



Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010 CEC European Managers Position

1 Overall assessment of the performance of the Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010

Do you think the Roadmap 2006-2010 has made a difference and contributed to more equality between women and men?

Achievements of the Roadmap for equality between women and men are not equally distributed in the six priority areas. In some areas, as work-life balance, we can observe some improvements and, in other areas, results seem to remain stable. However, the crisis has affected the development of this programme and we can observe some steps backwards such as the downfall of the women employment rate during the last months.

Nevertheless, we can try to assess in detail each policy commitment defined on the Roadmap for equality between women and men.

1- Achieving equal economic independence for women and men

One of the main goals of the Roadmap 2006-2010 is to achieve the 60% of employment rate of women in 2010. We can observe some improvements between 2006, when employment rate was of 57.3%, and 2008, at which stage the rate has risen to 59.1%. Nevertheless, the last Eurostat data (last trimester of 2008 and first of 2009) reveal a downfall from 59.2% to 58.4%. It is obvious that the crisis is affecting employment rates (also the rates concerning men) and will probably hamper to achieve the employment rate goal for 2010.

Concerning the unemployment rate we can observe that the gender gap has disappeared and both men and women have 8,8% rate of unemployment. This apparent improvement is a result of the crisis. Initially, men contributed significantly more than women to the increase in unemployment (more or less the double between October 2008 and May 2009). Currently, unemployment rate for both women and men is increasing at the same rates.

The pay gap is probably one of the goals in which improvements are less measurable due to a change in the statistical methodology. Women earned 15% less than men in 2005. With the new methodology, the figure increases until 17.7%. Between 2006 and 2007, we can observe a decrease of 0.2% in the gender pay. Nevertheless, due to the lack of recent statistics it is complicated to know if there are improvements in last two years, but probably, as with the unemployment rate, gender pay gap will sharply decrease due to the economic crisis and as a consequence of the fall in men salaries. If this trend is confirmed, new policies should aim at avoiding an increase in the gender pay gap after the crisis and allow equal wages increases for men and women. CEC European Managers also welcomes the European Commission campaign for equal pay launched in 2009.

Labour segregation remains an important problem. Most of women still work in low wage jobs, especially in health, public administration and education. Nevertheless we can notice some changes in trends. The figure of women working in those three sectors has fallen from 39.1% to 34.5%. We can also observe some increase in sectors like real

estate, renting and business activities or construction. There is also an important increase in the activities of households.

The figure of women entrepreneurs has also fallen. Nevertheless, we can first note, as in the case of the employment rate, that the number of entrepreneurs has fallen by 6.8% since 2006. The downfall of women entrepreneurs is sharper (10.9%) during the same period (first trimester of 2006 and first trimester 2009). As a result, the rate of women entrepreneurs has fallen from 33.1% to 31.6%.

The ageing population is the most important challenge for our social systems to prevent a major risk of poverty among elder people. This risk affects especially to women. According to the report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion in Europe 2008, current pension systems have generally reduced poverty among the elderly, but single elderly women face a much higher risk than single elderly men (28% as against 20%).

CEC European Managers considers that European institutions and social partners must stabilize the decrease of gender gap resulting from the crisis in some areas and keep working to improve results in other areas, especially the gender pay gap, labour segregation and poverty concerning elder people.

2- Enhancing reconciliation of work, private and family life

CEC European Managers is especially concerned by reconciliation of work, private and family life because it affects executives and managerial staff's work in a considerable way. Many managers have to travel and do overtime in order to keep up with their duties, and this complicates the reconciliation with family life. The consequence is that two-thirds of managers are male, only 10 percent of the board members in leading companies are women and only 3 percent holds high-level positions.

CEC European Managers agrees that it is a priority to enhance flexible working arrangements in European companies. Flexible and family friendly working hours enable managers to be more involved with family care. Additionally, it facilitates and supports women in their access to managerial positions. In 2006, flexible working time arrangements were implemented in almost half (48%) of companies with 10 or more employees in Europe. For the moment, we do not have statistics to know if these practices are being further developed in European companies.

One of the main objectives over the last years was to update the directive on parental leave. A first agreement between social partners was signed in June 2009 and approved by European Commission one month later. CEC European Managers welcomes the revision of the parental leave agreement, which should enter into force in 2011, but considers that some improvements, such as a clear reference in the agreement as regards the income, should be adopted in the future.

Childcare services are essential to improve the work-life balance. A recent Eurobarometer survey says that over 1.5 million women in the EU declare that they are forced not to work or to work less because of a lack of childcare facilities. Nevertheless, last data reveal a downward trend from 74 (2005) to 71% (2007) in childcare arrangements for children between 3 years old to mandatory school age in the EU 25, while the Barcelona target¹ is to achieve 90% in 2010. For children under 3 years old, childcare arrangements remain at 16%, far from the 33% established by the Barcelona objectives.

¹ Barcelona target : agreed by the EU's Heads of State and Government in March 2002, it commits the EU to becoming an economically competitive player at the global level through science and technology. Childcare arrangements are included as a way to improve work-life balance and the access to the labour market.

CEC European Managers has already proposed in precedent consultations some work-life balance measures to reduce differences between women and men:

- ⇒ Encourage men to be more involved in family cares by having the possibility to better organise their working time
- ⇒ Further development of telework.
- ⇒ Creation of multi-enterprises nursery or day care with the help of Member States subsidies: especially convenient for SMEs that could not afford a company day care or nursery.
- ⇒ Cheques delivered from employment services to pay the babysitter or housekeeper to which both the employee and the employer should financially participate. They should also benefit from a tax reduction.
- ⇒ Partnership between the enterprise and childcare associations, with a possible financial support from the enterprise and/or the works council. Tax reduction should also be conceded.
- ⇒ Free access to addresses and database of childcare structures through the company or works councils in order to ease the research and administrative formalities.

3- Promoting equal participation of women and men in decision-making

Participation of women in the process of decision-making is still low and improvements over the last five years have not been really significant, especially concerning managers. Stereotypes and the unfair repartition of the family tasks between men and women are the main barriers to women in order to achieve high level positions. As previously stated, only one-third of managers are female, only 10 percent of board members in leading companies are women and only 3 percent holds high-level positions. This figure has remained stable over the last few years. CEC European Managers considers that European Institutions and Social Partners should encourage companies to hire women in managerial positions.

Regarding European politics, there are some improvements. The last European Elections have shaped a European Parliament with an increased number of female deputies, from 30% to 35%. The rising of chairwomen and vice-chairwomen is more important, from 25% to 38%.

CEC European Managers considers that it is really important to ensure equal opportunities in order to female hold managers positions and other high level positions. Education and the fight against stereotypes are the basic way to achieve this. Managers are a strategic target of these policies, because stereotypes remain in this collective. According to a recent Eurobarometer survey, managers are more likely than the average European employees to say that differences (gender, physical appearance or nationality) are a disadvantage when applying for a position. CEC European Managers has already developed several actions on this subject, especially a conference on **“Better Performance through Diversity – Equal Opportunities as an Asset for Tomorrow’s Management”** held in June 2007 in Stockholm (Sweden).

4- Eradicating gender-based violence and trafficking

On the last International Women's Day, European Commission recognised that violence against women "is still widely underestimated", because of the lack of statistics and accurate information.

The programme "Combating violence towards children, adolescents and women: Daphne III (2007-2013)" is likely to solve this lack of information, in addition to directly combat all forms of violence. This programme would be an important step forward to measure the problem and to eradicate any kind of violence.

CEC European Managers also welcomes the announcement of the European Commission to look at European legislation on trafficking in humans, based on respect for human rights and increasing the level of protection and assistance for victims.

5- Eliminating gender stereotypes in society

Eliminating gender stereotypes in society is probably one of the most effective ways to achieve equality between men and women, and should be a priority in gender equality policies. Nevertheless, it is a long and complicated process to measure.

Statistics concerning number of graduates or pupils are probably not a good basis to assess the elimination of gender stereotypes. For example, concerning graduates, we can notice that the number of women graduating has been higher than that of men number over the last decades but the problem of stereotypes still exists. We must evaluate attitudes and behaviours. In fact, figures show that there are no real improvements in the elimination of gender stereotypes in education (females still hold degree mainly on Humanities, Social Sciences or in the health and welfare fields) or on the labour market (the number of female managers has not increased and, according to their education, most women work in the fields of health, public administration and education).

CEC European Managers also considers that campaigns should sensitize as soon as the primary school level in order to bring up a new generation more respectful of the other genre and to redefine school vocational orientation in the direction of eliminating the gender-based gap in the field of work, with a parallel implementation of the mainstreaming policy in syllabuses of vocational orientation. CEC European Managers believes that breaking stereotypes at the earliest age is crucial and that the benefits will be visible within the next generation of employees. Young managers having an educational background free from gender-related stereotypes will be ready to invest more time in their family responsibilities. Employers sharing the same mentality will not hinder this evolution.

But as the gender stereotypes are already affecting work places, CEC European Managers welcomes any other initiative to reduce this kind of behaviours. For example, Spain and France already have "Equality label" for companies and the United Kingdom and the Slovak Republic have created different awards to family-friendly and gender-friendly companies.

Other observed problems, mentioned by the CEC French member, CFE-CGC, are:

- **Negative image of part-time workers.** Part-time workers are currently considered as low-involved employees. This affects mainly women willing to balance their private and professional life, but it is even harder for the men who try to adopt such a lifestyle.
- **Glass ceiling.** Most entrepreneurs do not consider women for a top management position.

- **No support for motherhood.** Having a baby implies consequences for women, such as substitution at work, problems with childcare arrangements ...
- **Unfair repartition of the family tasks between men and women:** stereotypes concerning family duties must be changed. For instance, men can be willing to take days off for their child who is ill or decline attendance to late-meetings so as to pick their children up from school so as to share family duties with women. Men like women should be supported by companies in such decisions.

6- Promotion of gender equality outside the EU

Promoting gender equality outside the European Union is important, especially regarding those countries where rights of women are terminally damaged. Candidate States should also ensure minimum equality between genders to be able to integrate the European Union. Nevertheless, it is complicated to assess the efficiency of EU actions on this field, because improvements not only depend on EU policies.

CEC European Managers is concerned by enlarging gender equality and promotes this philosophy among its members, including European organisations from non UE countries.

CONCLUSION

CEC European Managers considers that it is too soon to assess the effectiveness of the Roadmap 2006-2010. Most of Eurostat's statistics reflect 2007 or 2008 data, which does not give enough time and scope. Indeed, some attitudes, especially those concerning stereotypes, are hardly measurable and changes could only be done on the long term.

We also have to consider that the situation has changed. The global crisis has altered the economic situation, both for women and men. This makes it more difficult to achieve some goals, such as increasing the employment rate or reducing the pay gap gender, and could lead us to an error when analyzing statistics, thinking, for example, that the decrease of unemployment rate gap is good news, when actually it is the consequence of a sharp increase in male rates.

Concerning managers, in order to assess their situation, it is essential to have data available on management, differentiating between men and women managers. It is also important to have specific data for managers in each analysed field (pay gap, employment and unemployment rates, working hours...).

Practical measures proposed by the CEC European Managers

It is worth mentioning that the issue of gender should always be seen in the context of the couple, of men and women or even in a more global perspective and not only as measures or problems that concern women.

1. Recruitment and Internal Promotion
 - o Information on internal job vacancies accessible for all
 - o Bonus system
2. Awareness raising policies
 - o Training of the management to raise awareness of gender issues and not only refer to the "problems of women", issues concern both men and women.
3. Career Management
 - o Support specific networking for female managers
 - o Support mentoring for male and female managers
 - o Confidence building

- Improve access for female employees to training
- 4. Work-life balance
 - Flexible working time (core working period, job-sharing, voluntarily reduced working time, per year working, homeworking)
 - Childminding possibilities in the company and other services for couples
 - Parental leave solutions and 'keep in touch' schemes for staff on career breaks
 - No late meetings
- 5. Strategic Management
 - Assessment and Evaluation (staff turnover, sickness absence rates, satisfaction with work patterns and so forth)
 - Assessment of achieved change in the organisational culture

2 Future challenges for gender equality

What are in your view the main medium and long term challenges that a new strategy for gender equality should address?

CEC European Managers considers that the main challenges for the coming years are:

Education. Education is the main way to eradicate gender differences. Member States should include in their curricula contents on gender equality. We should also redefine the school vocational orientation towards the elimination of the gender-based gap at work and extension of programs aiming at training teachers on matters of gender equality and relations between sexes.

Women managers. As already mentioned, CEC European Managers is really concerned with the stagnation on increase in employment of women managers. Eradicating stereotypes and ensuring work-life balance and a fairer assignment of domestic tasks is essential in order to allow women to reach higher position in their company.

Flexible and family friendly working hours enable managers to be more involved in their family care and facilitate the access to managerial positions for women. That could be developed by using new technologies and teleworking solutions. The European institutions should encourage companies to adopt these kind of measures.

Companies should also see benefits from a family-friendly strategy such as better results and higher productivity of their workers, a positive corporate image and staff retention. Including women in the managerial level enhances the quality of the management and the possibility to find better adequate professionals for each required profile.

Ageing population. Ageing population is one of the most important challenges in the future. Young people rate is decreasing while life expectancy is increasing. Regarding women, at-risk-of-poverty among elder people rates are higher for women than men.

New skills. "New skills for new jobs" are needed, as the European Commission has pointed out with the campaign launched in 2009. But the European Commission must ensure that these new skills are learnt equally by women and men, in order to guarantee a well-balanced labour market in the future.

Work life-balance. Encouraging work-life balance is the only way to make conditions for women and men the same. The European Commission should keep working on this field, encouraging companies to adopt more flexible schemes of work and help their workers to the reconciliation of their private and professional life.

3 Main policy priorities for gender equality

Are the six priority areas defined in the Roadmap still relevant? Which new priorities should be considered?

The fight against gender gap is a long one and it could not be accomplished with in 5 years-long program only. We have observed some improvements but also some weaknesses and, in any case, it is necessary more time to achieve most of the goals. CEC considers that the six priority areas are still relevant.

How can gender mainstreaming and specific actions be made more effective?

There are two main actions:

Including gender equality issues in individual and collective bargaining. Gender equality should always be present in individual and collective bargaining, whatever is the subject. Negotiators should also have a specific background on gender equality in order to ensure a properly transposition of these principles on European legislation.

Monitoring the implementation of gender equality legislation and agreements on national law. The European Commission should be extremely concerned to follow up whether gender equality is properly implemented in national law and ensure that governments take the required measures in due time. For example, in 2008, the European Commission sent letters to thirteen Member States where the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC) had not been fully implemented. The deadline for implementation on national law was December 2003. This means that those countries are more than five years in late in implementing the gender equality legislation.

In what policy areas could new gender targets be defined? Which targets should be quantified?

CEC European Managers estimates that the policy areas where new gender targets should be defined are:

Education, culture and youth. European Institutions should define one strategy to make the young aware of gender equality, including specific contents in their syllabus but also in other extra-curricula activities.

Business. The number of women entrepreneur should be increased, with specific allowances or attractive loans for women setting up their own business.

Science and Technology. Research and innovation is the key to be better prepared for the future. Europe needs the expertise from women in order to tackle this important challenge.

Employment and social rights. European Institutions and Social Partners should analyse on a regular basis the needs of the labour market in terms of gender equality.

Regional policy. Regions are one of the bases of the European organisation. They are probably the most efficient administration level to send messages to the population, including awareness on gender equality issues. Regions should be included in the definition of policies in the future.

Concerning the targets that should be quantified, CEC European Managers considers that, in order to evaluate the problem, it is essential to have data available on management and in particular to differentiate men and women in this data. It is also important to have data on gender segregation and to identify the sectors that typically employ women and that are generally less valued in order to follow whether there is any evolution. This data

needs to be up-to-date and a regular follow-up should be done. Finally, it is also important to measure social attitudes on gender, in order to see if stereotypes and other negative behaviours against women are being eradicated.

How can complementarities and synergies between the Commission's initiatives, the actions by the Member States, the actions by Social Partners and organisations representing civil society, both at European and national level, be achieved?

Negotiations on a regular basis between all these actors are essential to achieve agreements and to improve current policies. Organisations representing civil society could be a good barometer on the implementation of the gender equality policies.

What types of improvements should be aimed at concerning the monitoring and the reporting on progress made?

As previously stated, statistics are one of the most efficient ways to monitor the progress on equality. But, statistics should cover every sector concerned and include data on managers. Statistics should evaluate not only quantitative data but also general attitudes. Attitudes could be measured through opinion barometers.

CEC EUROPEAN MANAGERS

