



IOE Position Paper: Recommendations to foster female talent in top management levels

April 2020



A powerful
and balanced
voice for business

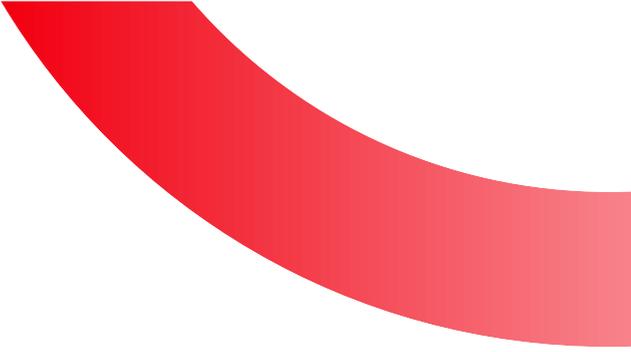


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Abbreviations

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|----------------|---|
| ACT/EMP | Bureau of Employers' Activities (at the ILO) |
| BDA | Confederation of German Employers' Associations |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer |
| CEOE | Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales |
| CFO | Chief Financial Officer |
| CNI | Brazilian National Confederation of Industry |
| CONFIEP | La Confederación Nacional de Instituciones Empresariales Privadas (Peru) |
| ECOP | Employers Confederation of the Philippines |
| EU | European Union |
| EO | Employer Organisations |
| FEI | Federation of Egyptian Industries |
| HR | Human Resources |
| IOE | International Organisation of Employers |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| MEDEF | Mouvement des Entreprises de France |
| MEF | Montenegrin Employers Federation |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic and Cooperation Development |
| STEM | Science Technology Engineering Mathematics |



Disclaimer: The Coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) has disrupted various governance systems, pertinently the healthcare response systems, and the crisis has and will continue to shock the global economy. At the time of writing (end April 2020), the world is struggling to keep pace with evolving information and various countries are reshaping policy interventions on a daily basis in order to contain the virus and to prevent its spread. Not only is the virus triggering a humanitarian emergency, it is already negatively impacting all stakeholders in the world of work.

It remains to be seen as to how Covid-19 greatly impacts gender equality issues. More research, data collection and investigation are needed in order to come up with effective policy interventions in this space. This is a 'living document' and IOE will continue to update the recommendations as the gender story unfolds in the context of Covid-19.

Introduction

The recent ILO ACT/EMP report (2019) reaffirms the business case for gender diversity, especially at top management levels, and shows that the share of women in managerial positions globally has been on the rise¹.

Women are still largely under-represented on corporate boards globally, and progress to change this trend continues to be slow. According to the latest Deloitte report²: “Women in the boardroom. A global perspective” women hold 16.9% of board seats worldwide, which is a 1.9% increase within 2 years. Women hold only 5.3% of board chair positions and 4.4% of CEO roles globally. They also hold 12.7% of CFO roles globally – nearly three times that of CEO positions.

According to ILO’s statistics, from 2002, a steady upward trend of women occupying top-level positions at a faster pace than that of men has been observed, particularly in Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe and Central Asia. On the other hand, this increase has been mitigated in some regions notably Africa and the Middle East.

The report, consistent with other studies, argues that gender diversity is a smart business strategy: the lack of gender diversity may act as a barrier to enhanced business performance. According to the ILO

¹ International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2019, “Women in business and management: the business case for change”, Chapter 1, Pg 4-9.

² <https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/risk/articles/women-in-the-boardroom-global-perspective.html>

report specifically, over 60% of the enterprises surveyed report higher profitability and productivity and they are almost 60% more likely to experience enhanced reputation, greater ease in attracting and retaining talent, and greater creativity and innovation³.

Despite the undeniable business case behind gender diversity in workplaces, efforts need to be continued to see gender balance among senior leadership and decision-making positions in many companies⁴. Over 78% of the enterprises surveyed for the ILO report reported having a male CEO. With increasing enterprise size, the percentage of female CEOs dropped from 26% in small enterprises, to 20% in mid-sized enterprises, to only 16% in larger enterprises.

An important contributor to the lack of gender diversity at top management levels is the “leaky pipeline”, wherein the representation of women decreases as the level of management increases. The leaky pipeline occurs as a result of “glass walls” or obstacles to gender equality. Barriers to gender equality at management levels are mostly characterized in two main areas: (a) those related to perceptions of women’s roles and capacities, and (b) those concerning management structures and systems of institutions, organisations and companies that are considered not conducive to the advancement of women. The 2015 ILO report identifies 14 barriers to women’s leadership as shown below. In addition, there also appears to be a lack of networking opportunities for women in business.

Barriers to Women’s Leadership:

1. Women have more family responsibilities than men
2. Roles assigned by society to men and women
3. Masculine corporate culture
4. Women with insufficient general or line management experience
5. Few role models for women
6. Men not encouraged to take leave for family responsibilities
7. Lack of company equality policy and programmes
8. Stereotypes against women
9. Lack of leadership training for women
10. Lack of flexible work solutions
11. No strategy for retention of skilled women
12. Inherent gender bias in recruitment and promotion (ranked the same as:)
Management generally viewed as a man’s job
13. Gender equality policies in place but not implemented
14. Inadequate labour and non-discrimination laws

Source: ILO (2015), “Women in Business and Management Gaining Momentum”, Global Report.

Tackling gender inequality is not an easy feat. In many countries, despite there being generations of highly educated women being trained and joining the workforce upon graduation, the figures from the ILO indicate that they have not been able to break through the glass ceiling and walls in significant

³ International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2019, “Women in business and management: the business case for change”, Chapter 1, Pg. 21.

⁴ International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2019, “Women in business and management: the business case for change”.

numbers to occupy top management jobs and board positions as well as lead their nations' largest businesses. It is therefore no longer sufficient that the public and the private sector work in isolation to tackle this problem. To truly lead change will require the joint efforts of governments, employers and workers to remove the cultural, economic and social barriers hindering women from participating in top management levels. Governments need to invest time and resources in effective policies (together with employers) and provide support when needed such as practical advice and offering quality childcare facilities.

Picking up from this research as well as IOE's ongoing work on gender, this IOE paper aims to strengthen efforts towards gender equality by proposing 5 recommendations each to governments, employers' organisations (EOs) and companies in order to attract and retain female talent in management positions.

Recommendations to Governments

1. Introduce a change in mindset on gender roles and stereotypes at an early age

In many countries, the gender role of women is still perceived by many, including women themselves, as being the primary caregiver in the family. Among the younger generation, it is observed that increasingly men are beginning to take on more responsibilities at home. This should be encouraged. For this trend to take on, it is important to start advocating at an early stage, especially to young minds of both boys and girls, the equality of gender in all matters including family responsibilities. Public authorities can do so by helping to change mindsets in educational policies.

Girls' Day/Boys' Day

The German Girls' and Boys' Day initiatives aim at breaking down the gender-related stereotyping of sectors at early age, i.e. pupils from 10 years upward, by allowing boys and girls to explore industries and competences traditionally assigned to the other gender. On the one hand, boys participate in workshops where social competences, role models and work and life planning are discussed. On the other hand, girls immerse in the day-to-day work in laboratories, offices and shops to inspire a higher interest on their part in traditionally male dominated industries.

Both initiatives are funded by the German Government. On Girls' Day, for example, companies and organisations participate with around 10,000 events annually with the Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA) being an official campaign partner since the very start in 2001. In 2019, BDA welcomed 20 high-school girls who participated in discussions about career choice differences between men and women, remuneration and opportunities across sectors. Moreover, they were given the chance to program a robot, which reinforced the idea that the technical sector can be just as interesting for girls as for boys.

Link:

<https://www.arbeitgeber.de/www/arbeitgeber.nsf/id/77A07B971683F325C1257FA300492401>

There are also several projects which look deeper into the field of psychology. Activities include playing games to build self-confidence of girls and advocacy to break stereotypes by showing examples. This is an example of an initiative which can help inspire governments:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4JK-pQzFPk>

2. Promote STEM education to women early

The quickening pace and nature of technological change and the ongoing reach of globalization demand a qualified labour force, especially in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields. As these skills are increasingly favoured and pay better in labour markets⁵, it is important for women to be equipped with these necessary skills in order to remain attractive and employable in the labour market. The OECD shows that STEM fields tend to pay better and offer better opportunities to advance into leadership positions⁶. Removing barriers to access basic education and by promoting STEM fields to all children, especially girls, is an important step in generating interest in such fields which are traditionally seen as male-dominated.

Investing in STEM initiatives – Australia

The Australian Government regards high-quality STEM education as critically important for current and future productivity, as well as for informed personal decision making and effective community, national and global citizenship. The Government is committed to improving the STEM skills of young Australians to ensure that they have the skills they need to live and work in a globalised world. As part of the \$1.1 billion National Innovation and Science Agenda, the Australian Government has allocated over \$64 million to fund early learning and school STEM initiatives under the Inspiring all Australians in Digital Literacy and STEM measure. This includes two measures: Embracing the Digital Age (school initiatives – \$51 million) and Inspiring STEM Literacy (early learning initiatives – \$14 million).

Link:

<https://www.education.gov.au/support-science-technology-engineering-and-mathematics>

Poland

In Poland, there is an initiative called LEAN IN STEM which is seen as a highly successful mentoring programme. Link: <http://leaninstem.pl/>

Poland also hosts the annual 'Women in Tech' Summit. It is the biggest conference of women in IT and STEM in Europe and Asia (organized by a Polish NGO: Fundacja Perspektywy). 2019's conference brought together over 6 300 participants from 52 countries.

Link: <https://womenintechsummit.pl/>

⁵ Burning Glass Technologies, 2014, "Real-Time Insight into the Market for Entry-level STEM Jobs".

⁶ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2017, "The Pursuit of Gender Equality", Chapter "The under-representation of women in STEM fields", pg 105-112.

SCHULEWIRTSCHAFT Deutschland

SCHULEWIRTSCHAFT Deutschland is a regionally embedded, German-wide connected network aimed at better reconciling school education with the demands of the labour market. To this end, schools and companies engage on a voluntary basis to improve educational and vocational qualifications by taking a labour market oriented approach. The network is supported at federal level by the Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA) and numerous employers' organisations partner with local ministries.

In 2019, more than 14,000 partners (schools, companies, institutions, employment agencies, voluntary experts and sponsors) cooperated and regularly engaged in ca. 382 working groups, organizing 4,100 events which include 135,000 participants.

The goal is to provide pupils with professional orientation, economic education and the opportunity to get more insight into increasingly relevant areas such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The network strives to provide a sustainable transition from school to career, while respecting the curricula and allowing schools to decide on how learning materials provided by the network will be used in the educational process. The network also supports the Career Choice Seal as an award for schools performing excellent in career orientation of their pupils. There were 1,580 schools in Germany awarded in 2019, with 1,520 persons as volunteers in the audition teams.

Link: <https://www.schulewirtschaft.de>, www.netzwerk-berufswahlsiegel.de

3. Ensure proper infrastructure in place for women balancing family and work

Many women tend to shun from responsibilities in managerial positions when they have equally demanding care responsibilities at home. In most countries, women are still seen as the primary caregivers in the family, where they are still expected to look after the young and elderly, on top of their paid jobs. Although some progress can be observed in some societies, working mothers, on average, perform 76.2% of the total share of household chores, which is 3.2 more times than men⁷.

In order to help them to better balance both responsibilities, public authorities can, according to the country's needs, provide the right social infrastructure and policies such as quality, reliable and affordable child-care centers, home caregivers and access to quality education. Such structures and options have proven to retain female talent in many economies.

⁷ International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2018, "Care work and care jobs for the Future of Decent Work", https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_633166.pdf.

Iceland, for instance, provides affordable child-care options, where the costs of the child-care are determined by income and the ability to pay⁸.

In the **Czech Republic**, the national Nursery and Basic School Capacity Development fund offers support to childcare providers⁹.

In **Latin America** where public sector involvement in providing childcare is extensive, evidence suggests that publicly supported programmes are either affordable (below 10% of the average household per capita income) or moderately so (between 10 and 20%)¹⁰.

Furthermore, an experiment in **Nairobi** found that use of subsidized childcare by poor women boosted their likelihood of employment by 20 percentage points, attesting to relevance of affordable and quality childcare to promoting gender equality¹¹.

4. Make a concerted effort towards reducing the issue of gender stereotypes and discrimination

Governments can lead by example by ensuring women working in public institutions are not discriminated against and are offered the same opportunities as their male counterparts for career advancement. Furthermore, resources can be invested in awareness campaigns on gender issues such as how to tackle gender stereotypes.

The Government of **Thailand** is resolved to move forward on gender equality by developing a curriculum on gender roles that cultivates positive attitudes and acceptance of gender equality in children from an early age. The Government is taking several measures to enhance gender equality and women's empowerment, by engendering school curricula, implementing gender-responsive budgeting and improving sex-disaggregated data collection. It will collect sex-disaggregated data, for analytical purposes and for formulating gender-sensitive policies, as well as for monitoring progress made to achieve gender equality. In providing training to relevant national public agencies, it will promote gender-responsive budgeting.

Link: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/step-it-up/commitments/thailand>

5. Monitor policies to track progress

As it is best practice in many countries already, it is the role of governments to institutionalise a gender inclusive approach in its operations, policies and programmes and most importantly track the progress of such measures in order to better understand if the policies and programmes work or not.

⁸ UNICEF, 2019, "Are the world's richest countries family friendly? Policy in the OECD and EU", Pg 19.

⁹ World Economic Forum (WEF), 2019, "These countries have the most expensive childcare", blog.

¹⁰ UNICEF, 2019, "Childcare and working families: New opportunity or missing link?", Evidence brief.

¹¹ Clark, Shelley, et al., 2017, "Can Subsidized Early Child Care Promote Women's Employment? Evidence from a Slum Settlement in Africa", Grow Working Paper Series (GWP-2017-05), Institute for the Study of International Development, Montreal, Canada.

By tracking progress of implemented policies and programmes, governments can have a better understanding of what works and what does not work and why. These can then help governments improve on these policies by eliminating the obstacles hindering their progress. Monitoring does not only enable to see where and how actions are being implemented. It can also indicate whether or not transformative changes are taking place.

Various international organisations have guidelines on how governments can monitor gender policies to track progress. In support of robust policy monitoring and evaluation systems in general, the OECD focuses on 3 main pillars:

1. Building an institutional framework by putting the right legal, policy and organisational measures in place to support the performance of public policies
2. Promoting the use of evidence and policy monitoring and evaluation, by investing in public sector skills, policy making processes and supporting stakeholder engagement
3. Promoting the quality of policy monitoring and evaluation, for instance through developing guidelines, investing in capacity building, and ex post review and control mechanisms.

Link: <http://www.oecd.org/gov/policy-monitoring-evaluation.htm>

Recommendations to EOs

1. Place the topic of gender equality on the agenda

EOs should enable discussions on gender equality policies with their member organisations, for instance, on recruitment, employment, promotion and training opportunities. They can also themselves, where feasible, establish policies on flexible work arrangements and mobile working arrangements so that both men and women can benefit. Companies facing implementation issues can thereby reach out to EOs to get advice on how to implement certain forms of policies. Other internal gender equality policies can range from policies offering equal opportunities for management training to gender awareness campaigns. By providing an example of how such policies are framed and implemented within EOs, EOs can provide hands-on support especially to small and medium-sized companies on how to retain and attract female talent to top management roles.

BusinessNZ's Manual on Balancing Work and Life

BusinessNZ has produced a booklet to help its members especially small and medium-sized enterprises offer greater flexibility to its workers. The manual provides draft policy examples as well as helpful case studies with useful contacts as further guidance for its members. It also highlights the importance of voluntarily implementing such policy as opposed to legally imposing one, which might prove to be counterproductive.

Link: https://www.businessnz.org.nz/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/74720/Balancing-Work-and-Life.pdf

2. Reinforce and update the business case for gender diversity

While many companies and governments agree on the importance of gender diversity, it is essential that the message is continually reinforced and updated by EOs so that policymakers do not lose sight of this important goal. Updating the business case and tracking progress by members on their internal policies can equip the EOs with the right tools to continuously reinforce the business case for gender diversity and even offer new insights on what measures work and what doesn't.

CONFIEP "Action for Equality" Working Committee for the Promotion of Women's Empowerment

Its key objective is to promote, together with the guilds associated with the National Confederation of Private Business Associations (CONFIEP) and other business entities, those actions which facilitate progress towards equal opportunities and women's empowerment. The working committee includes important business federations and technical assistance provided by the ILO.

Link:

<https://www.confiep.org.pe/quienes-somos-2/comites/comite-igualdad-empoderamiento-mujer/>

Mouvement des Entreprises de France (MEDEF)

MEDEF would like to set an example within its organisation and to share diversity objectives with its membership. MEDEF would like to ensure that increasing numbers of women participate more actively in the professional sectors in their area and take on representational responsibilities.

To this end:

- the professional and territorial associations commit to reaching an objective of "equal standing" by 2023 in their proposals of representatives for appointment to MEDEF bodies, given that it is estimated that in 2018 women represented approximately 30% of the management,
- this commitment shall be increased to 50% within the same time frame for persons elected to the Board, in line with President Emmanuel Macron's proposal.

An annual report on gender parity within MEDEF shall be presented at the session during which the Management Board evaluates whether its actions are in line with its mission.

IOE-EU Course on Women in Management in 2020

The IOE, through the IOE-EU Partnership Agreement will organize two intensive courses for its Members on 'Women in Management and Business' in 2020/2021. The main objective of these two courses is to upskill, train, build capacities and to create spaces for mutual exchanges on gender empowerment skills at the workplace.

3. Partner with other organisations to leverage their strengths

EOs can extend partnerships to other organisations to jointly work on this issue. They can partner with academics to do research to help them update their business case. They can also work with the media to advocate change as well as with business women's associations which can help them to understand experiences of female business leaders and barriers of female entrepreneurship and women empowerment.

IOE works with UNICEF on family-friendly policies

UNICEF advocates for family-friendly policies, highlighting the substantial evidence on the health, educational, and economic benefits of such policies in workplaces. In particular, UNICEF proposes a sets of recommendations to policymakers, including:

- Support the ability of mothers to breastfeed
- Ensure access to affordable, accessible and quality child-care
- Provide child benefits

All these policies should be considered, according to the needs in each country. The IOE will be working closely with UNICEF in 2020 in an effort to better understand the framing of family-friendly policies in organisations.

Link: <https://www.unicef.org/early-childhood-development/family-friendly-policies>

Collaboration with Ranking PAR

The National Confederation of Private Business Associations (CONFIEP) is responsible for encouraging private businesses to partake in this initiative. It is a free tool that facilitates the generation of baselines in terms of gender equality by surveying organisations and businesses through a virtual questionnaire designed by an NGO, Aequales. This survey assesses the performance of organisations in Peru, Colombia and Mexico in terms of gender equality and recognises those which promote equality practices. In addition, it serves as a companion to those interested in embarking on their journey towards equality. The aspects assessed in this questionnaire are as follows: management by objectives, organisational culture, organisational structure and talent management.

Link: <https://par.aequales.com/>

SENAI'S "Programa SENAI de Ações Inclusivas – PSAI"

Along with Brazilian employer organization CNI, the National Service of Industrial Training (SENAI) is part of the Industrial System and provides professional education and technological services aimed to promote industrial innovation and technology transfer.

Its program titled "Programa SENAI de Ações Inclusivas – PSAI" seeks to promote gender equality and the inclusion and formal training of women, especially in areas of the industry historically carried out by men, such as construction work, electrical work, auto mechanical work, microcomputer and computer work, among others. The program supports different groups and implements inclusive actions in the SENAI's 27 Regional Departments, in the Technology Center of the Chemical and Textile Industry – "CETIQT" and in over 465 operating units, covering 552 municipalities throughout Brazil.

The program also promotes awareness and offers workshops, lectures and guidelines for trainers and collaborators on the prevention of prejudice, stigmatization and discrimination. It is important to note that, in 2018, of 2.3m enrolled in SENAI courses, 33% were women (over 700,000 enrolments).

Links:

<https://noticias.portaldaindustria.com.br/noticias/inovacao-e-tecnologia/dia-mundial-da-propriedade-intelectual-destaca-papel-das-mulheres-na-inovacao/>

<https://noticias.portaldaindustria.com.br/noticias/educacao/curso-do-senai-profissionaliza-detentas-para-o-mercado-de-confeccao/>

'Safe Enterprise without Violence and Discrimination Against Women' Certification

CONFIEP encouraged private businesses in Peru to partake in this initiative. It is a form of recognition given by the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations to businesses which demonstrate good practices in their business management, aimed at promoting equality as opposed to violence against women within both their organisations and the local community, as part of their social responsibility. It is of a biannual nature and is aimed at all national companies.

Link: <https://www.mimp.gob.pe/empresasegura/>

Note: In reference to the context of violence towards women, the Universidad San Martín de Porres carried out a study¹² on the costs of violence of women in formal micro-enterprises in Peru. The results showed that violence towards women generates a loss of 47.3 days of productivity per year and a loss in added trade value of USD 9,130. For 550,000 micro-enterprises led by women, the country cost is between USD 1,982 and USD 2,497 million dollars per year, 90% of which corresponds to opportunity cost and 10% to out-of-pocket expenditure.

¹² https://www.administracion.usmp.edu.pe/investigacion/files/Costos_VcM_microempresas_formales_peruanas-1.pdf

4. Provide support and new services to members requesting guidance

EOs can venture out and come up with innovative new services to members requesting guidance on gender equality at management levels. For instance, EOs can offer their training through online platforms for a wide variety of their members. Where feasible, they can organize internal gender platforms where female managers can tap into mentoring opportunities and other resources or for women entrepreneurs to network and learn from one another. EOs can also partner with male CEOs to encourage a change of mindset in companies. Having frequent exchanges with members on their services can guide EOs in coming up with new and inventive services to support their members with efforts towards gender inclusivity.

Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI)

The ILO has collaborated with the FEI in the last few years to help increase the number of women in the FEI board, the publication of the Women Entrepreneurship Development (WED) Assessment report and the establishment of a Social Academy entitled "Human Resources Academy: strategies and practical solutions for better HR and gender policies" which is a tailored-made training cycle for HR directors and other managers offered as a service by the FEI for its members.

Link: https://www.ilo.org/africa/media-centre/video/WCMS_711225/lang--en/index.htm

CEOE's "Proyecto Promociona"

The Spanish employer organization, CEOE, works together with the National Women Institute to run a high-level training programme for women managers since 2013 entitled "Proyecto Promociona". The objective of the programme is to increase the number of women in senior management positions in companies. Following the success of this programme, CEOE has also recently launched, another programme entitled "Progresiva Proyecto", aimed at middle women managers.

Link: <https://proyectopromociona.com/>

ECOP (Philippines) – fostering soft skills for women

The Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) works with the ILO ACT/EMP in training of trainers on soft skills for women in the workplace. The project builds upon the In Business Soft Skills modules and materials to be used by employers' organizations and private enterprises. The materials and modules are based on a training method where participants work in groups, learn with and from each other, and learn through activities rather than complex textual information. Ultimately, the project aims to highlight the importance and relevance of soft skills for personal productivity and enterprise competitiveness. More than that, the project also aims to improve career prospects and empower workers in the Philippines, especially women.

Link: <https://ecop.org.ph/ecop-conducts-training-of-trainers-on-soft-skills/>

NHO's "Female Futures"

Female Future is a management and board development program for female managers. The main purpose is to provide knowledge, self-awareness and to motivate women to take board positions and important management tasks in business and industry. The program has proven to be a success in Norway. The program is now being carried out by NHO's sister organizations in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana and Tunisia with good results. The program is based on a model developed by NHO, as a service to its members. The programme provides a better pool of competent women to choose from when recruitment to boards and management positions take place. This is beneficial for the women, for the business community and for countries that deliberately work to get more women into top positions.

Link: <https://www.decp.nl/friends/nho-confederation-of-norwegian-enterprise-4617>

5. Share best practices across the region through the IOE

Through the IOE's own Gender Network, EOs have access to other EOs within their region or with EOs in other parts of the world to learn from their experiences on gender equality. The IOE Gender Network also provides good practices brochures and policy guidance on gender equality at management levels, which are readily available to all EOs through the IOE website. EOs can tap into the rich resources and extensive network of the IOE to share their best practices in order to learn from one another. Not only are these resources useful materials to the IOE members, they also help to track progress by the EOs in their attempts to make Sustainable Development Goal 5 a reality. Most importantly, the work by EOs will be instrumental in showing the private sector engagement in promoting gender equality.

Award Ceremony for “The best women managers” in Montenegro

The Award Ceremony for “The best women managers” in Montenegro is a traditional event held annually and organized by Montenegrin Employers Federation (MEF) with the aim of promoting successful business women with responsible and professional attitudes in performing their work, confirming the power of women leadership and larger representation of women at management positions. In 2019 and 2018, MEF awards were given to successful business women leaders in the following categories: (1) economy, (2) public sector, (3) civil society sector, (4) media. Three equal MEF awards are given in each category. This means that twelve awards for “The Best Women Managers in Montenegro” are given each year. In addition, at the same event, the MEF honors representatives of the private and/or public sector and awards them with *MEF Plaques for special contribution to the economic empowerment of women in Montenegro*.

MEF also created the training programme for women managers as a platform to develop knowledge base, skills and professional results. The training programme is specially designed for women in management as well as women aspiring to higher leadership positions. It aims to support the ambitions and initiatives of business women by helping them towards their professional accomplishment and advancement and empowering them to show the full potential in their economic, political and social lives.

Note: In 2018, both the event and training programme were organized within the project “Women in Management in Montenegro – Support to Leadership and Professional Development of Women in Montenegro” implemented by MEF, with support of ILO. The sustainability of this project is due to MEF’s strong incentive to carry out these initiatives on its own.

‘Women in Management in Montenegro’ report outlines findings and provides policy recommendations:

<http://poslodavci.org/en/publications/women-in-management-in-montenegro>

Recommendations to Companies

1. Introduce organizational changes to change corporate culture

Even in countries where the culture and norm is strongly male dominated, companies can create an organisational culture that is inclusive to reap the gender diversity dividend. One way around this is to promote changes to internal corporate culture. Inspiring male CEOs can be used as 'Ambassadors' or 'Champions' to advocate for this change. They can be used to promote gender diversity in their companies as well as groom female talent for their positions.

'Male Champions of Change' Club in Poland - Greater diversity at the top will make Polish businesses more competitive

The Champions of Change club is the first organisation in Poland to bring the chairmen of 11 large companies together to support women and diversity in business. The club was founded on 25 October 2018 by the Ambassador of Australia in Poland, Foundation Sukces Pisany Szminką and CEOs of 6 big companies: BGŻ BNP Paribas, Citi Handlowy, Coca-Cola Poland Services, Deloitte, Mastercard, Microsoft.

The club's key objectives are to promote best practice and initiatives to increase the number of women in senior management and executive positions, to eliminate the gender pay gap and to introduce effective new tools to make better use of women's and men's talents. The founding members emphasised that while they recognise the importance of being inspired by international trends and ideas, their primary focus will be on developing solutions that specifically target Polish issues. This, they believe, will translate into better use of diverse teams, consequently driving greater competitiveness for the country's companies. During the club's first 12 months, the members created working teams made up of experts from the founding companies, identifying and developing good practices in terms of the diversity and inclusion activities in their organisations and the wider market place. They also focused on developing training programmes to build high-performing diverse teams and on creating 'All Roles Flex' tools to enable flexible career paths for all.

Link: <https://sukcespisanyszminka.pl/powstal-klub-champions-of-change-pierwsza-taka-organizacja-polsce-dzialajaca-rzecz-wspierania-kobiet-roznorodnosci-biznesie/>

Diversity & Inclusion Rating - an objective and transparent assessment of diversity and inclusion management

The Diversity & Inclusion Rating provides an objective and transparent assessment of how diversity is managed in organisations. Employers can use it to determine tangible goals and develop action plans. It allows them to better define the opportunities and risks related to diversity management, and delineate the areas that require improvement in building an inclusive and diverse workplace. Forum Odpowiedzialnego Biznesu (Responsible Business Forum), coordinator of the Diversity Charter in Poland, has initiated a project that aims at assessing the companies' maturity in Diversity & Inclusion. Deloitte, the study's auditor, ensures that the assessment process is conducted correctly. The Diversity & Inclusion Rating is based on Polish and international experiences and methodologies. The questionnaire is based on ISO and GRI Standards (diversity and equal opportunity) and OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (employment and employee relations).

Link: <https://www2.deloitte.com/pl/pl/pages/human-capital/solutions/hr-diversity-inclusion-rating.html>

2. Put in place diversity and inclusion policies to retain and promote talent

Companies can, where feasible, introduce policies related to recruitment or promote career development policies such as equal access to skills training, mentoring programmes as well as exposing female talent to all company operations and functions to build up their portfolio. Companies can also organize cross-company exchanges to tap into a larger network of capable women in order to groom their own female talent.

Polish Diversity Charter

The Diversity Charter is a written commitment which is signed by companies that oblige themselves to the introduction of equal treatment policy and diversity management, as well as active prevention of discrimination in the workplace. By signing the Diversity Charter (Karta Różnorodności), a company commits to non-discrimination in the workplace and to introducing policies that create and promote diversity. In Poland, the Charter is coordinated exclusively by Responsible Business Forum and held under the auspices of the Commissioner for Human Rights. Over 7 thousand signatories in 24 European countries so far, and over 270 signatories in Poland.

Link: <http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/diversity-charter/>

3. Introduce family-friendly policies

Companies can introduce family-friendly policies which are accessible to both men and women, allowing for more men to share in family responsibilities. Flexible working arrangements can be offered to all, and such measures if increasingly utilized by top management will gain more traction within the company. Other family-friendly policies which are already used in various instances, where feasible and relevant at the company level, include offering parental leave for fathers as well as mothers in the

company or additional contributions to parental leave, contributing to company-specific childcare facilities and setting up nursing stations for mothers, among others. While some of these measures may be difficult to implement for some companies, in addition to their own initiatives companies could seek the support of political authorities in order to tap into potential resources.

Nestlé supports families with new parental leave policy

Nestlé has adopted a new gender-neutral policy for its employees worldwide. Under the new policy, parental leave for primary caregivers will be extended to 18 weeks of fully paid leave from 14 weeks previously. In addition to this, the parental support policy reinforces employment protection, non-discrimination, health protection, the availability of flexible working options, as well as breastfeeding support.

Link: <https://www.nestle.com/media/pressreleases/allpressreleases/nestle-supports-families-new-parental-leave-policy>

4. Put in place structures for women re-entering workforce

Women tend to leave the workplaces either due to statutory maternity leave or extend their absence for longer periods of time to care for their young infants. Companies can come up with policies that help to integrate returning women to their prior positions through extensive training. They can, for example, opt to offer online training to women who are keen on returning back to work so that they are not entirely cut off from the workforce.

Laboratoria

This is a Peruvian non-profit organisation which aims to educate and train underprivileged young women as programmers and web developers. The aim is to provide them with labour market opportunities in the digital sector. Currently, it facilitates training for women in Lima, Arequipa, Santiago de Chile, Mexico City, Guadalajara and Sao Paulo. In April 2016, Laboratoria received the Google Rise Award for its inclusive work in the technology sector. Likewise, in August of the same year, the project was recognised by the MIT Technology Review as one of the most innovative projects driven by entrepreneurs under 35 years of age.

Link: <https://www.laboratoria.la/>

Goldman Sachs Returnship Programme

Goldman Sachs debited one of the first returnship programmes in 2008 and there are now at least 50 similar ones across the United States. Such programmes are structured like internships and are open to women and men who have taken a career break of at least two years and they generally last from eight weeks to six months.

Source: Harvard Business Review, 2019, "Helping Stay-at-Home Parents Reenter the Workforce", <https://hbr.org/2019/06/helping-stay-at-home-parents-reenter-the-workforce>

5. Provide awareness raising training for senior management on the business case for more women in management

In order for companies to fully embrace a change in corporate culture and move towards a more gender diverse management, it is important to sensitize employees on promoting gender equality. This can be achieved, for example, through awareness raising training for all, especially senior management. Such training can cover topics of family-friendly policies as well as measures to attract and retain female talent. Providing training to senior management might be helpful in some instances so that they are not only aware and sold on the need for a gender diverse management, but have the right tools to put the right measures in place. While this may not be affordable for SMEs, SMEs can consider tapping into existing resources for this purpose. They may choose to seek guidance from employers' organisations or women's associations of which they may be a part of or they may choose to consider partnering with bigger companies which provide similar training to their employees in the same industry. There are some countries too, which have a growing aging population, where older women no longer have family responsibilities and are interested to devote more time to work.

Kering's Internal Campaign against Gender Stereotypes

Kering, a French luxury company, launched an internal campaign against gender stereotypes, with the aim of engaging all collaborators in a discussion on women's and men's representation and to study how these stereotypes trap people in gendered social roles.

Source: BusinessEurope, 2019, "Key issues to Strengthen Gender Equality in Europe", Position paper



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