



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF “GENDER EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY (GED) CONSULTANCY AT WORKPLACES MODEL”



www.gedplan.eu

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Gender equality and Diversity planning at workplaces



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www.lygybe.lt



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**Welcome to EC Leonardo da Vinci project
“Gender Equality & Diversity Planning at Workplaces (GED-PLAN)”**

This **Framework** is a result of the EU Leonardo da Vinci project “**Gender Equality & Diversity Planning at Workplaces**”.

The project aim is to develop an innovative solution within Vocational Education and Training (VET) system by introducing new institutional settings and practices, which could help to ensure the implementation of gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces.

The project objectives are:

- to create the quality standards for GED (gender equality and diversity) consultancy at workplaces in order to assure the effective functioning of innovative qualification – GED consultant at workplace;
- to support innovation in vocational education and training practices by developing e-learning-training program for GED consultant at workplace;
- to ensure effective promotion of GED consultancy model at national and European levels.

Short-term target groups are:

- 18 public/private organisations and employers from the selected organisations will get acquainted with general principles of GED planning at workplaces;
- 21 trainers-multipliers for GED consultants, who will be trained to hold the piloting of the training program;
- 54 employees from the selected organisations, who will be trained to acquire complementary qualifications as GED consultants.

Long-term target groups are:

- public and private organisations willing to implement GED planning at workplaces;
- employees within 18 pilot organisations who will benefit from implementation of GED planning at their workplaces;
- labour market consultancy and training institutions;
- trade unions, employees’ and employers’ associations;
- politicians and decision makers.



The main products of the project:

- **State of Art Review report** defining the ways how new qualification of GED consultant at workplaces might be introduced into national programs of VET system.
- **Quality standards for GED consultancy at workplaces** both at system's and VET providers' levels to assure the effective functioning of innovative qualification - GED consultant at workplace.
- **Framework of the European model "Implementation of gender equality and diversity at workplaces"** - a basis for integration of innovative professional profile of qualified in-house GED consultant into VET systems.
- **Outline curriculum "GED consultant at workplace"**, which defines the content, duration, learning outcomes, teaching and learning as well assessment strategies of the training program.
- **Training program "GED consultant at workplace"** with blended learning approach containing theoretical materials, practical exercises as well as other methodical and didactical materials, such as good-practice examples on GED planning, tool-kit for GED planning and trainer's guide.
- **E-learning platform for GED consultants' learning-conducive workplaces** which allows learning at workplace environment.

The project **addresses the specific needs** of the employers to have qualified in house GED consultant in order to promote equal treatment for all in the workplace in a planned and systematic way.



The project “**Gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces (GED-PLAN)**” is designed to address the need for qualified gender equality and diversity (further in text – GED) consultants at workplaces. The demand of integrating this innovative qualification into VET system rises from necessity to implement EU directives No. 2002/73/EC and 2000/78/EC, which encourage employers in the Member States to promote equal treatment for everyone in the workplace in a planned and systematic way.

The following indicators (Eurostat, 2006) depict still existing inequality in the working life in EU countries:

- reconciliation of professional and private lives (e.g., 32,9% of women work part-time, compared to 7,7% of men);
- gap in employment rates between men and women (the rate employment of women between the ages of 20 and 49 falls by 15 points when they have a child, while that of men increases by 6 points);
- occupational and sectorial segregation;
- gender pay gap (women earn in average 15% less than men for every hour worked);
- imbalance in decision-making positions, both political and economical (less than 1/3 of managers are women).

These problems become even more complex, when they include one or more of the diversity factors: disability, race and ethnicity, religion or belief, age, sexual orientation, which form a basis for multiple discrimination at work.

The need of qualified GED consultants at workplaces is also highlighted in recently adopted EU document “Manual for Gender Mainstreaming in Employment Policies” (2007), which emphasises necessity of training facilities at national level to prepare the qualified specialist of gender equality and diversity.

The Project Consortium has developed the State of Art Report¹ to define the possible ways of introducing the new qualification of GED consultant at workplaces to the national VET systems. The review shows that partner countries have chosen different ways to implement the above-mentioned EU directives concerning gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces. The national legal mechanisms In Finland provide concrete and real measures to promote equality planning at workplaces purposefully and systematically. The equality planning at enterprises and workplaces with at least 30 employees is legally binding. In Germany a legal obligation for employers to implement positive action for equal opportunities at workplaces exists only in the area of public administration. Equal opportunities for female and male employees are statutorily regulated, but an obligation for a systematic gender equality and diversity planning is either non-existent (Act of Equal Rights for Men and Women in Lower Saxony) or very low developed (Federal Gender Equality Act). In the area of private economy there is no legal obligation for GED planning at all. The legal regulation of equal opportunities in Lithuania does not specifically target gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces as well. The concrete means aimed at GED planning at workplace are not anticipated in the national programs dealing with equal opportunities and anti-discrimination. Luxembourg’s legislation is offering a series of good possibilities to enhance gender equality planning at workplaces by positive actions’ programmes. They propose incentives to employers of the private sector that show readiness to enhance their gender equality policies. The Report also shows that the initiatives of GED planning at workplaces are either performed by outside experts (consultancy agencies) or applied as a result of some short-term projects. They are usually fragmented, lack consistency and sustainability

¹ The State of Art Report is available on the project’s web-site: www.gedplan.eu



and serve as good practice examples rather than a well-functioning system of GED planning at workplaces. The analysis undertaken by Consortium shows that none of the partner countries has professional profile of GED consultant at workplace in their VET systems. However, the need to implement GED planning at workplaces is obvious and beneficial for organization, taking into account demographic changes, ageing of societies and increasing need for flexicurity policies. “The business case for diversity: good practices in the workplaces” issued by EC in 2006 states that 83% of companies with a diversity policy in place said that it had brought real business benefits. Therefore, the establishment of new institutional settings and practices to ensure effective and systematic implementation of gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces is an important task to all partners.

The Report has facilitated the development of European Framework of ‘GED consultancy at workplaces model’, which creates basis for integration of innovative professional profile of qualified in-house GED consultant into VET systems. The model should ensure the transition from fragmental implementation of GED policies at workplaces towards more effective promotion of equal treatment of all employees at workplaces in a planned and systematic way. The model is based on blended-learning approach for e-learning conducive workplaces for GED consultants. This approach will ensure that in-house GED consultants are capable to develop GED plan as a tool for managing gender equality and diversity within their companies.

The main aim of the “GED consultancy at workplaces model” is to elaborate a framework of new institutional settings and practices, which would ensure the effective integration of innovative professional profile of GED consultant at workplaces within national VET systems. The model offers systematic and complex approach to innovative professional profile of GED consultant at workplaces. It is based on close cooperation among VET institutions, enterprises, social partners and decision-makers. The model of a recommendatory nature and ensures flexibility due to diverse functioning of different European VET systems.



**EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK
OF 'GENDER EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY (GED) CONSULTANCY AT WORKPLACES MODEL'**

I level



GED PLAN

II level



FIRST LEVEL

The first level of the model includes the core elements related to legal regulations, quality standards and content of GED consultancy, which are needed for a new qualification of GED consultant at workplace and integration of GED consultancy programmes into national VET system. The following core elements have to be identified and defined in each partner country.

GED planning at workplaces: national incentives and legal regulations

The successful implementation of GED planning at workplaces depends on national incentives and legal regulations. The first step is to assess the EU and national contexts in the following areas:

- EU directives on gender equality and diversity;
- National legislation on gender equality and diversity planning at workplace;
- National programs and action plans on gender equality and diversity in employment and lifelong learning;
- National legislation on VET; recommendations on how to include GED consultant training program into the VET system.

EU directives on gender equality and diversity planning

Since its beginning in 1957, EU gender policy has been based predominantly on the concept of equal opportunities, which has set the legal basis for the elimination of discrimination against women in the field of employment in the EU and its member states. Eventually, the equal opportunities approach revealed limitations embedded in a perspective that adopts the logic of the individual, rather than paying attention to the gender-biased structural conditions under which opportunities are offered. It is mostly in the nineties that other types of political strategies such as positive action measures and gender mainstreaming have emerged to complement the approach of equal opportunities. It was recognized that it is important to consider the existence of material conditions, determined by the patriarchal social contexts in which women and men live, that prevent women from exercising their rights and having equal access to the opportunities they are offered on a fair ground with men. A new provision in the Treaty of Amsterdam, i.e., Article 141.4 allows member states to introduce positive actions, defined as “specific advantages in order to make it easier for the underrepresented sex to pursue a vocational activity or to prevent or compensate for disadvantages in professional careers”. The aim of these measures is that of “ensuring full equality in practice between men and women in working life”. Unlike the principle of equal opportunities, positive actions have not been given the legally binding form of a directive yet (Lombardo, Meier, 2007).

The EU Directives in the areas of equal pay, equal treatment in employment and working conditions, and equal treatment in social security oblige national policy makers to legislate on equality according to various grounds. For example, the Council directive 2002/73/EC aims to ensure equal treatment for men and women in respect of access to employment, vocational training and career advancement, as well as working conditions.



The Directive 2004/113/EC established the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services. The [racial equality directive \(2000/43/EC\)](#) and the [employment framework directive \(2000/78/EC\)](#) set out the principles of diversity and non-discrimination regarding ethnic and racial origin, disability, religion or belief, age and sexual orientation. All those directives encourage employers in the Member States to promote equal treatment for everyone at workplace in a planned and systematic way.

Prohibited discrimination grounds usually include: language, race, colour, opinion, sex/gender, political orientation, national origin, property or other discrimination based on the position. The right to equal treatment at work is considered as a basic social right as well as characteristic of good work.

National legislation on gender equality and diversity planning

The short overview of national legislations on GED at work in project partner countries is presented; more information can be found in www.gedplan.eu (State of Art Review)

★ Finland

Gender equality and respect for diversity at workplaces is legally founded in the **Constitution of Finland (731/1999)**, the non-discrimination provisions are given a concrete content in the **Non-Discrimination Act (21/2004)** as well as several more specific legal acts are applied to working life. **The Employment Contracts Act (55/2001)** is applied to work based on employment contract. The Act obliges the employer to treat all employees equally. The Finnish **Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1989)** includes provisions on the prohibition of sexual/gender-based discrimination in working life. The Act was amended in 1992, 1995 and 2005. The amended Equality Act provides more practical tools for promoting gender equality at work. Section 6a of the Act presents concrete measures to promote equality purposefully and systematically: *“If an employer regularly employs a staff of at least 30, the said employer must include measures to further equality between women and men in the workplace within annual personnel and training plan or the action programme for labour safety and health “.* The equality plan can be a part of the organisation’s safety and health plan or staff development action plan. The equality plan can also be made separately. The Plan basically aims to desegregate labour market on the basis of gender and to close the gender - based wage gap. Other aspects belonging to equality such as ethnic origin, age, disability and sexual orientation or preference can also be included in the equality plan even though the focus is on the equality between women and men. *Multi-dimensional* concept of gender can be applied, if this is found necessary in the workplace. The Equality Ombudsman and the Equality Board are responsible for supervision of the Equality Act.

★ Germany

Since 2006 **The General Equal Treatment Act (AGG)**, which aims at prevention of discrimination, in particular in employment, came into force. It serves the implementation of the Council directives 2000/43/EC, 2000/78/EC, 2002/73/EC and 2004/113/EC. The purpose of this federal law is to prevent or abolish discrimination by reason of race or ethnic origin, sex, religion or philosophy of life, disability, age, or sexual identity. In 2001 the **Gender Equality Act** replaced the Act for Women’ Advancement from 1994. The Gender Equality Act applies to the entire Federal administration and mainly aims at three



fields. In the section *promoting equality between women and men* it regulates issues like staff recruitment, placement and advancement, further education and gender equality planning. Gender equality planning in this law is focused for the most part at raising the share of women in single areas. The section *reconciliation of work and family life* covers family friendly working times and conditions, part time and telework and the return after family break. The Act is also representing the basis for the work of the *equal opportunities commissioner*. Similar to an ombudswoman she is responsible for monitoring the law and represents the interests of the female employees in the administration. In 2001 the Federal Government and head associations of the German economy concluded an **Agreement for the promotion of equal opportunities of women and men in the private economy**. With this agreement, the partners commit to improve vocational training perspectives and job chances of women as well as the reconciliation of work and family life for women and men, to increase the share of women in leading positions and in future-orientated professions and to contribute to the reduction of unequal payment. Every two years the partners examine the progress on certain issues of the agreement. Despite the above mentioned legal regulations and policy initiatives, the detailed mechanisms aimed at purposeful planning of gender equality and diversity at workplaces in economy and administration are absent.

★ **Lithuania**

The principle of equal opportunities is a part of a number of general legislation, among them **The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men** and **The Law on Equal Treatment** being the most important ones. Both laws established a legal obligation for education institutions and employers to apply principles of equal treatment in recruitment, promotion, work conditions, equal pay, freedom from harassment, etc. For instance, the Article 3 of the Law on Equal Treatment obliges state institutions within the scope of their competence to draw up and implement programmes and measures aimed at ensuring equal opportunities, in other words, to take an active role to prevent discrimination on different grounds. This obligation does not apply to private institutions. Both laws created a system for investigating discrimination cases, which fall under the competence of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson institution. Nevertheless, the concrete regulations aimed at GED planning at workplaces are not anticipated.

★ **Luxembourg**

Gender equality and diversity (GED) at workplaces is legally founded by the **Law of 13th of May 2008**. It specifies equal treatment of employees of all types of employment. It is tied to the legislation of collective agreements as well as to the legislation of contractual agreements (the so-called labour contracts). It is also legally bound to the legislation on positive actions in favour of the underrepresented gender in the companies within the private sector. Finally it concerns the field of employees' representation as well as the promotion of vocational training plans for enterprises. Consequently, the very comprehensive Law of 13th of May 2008 includes the principle of gender equality and diversity at workplaces at all levels. On one hand, the law is transposing the Council Directive 2002/73/EC 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. On the other hand, this law modifies the former Law of 28th of November 2006 concerning the transposition of Directive 2000/43/EC and Directive 2000/78/EC. At the same time some chapters of the Labour Code were amended as well to include notions on equal treatment in employment and labour.



The introduction of **positive actions** on GED planning at work in private companies under articles L. 243-1 to 243-5 of the Labour Code seems to be a remarkable achievement in this context. Private companies of all economic sectors and of all sizes are eligible to get acknowledged and financially supported as an employer of positive actions in the field of gender equality.

National programs and action plans on gender equality and diversity in employment and lifelong learning

★ **Finland**

The governmental **Action plan for gender equality** (2004-2007) particularly emphasizes gender equality in working life, gender mainstreaming and men's role in relation to gender equality. One further objective was to put more emphasis on workplace-specific equality plans. A new governmental action plan with the similar objectives was issued for the period of 2008-2011. It has seven priorities, among which, reducing pay differentials, promoting women's careers, raising gender equality awareness in schools and reducing gender segregation in education and the labour market.

The Equal Pay Programme, administered by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, includes a number of research and development actions and projects (www.samapalkka.fi). The main objective of the programme is to reduce the pay gap between women and men from 20 percent to at most 15 percent by the year 2015. The programme contains numerous sets of actions. One of the main instruments is related to equality plans and pay surveys. It is also important to support women's career development and training at work.

★ **Germany**

During the last years the Federal Government has concentrated on family issues and promoted the reconciliation of work and family life. The national programme **Family – a factor of success** was introduced by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, together with the head associations of the German economy and the German Federation of Trade Unions. It encourages enterprises to support a family friendly working environment. The programme outlines information (studies, fact sheets and guidelines) around the issue of family friendly companies, family friendly regulations and success stories of companies practising a family friendly personnel policy by innovative measures. The programme includes also a company network, a company contest and a funding programme for childcare facilities offered by the companies.

In 1996 the association **TOTAL E-QUALITY Deutschland e.V.** was established to promote equal opportunities in business, science, politics and civil service. The association annually honours enterprises with more than 15 employees, which are verifiably committed to a long-term policy of equal opportunities with the TOTAL E-QUALITY award. The award intends to support the self-initiative of organizations. The initiative TOTAL E-QUALITY is supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

Another approach is pursued by the **work and family audit** (audit berufundfamilie) initiated by the non-profit Hertie Foundation in 1995. It supports companies in creating



new options towards family-oriented policies. The *work and family audit* combines a network of partners from science and research, politics and central associations, private companies and licensed auditors. The “audit berufundfamilie” evaluates measures aimed at enhancing compatibility of work and family life, assesses potential for development and sustainability in the participating enterprises and supports them in reaching future goals. The *work and family audit* is supported by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the ESF.

★ **Lithuania**

The concrete measures of the principles of the above mentioned equality laws are outlined in the **National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for 2005-2009**. The Programme aims at addressing, in a consistent, complex and systematic manner, gender equality issues, ensuring gender mainstreaming in all spheres and tackling specific problems of women and men. The Programme identifies main priorities for gender equality and specific measures to achieve the goals set. The **National Anti-discrimination Action Programme for 2009-2011** aims to eliminate discrimination based on age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, racial or ethnic origin, religion or beliefs in all spheres of public life and to increase tolerance of the society. The concrete means aimed at GED planning at workplace are not anticipated.

★ **Luxemburg**

The measures related to GED at workplaces and more specifically to gender equality, included in Luxembourg’s **National Reform Programme (NRP)** for the period of 2007 to 2010, are linked to the implementation of positive actions in private enterprises. They concern more precisely the elimination of gender pay gaps by providing training sessions to employers and employees on gender neutral evaluation systems of employees. The national measures reflect the guideline No. 18 of the European Integrated guidelines for growth and jobs (2005-2008) which declares a need to “promote a lifecycle approach to work through a resolute action to increase female participation and reduce gender gaps in employment, unemployment and pay”.

The concerned measures in the **National Action Plan for Gender Equality** are generally speaking targeted at the integration of the gender principle into the management of human resources in education and training. Relevant measures to be quoted in this context are described with the following objectives: “to highlight the gender dimension in actions related to school staff”, “to promote the equality between women and men in staff management at the Ministry for Education and Training”, “to further the access of women and men to life-long-learning and the information society” as well as to enhance gender equality training measures at specific levels of concern. As potential training fields, the plan gives here the examples of university trainings and research activities, as well as education and training of school workers. Furthermore, it refers to awareness raising on gender equality at the level of magistrates, police and prison workforces.

National legislation on VET; recommendations on how to include GED consultant training program into the VET system

None of the partner countries found any special training programme in their VET system on training the GED consultant at workplace. The trainings for employers and/or employees are



mostly voluntary, based on short – term projects, usually lack consistency and are not sustainable. There are several other difficulties to be mentioned. Firstly, it is very hard to attract the attention of employers. Secondly, there is no formal mechanism to involve employers or representatives of employees in more coherent and longer lasting GED trainings or to enforce the equality planning at workplace in practice. The whole system in national VET structures is needed. It would allow an employer to get qualified in-house GED consultant and to run GED planning at workplace in an effective and systematic way. An innovative professional profile of GED consultant at workplace in national VET system would be an important progress in terms of quality management and making GED planning at workplace more attractive for companies and organisations. Thus, it is strongly recommended to define the national ways on how to register the training programme for in-house GED consultants into national VET systems and describe this possibility in the GED consultancy model.

Quality standards for GED consultancy at workplaces

The main aim of the Quality Standards for GED Consultancy at Workplaces² is to address the effectiveness of the innovative qualification – in-house GED consultant at workplaces. The Quality Standards were developed using the principles of the European Quality Assurance Reference framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQARF). They serve as a model, which can be further adapted on national level in the process of implementation of GED consultancy model.

The Quality Standards are intended to be used by the national VET providers, employers and human resources managers, national decision-makers, social partners, employers' networks and associations at all levels. The Quality Standards for GED Consultancy at Workplaces determine the main requirements for the effective implementation of GED consultancy system at national levels and contain description of quality standards for:

- training programme “GED Consultant at Workplaces”;
- GED consultant profile;
- training institutions, providing training for GED consultants;
- e-learning conducive workplaces for training of GED consultants.

The Quality Standards will facilitate the implementation of the training programme for GED consultant at workplace and create a practical basis for implementation of EU directives No. 2002/73/EC and 2000/78/EC, which encourage employers in Member States to promote equal treatment for all employees at workplaces in a planned and systematic way.

² The Quality Standards were developed during the project time and are available on the project's web-site: www.gedplan.eu



Training programmes to be registered in VET system

The availability of well-developed training programme³ is a core element of the GED Consultancy at Workplaces Model. The training programme should provide a basic knowledge on such topics as:

- European and national legislations, policy measures and challenges towards implementation of gender equality and diversity at workplaces; benefits of GED planning for employee and employer;
- social and economic situation of diverse disadvantaged groups in national contexts (women, people of colour, elderly, disabled, sexual minorities, etc.);
- social construction of gender and other forms of difference; the complex interactions between gender and other social characteristics, such as age, ability, ethnicity, sexual identity, etc.;
- different grounds and multidimensional aspects of discrimination;
- origins of stereotypes and prejudices related to inequality and discrimination in the labour market and workplaces.

The training program should also provide adequate knowledge, skills and practical exercises on how to assess GED situation in organization and identify needs; what are the main steps and topics of GED planning; how to ensure the participation of staff members in planning; how to monitor the implementation of the GED measures; what are tools for evaluating the implementation of GED plan.

What regards the methodology of the training, it should be based on the combination of face-to-face training, e-learning training and practical exercises. The training methodology should be adapted to the specific needs of participants' organization, work specifics and expectations. In general, it is recommended to follow the 3-stage-learning process as described by Cox and Beale in their study "Developing Competency to Manage Diversity": awareness raising, acquiring and deepening knowledge, as well as engendering practice.

It is recommended to adapt the training program 'Gender Equality and Diversity consultant at Workplaces'³ developed within the project to the national levels and to organise the registration of the training program in the national VET system to make it visible and accessible for the employers and employees.

It is strongly recommended to be sensitive to national and organizational contexts. It is also recommended to define the further possibilities for qualification raising/retraining of GED consultants (could be some framework for study visits abroad for qualification raising of GED planning in specific sectors, e.g. construction enterprises, having multicultural workers, etc.).

³ The Training programme for GED consultants at work will be developed and tested during the project time and will be available at the project's web-site: www.gedplan.eu



SECOND LEVEL

The Second level includes the description of the core elements, which have to ensure the practical implementation of the training programme for GED consultants at workplaces.

Training facilities/institutions

Training Institutions should have adequate technical and human resources as well as be experienced in training in order to be able to run the training programme for GED consultants. The technical resources should ensure the possibility to introduce the e-learning process in user-friendly manner. Human resources (trainers) should be sufficient and appropriate to guarantee the quality of the programme. The trainers should possess the comprehensive knowledge of:

- particular theories, good practices, benefits and possibilities associated with the gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces;
- historical process leading to gender equality, equal treatment for all and prohibition of discrimination;
- equality legislation on EU and national levels;
- linking equality and diversity policies with everyday experiences.

The trainer should also possess the main didactic skills and pedagogical competencies to hold the training programme and be able to encourage active learning with reflective, open and tolerant communication. S/he should be highly focused on constant professional and personal self-development. It is very important that GED trainer was familiar with the specifics of companies and organizations and the way they work in order to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the training and encourage further actions of learners within their organizations.

It is recommended to identify and make a list of training institutions at national level which provide or plan to provide training / retraining facilities for GED consultants.

GED consultancy agencies and GED audit agencies

GED consulting agencies usually offer consulting and outsourcing services in the field of gender, diversity and equality to local, national, regional and international organizations. They aim to advise and help organizations to acquire knowledge or improve themselves by integrating diversity, gender and equality measures in their institutional structures and activities.

GED Audit agencies usually assess the accountability of organization or programme to policy commitments. The audit has a broad organizational or programme scope of inquiry and compares organization's performance against external benchmarks. The Audits usually include the assessment of programming dimensions (programme planning & design, programme implementation, technical expertise, monitoring & evaluation, partner organizations) as well as organizational dimensions (gender and diversity policy, staffing, human resources, advocacy, marketing and communications, financial resources, organizational culture). GED audit should be understood as a useful tool for self-reflection, learning and change. In the context where we have very little data on organizations'



performance, GED audits could be used as a baseline against which to measure future performance.

Within the framework of this model it is recommended to identify and make a list of GED consulting agencies and GED audit agencies or experts at national level, who are able to provide external GED consultancy or audit for organizations willing to implement GED planning.

GED consultancy promotion at enterprises (awards)

An important element of the GED Consultancy model is the promotion of GED consultancy at enterprises, in public and, most importantly, in legislation. It has partly been realized by training employers, social partners and decision-makers. The seminars can be organised by governmental authorities, employers' or employees' associations, trade unions or other organizations of civil society. Social advertisements have played an effective role as well. It is important to collect the good practices of social advertisements and promote them in the GED Consultancy model.

Recently several European countries have promoted GED planning at workplaces by presenting awards to gender and diversity friendly enterprises. The German case is presented below.

TOTAL E-QUALITY Germany e.V.

Basic information

TOTAL E-QUALITY Deutschland e.V. is a non-profit organisation founded in 1996 to support equal opportunities of men and women in all fields of society such as business, administration, science, and politics. The association was founded by a group of German companies in cooperation with the Federation of German Trade Unions, the Confederation of German Employers, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Technology and the Federal Ministry of Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. The initiative receives sporadic support, i.e. in individual projects, from the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

The association holds a Board of Directors which is responsible for all matters and concerns of TOTAL E-QUALITY. The directors are supported by the Advisory board. In addition, the Board of Trustees which consists of several high level politicians and high profile commerce and science individuals assists the organisation in its achievement of objectives. Moreover, the initiative has members who meet annually to participate in the decision making processes and to elect the boards.

The objective of TOTAL E-QUALITY is to award organisations which provide equal opportunities for men and women at the workplace. The award is based on a self-assessment tool which is evaluated by an independent jury. Equal opportunities are considered to be reached when talents, potentials and competences of women are equally recognized and supported. Organisations that are evaluated positively get a TOTAL E-QUALITY certificate which they can use for their marketing purposes. The certificate is valid for a period of three years. After that period the organisation has to apply for the award



again. The jury decides about the applications once a year and hands over the award in an awarding ceremony. In 1997, the award was given for the first time. Since then more than 160 organisations received the award. 74 organisations have been awarded repeatedly. Some of them received the award for the fifth time now. All in all, the organisations usually attempt to be awarded two times minimum.

Award and application

The award aims at all types of organisations such as private enterprises, universities, research institutes, public authorities, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). There are two types of application forms, one for organisations from the private sector and administrative bodies, one for organisations from the scientific sector. The organisations have to state that they provide gender equality in a sustainable way in several fields of activities.

For private companies and administrative bodies these fields are:

- Review of the occupational situation of the employees
- Personnel recruitment, staffing, and young employee allocations
- Further education/human resources development
- Reconciliation of work and family life (work-life-balance)
- Promotion of cooperation at the workplace
- Institutionalisation of activities to promote equal opportunities.

For organisations from the scientific sector these fields are:

- Personnel recruitment, staffing
- Career and personnel development
- Reconciliation of work and family life (work-life-balance)
- Institutionalisation of gender equality policies
- Planning and steering instruments in organisational development
- Corporate culture
- Research, apprenticeship and graduate studies
- Review of the occupational situation of the employees

The self-assessment tool offers a deep insight into the situation of men in women in the companies. By filling in the application forms, the applicants get an idea of how male and female employees are able to participate in decision-making processes and how they are supported or disadvantaged. The tool points at positive developments, and situations that must be improved at the same time. In contrast to similar awards, TOTAL E-QUALITY not only points at reconciliation of work and family life but focuses on equal opportunity of men and women in all fields of activities of an enterprise. For the applicants it means a lot of work to apply for the award. The expense (finance as well as time) is less than for other certificates, however. Organisations pay between 250 and 2000 Euro for the application, depending on the number of employees.



Awarding process

The awarding process is carried out by two independent expert panels. One panel is responsible for the evaluation of the applications from organisations from the economic, the other one for the scientific sector.

If the organisations have any questions regarding the application and the awarding process, they can ask the association office for support. These are usually questions about how to fill in the application form, e.g. which measures an organisation should state in the application, and which measures fit to which field of activities.

The jury's decisions are based on scores which are credited to the different fields of activities. The jury considers various factors, for example size and sector of the applying organisation, or plans for the future. As the award can be assigned several times, the development of an organisation must be taken into account as well. As the application is based on a self-assessment tool, the jury usually trusts in the information which is given by the organisations. If there are doubts, however, the jury contacts the applicant to assure that the information is reliable or to get further information. When the jury is convinced of the achievements of an applicant regarding a successful consensus between economic parameters and the interests of the employees through a suitable human resources strategy, the organisation can be awarded. After the evaluation, the applicants are informed whether their application was successful or not. The letter contains a feedback about the strengths and the weaknesses of the organisations, and the reasons why the application was evaluated positively or negatively.

In 2008, all organisations which hold the TOTAL E-QUALITY award since 1997 were asked to evaluate the effects of the award. The responses were mostly very positive. Most of the participants considered the award as beneficial for human resource development. They think that the award helps to raise the awareness in the management, and that it shows the employees how the enterprise realises gender equality. By passing through the application process, the organisations achieve sustainable improvements in the field of equal opportunities. The examples of good practices in gender equality can inspire human resource managers to develop similar measures in their own enterprises. As the certificate is valid for only three years, the companies are forced to work on their gender equality measures constantly.

Last but not least, most organisations use the certificate for their public relations and to improve their image and reputation.

