



EDITORIAL

CEC European Managers Conference—Stockholm 7-8 June 2007

Better Performance through Diversity: Equal Opportunities as an Asset for Tomorrow's Management (Georges Liarokapis—CEC President)

To raise managers' awareness on discriminations, being intentional or not, in our societies and European companies: this was the aim of the conference organised by CEC European Managers on 7 and 8 June in Stockholm. During a couple of days discussion panels, thematic workshops and interventions of specialists have addressed questions, remarks and suggestions of an audience representing 20 European countries.

Discrimination on the workplace

The 'mise en scène' of a real case of discrimination at work, through a theatre play performed by talented actors, has launched the debate and raised numerous questions. Of course, **competition between men and women** for a responsibility position is a common fact within enterprises. A careful observation of roles and behaviours has consented to identify the **discriminatory elements**, which often remain barely visible.

Equal opportunities, the role of European institutions

The European Commission finances and supports a number of initiatives aimed to promote equal opportunities and to fight discrimination all along the year 2007.

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions disposes of a large comparative database. Its analysis allowed, amongst other interesting outcomes, to become aware that workers and citizens' age can be an element of discrimination. In Northern European countries the seniors employment rate overpasses 50%, reflecting a situation which is compatible with the ageing of European population.

The European Social Partners CES, Eurocadres, CEC (employees side), BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP (employers side) have elaborated a Framework of Actions to promote gender equality.

Equal opportunities, facts and figures within European companies and society

The first workshop has developed the issue of **women managers**, pointing out the obstacles to access high level positions. The gender stereotypes still persisting in many companies, the **structural pay gap**, the appearing incompatibility between **family and professional life** are several elements for the debate and for action paths. Local initiatives taking place in some countries can be taken as examples of good practices.

The **second workshop** examined the management of **diversity on the workplace**. Enterprises such as IBM or L'OREAL presented their innovative practices to avoid the trap of discrimination and to **keep and integrate in the company people coming from a sensible group**. The most frequent discrimination cases are related to age, ethnical origin, handicap, sexual orientation and religion. Independency from any religion and equality between men and women are non-negotiable principles.

Conclusions

The best expression of diversity is to accept people as they are

Concerning the issue of diversity, we can notice that the list of categories potentially victims of discrimination could be very long without being exhaustive. Therefore it is preferable to adopt a general principle of non-discrimination towards the others, by accepting them as they are. Certain categories, for instance disabled people, could constitute a specific category. Nevertheless, the best evidence of non-discrimination is actually the absence of a list of potential victims of discrimination.

Positive wage discrimination in favour of women

The temporary interruption of the professional career during maternity leads to structural pay gaps between men and women at the same level of work responsibility. This difference is not justified and should be filled in. Considering the demographic challenges in Europe and the crucial role of women in managerial positions, a positive wage discrimination in favour of women seems a reasonable measure.

Should women act as men to reach equality?

Women who succeed in a competitive environment dominated by men (enterprises, institutions, political parties, trade unions), they succeed in a contest where the game rules are set up exclusively by men. For this reason they have to behave like men, even to be better than men. This does not create particular problems, but it stimulates a reflection on how our society would look like, if women could perform their talent in a context where they have chosen the rules of the game by themselves. Europe has done a lot for gender equality and it still does. We hope that in the upcoming years women will have more power in setting up the rules of power. Maybe some delicate issues like environment protection, energy supplying and respect of human rights would be better tackled.

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EU AFFAIRS

IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES OVER PORTABILITY LEAD TO FAILURE

IT WOULD DEFINITELY BE A SAFE BET TO SAY, THAT BEFORE THE END OF THIS DECADE THE COMMISSION WILL LAUNCH A NEW INITIATIVE IN THIS FIELD.



As to the so-called Portability Directive, the optimistic prognosis ("Slimmed-down portability directive now likely to pass") which has been published in the last edition of the CEC-Newsletter was unfortunately wrong: Few days ahead of the deciding vote in the European Parliament in the end of April, the Dutch government announced to veto the directive.

The European actors have been very divided on this issue from the very beginning. The Commission's proposal, published in 2005, has ever since been criticised as too far-reaching by some member-states on the one hand, as too unambitious by a majority in the European Parliament on the other hand.

On June 20th the European Parliament ultimately ratified its report with a substantial

number of amendments to the Commission's proposal:

In some points the report takes into account the criticism of some member states who expressed their fear that new legal standards must not lead to unreasonable cost increases for employers. For example, the right to transfer vested pension rights from one employer to another was taken out of the directive. However, other amendments aimed at a better acquisition and protection of supplementary pension rights are perceived as even more ambitious (and more costly) than the Commission's original proposal.

It is therefore almost certain that the directive will not reach the necessary unanimous vote in the European Council.

What lies ahead? Most observers believe that the fail-

ure will not be definitive. Both the Commission and a majority within the parliament will not give up the idea of reaching higher and more reliable standards for the acquisition, the protection and the transfer of supplementary pension rights.

The next EU-presidency (Portugal) has so far not shown any specific interest in this issue. Nevertheless, it would definitely be a safe bet to say, that before the end of this decade the Commission will launch a new initiative in this field.

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EUROSTAT DATA ON EMPLOYMENT—JUNE 2007: LACK OF HIGH SKILLED WORKERS

Amid Commission predictions that some 5.5 million new jobs will be created in 2007-08, EU leaders are facing a different challenge: finding workers to fill the vacancies.

According to data published on 1 June by the EU's statistical agency Eurostat, the jobless rate in the EU stood at 7.1% in April 2007 – representing nearly a full percentage point drop since last year and bringing unemployment in Europe down to its lowest level for more than 15 years.

In 2006, 2 million new jobs were created and, based on the continent's booming growth rates, the Commission has predicted that another 5.5 million jobs will be created in 2007 and 2008.

However, amid these positive developments, a dilemma lurks for Europe's businesses and leaders: that of finding people to fill all these new vacancies and keep the economy surging forward.

Europe's declining population, the ageing of its workforce and its lack of qualified personnel mean that labour

shortage, which is severely limiting the innovation capacity of those high-tech companies leading the economic revival, is fast becoming one of the largest constraints to the continent's competitiveness.

Lack of workers

There are now around three million unfilled jobs in Europe, according to Commission figures. While the problem has traditionally been linked to low-skilled jobs, filling jobs in high-skill sectors, such as engineering, is also becoming increasingly troublesome.

Active ageing

With 22% of the EU population already over 60 and this share expected to rise to 36% in 2050, companies will have to rely on senior workers even more in the future and the EU is pushing forward policies aimed at keeping people in the workplace for longer. Bans on age discrimination, a focus on lifelong training and encouraging more flexible work schedules are part of efforts being un-

dertaken at this level.

Moving abroad

More and more companies are already leaving Europe behind to expand in countries such as China, with lower labour costs and stronger demand. If the supply of engineers does not pick up, this trend could continue, gradually eating away at Europe's 'critical mass' on the world stage.

EU Employment Commissioner Vladimír Špidla affirms that free movement of workers can contribute to tackling unemployment and labour shortages in Europe. "It must be recognised that the absence of a mobility culture in Europe has a cost," he said, adding: "Free movement of workers is economically rational and is enshrined in EU treaties. We have not seen any catastrophic tendencies since enlargement." On the contrary, he stresses, imposing restrictions had led to "undesirable side-effects, such as higher levels of undeclared work".

Source: Euractiv, 5/6/2007

THERE ARE NOW AROUND THREE MILLION UN-FILLED JOBS IN EUROPE.

FILLING JOBS IN HIGH-SKILL SECTORS, SUCH AS ENGINEERING, IS ALSO BECOMING INCREASINGLY TROUBLE-SOME.

Brussels, 27/06/07

Flexicurity: getting more people into good jobs

The Commission today proposes the establishment of common principles of flexicurity to promote more and better jobs by combining flexibility and security for workers and companies. Flexicurity strategies can help modernise European labour markets and better address the opportunities and challenges of globalisation. They include at the same time flexible and reliable contractual arrangements, active labour market policies, comprehensive lifelong learning strategies and modern social protection systems providing adequate income support during periods of unemployment. The Commission also sets out a number of typical pathways to help Member States draw up their own national strategies for flexicurity and learn from each other's experiences and best practices. In line with the EU's Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs, the common principles of flexicurity aim to ensure that more Europeans get the most out of today's fast-changing global economy.

The Communication, based on extensive consultations with key stakeholders, identifies the main flexicurity policy areas (flexicurity components) and sets out proposals for eight common flexicurity principles. These principles are reference points that Member States should agree on. They include:

- Reinforcing the implementation of the EU's strategy for Jobs and Growth and strengthening the European social models;
- Striking a balance between rights and responsibilities;
- Adapting flexicurity to different circumstances, needs and challenges of the Member States;
- Reducing the gap between

those in non-standard, sometimes precarious contractual arrangements on the one hand (so-called 'outsiders'), and those in permanent, full-time jobs on the other (the 'insiders');

- Developing internal and external flexicurity, by helping employees move up the career ladder (internal) as well as across the job market (external);

- Supporting gender equality and promoting equal opportunities for all;

- Producing balanced policy packages to promote a climate of trust between social partners, public authorities and other stakeholders;

- Ensuring a fair distribution of the costs and benefits of flexicurity policies, and contribution to sound and financially sustainable budgetary policies.

The Communication also presents four typical "pathways" for Member States to develop their own flexicurity strategies suited to their national challenges. Clearly there is no one size fits all - labour market situations vary greatly across the EU. For example, in some countries, efforts might focus on solutions within companies, in others the focus could be more on transitions between jobs. These pathways are designed on the basis of the actual real experiences and policies of the Member States, which were analysed by a Group of Experts on flexicurity and its rapporteur, Professor Ton Wilthagen.

The separate policy aspects covered by flexicurity and its components are not new - but flexicurity strategies present a new, integrated approach whereby the different elements can be mutually supporting.

The EU financial instruments for Cohesion - and in particular the European Social Fund for the 2007-2013 programming period - can contribute significantly to the budgetary



aspects of flexicurity, for example through training at company level, lifelong learning programmes, or the promotion of entrepreneurship.

Flexicurity has a prominent place in the Integrated Guidelines agreed unanimously by Member States and which underpin the implementation at both European and national level of the Lisbon Growth and Jobs Strategy. Flexicurity can only succeed with the involvement of all stakeholders. The Commission encourages Member States to work with social partners with a view to including their approaches to flexicurity in their National Reform Programmes under the Strategy.

For more information see:

Link to communication
http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/news/2007/jun/flexicurity_en.pdf

Source: www.europa.eu



THE COMMUNICATION IDENTIFIES THE MAIN FLEXICURITY POLICY AREAS AND SETS OUT PROPOSALS FOR EIGHT COMMON FLEXICURITY PRINCIPLES

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

CEC CONFERENCE: OVERLOOK OF THE HOSTING ORGANISATION



Website:

www.ledarna.se

Managers at all levels have a crucial importance when it comes to strengthening diversity as well as gender equality on the workplace. This was stated June 7-8 at the CEC-conference "Better Performance through Diversity – Equal Opportunities as an Asset for Tomorrow's Management". The conference took place in Stockholm, Sweden, and was hosted by Ledarna, the Swedish association for managerial and professional staff, and supported by the European Commission.

Mrs Annika Elias, chairwoman of Ledarna, opened the conference stating that Sweden is facing a major shift in generations on the managers market. There is a demand for 250 000 managers the upcoming ten years due to the retirements of the managers born in the 1940s. Hence attracting younger people to managerial positions is a major challenge for a lot of Swedish companies and organisations. Elias con-

cluded that diversity is key to attracting and keeping people to managerial positions.

Together, legislation, EU-directives and social partners' efforts have increased the focus on the diversity issue. But, as many speakers stressed during the conference, this is not enough. A change in people's attitudes, less prejudice and better efforts to implement legislation within companies and organisations is also needed.

The benefits of diversity are many: On an individual level new ideas, cultural exchange and greater mobility. Increased creativity, innovation and efficiency favours the companies. Society as a whole gains better tolerance, integration and social cohesion.

Many European organisations work with diversity and have produced action plans based on EUs gender equality directive and the Commission's roadmap from 2006, stating which tasks should be prioritised in the

area of gender equality till 2010. Important areas of action are mapping out gender roles, networks for female managers and promoting women to managerial positions. Other areas are improved childcare opportunities, flexible work hours and levelling out the gender pay gap.

Many of the speakers stressed the problem of applying the legislation within companies due to prejudice as well as social structures. Mr Georges Liarokapis said the means to implement legislation lacks power.

Ending the conference, Mrs Elias said that the two days really pointed out managers as key to improving diversity in society and that with the conference CEC has taken a great leap forward as an organisation.

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CCP JOINS THE INTERCONFEDERAL AGREEMENT FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING 2007



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The two main trade unions and the Spanish employers confederation, have signed an agreement for Collective Bargaining 2007 (ANC) in order to give continuity through social dialogue and the collective bargaining to the commitments obtained, to contribute to provide security for the workers and flexibility for the companies.

This Agreement proposes the criteria that would have to govern the negotiations of the different collective agreements between the companies and the unions throughout this year. It has been decided, first of all, to adopt a policy of moderate growth of the wages considering, as a first reference, the forecast of the inflation obtained by the Spanish Government, which is currently at 2%.

Together with the wage increase, ways and mechanisms to obtain the stability

are researched. In this sense the signers reflect in this Agreement their conviction that it is necessary to improve the productivity at work and to increase the managerial competitiveness. This will only be possible by reaching the balance between the flexibility and the security for the workers. In order to do so, it is necessary that the collective agreements continue to ensure the maintenance of employment, the guarantee of equal opportunities, the promotion of the indefinite initial contracting, the transformation of the temporary contracts into fixed when possible and the promotion of training contracts as a way of labour insertion and qualification for young people and for other persons.

Special emphasis has also been given to education and professional qualification. In 2006 the European social

partners, amongst them CEC, evaluated the "Frame of actions for the lifelong development of the competences and qualifications" committing all of them to promote priorities as the identification and anticipation of the necessities of competences and qualifications and their recognition and validation. So it is matter of putting into practice the necessary means to reach the objectives of education within this frame.

The ANC incorporates the agreements of European area in which CEC has participated. As CCP is the Spanish member organization of CEC, the Executive Committee of CCP last March 29 has approved its adherence to the Agreement. Therefore, CCP will contribute to the application and follow up of these European agreements within the national area.

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MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

FECCIA EUROPEAN MEETING WITH ECEG (PARIS, 21/06)

FECCIA re-affirms her interest towards European sectoral social dialogue.

For the second year, the FECCIA steering committee has

met European employers of the chemical sector (ECEG). The sectoral dialogue committee has been formalised between EMCEF and ECEG in 2004 and its work program is

ambitious. Three working groups are being progressively constituted.

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SAM: SERBIAN MANAGERS CLOSER AND CLOSER TO EUROPE

Serbian Association of Managers (SAM) continues with the proactive approach to the problems concerning evergrowing population of managers in Serbia. As a guest of SAM, Secretary General of CEC, Mr. Ludger Ramme, held a presentation on 16th April 2007 at the Great Hall of Serbian Chamber Of Commerce in Belgrade. The topic was Organization of Managers in Germany and in European Union, Social Dialogue and Influencing Policy in EU.

The lecture encompassed practical experiences of associations of managers in Germany and in Europe, which dates back to 1950s. Mr. Ramme presented the ways in which manager's interests are represented on the national and European level, the advocacy practices and introducing positions of associated managers in the frame of the social dialogue in the European Union.

State Secretary of the Serbian Ministry of International Economic Relations, Mr. Vlatko Sekulovic contributed to the debate by welcoming the synergy between CEC and SAM, highlighting the impact of

managers in modern economy and the role of managers in brand making. Beside large number of participants, members of SAM and large media coverage, this event was accompanied by a significant number of university students of economy and management. Mr. Ramme introduced CEC as an "umbrella association" made of national association of managers of the European Union, but also enhanced by manager's associations of Norway and Croatia, which are not (or not yet) members of EU. Mentioning the slogan of CEC „more than a Union", Mr. Ramme emphasized the importance of lifelong education and the role of social dialogue in the system through legislation regarding connection of national economies in order to define managerial rights, obligations and to make better working environment for all in cooperation with the unions and elected workers. Mr. Ramme expressed his interest in fast growth of the Serbian association and the many educational and networking activities which have taken place in only six months since establishment.

He especially complimented the close relationship of SAM with the media in order to acquire higher visibility and achieve a stronger impact of the Association.

During the CEC Stockholm conference Mr. Daniel Pantic, Vice President for International Cooperation of Serbian Association of Managers (SAM) and the representatives of CEC signed the Cooperation Agreement of SAM's associated membership - observer status in CEC. CEC and the Serbian Association of Managers found it necessary to contribute at best to the fulfilment of the social and economic objectives pursued by the European countries. This signing marks a new international era of the activities of SAM, which already started in the region. Conference means a lot for new associated member countries, especially for the Serbian Association of Managers as a source of information and networking, as well as a very important link to European social issues, where managerial and executive staff has a key role to play in the promotion of the social and economic progress.

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ULA'S SPRING RECEPTION IN BERLIN

An African proverb says "little people doing little things in a lot of little places will change the face of the earth". In this line of thought, ULA's spring reception took place in the South-African Embassy on the 9th of May in Berlin. More than 250 high-ranking guests, inter alia members of parliament, government representatives, journalists and managers, were present and enjoyed excellent wine, food, and music. More than 30 children, who are traditionally also in-

vited, joined their parents and contributed to the unique atmosphere of this reception. ULA succeeded once again in bringing people together in a marvellous environment and thus promoting leadership issues.

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Mr. Ramme (CEC SG) and Mr. Betz (ULA President) greeting the guests at the entrance.



Website:

www.ula.de

CEC CONFERENCE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, 7 AND 8 JUNE 2007, STOCKHOLM

"Better Performance through Diversity
- Equal Opportunities as an Asset for Tomorrow's Management"

**First day:****An overview of the current situation and initiatives at European level**

The CEC President Georges Liarokapis during his opening speech.



The Ledarna President Annika Elias, who gave an overview on Swedish reality with regards to equal opportunities.



Pia Engstrom-Lindgren, European Commission DG Employment, reporting the initiatives of the EC in the field of gender equality.



Robert Anderson, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, focusing on discrimination on the ground of age in Europe.



The theater play tackling the issue of gender roles at work, which has triggered lively reactions among the audience.



Annika Elias (Ledarna), Christer Forslund (EUROCADRES), Loes van Embden Andres (BUSINESSEUROPE), Georges Liarokapis (CEC) and Maria Helena André (ETUC), participating to the panel discussion dedicated to the Social Partners.

CEC CONFERENCE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, 7 AND 8 JUNE 2007, STOCKHOLM

"Better Performance through Diversity
- Equal Opportunities as an Asset for Tomorrow's Management"



**Second day:
Good practices at national and company level**



Erica Grundberg's speech, focusing on diversity at Ikea.



The audience in the conference hall.

Workshop 1: Women in Management - Good Practices to Tackle the Obstacles.



Workshop 2: Diversity at the Workplace - Innovative Practices to Retain and Integrate Groups of Discriminated Workers.



Closing remarks from Marcia de Wachter, President of the National Bank of Belgium.

CEC CONFERENCE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, 7 AND 8 JUNE 2007, STOCKHOLM

"Better Performance through Diversity
- Equal Opportunities as an Asset for Tomorrow's Management"



Coffee break.



Dinner at Vasamuseum and performance of traditional Swedish musicians.



This conference has been organized with the support of the European Commission



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Photos credits:
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ABOUT CEC

The CEC represents 1,5 million executives and managerial staff in Europe organised into national federations and European branch federations. Since the end of the 1980s, the CEC contributes, as a social partner, to the European social dialogue. The CEC has made the task of defending the managers' specific interests its own, while maintaining dialogue with other parties.

CEC is consulted by the European Commission on all initiatives in the field of employment and social affairs (articles 138 and 139 EC Treaty). It is also part of the employees delegation in the negotiation with the employers' organisations at European level.

The CEC promotes a European integration clearly in favour of the principle of performance and competition, but also the social market economy and a value-oriented way of conducting business, since the respect of social obligations is an added value for economy in the long run.