and conflicting options. The report argues that gender stereotyping results in organizations routinely underestimating and underutilising women's leadership talent.⁹¹

To avoid falling into the trap of stereotyping, companies must:

1. assess the work environment to identify situations at risk of gender bias;
2. change organizational culture and provide all employees with policies, training, action plans, tools and resources to increase awareness of both women and men's skills and promote gender equality;
3. promote work practices that target biases, particularly in recruitment and performance management procedures.

This chapter gives practical advice to SME owners, human resource managers, trainers and consultants on how to drive growth by drawing on the complementary strengths of both men and women, free from stereotypes.

It gives suggestions on how to develop a simple action plan to take practical measures in a small or medium company. Additional tools can be found in Section Two – Unit 4.

4.2 Gender equality Action Plans⁹²

A gender equality action plan is about ensuring fair conditions and opportunities for both women and men so that businesses can realise advantages. It recognises the need:

- to attract and retain the best talents for the work to be done;
- to boost creativity and innovation by promoting better gender balance and diversity of views and ideas in management teams;

⁹¹ Catalyst, *The Double-Bind Dilemma for Women in Leadership: Damned if You Do, Doomed if You Don't*, Catalyst, New York, 2007. Available at: <http://www.catalyst.org>.

⁹² EU Equal and PROGRESS initiatives can offer examples of good practice or opportunities for funding the measures identified by the action plan. For more information consult http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html. External consultants on HRS and gender equality, employers' organizations, business support agencies, Chambers of Commerce or national gender equality institutions can provide technical assistance and training.

- to meet skills shortages by increasing the number of women in occupations where they are under-represented;
- to improve the working conditions of women and men employees;
- to make sure that individuals are satisfied and more productive at work;
- to comply with the law and avoid the risk of grievances and litigation;
- to attract more men and women as customers;
- to improve customer loyalty;
- to improve the firm's public image;
- to improve chances of gaining public contracts.

4.2.1 Devising a good gender equality Action Plan⁹³

A gender equality Action Plan (PLAN) explains in clear language what will be done, and by whom, to promote equality in the company, and includes:

- establishing who will be responsible for implementing the PLAN;
- assessing the working environment, policies, procedures and processes;
- drawing up equality policies, including for example employment equality policies, and policies to counter harassment, sexual harassment, and bullying;
- setting targets on the basis of needs assessment, for example:
 - increasing the number of management positions open to part time jobs so as to facilitate better gender balance;
 - interviewing more women for managerial posts;
 - attracting men and women into non-traditional occupations;
 - attracting more qualified women by changing the way in which jobs are advertised etc.
- “positive action”, where needed, to attract more women;
- monitoring arrangements, stating how success will be measured and how and when the overall performance of the PLAN will be assessed.

A good PLAN for SMEs has a number of core elements:

- *Leadership* – it must have a clear vision and lead by example in motivating others to implement the PLAN;
- *Involvement* – consulting with staff to assess their experience and perceptions is necessary to build commitment;
- *Training* – competency and confidence are key to enabling people to implement the PLAN;
- *Data* – assessments based on the real picture, that is monitoring change in gender proportionality is essential to clear decision-making;

⁹³ Many country-specific guidelines and booklets are available. For instance, the Equality Authority in Ireland has produced a comprehensive guide for enterprises on developing and implementing employment equality policies. For information go to: <http://www.equality.ie>. More information on other countries is provided at para 4.4.

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- *Measurable activities* – focused on human resources, work organisation and marketing functions; and
- identification of *linkages to business plans*.

All staff, sub-contractors and suppliers should be informed about the PLAN.

Good practice for identifying potential for widening a company's talent pool and attracting a more gender balance work force includes:

- *An assessment of the situation within the company*

Depending on the size and resources of the company, an *employee census* can identify where women and men are positioned within the organization and set a baseline to track the frequency with which women are recruited into specific business units, work teams or job classifications. The census should also collect qualitative data from staff on their perceptions about stereotypes, and on both women's and men's opportunities and ability to balance work-life issues. The survey should also aim at understanding whether and why internal job advertisements attract varying responses, and whether current HR practices are conducive to gender equality or pose barriers to women's participation or to employees with care responsibilities.

- *Partnerships and collaboration with local partners*

In cooperation with local employment agencies and equal opportunity bodies, an assessment of *the local labour market* can help establish why women or men are under-represented in particular occupational groups.

Partnerships with universities, technical and vocational schools, centres for re-training of the unemployed, and voluntary organisations can help identify new resources.

4.2.2 Training and raising awareness to help everyone play their part

Gender equality can provide a very useful context for skill enhancement, particularly for those that are responsible for the supervision of other staff, who should be aware of the influence stereotypes can have on women and men's capacity to develop their individual talent.

Staff who recruit, select, appraise and supervise should benefit from specialised training on breaking gender stereotypes and applying gender equality in practice.

Training for existing and new staff on company policy for gender equality can be an important tool for ensuring that everyone knows what it means for them as employees. The training, whether delivered by internal staff, HR professionals or external trainers, should guide participants on:

- gender equality legislation and what it means in practice;
- the roles and responsibilities of staff in making the PLAN work;
- relations with fellow-workers and dealing with harassment and bullying;
- the opportunity for all staff to express their views on the matter, as well as their needs and concerns;

- where appropriate, availability of gender-sensitive customer service training;
- To reinforce the training staff should be provided with written materials for future reference.

4.2.3 A clear Gender Equality Policy⁹⁴

A gender equality policy is the cornerstone of any PLAN. It is a very valuable document that:

- states the enterprise's values in relation to equality and how they will be put into practice;
- shows all staff, potential recruits, customers and suppliers that the enterprise is serious about fairness and helps them understand:
 - what behaviour is expected and what is not acceptable;
 - what they can expect of the enterprise.

A gender equality policy works best with the support of everyone in the organisation. All staff - or staff representatives - should be consulted and have a chance to express their opinions on the policy.

Any policy has to be adapted to the size and context of the enterprise, but the key elements for any SME are:

- a statement on *the gender equality vision* of the enterprise, e.g.:
 - the aim of encouraging and valuing gender equality (and equality of opportunity for all);
 - a commitment to ensuring equality for all its staff;
- a statement on the company's commitment to ensuring a *working environment in which all are able to give of their best*, and where all decisions are based on merit.
- a statement on the company's commitment to combat *sexual harassment, harassment, mobbing or bullying*; some companies have a separate policy on harassment, and this may also vary according to national legislative provisions;
- a statement on measures, for example:
 - in relation to human resource and work organisation, setting clear, measurable objectives and targets;
 - a communications strategy for making the policy known to all workers and at all management levels;
 - training for all staff;
 - monitoring and evaluation.

4.3 Action Plan measures – Concrete steps

4.3.1 Recruiting and selecting the right person for the job

Having a transparent and structured approach to recruitment prevents a company from incurring two costs resulting from:

⁹⁴ The booklet *Diversity at Work 8 Steps for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises* contains more detail for SMEs. For more information go to: <http://www.stop-discrimination.info>.

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- Hiring the wrong person, investing in training them and having to go through low productivity, possible dismissal and a new recruitment process;
- Applying discriminatory recruitment practices, contravening equality legislation and running the risk of grievances and court cases.

A structured approach will help companies to select the best person for the job based on merit, and will also enable the decision-maker to explain his/her choice clearly.

Tips – Preparing a good job description and person specification

A good job description is the first step to find the right person for a job. It needs to be clear and concise and describe:

- overall title and aim;
- tasks, responsibilities and reporting lines;
- the personal profile, namely which skills, competences and attitudes are really needed to perform the job in the best way.

A good job description is free from gender bias and:

- reflects the real requirements of the job, rather than describing the person who filled that job previously;
- does not make assumptions about the required abilities but describes the tasks that a person needs to be able to perform
- *for example, instead of ‘needs to be physically fit’ it says ‘needs to lift boxes and load them on shelves’ or ‘needs to operate tractor’;*
- does not include subjective criteria (*for example, instead of ‘a mature marketing manager’ it says ‘has 5 to 10 years of experience’*);
- distinguishes between essential criteria (skills required to do the job) and desirable criteria (skills which may enhance job performance);
- includes criteria such as physical ability or appearance on the basis of the real job requirements, not on the basis of arbitrary stereotypes;
- requires formal qualifications (i.e. academic or trade) only if they are really essential for successful performance of the job;
- allows applicants to assess whether their work or life experience may help them meet the job criteria; *e.g. a former dishwasher with experience in a school canteen may have acquired knowledge and skills in relation to hygiene, operation and maintenance of machines etc.*
- uses clear, non-sexist, language and invites both women and men to apply;
- may mention possible avenues for career progression, training and development;
- makes clear whether the job needs to be performed in a standard full-time arrangement, workplace-based manner or if it allows for flexibility in work organization and working hours;
- values individual talent, gender equality and inclusiveness among the core competences.

Consulting supervisors and co-workers on job requirements when preparing a job description can be a very important exercise for ensuring that the new employee is welcomed with a positive attitude. This may be particularly important when a female or male employee is hired in a non-traditional position or in a team mainly made up by staff of the opposite sex.

Tips – Advertising a vacancy

Vacancies should attract the widest possible pools of qualified candidates. Using the company's usual list of contacts to advertise a vacancy may provide a very limited choice and may be against the law in some countries. Vacancies should be advertised through a variety of channels:

- public employment services, which are aware of local employers' needs and of the legal requirements of non-discriminatory law;
- national, local or specialist press;
- local schools, vocational centres, technical colleges or universities;
- private employment agencies;
- non-profit organizations, groups and training and re-training programmes for women returning into the labour market;
- website/internet.

A vacancy announcement should:

- contain the main elements of the job and personal description;
- use non-sexist language and avoid using wording that may imply sex or age restrictions ('free from family responsibilities', 'young graduates', 'mature person' may anyway be unlawful in many countries; the use of plural pronouns or of "s/he" should be preferred to "he" or "she");
- state that it welcomes applications from persons of both sexes;
- give clear instructions on how to obtain the application form;
- inform about the company's gender equality policy and PLAN.

Tips – Application Forms

The form should elicit the necessary information to ensure that a shortlist of suitable candidates can be quickly drawn up. Questions should:

- ask only for basic personal details: name, address and telephone number are normally enough; personal questions such as marital status are not needed for assessment of an application;
- aim directly to elicit information on the applicants' ability to perform the job;
- enable applicants to show how they may have gained the necessary skills outside formal employment and/or education (e.g. through voluntary work or a career break);
- be standardized in relation to the core competencies that all staff may need to have in the company (e.g. ability to work in a team; communication; etc.), complemented by additional questions related to the technical requirements of the position.

Tips – Preparing a short list of candidates

Preparing a short list involves assessing how the information given in the application form matches the job requirements. To reduce the risk of biased judgments:

- more than one person should conduct short-listing;

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- all those carrying out the selection should be acquainted with the job requirements and trained or at least sensitized to gender equality matters;
- if the position has traditionally been occupied only by men or by women, an assessment should be made of the reasons for this situation and whether it is justified by the actual job requirements, or whether it solely reflects stereotypes;
- a simple evaluation system should be adopted, to measure the extent to which candidates meet job requirements;
- applications should be individually assessed against each specific job requirement, awarding a mark for each and according to importance for the job; all marks should be reviewed at the end of the exercise, ensuring that they have been awarded on the basis of evidence provided on the application form.

In particular:

- it should be recognized that skills and abilities “have no gender”, and that they can also be acquired outside the workplace and during career breaks;
- the assessment should be consistent with the criteria identified in the person specification, and criteria should not be changed to include someone else at a later stage (this may be unlawful in some countries).

Tips – Interviewing

Interviews should be conducted by panels of women and men from a range of backgrounds, with good interviewing skills and possessing a good understanding of the requirements of the job. It is particularly valuable to have interviewers who have received sensitivity and awareness training related to gender issues.

All candidates should be interviewed according to a common set of questions, based on the job description and the list of skills and competences required.

Questions about a candidate’s private life should not be asked as they are not relevant to the job requirements e.g. marital status, number of children, intention to have children, sexual orientation.

It is important that the interview remains focused on the task at hand, finding the best person for the job.

Tips - Making the recruitment decision

When taking up or checking references, it is advisable to provide the referee with a copy of the job description and ask for evidence of the candidate’s ability to meet the specific job requirements.

Adjustments to the work organization should be considered if they would better enable highly desirable candidates with limited mobility or specific needs to reconcile work and family.

All candidates should be informed of the result of their application, including those who were unsuccessful.

4.3.2 Internal recruitment – Promotion

When selecting for promotion, the same principles used for external recruitment should apply. Internal job advertisements should be designed in the same way as external

advertisements – to attract the best person for the job. The position should be advertised in such a way as to be accessible to all staff, including employees on maternity or parental leave.

All employees, female and male, in part time or full time positions

- should have equal opportunity to apply for an internal or external vacancy, and to be short-listed;
- should have equal access to promotion;
- should have the opportunity to be offered the position as a development assignment;
- should be prepared to apply for internal positions by:
 - appropriate succession planning;
 - having access to opportunities to work in different organisational areas and gain broad range of work experience;
- should be provided with feedback on the outcome of the selection process, and offered self-development opportunities to position them well for future internal recruitment processes.
- If short-listed together with external candidates, they should be posed the same questions as everyone else. Using different questions for internal and external candidates could be used as evidence of discrimination.

4.3.3 Training and development

It is important that all staff have access to training regardless of *inter alia* their gender and whether they are in part-time or full-time employment. All new staff should receive an induction course on the business, including information on the company's gender equality policies and procedures, including the responsibilities of the employees.

The time and location of the training are key to ensuring that it is accessible to all employees, women and men, so care needs to be taken to monitor attendance at, and the outcomes of, training incorporating gender considerations. All women and men employees should be encouraged to apply for training that broadens their skills potential and adaptability to market changes.

4.3.4 Job evaluation and classification – Equal pay.

Equality legislation covers terms and conditions of employment and all employees are entitled to fair pay. Providing equal pay means that you provide the same pay and conditions for men and women doing work that:

- is the same or broadly similar;
- has been rated as equivalent under a job evaluation scheme; *or*
- is of equal value in terms of the effort, skills, knowledge and responsibility required.

Providing equal pay also means that employees should know how their pay is made up. So if, for example, a company pays bonuses, its employees should know what they have to do to earn one, and how it is calculated. If legal provisions for Equal Pay exist, a Pay Audit may be needed to show that the company is complying with the law.

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Job evaluation is a system for comparing, ranking and valuing different jobs within an organization. It bases the evaluation and related wage setting mechanism on the demands of the job or roles performed, rather than on how an individual performs. Job evaluation is the key tool for determining whether two jobs are of equal value, as it enables a systematic analysis to be made of the values given to specific jobs.

There are several job evaluation schemes, but they are not always free of gender bias. This is particularly important, since stereotypes tend to work to the disadvantage of jobs done by women. For instance, the “risks and physical efforts” factors implied in the job of janitor (male job) may be considered higher than the risks and physical efforts required from an office cleaner doing night shifts (female job).

A job evaluation free from gender bias unveils the gender stereotypes that underpin the job classification and evaluation system in an enterprise or a sector, by considering four basic factors and sub-factors:

- **Skill:** experience, training, education and ability (mental and physical) required to do the job.
- **Effort:** the physical or mental exertion needed to perform the job.
- **Responsibility** for human, technical and financial resources.
- **Working conditions:** the working environment, including physical surroundings, psychological pressure and hazards of the job.

Normally the revision of a job classification and evaluation system is done in the framework of pay equity programmes in those countries where legislation requires enterprises to prove that they do not discriminate against women in wage setting. However, the exercise can bring benefits to employers, as a re-evaluation of jobs allows appropriate re-design of vocational training programmes and rationalization of jobs. A recent study by the ILO proposes a comparative table of cost and benefits brought about by pay equity programmes, highlighting the presence of immediately quantifiable benefits such as improved recruitment processes, lower employee turn-over, and improvement of production processes and quality systems.⁹⁵ More information on different tools for job evaluations free from gender bias is provided in paragraph 4.4. below.

4.3.5 Positive Action

Overcoming gender stereotypes is necessary but it may not immediately bring gender equality. If monitoring shows that people from some under-represented groups do not appear to succeed as well as others within the company, one should consider whether legal Positive Action measures are appropriate.

Positive action can ensure that groups which have been disadvantaged can be helped to apply to an organisation or company, thereby broadening the available range of candidates. These legislative provisions enable the company to encourage applications for jobs or promotion from specific groups in the community that are under-represented in its workforce as a whole or at particular levels.

Actions could include:

- offering work experience opportunities;
- open days.

⁹⁵ Chicha, M.T., *A comparative analysis of promoting pay equity: models and impacts*, ILO, Geneva, 2006, pp. 50 – 51.

Training courses may also be provided to enable participants, for example, to:

- develop skills to the required level for competing for jobs and promotion opportunities;
- complete application forms proficiently;
- develop interview techniques;
- develop confidence or assertiveness;
- retrain those workers, including women, whose skills have become rusty or out-of-date;
- develop management skills to encourage women to apply for promotion;
- provide career counselling and guidance for working women or for those wishing to return to work.

4.3.6 Work-life balance – benefits life, benefits work!

Many employers who have developed family-friendly policies say that the benefits to their businesses far outweigh the administrative costs. Benefits include:

- retention of skilled staff;
- reduced costs of recruitment and training;
- recruitment from a wider pool of experience;
- increased numbers of mothers returning after maternity leave;
- reduction in sickness and absence;
- better time-keeping;
- shared workloads;
- improved staff morale;
- improved productivity;
- reduced stress levels;
- greater degree of loyalty and commitment;
- a reputation as a good employer.

Striking the balance between work and other areas of life makes good business sense. A flexible approach to working arrangements can have advantages for the company and its staff and could help business. It is important however to be cautious about relying only on informal arrangements. Clear criteria are essential for ensuring that flexibility is to the advantage of both employees and the company. It is also important to ensure that not only women but also men employees are allowed and encouraged to make full use of the existing legal provisions and organizational measures to improve their work-life balance and care for their families.

Businesses will prosper, and employees flourish, if they are enabled to strike a proper balance between work and personal life. Giving people flexible working options that fit in with their lives and business needs will enable the company to reap the benefits of improved productivity and performance. It makes it easier for staff to meet their out-of-work commitments. This in turn can also help in reducing absenteeism and time taken off for sickness.

People, with their skills and abilities, are the company's most valuable resource. In an ever-changing society and with ever-changing working practices one needs to keep ahead of the game. Flexible working is about recognising individuals' personal lives outside their work environment. It can help people more effectively integrate their parental and other caring responsibilities with their working life. In most EU countries working parents have statutory rights to care for their small children (or disabled children). It is imperative to consider carefully and objectively the possible advantages which could be gained from requests for flexible working hours, if it works better for the employee and could work for the company. Flexible working is suitable in other circumstances, too, such as caring for older family members or to meet disability or religious needs. Below are some of the different types of flexible working that are available:⁹⁶

- Job sharing;
- Part-time working (a right to request to go part time and for the request to be seriously considered);
- Flexible hours;
- Term Time;
- Tele-Working;
- Shift swapping;
- Voluntary reduced hours;
- Annualised hours.

4.3.7 Conclusions

For SMEs the dangers of falling into the stereotyping trap are great. The pressures of business are often overwhelming and necessitate strategic action. Having a Gender Equality Action Plan is a strategic response to many of today's business challenges.

4.4 References of initiatives offering tools for gender equality plans in enterprise

UK

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, *Advisory Booklet on Tackling discrimination and promoting equality*, ACAS, London, 2006.
<http://www.acas.org.uk/>

Belgium

Service public fédéral Emploi, Travail et Concertation sociale, *Guide pour l'égalité des femmes et des hommes lors de la valorisation des fonctions*.
<http://www.emploi.belgique.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=8486>

Service public fédéral Emploi, Travail et Concertation sociale, *Check-list «non-sexisme» dans l'évaluation et la classification des fonctions*.
<http://www.emploi.belgique.be/WorkArea/showcontent.aspx?id=8560>

⁹⁶ For more information on different types of arrangements, see for example "Information Sheet series on working time and work organization" produced by the ILO, Conditions of Work and Employment Programme, available at: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/condtrav/time/time_infosheets.htm.

France

Ministère du travail, des relations sociales, de la famille et de la solidarité, *Le Label Egalité*, 2004.

<http://www.travail.gouv.fr/espaces/femmes-egalite/label-egalite.html>

La promotion de l'égalité dans l'entreprise (e-learning module)

<http://www.halde.fr/elearning/>

Spain

Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales de España, Instituto de la Mujer; *Programa Optima: Manual de Orientación para la puesta en marcha de Acciones Positivas en las Empresas: Nuevas situaciones - Nuevas respuestas*, Instituto de la Mujer (Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales), Madrid, 1999.

Good practice guide to guarantee equal pay and tools in order to eliminate salary discrimination. (English, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish)

<http://www.tt.mtas.es/optima/>

Italy

Bollino Rosa S.O.N.O. - Stesse Opportunità, Nuove Opportunità

<http://www.lavoro.gov.it/ConsiglieraNazionale/>

Canada

Canadian Human Rights Commission, Pay Equity Directorate, Anti-Discrimination Programs Branch, *Guide to pay equity and job evaluation.*

Available on-line at <http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca>

USA

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, *We're Worth It: An AFSCME Guide to Understanding and Implementing Pay Equity.*

Resource package of information for building capacity and awareness about pay equity.

<http://www.afscme.org>

Sweden

Harriman, A., Holm, C., *Steps to Pay Equity: An easy and quick method for the evaluation of work demands*, Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, Lönelots/JämO, 2000, 2001.

<http://www.jamombud.se/inenglish/docs/Stepstopayequity.pdf>

International labour organization

A step-by-step guide to job evaluation methods free from gender biases, ILO, Geneva, forthcoming.

Chicha, M.T., *A comparative analysis of promoting pay equity: models and impacts*, ILO, Geneva, 2006.

http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.DOWNLOAD_BLOB?Var_DocumentID=6596

SECTION TWO: HANDBOOK FOR TRAINERS AND ADVISORS

This Section provides practical guidance on how to use Section One "Raising the Issues" so as to overcome gender stereotypes and improve business management and performance. It can be used by trainers and business advisers to set up training and awareness-raising workshops or to support consultancy services. It also proposes tools that can be used by SME managers for self-assessment and planning.

Chapter One contains the description of a generic workshop for business advisers or managers in SMEs. The workshop is divided into five learning Units that can be organised in different ways according to the needs of the target audience.

Chapter Two describes in detail the methodology and the practical tools and exercises that can be used to deliver each individual learning Unit.

Chapter 1.

Workshop overview

1.1 Rationale

Quality and competitiveness are key success factors for SMEs in Europe. To meet the new challenges of the global market, companies must be able to anticipate change, for example in technology and production methods, and be capable of devising organizational strategies that capitalize on developments and enable them to:

1. *do the right things* (“*know what*” to produce and distribute, and for *whom*) with respect to the changing needs and expectations of their customers and society at large;
2. *do things right* (“*know-how*”) by producing goods and services in the most equitable, and efficient way, making full use of all the available human and physical resources, minimizing environmental impact and producing positive social effects.

Companies cannot afford to waste human talent and market opportunities. They can grow and succeed only if they are able to build a positive interaction with customers, investors, shareholders, employees, suppliers and partners. These are all women and men with diverse talents, perspectives, expectations and needs.

Stereotypes, views based on what is more appropriate for men and women, create barriers that a) prevent companies from seeing and unlocking individual talent in women and men, and b) prevent companies from attracting women and men as customers. The cost for companies can be high: loss of human capital, difficult employee relations, high levels of stress and absenteeism, loss of potential customers, loss of revenue, and so on.

Businesses can derive many benefits from breaking gender stereotypes and promoting equality in the workplace:

- access to a wider talent pool;
- ability to attract and keep highly-qualified and motivated staff;
- more opportunity for creativity, innovation and profit;
- a wider and more satisfied customer base;
- better staff morale and minimum risk of litigation;
- a better public image and higher shareholder value.

Women and men working together can create a win-win situation. The forward-looking business manager is aware of all these dimensions.

1.2 Aim of the Workshop

This workshop is designed to raise awareness among SMEs of the impact of gender stereotyping in their organisation and to offer practical solutions for overcoming them and improving business performance.

The key messages are that gender stereotypes:

- are detrimental to business;

- can be a cause of unlawful discrimination;
- can be overcome.

When stereotypes are overcome, and gender equality is in place, organizations do better. By joining the workshop, participants have a chance to:

- discuss research-based evidence and practical business experiences on the benefits brought about by gender equality, occupational diversification and gender balance in decision making in SMEs;
- analyse how gender stereotypes constitute a cause of gender inequalities and inefficiencies in the life of individuals, in enterprises, and in the labour market;
- assess strategies and tools to help SMEs “unlock potential”, that is to promote gender equality in occupations and managerial positions and therefore make a better use of women and men’s skills and talents, to the benefit of enterprises;
- appraise the relevance of international, EU and national policies and legal obligations on gender equality in employment;
- develop concrete plans for either further disseminating the “business case for gender equality” or implementing some of the proposed strategies at enterprise level.

1.3 Target Groups Profile and Criteria

This workshop has been designed for the following target groups:

I. Business “Relays”

- Staff from Chambers of Commerce and SME support organisations (operating in strategic sectors such as departments of business start-up, innovation, training and business development services).
- Experts/consultants in HR selection and training, including in private employment services.
- Experts/consultants in entrepreneurial training, business organisation and management control.
- Managers from public institutions concerned with SME development, training and employment support services.

II. Selected owners and managers of small and medium enterprises

- Women and men entrepreneurs, covering decision-making positions in business associations or consortia.
- SME owners or employees responsible for human resource management (HRM) or administration of key organizational processes such as quality, productivity and innovation.

III. Other stakeholders

- Representatives from equal opportunities institutions or networks directly engaged in promotion of gender equality in the private sector.

- Representatives of trade union training organizations, employment services, vocational training, research and higher education.

Participants will:

- have proven ability, on account of their institutional outreach and professional responsibilities, to reach and influence effectively the SME organizational culture through training, consultancy, dialogue with entrepreneurs, managers and employees.
- have operational contacts and be familiar with the challenges and opportunities met by their countries' SMEs in the selected sectors.

1.4 Accessibility

Efforts will be made to ensure that men as well as women attend the workshops. Measures to promote accessibility to diversely able persons shall also be provided for.

1.5 Learning Approach

The proposed learning approach is flexible, interactive and learner-centred. It is based on the engagement of participants in a process of attitudinal change, group learning and active acquisition of practical skills.

A variety of interactive learning methods, such as participatory presentations, exercises and real life case-studies can be used to draw on participants' individual experiences and make the contents relevant to their diverse work contexts and needs.

Each of the five Learning Units corresponds to a specific objective, so that units can be combined internally in different ways, according to the needs and available time of the target group.

1.6 Contents

Unit 1 – The business case for gender equality

This Unit presents the evidence-based research and real-life experiences that demonstrate that gender equality, occupational diversification and gender balance in decision-making in SMEs can bring real benefits to these enterprises. It provides information on:

- The business benefits of gender equality.
- The negative impact of gender stereotyping.
- Evidence showing the relationship between higher profitability and women in management.
- Business success stories promoting both women's and men's access to non-traditional occupations.
- Assessment of costs and benefits.

Unit 2 – Do jobs have a gender?

In this Unit participants are invited to analyse how stereotypes are at the root cause of gender inequalities and inefficiencies in the labour market, in enterprises and in the life of individuals:

- What constitutes gender segregation in the labour market, and what are the specific issues in a given country?
- What is the gender division of labour? What are the underlying gender stereotypes?
- How does this impact on business efficiency?

Unit 3 – The rules of the game

Building on the business case for gender equality, this Unit generates discussion on the broader social and economic policy contexts for promoting equality. Information inputs cover:

- Key data on gender equality in the EU and in the relevant country.
- EU and the Social Partners' commitments, policies and support for gender equality.
- International commitments to gender equality in employment (ILO, UN).
- National policy, legislation and support for gender equality in employment.

Unit 4 – Building gender equality into your business model

This Unit invites participants to analyse the extent to which gender stereotypes are affecting business for SMEs. It provides participants with a range of tools for effective analysis of their own situation and development of options that meet their business needs. Participants are encouraged to test out assessment and management tools to develop methods that they can apply to “give talent a chance”. Practical solutions, examples and case studies help participants become conversant with the methods proposed.

Unit 5 – Gender equality. Plot it in your work plan

This Unit builds on the concepts and outputs of the other Units. Participants learn about the steps that are effective in supporting gender equality and how to identify action appropriate to their business model. Depending on the target group profile, they will draft plans to:

- further disseminate the “Break gender stereotypes, give talent a chance” approach and tools: *or*
- adopt concrete measures at enterprise level (follow-up visits by experts can be planned).

1.7 Evaluation and monitoring

The workshop concludes with a participatory evaluation session in which participants provide qualitative feedback. Participants are also asked to fill in a standardised written evaluation questionnaire, which includes questions on how they intend to apply their learning in practice. Results are collected and processed for comparison with similar workshops and for monitoring dissemination of the initiative.

Chapter 2. Workshop delivery

2.1 Methodological note

Each of the Chapters presented in Section One can be flexibly used as a “Learning Unit” in the training workshop. The programme proposed includes all the learning Units and may last from one to three days.

However, the training should be delivered to a timetable that suits the specific target group. Therefore for each learning Unit only approximate minimum and maximum learning times are suggested.

Each of the learning Units has a specific learning objective. The following tables illustrate how each learning Unit can be organised. The proposed structure is flexible, as each workshop must be designed to meet the requirements of the target audience, maximize learning and ensure as wide a dissemination as possible.

Further information can be accessed at: <http://www.businessandgender.eu>.

2.2 Delivering the learning Units: structure and contents

Learning Unit 1	Aims to build participants awareness of the business benefits of gender equality in SMEs
Resources	Toolkit - Chapter 1 Toolkit - Delivering Unit 1
Structure of the Session	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introductions 2. Presentation covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The business benefits of gender equality • The negative impact of gender stereotyping • Evidence showing the relationship between higher profitability and women in management and business success stories promoting both women’s and men’s access to non-traditional occupations • Assessment of costs and benefits 3. Exercise: What are the Issues 4. Case Study: Presentation and discussion
Suggested timeframe	Minimum 90’ – only presentation and discussion Maximum 180’ – including all exercises

Learning Unit 2	Aims to help participants to analyse the impact of gender stereotypes on businesses
Resources	Toolkit - Chapter 2 Toolkit - Delivering Unit 2
Structure of the Session	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Presentation covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is gender segregation • How does gender segregation impact on our country • The gender division of labour • What are the underlying gender stereotypes? • The impact on business efficiency 3. Exercise: What are the Issues 4. Case Study: Presentation and Discussion
Suggested timeframe	Minimum 90' – only presentation and discussion Maximum 180' – including all exercises

Learning Unit 3	Aims to provide information on the broader social and economic policy context's for promoting equality
Resources	Toolkit - Chapter 3 Toolkit - Delivering Unit 3
Structure of the Session	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Presentation covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key data on gender equality in the EU and in the relevant country. • EU and Social Partner commitments, policies and support for gender equality. • International commitments to gender equality in employment (ILO, UN Global Compact). • National policy, legislation and support for gender equality in employment. 3. Exercise: What are the Issues 4. Case Study: Presentation and Discussion
Suggested timeframe	Minimum 60' – only presentation and discussion Maximum 180' – including all exercises

Learning Unit 4	<p>Provides participants with a range of tools to support effective analysis of their own situation and develop options that meet their business needs.</p> <p>Participants will learn about the steps that are effective in supporting gender equality and are helped to identify measures that are appropriate to their business model.</p>
Resources	<p>Toolkit - Chapter 4</p> <p>Toolkit – Delivering Unit 4</p>
Structure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Presentation covering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustration with practical examples of concrete measures that can be taken to promote gender equality in decision-making and occupations 3. Exercise: What are your Issues 4. Exercise: What is your marketing style
Suggested timeframe	<p>Minimum 60' – only presentation and discussion</p> <p>Maximum 180' – including all exercises</p>

Learning Unit 5	<p>Consolidates learning of previous Units (can conclude any unit) by asking participants to take concrete action in relation to their findings</p>
Resources	<p>Toolkit – Delivering Unit 5 Action Planning</p>
Structure	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Exercise: Action planning</p>
Suggested timeframe	<p>Minimum 90'</p> <p>Maximum 180' – According to number of participants</p>

Delivering Unit 1: The business case for gender equality

1.1 Introduction

The aim is to present evidence and real life experiences that demonstrate that gender equality, occupational diversification and gender balance in decision-making in SMEs can bring competitive advantage and attract better staff and more customers. The Unit should improve participants' understanding of:

- The business benefits of gender equality for SMEs.
- The negative impact of gender stereotyping.

1.2 Learning Objective

By the end of this Unit participants will have a better awareness of the business benefits of gender equality in SMEs. Participants will have discussed how gender equality, occupational diversification and gender balance in decision-making in SMEs can bring efficient solutions to the challenge of finding and retaining better skilled personnel and more customers, and thereby add value to enterprises.

1.3 Contents

Presentation

The presentation in this Unit should be concise and to the point, focusing on the business benefits to SMEs in particular. The evidence in Chapter 3 of the Toolkit should be supplemented with national examples, and case studies in similar countries that reveal benefits. The presentation should address:

- Evidence demonstrating the relationship between higher profitability and women in management (see Section One – Chapter 1).
- Evidence demonstrating the value of gender equality initiatives for SMEs.
- Business success stories promoting both women's and men's access to non-traditional occupations.
- Testimonials from the business world.



The examples shown or quoted should be relevant to SMEs and be applicable to the national context. The inclusion of testimonials from the business world will be very valuable for the session.

Exercise 1.1. The Issues

Consider whether the business model enables you to make the best of the available human capital. Participants are split in small groups, and come up with a list of options, using the following table that would be viable for their businesses.

There are factors that need to be addressed in any enterprise when considering change, namely:

- those **internal** to the enterprise, e.g. competition, employers' attitudes, employees attitudes, enterprise structures, working processes, employment policies, cost factors, employees' lack of motivation, perception of work is influenced by gender roles, etc.; *and*
- those **external** to the enterprise, e.g. inadequate supply of candidates in non-traditional areas among job-seekers as well as among school leavers; policies in the "enabling environment" affecting the labour market; educational policies; social policies; transport and housing; gender perception of the work, etc.

Using the following table, identify the internal and external factors that could encourage employers to promote gender equality in a) occupations and b) decision-making.

Gender equality in occupations in the SME	
Gender equality in decision making in the SME	
INTERNAL FACTORS	
Positive	Negative
EXTERNAL FACTORS	
Positive	Negative

When the groups are finished and feedback is being given, hand out a solution sheet prepared on the basis of the following example and ask participants to highlight additional factors they have discussed.

Exercise 1.1. Sample solution sheet

Factors internal to the enterprise

Positive influence

Employers side

- Awareness that “skills have no gender”
- An organisational culture capable of seeing and valuing talent beyond traditional roles
- Information on legal provisions, costs, benefits and public incentives relating to hiring of women
- Information on how to facilitate work/life/family reconciliation with practical measures
- Information on how improved working conditions can improve productivity
- Willingness to improve social image and capacity to meet the needs and expectations of a wider client base
- Existence of corporate social responsibility policies and/or quality systems

Employees’ side

- Courage to overcome stereotypes and choose non-traditional careers
- Acceptance of the need to change work organisation or relations with co-workers
- Within families, awareness of the need to better share family responsibilities
- Awareness of gender equality laws and of how to benefit from them
- Willingness to include the issue in collective bargaining

Negative influence

Employers’ side

- Employers’ pre-conceived views about women’s and men’s abilities and aspirations
- Organisational culture
- Real or perceived costs related to women’s employment and turnover
- Working times, mobility requirements, etc.
- Workplace and life-long learning provisions inadequate to meet needs of workers with family responsibilities
- Biased classification of positions
- Biased evaluation of positions and performance

Employees’ side:

- Stereotypical choices of occupations
- Women’s and men’s socialization patterns
- Need to reconcile work and family
- Lack of confidence in one’s own skills /potential
- Lack of motivation and awareness in relation to gender equality
- Organisational culture

Factors external to the enterprise

Positive influence:

- Skills shortage and high levels of women's education
- Political will to enforce gender equality law with initiatives, incentives, programmes
- availability of childcare and public policies targeting men as fathers as well as women as mothers
- Availability of adequate childcare facilities, public transport, housing
- Existence of public initiatives or incentive programmes and their limited scope, for example only focusing on women and not on both women and men
- Media and education campaigns to overcome gender stereotypes
- Demographic trends

Negative influence

- Gender stereotypes in dominant culture
- Media, education and training systems reinforcing traditional roles
- Cultural and historical developments (economic downturns, transition)
- Lack of adequate childcare provisions
- Lack of incentives to implement gender equality actions in employment
- High social costs of skilled labour

Exercise 1.2. Case Study

Prepare information on successful gender equality initiatives or practical cases at enterprise level, from the country directly concerned and from other countries. Such cases can prove very valuable for demonstrating measures taken and outcomes in SMEs.

Participants should be asked to analyse the information presented and assess whether similar measures would be applicable in their work contexts

Delivering Unit 2: Do jobs have a gender?

2.1 Introduction

In this Unit participants are invited to analyse how stereotypes can be at the root of gender inequalities and inefficiencies in the labour market, in enterprises and in the life of individuals:

- What is the gender segregation of the labour market, and what are the specific issues in our country?
- What is the gender division of labour? What are the underlying gender stereotypes?
- How does this impact on business efficiency?

2.2 Learning Objective

By the end of this Unit, participants will have examined the patterns of gender segregation in the country. They will have analysed how gender stereotypes constitute a cause of gender inequalities and inefficiencies in the labour market, in enterprises and in the life of individuals.

2.3 Contents

Presentation

This presentation should focus on the patterns of gender segregation in the country's labour market. It will show how gender stereotypes constitute a cause of gender inequalities and inefficiencies in the labour market, in enterprises and in the life of individuals. Chapter 2 of the Toolkit provides key information on:

- Defining stereotyping and segregation;
- The gender division of labour, i.e. gender segregation;
- The underlying gender stereotypes;
- Results from previous research on stereotypes (STERE/O project);
- Key data on horizontal and vertical segregation in the country (labour market and education).

The presentation should address definitions of vertical and horizontal segregation, using data at both national and EU level: labour force participation, unemployment, part-time work and gender; girls and boys in higher education; women and men in economic sectors; women and men in professions. The presentation should also provide participants with information for improving their understanding of the effect of the vicious circle of stereotypes (STERE/O framework) and "meta-stereotypes" and how they relate to segregation. The presentation could also highlight culturally or socially-predominant stereotypes in your country/region.



Tip for Trainers

It will be very important to adapt information to country level, that is, with due reference to the social, cultural and economic conditions that operate in each participant's country.

Data should highlight the challenges faced by men and women. It will be particularly important, in jurisdictions with multiple-ground equality legislation, to highlight the efficiencies that can be achieved by paying attention to and accommodating gender, addressing stereotyping and so on. This will help develop responses that accommodate other discriminatory grounds and ensure compliance with the law.

Exercise 2.1. The Issues

The objective of this exercise is to raise participants' awareness on gender inequalities in the labour market. Ask participants to complete the quiz, quickly and without thinking too much. In small groups, ask participants to discuss their answers with their group. The exercise can also be done as a brainstorming in plenary. Make sure that you have a slide or a flip-chart showing the correct data at the end of the exercise.

	The % of women and men in the total population
	The % of men and women in the active population
	The % of boys and girls in engineering studies
	The % of women and men among bus drivers (or welders, hairdressers, cleaners, nurses, primary school teachers...)
	The % men and women among SME managers
	The % of female and male managers
	The % of children attending pre-school care
	Men's take-up rate of paternity leave
	The % of male and female employees who have access to lifelong learning
	How many information technology specialists will be needed in 2010?

Take feedback from each group and facilitate a discussion of the need for accurate information to counteract stereotyping.



Tip for Trainers

This quiz can be used at the start of the session or after the presentation, but ensure that the presentation answers the questions raised, and that participants are encouraged to take risks in guessing their answers. The objective is to stimulate discussion, not measure how much people know.

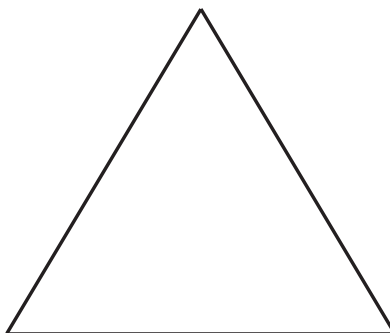
Exercise 2.2. Understanding Stereotyping

The objective of this exercise is to help participants explore the factors that support stereotyping and apply a framework for analysis to help improve their understanding of how this operates in the workplace.

Step 1: In small groups participants fill in the following table.

Name typically “male” and “female” job?	Why is this so?	Has this changed in the last few years?	What would change the situation?
‘Female’ job			
‘Male’ job			
Name typically “male” and “female” jobs in your sector/enterprise	Why is it so?	Has this changed in the last few years?	What would change this?
‘Female’ job			
‘Male’ job			

Step 2: Participants draw up a **Gender Organigram of their Enterprise** (or one they know), marking how many women (W) and how many men (M) can be found at each level. The higher the decision-making position, the higher in the pyramid. The more a job is strategic for the business, the closer to the centre.



Step 3: In the group participants discuss the results of the organigrams and agree on two jobs, one held by a man and one by a woman, in similar positions and of similar strategic importance. They fill in the table below and discuss.

Rank the importance of each of these attributes in relation to each job 1=important 2=significant 3=not important	Position held by woman	Position held by man	Are there differences? Yes / no	Can this be changed?	If so, how can you change?
Education					
Experience					
Technical skills					
Time availability					
Physical strength					
Mobility					
Family responsibilities					
Leadership ability					
Authority					
Acceptance by co-workers					
Long term vision					
Attention to detail					

Take feedback from each group on the changes that could be made and how.

Exercise 2.3. Skills have no gender

This exercise will help participants appraise how stereotypes can influence the way jobs are valued and classified.

Divide participants in small groups and ask them to select 1 or 2 typically male and 1 or 2 typically female jobs and analyse the different factors that may be included in their job description. When they have done this, ask them to compare their results in plenary. If necessary, highlight how stereotypes influence the way in which these different factors are valued in female or male jobs (e.g. responsibility over equipment for a technician may be considered more valuable than responsibility over people for a nurse).

Name 1 or 2 typically "male" and "female" jobs?	Skills : education, training, experience, physical or mental ability	Effort (physical or mental)	Responsibility (over human, technical or financial resources)	Working conditions (hazard/ stress)
'Female' jobs				
'Male' jobs				

Delivering Unit 3: The rules of the game

3.1 Introduction

Building on the business case for gender equality, participants should be guided in a discussion on the broader social and economic policy contexts for promoting equality. Information inputs will cover:

- Key data about gender equality in the EU and in the relevant country.
- EU and the Social Partners' commitments, policies and support for gender equality.
- EU legislation on equality between women and men.
- International commitments to gender equality in employment (ILO, UN).
- National policy, legislation and support for gender equality in employment.

3.2 Learning Objective

By the end of this Unit participants will have appraised information on existing EU and national policies, equality legislation and support for promoting equality in enterprises.

3.3 Contents

Presentation

The presentation could be delivered by a number of people, depending on the audience. Pick one that participants can most relate to, for example:

- an owner-manager of an SME; an SME representative can offer his/her reflections on how gender equality actually benefits business;
- the EU perspective could be given by the facilitator or by the person responsible for EU relations in the Chamber or a EC representative (if available);
- the national perspective could be given by a representative from a national institution/agency/ other organisation which deals direct with promotion of gender equality and enterprises in the workplace, in the labour market and so forth.

To make the presentation more interactive each presenter can be "interviewed" by the facilitator on a specific topic. Organise the thematic questions with each of the presenters beforehand, and encourage presenters to generate questions for discussion with participants.



Case Study 3.1

Present the experience of an SME that has successfully utilised support or incentives to promote equality. Use the case study to introduce the following exercise.

Exercise 3.1. The Issues

This exercise will help participants formulate their position and needs in relation to existing policies.

Divide participants into groups of four, and ask them to consider the following questions:

1. What support do I need to analyse the barriers to gender equality in my organisation/enterprise?
2. What support do I need to promote gender equality in my organisation/enterprise?

Take feedback from each group and write key words on flip charts, one headed **support for analysis** and with the other **support for action**.



Tip for Trainers

- Your target group may have considerable experience and knowledge of a range of enterprise support measures or incentives and may have direct experience of making use of them.
The session will be improved by encouraging participants to focus on support that will promote measures favouring gender equality.
-

Delivering Unit 4: Building gender equality into the business model.

4.1 Introduction

This Unit invites participants to analyse the extent to which gender stereotypes are affecting business for SMEs. It provides participants with a range of tools with which to support effective analysis of their own situation and develop options that meet their business needs. Participants are encouraged to test out assessment and management tools to develop methods that they can apply to “give talent a chance”. Practical solutions, examples and case studies help participants become conversant with the methods proposed.

4.2 Learning Objective

By the end of the session participants will have identified gaps and examined possible strategies and tools that can help SMEs “unlock potential”, promote gender equality in occupations and decision-making and therefore make better use of both women’s and men’s skills and talents, for the benefit of their enterprises.

4.3 Contents

Presentation

This presentation should provide practical examples, that is give an overview with examples of the various tools and initiatives that can be used to promote gender equality in decision-making and occupations.

The tools aim to help participants see that breaking gender stereotypes will help enterprises improve their business planning processes to achieve better outcomes from human resource management, work organization, product process, customer feedback and so on. Adopting a gender equality perspective means improving business practices and making them more relevant, efficient and effective.



Tips for trainers

The presentation will be interactive and participants may be asked to identify whether organizational practices are conditioned by stereotypes. Questions may include the following:

Do they have specific HR policies? Are they formal or informal? How does recruitment work? Do you have job descriptions that are reviewed regularly? Is recruitment formal or informal? Who selects and on which criteria? Do selection procedures/panels tend to self-perpetuate existing power structures? Do they risk missing specific talent pools? What are the policies on working conditions and on working hours? Is there high turnover? Why?

It is important to present measures/initiatives at national and international level that can encourage employers to undertake gender equality actions. Thus whatever questions you generate, make sure you have examples of ways in which these issues can be addressed.

Exercise 4.1. The Issues

This exercise helps participants to see the value added and competitive advantage to be gained from promoting effective gender equality policies and procedures.

Can I gain from gender equality?

Pick three of the statements that most meet your current situation.

1. Talent is significant in building our competitive advantage.
2. We have trouble in finding skilled labour.
3. There is not enough supply of skilled labour to meet our needs.
4. We need to make better use of the potential of our employees.
5. So-called “female” jobs appear to be easier to fill than the so-called “male” jobs.
6. There are difficult working relations between women and men employees.
7. We have noted that men and women in non-traditional positions may face difficult work situations.
8. We have a system in place to assess the cost of maternity leave.
9. We have a system in place to assess the cost of paternity leave.
10. We have a system in place to assess the cost of absenteeism.
11. Our male employees do not take paternity leave.
12. Our female employees do not return after maternity leave.
13. Is it difficult to comply with equality legislation.
14. We have not made use of incentives for enterprises to hire and retain women, or to provide for gender equality measures.
15. We have not undertaken research to find out if women and men customers influence our sales differently.

In groups discuss the results and decide which area is most important for each participant to work on.

Exercise 4.2. Action

This exercise helps to make an assessment of where specific action can be taken to enhance the capacity of an enterprise to make full use of its human potential and how a specific attention to gender equality dimensions can contribute to this process. The role of the facilitator is critical in this exercise, to help participants come to a realistic assessment of the areas where their organizations could improve their “performance”, and how specific actions in relation to gender equality could contribute to this goal.

Go through the following list and mark 1 to 3:

1 is vital, **2** important and **3** worthwhile in each of the following boxes.

Our recruitment process delivers a diverse range of quality job candidates, both female and male	
We consider the broadest pool of candidates for all positions	
We have a range of candidates willing to work part-time and full-time hours	
Our interview questions and selection processes meet anti-discrimination legislation guidelines	
Our recruitment processes are transparent, easily reproducible and accessible for a diverse pool of candidates	
Our recruitment processes are effective at getting the best person for the job	
Our selection panel members aware of your company’s equitable recruitment and selection policies and procedures	
We get both women and men responding to our job advertisements	
Both female and male candidates apply for roles in non-traditional areas	
Our respondent profile includes men and women of different backgrounds	
Our interviewers and those on selection panels are trained in selection and interviewing methods which are free from gender bias	
People working part-time, home-based or who have family or caring responsibilities and women who are pregnant make it on to our selection shortlists	
Our recruitment and selection processes and decisions withstand the rigour of a review by an independent third party	
Both women and men are appointed to senior management positions in our organisation	
Both women and men are appointed to operational line jobs in our organisation	
Our recruitment processes ensure the candidates can demonstrate their full range of skills and expertise	
We are an employer of choice among our competitors	
Our organisation has an active role in showcasing female and male employees in non-traditional roles at schools or universities	
We speak to groups of students and their parents about opportunities in your industry or business	
We have a reputation as an equal opportunities employer	

Assess whether there is need to take action and how.

Exercise 4.3. What is your marketing style?

By asking participants to individually reply to the following set of questions, this exercise helps them to assess the capacity that an enterprise has to respond to the needs and expectations of its female customer-base.

What is your marketing style?

This quick-scanning exercise will help you assess if you are capturing the needs and expectations of women and men customers, both as direct marketing targets and in their capacity to influence many purchasing decisions.

In small groups answer the following questions:

- Do you have a male and female **customer base / market share**?
- How has this share been evolving in the last 5 years (at least)?
- Can you identify which groups of women and men you are targeting and what are their expectations?
- In relation to your **consumer surveys** irrespective of whether you have an internal survey group or use external consultants, do you pay attention to the following aspects:
 - Is the research designed to take account of gender?
 - Are the focus groups gender balanced / gender specific?
 - Are the team of researchers gender balanced / gender specific?
 - Who writes the questions?
 - Is the data gender-disaggregated?
 - Is the information gender-differentiated?
- In relation to your **product development process**:
 - Are there women and men in your product development unit? How many?
 - Are there women and men involved in design? How many?
 - Are there women and men involved in innovation? How many?
 - Are there women and men involved in customer relations? How many?
 - Are there women and men running these departments/units?

Having assessed your **approach** to marketing to women, how would you call yourself?

Eyes Shut	My marketing style is not influenced by the gender of my customer base
Stereotyped	I market on the basis of certain “pre-set” ideas of what my women and men customers “should be or like”
Think Gender	I target women and men specifically, using highly targeted products or marketing campaigns which focus on a purely female / male segment.
Oriented and prioritised across genders	I actively survey women’s and men’s needs and expectations and use this knowledge to rethink my entire business and marketing approach to my core customers – both male and female.

Delivering Unit 5: Gender equality. Plot it in your work plan

5.1 Introduction

By the end of this unit, participants will have:

- a) (if trainers or SME relays) developed organisational action plans to further disseminate the “business case for gender equality” through training or consultancy; *or*
- b) (if entrepreneurs) prepared plans to implement some of the proposed strategies at enterprise level.

Exercise 5.1. The Plan

This exercise brings together the work undertaken during the whole workshop so that participants can leave with a Plan to ensure that their business benefits from promotion of gender equality.

In the following table insert:

Challenge	We will	Responsible	Timeframe
Issue 1 <i>e.g. Attracting more women engineers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Universities and secondary schools to inform students that we welcome female applicants • Find out why we have few women applicants • Discuss the issue with male engineers 		
Issue 2 <i>e.g. Avoid the costs of high staff turn-over</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the conciliation needs of current staff and find out whether some amendments to work schedules can be made 		
Issue 3 <i>e.g. understand the potential of our female customer-base</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a monitoring system to assess the needs of our customers by gender / involve more women in product development or sales 		
Issue 4 <i>e.g. make use of existing incentives to hire women</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request assistance from our SME organisation to submit a project proposal in time 		

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