



Promotion of Gender equality and Diversity planning at workplaces in Lithuania

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

New Opportunities of Gender Equality and Diversity Planning at Workplaces

Liudmila Mecajeva,
Director of Social Innovation Fund in Lithuania, Project coordinator.

Social Innovation Fund, together with The Office of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson and Lithuanian Business Employers' Confederation, carried out the project **Implementation of Equal Employment Opportunities for Men and Women: Measures, Practice, Changes (2006-2008)** funded by the European Social Fund and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.

The main aims were:

- to foster employers understanding of the nature of gender equality at workplaces
- to realize its importance to enterprise,
- to create and implement systematically the measures for ensuring gender equality at workplaces.

During the project time, **54** employers and representatives of employers' organisations participated in 80 hours training programme with e-learning approach "**Gender equality planning at enterprises**".



The participants have got the certificates.

The “**Practical guide for employers on gender equality planning**” with the concrete measures to be included to gender equality plans was developed and widely disseminated to employers.

The **Training Programme** and **Practical guide** were created on the basis on international experience of gender equality planning and Finnish experience in preparing gender equality plans in enterprises.

We would like to thank our long term Finnish partner Dr. Kaisa Kauppinen from the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health for methodical support in developing above mentioned outcomes as well as for organizing study visit in Helsinki for representatives of seven Lithuanian enterprises.



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As a result of this study visit, seven Lithuanian enterprises developed gender equality plans for further implementation. The key areas distinguished by most of the employers in their equality plans were following:

- wages and payment structure;
- education and training of employees;
- safety and health at work;
- reconciliation of work and family life;
- recruitment;
- organisation of work, personnel structure;
- access to career advancement and diversification of tasks.

On the basis of the results of the project and taking into consideration the Recommendations of United Nations CEDAW Committee (Committee for Convention of Elimination of all kind of Discrimination Against Women), the Social Innovation Fund together with Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson Office and Lithuanian Employers' Association addressed the official appeal to the main institutions of policy making in Lithuania.

In this appeal it was suggested to initiate the amendment of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men to include an obligation of equality planning by public and private employers.

It was suggested that employer regularly employs a staff of more than 50, must develop measures for promoting equality between women and men at workplace within annual gender equality plan.

The equality plan must be drafted in cooperation with representatives of employees and include the following measures:

- an assessment of gender situation in the workplace, including the analysis of work performed by women and men and the pay structure;
- concrete measures for promoting gender equality and closing pay gap must be specified;
- follow-up and review of previous measures and results achieved.

For successful implementation of gender equality planning, it is also recommended to allocate resources for training of gender equality consultants, who would be qualified to develop equality plans and consult on their implementation.

This appeal was send to the Committee of Human Rights of Lithuanian Parliament, Members of the Parliament, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.

We are eager to foster the suggested amendment for the Law of equal Opportunities for men and women in Lithuania to ensure the implementation of Recommendations of CEDAW Committee in time. The next reporting time to UN CEDAW Committee is February 2011.

We would like to remind the CEDAW Committee Recommendations to Lithuania:

- to discuss the amendments of the Law of Equal Opportunities for Women and Men including the *obligatory gender equality planning* to be done by the employers of public and private sectors under supervision of Equal Opportunities Ombudsman. Gender equality plans should include the section regarding wages and family-friendly policies' implementation at enterprises;
- to change the Law of Equal Opportunities for Women and Men including the obligatory commitment of employer to appoint a gender equality specialist for each municipal and regional administration and to strengthen network between national, regional and local institution in activities related with gender equality by organizing trainings on gender equality, gender awareness, gender aspect integration;
- to make every effort striving for reconciliation of work and family life and promoting equal distribution of roles within the family and encouraging men to take parental leave.

We do hope that this International seminar will strengthen our positions in promoting the gender equality and diversity planning at workplaces by adapting the good practices from our partner countries which are presented in this Seminar.