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Gender Inclusion Guidebook



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Introduction - Setting the Foundation for Gender Equality Policies in the Workplace

In the modern landscape of organisational dynamics, fostering gender equality isn't just a moral imperative; it's a strategic necessity. As organisations embark on the journey of crafting, enacting, and overseeing gender equality policies within workplaces, the aim extends beyond fairness to unlocking the full potential of both organisations and society at large.

Greece, Cyprus, and Austria, like many European Countries, grapple with gender disparities in various facets of professional life, from representation in leadership roles to wage discrepancies. However, this challenge presents an opportunity to reshape workplaces into environments where talent knows no gender and where every individual is empowered to thrive.

About STRIVE Project

The STRIVE project is an Erasmus+ initiative focused on fostering a work culture of inclusion and respect that ensures gender equality through practical training for managers and dissemination activities. The project aims to address and mitigate gender disparities within the workplace, enhancing both organisational effectiveness and employee well-being.

Objectives of the STRIVE Project:

- Foster a culture of inclusion and respect that promotes gender equality.
- Ensure that all managers are aware of their responsibilities under organisational policies and legal requirements related to gender equality and harassment prevention.
- Provide ongoing support and resources to managers as they work to create a more equitable and respectful workplace culture.
- Improve work-life balance policies and practices to support women's participation in the workforce.

- Develop an innovative train-the-trainer program to build the internal capacity of organisations, ensuring sustained diversity-related efforts even after the departure of external trainers.
- Build partnerships and networks with other organisations to share best practices and advocate for gender equality in the wider community.

The activities are carried out by three European partners: Hellas for Us (Greece), bit Schulungcenter GmbH (Austria), and MindSpin (Cyprus). The focus on these countries stems from their unique yet comparable challenges regarding gender equality in the workplace. Concentrating efforts within these nations, the project can tailor its approach to the specific cultural, legal, and business landscapes, making the recommendations more actionable and impactful.

This Gender Inclusion Guidebook, created by the partners of Strive project, serves as the cornerstone of this endeavour, offering a systematic approach to the creation, implementation, and monitoring of gender equality policies. Providing a structured framework, it aims to equip organisations within Europe, particularly in Greece, Cyprus, and Austria, with the tools and insights necessary to cultivate environments where diversity is celebrated, inclusion is the norm, and gender equality is not just a concept but a lived reality.

While this guide is tailored to the Greek, Cypriot, and Austrian business environments, its principles and strategies are adaptable to other regions and countries. The framework provided can serve as a blueprint for organisations worldwide seeking to foster gender equality, making adjustments as necessary to fit their unique contexts.

Target Audience

This guide is directed at a broad range of stakeholders within organisations, including:

- Human Resources professionals responsible for developing and implementing policies.
- Senior and middle management tasked with ensuring compliance and fostering a culture of inclusion.
- Diversity and Inclusion officers who champion gender equality initiatives.
- Union representatives who advocate for employees' rights and wellbeing.

- Legal advisors ensuring that policies align with national and international laws.
- Training and development specialists focusing on educational programs and capacity building.

This Guide delves into each step of the process, from assessing the current state of gender equality within organisations to setting clear objectives, engaging stakeholders, developing comprehensive policies, communicating effectively, implementing strategies, and evaluating outcomes. Each step is essential, building upon the last to create a holistic approach to gender equality that permeates every aspect of organisational culture and operations.

The guidance offered is tailored to the unique context of workplaces in Greece, Cyprus, and Austria, taking into account cultural nuances, legal considerations, and industry-specific challenges. By grounding recommendations in the realities of the European business landscape, the guide seeks to ensure that efforts toward gender equality are not just aspirational but actionable and impactful.

All in all, the pursuit of gender equality within the workplace is a continuous journey requiring commitment, education, and proactive measures. By leveraging the structured framework and strategic insights provided in this guide, organisations can create a culture of respect and inclusion that empowers all employees and drives sustainable success.

As European Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli, stated: "Achieving gender equality is a fundamental principle of the European Union. It is essential for the full realisation of our social and economic potential. Only by ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for all can we build a truly inclusive and prosperous society."

Gender equality - The basics

What is gender equality

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right but also a necessary foundation for a peaceful, sustainable and prosperous world (UN, strategic goal). Eight years remain until the milestone of 2030 for achieving the [Sustainable Development Goals](#); progress in this direction is slow and varies according to the priorities set by governments around the world. According to data from the [European Institute for Gender Equality \(EIGE\) and based on the European Gender Equality Index 2023](#), no Member State of the European Union (EU) has achieved full gender equality and progress is slow. In recent years, the financial crisis and the prolonged austerity policies in Greece and Cyprus, followed by the pandemic, have had a significant gender impact and have further hindered the already slow progress of these nations in this regard.

At a European level, the “[Gender Equality Strategy](#)” forms the framework for the European Commission's work on gender equality and sets out policy objectives and key actions for the period 2020-2025. Regarding the policies to promote gender equality in research and innovation, gender equality was gradually strengthened as a priority of the European Commission for the European Research Area (ERA); in 2020, a new commitment was made and integrated into several measures and initiatives, such as the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (Horizon Europe) for the period 2021-2027. In this framework programme, gender equality is set as a horizontal priority, both in the evaluation of research proposals and in the implementation of research programmes as well as in the profile of institutions applying for funding. In this way, one of the basic conditions for funding is the existence of active Gender Equality Plans, which have certain specifications, at Universities and research organisations. The integration of the principle of gender equality in a clearer and more binding way into the strategic plans and objectives for education, research and innovation can only be achieved through concrete and comprehensive planning, such as that undertaken in the Gender Equality Plans (GEPs). This GEP aspires to actively contribute to these changes.

[A Gender Equality Plan \(GEP\)](#) serves as a strategic framework designed to promote gender equality within organisations, particularly in the context of

research, academia, and innovation. It encompasses a range of actions and measures aimed at addressing gender disparities, biases, and inequalities that may exist within the organisational structure, processes, and culture. The GEP typically involves conducting an in-depth analysis of the current state of gender equality within the organisation, identifying areas for improvement, and setting clear objectives and targets for achieving gender equality. It includes specific actions and initiatives to be implemented, such as policies, programs, and training activities, to foster a more inclusive and equitable environment for all individuals, regardless of gender. Additionally, the GEP often entails monitoring and evaluating progress towards its objectives, with mechanisms in place to adjust strategies and activities as needed. Ultimately, the Gender Equality Plan represents a commitment by the organisation to actively promote and support gender equality in all aspects of its operations and practices.

Examples of initiatives that may be included in a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) encompass a wide range of measures aimed at addressing gender disparities and promoting inclusivity. This may involve implementing policies to ensure gender-balanced representation in decision-making bodies, such as boards and committees, and establishing transparent recruitment and promotion processes that mitigate biases and promote equal opportunities for advancement.

Additionally, organisations may introduce flexible work arrangements and parental leave policies to support work-life balance for employees of all genders. Training and development programs can be implemented to raise awareness of unconscious biases and promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Harassment prevention policies and mechanisms for reporting and addressing incidents of gender-based discrimination or violence may also be part of the GEP. Furthermore, initiatives to promote the visibility and recognition of women in leadership positions and fields traditionally dominated by men, such as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), can be included to foster a more inclusive and diverse organisational culture. These examples demonstrate the multifaceted approach of a Gender Equality Plan, addressing various aspects of organisational practices to create an environment where all individuals have equal opportunities to thrive and succeed.

Gender Pay Gap

In the pursuit of economic security and equality, the persistent gender wage gap remains a formidable barrier, not only in Europe but across the globe. Despite decades of efforts to address this issue, women continue to earn significantly less than their male counterparts, reflecting deep-rooted inequalities in the labour market. This chasm in earnings not only undermines the financial well-being of women but also perpetuates broader societal disparities.

In Europe, where gender equality is enshrined in principles and policies, the prevalence of the gender wage gap underscores the complexity of the issue. Despite strides towards gender parity in various aspects of life, such as education and political representation, the disparity in earnings persists, casting a shadow over the region's commitment to equality and fairness. Recent data from the European Union (EU) paints a stark picture: women in the EU earned on average 12.7% less per hour than men in 2021. This figure, while indicative of progress over the years, signifies a stubbornly persistent gap that continues to thwart efforts towards true gender equality. Moreover, the situation varies widely across EU countries, with some nations exhibiting more pronounced disparities than others.

Beyond the numerical discrepancy lies a complex web of factors contributing to the gender wage gap. Structural inequalities, occupational segregation, and societal expectations regarding caregiving responsibilities all play a role in perpetuating this imbalance. Despite concerted efforts to address these issues, progress has been slow, and significant disparities persist across various demographic and occupational lines. As Europe grapples with the implications of the gender wage gap, policymakers, advocates, and citizens alike are called upon to confront this challenge with urgency and determination. Closing the gap is not only a matter of economic justice but also a crucial step towards building a more equitable and inclusive society. In this endeavour, understanding the root causes, implementing effective policies, and fostering cultural shifts are paramount.

Gender Based Violence and Harassment

Gender-based violence (GBV) is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality. GBV is any type of violence based on someone's gender from physical to emotional to financial to reproductive violence. While anybody can be a victim of GBV, women are overwhelmingly the victims.

Violence against women continues to be one of the most severe human rights violations within societies. It is deeply rooted in systemic power imbalances between women and men.

Workplace violence and harassment are unfortunately prevalent occurrences. More than one in five people have experienced violence and harassment at work, whether physical, psychological or sexual, with women being particularly at risk. At both EU and Member States levels, policymakers actively support the development of policies and measures to combat gender-based violence (GBV).

The Council has adopted a decision inviting member states to ratify the International Labour Organisation's convention on violence and harassment (ILO convention 190). The violence and harassment convention is the first international instrument setting out minimum standards on tackling work-related harassment and violence. This convention will help promote decent work for all, health and safety at work and gender equality, and will also help to combat discrimination.

With today's decision, the Council invites member states to ratify the parts of the convention that concern in particular the improvement of the working environment to protect workers' health and safety and safeguard equality between men and women in matters of employment.

In 2019, The International Labor Organisation (ILO) ratified the "Violence and Harassment Convention," marking the first and only international convention dedicated to this issue. This convention, along with Recommendation 206 (R206), emphasises the importance of an inclusive, integrated, and gender-responsive approach to preventing and eliminating violence and harassment in the workplace. C190 and R206 ensure that no one is left behind, extending protection beyond traditional work hours and locations to encompass activities like commuting, business travel, meetings, and social gatherings related to work. The

Convention acknowledges that violence and harassment hinder equal opportunities and underscores the necessity of a gender-sensitive approach to address these issues in the world of work.

Governments are bound by international law to address the issue of gender-based violence effectively. International legal frameworks emphasise the importance of collaborative and organised efforts in combating such violence. Consequently, both states and non-state actors bear the responsibility of preventing gender-based violence and harassment due to their legal duty of care. Private sector organisations also have obligations in this regard, stemming not only from legal requirements but also from their commitments to business efficiency, adherence to principles of business ethics, and alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, it is imperative for companies and organisations to take proactive measures.

GBVH across the workplace constitutes violation of:

- Personal rights of the party exposed to violence and harassment;
- The right and freedom to work;
- Prohibition of discrimination / principles of equality;
- The right to be treated with dignity in the workplace
- Occupational health and safety of the employees;
- Labour peace;
- Public order and safety.

Surveys around the world

European Union: A recent survey by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) highlighted the under-reporting of sexual harassment in the workplace across the EU. It detailed that many cases go unreported due to fear of retaliation or disbelief that any action will be taken. The survey also emphasized the importance of better legal frameworks and support systems to address this issue effectively ([European Institute for Gender Equality](#)).

Eurostat: The EU-GBV survey from Eurostat outlines various forms of workplace harassment experienced by women across member states, including indecent jokes, unsolicited physical contact, and inappropriate advances via social

media. It underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to tackle these issues at the policy level ([European Commission](#)).

France: According to a 2018 study, about 20% of female employees in France reported experiencing sexual harassment during their careers. This study brought attention to the pervasive nature of sexual harassment and the need for stringent workplace policies ([FEPS](#)).

Australia: A national study in Australia revealed alarming rates of workplace sexual harassment. Over the past five years, two out of every five women and one out of every four men reported encountering harassment. This study highlighted the critical need for stronger workplace protections and cultural changes to address these issues ([European Commission](#)).

Mexico: In Mexico, a survey found that 46% of female employees had experienced some form of sexual harassment at work. This high prevalence indicates the necessity for better enforcement of anti-harassment laws and more robust support systems for victims ([European Commission](#)).

United Kingdom: A national survey in the UK found that over half of the women participants, and approximately two-thirds of women aged 18 to 24, had experienced harassment at work. This highlights the urgency for targeted interventions, particularly for younger women entering the workforce ([European Commission](#)).

According to a survey conducted among 1,444 women employed in the transport sector across 24 European countries, a significant portion perceive violence against women, both from colleagues/managers and customers, as common within the industry (ETF, 2017; ILO). It is crucial for private sector entities to recognise their obligations in combatting gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH), not only as a business necessity but also as an ethical responsibility. The adverse effects of GBVH extend beyond the individuals affected, impacting their health and well-being, as well as their families. It's imperative for organisations and investors to understand that even seemingly minor instances of violence and harassment can have long-lasting detrimental effects on individuals' physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health.

These adverse effects can also manifest in various ways within the organisation's business processes, including:

- Erosion of trust with investors and partners
- Damage to relationships with users of products and services
- Legal costs arising from litigation
- Increased absenteeism and reduced efficiency among employees
- Challenges in ensuring the safety of shift workers
- Weaknesses in occupational health and safety protocols
- Difficulties in recruitment, skill development, and promotion of personnel
- Issues with talent retention
- Damage to corporate reputation in the public eye

However, effectively addressing the problem can yield several benefits for employers, including:

- Reduction in sick leave taken by employees
- Enhancement of employees' health, safety, and overall well-being, fostering a positive work environment
- Improvement in the company's reputation, aiding in attracting and retaining talent
- Increased productivity among employees who were victims, perpetrators, or witnesses of violence in the past
- Enhanced employee satisfaction through the availability of trusted channels for addressing issues
- Positive societal and familial impacts when workplace violence and harassment are identified and addressed effectively.

Flexible working arrangements (FWAs)

Flexible work arrangements encompass various business policies that empower employees to determine how, when, and where they work. These arrangements include hybrid work schedules, compressed workweeks, job sharing, and flextime, among others. Organisations adopt flexible working arrangements to help employees achieve better work-life balance and enhance productivity.

Flexible working arrangements (FWAs) offer increased opportunities for entering the labor market, maintaining full-time employment, or achieving a better work-life balance by aligning working hours with personal needs. Research from the Eurobarometer in 2018 reveals that nearly half of part-time workers in the EU express willingness to transition to full-time roles if more FWAs were accessible. However, despite this desire, only 42% of individuals actually utilise available FWAs, indicating a need to address both their general availability and barriers to uptake. These barriers can include discouragement from management, social stigma, lack of support from colleagues, or anticipated negative effects on career advancement. Even before the outbreak of COVID-19, various forms of flexible work, such as teleworking and flexitime, were in place across EU Member States. However, the pandemic led to a surge in flexible working practices with many workers wanting to focus on their work-life balance and have more time for their family and personal life. There is much debate on the pros and cons of flexible work initiatives, with features such as work-life balance, autonomy, productivity and mental health at the core of the discussions.

In 2020, when the pandemic hit, there was a significant increase in teleworking in most EU Member States, as highlighted by [the Network of Eurofound correspondents and the EU Labour Force Survey 2019–2022 \(EU-LFS\)](#). Remote working policies were adopted across the EU due to travel restrictions and the requirement for workers to stay at home. After this initial surge in teleworking, the number of EU workers working from home continued to increase in 2021, followed by a small decline in 2022, and a general trend of stabilisation by the end of 2022 and 2023. The number of workers teleworking 'usually or sometimes' increased from 14% in 2019 to 24% in 2021, followed by a small decline to 22% in 2022. More than 44 million workers teleworked in the EU.

In some countries (Austria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands) teleworking remains widespread, with almost the same number of workers teleworking in 2022 than in 2020. However, the outlook for teleworking differs in other countries. For instance, Bulgaria and Romania experienced the biggest decline in teleworking after 2021. Other countries also experienced a considerable reduction in workers teleworking (Portugal, Poland, and Greece and Slovakia). Poland is the only country returning to pre-pandemic figures. The remaining 14 Member States follow the EU average; a small decrease in 2022, which then stabilised in 2023 (based on national level LFS quarterly data).

Interestingly, the EU-LFS 2022 shows strong variations in the percentage of people working from home between 2019 and 2022 depending on the skill level of workers. Workers in high-skilled occupations experienced the most significant increase in remote working.

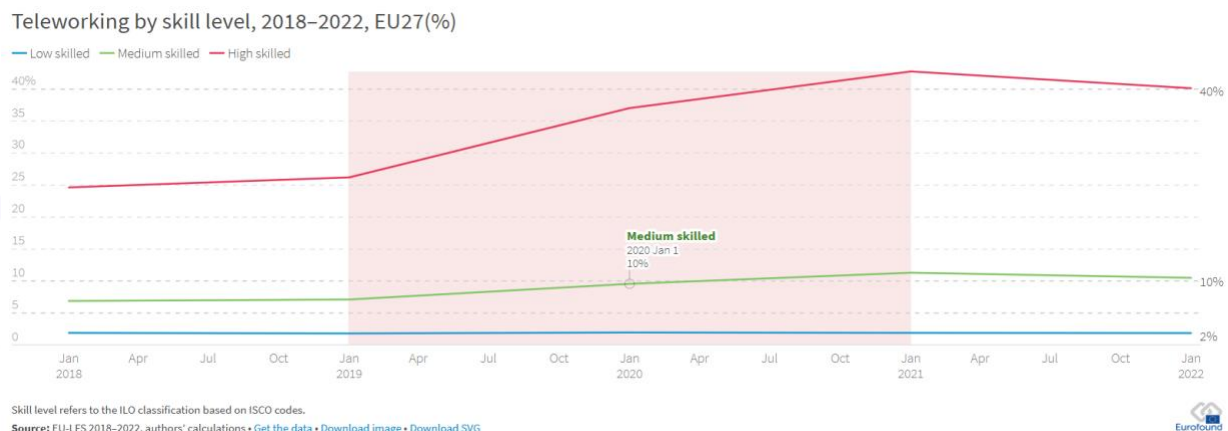


Figure 1 Skill level refers to the ILO classification based on ISCO codes. Source: EU-LFS 2018–2022, authors' calculations. Retrieved by www.eurofound.europa.eu

FWAs typically encompass flexibility regarding the amount, timing, and location of work, aiming to alleviate conflicts between work and personal life demands. Originally introduced to facilitate greater female participation in the workforce, FWAs remain closely linked to the need for additional time for household and family responsibilities. This association contributes to the lower adoption of certain FWAs by men. Nevertheless, shifts in the labour market increasingly position FWAs as innovative tools for enhancing productivity and attracting and retaining talent, presenting mutual benefits for both employees and employers.

In the European Union (EU), the public sector employs approximately 27% of all female employees and about 16% of all male employees. Despite this notable percentage gap, a comparable proportion of women (65%) and men (62%) lacked flexibility in setting their working-time arrangements, indicating a disproportionate impact on women. Furthermore, when examining varying levels of flexibility in working-time arrangements, the public sector had the smallest percentage of employees (5%)—both women and men—who had complete autonomy in determining their working hours.

Women face greater barriers in transitioning from part-time to full-time employment compared to men. While data on flexibility in working-time arrangements suggest lower availability of Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) for women, the actual uptake of such arrangements is higher among women than men. This discrepancy contributes to what is termed as a 'penalty' imposed by flexible work on women's careers and lifetime earnings. This situation is exacerbated by gendered norms where women disproportionately bear caregiving responsibilities.

Moreover, the lack of supervisor support and unsupportive organisational cultures also hinder women's uptake of FWAs. Additionally, the design of national public policies, such as parental leave entitlements, varies widely across Member States, influencing the availability and uptake of FWAs. For instance, in Sweden, parents can use parental leave entitlements to shorten their working hours, further shaping the landscape of FWAs.

In the EU, part-time employment is much more common among women, with four times as many women as men aged 20-64 working part-time. Despite the smaller pool of men working part-time, they have higher opportunities to transition to full-time jobs compared to women.

Flexible work arrangements have become increasingly popular in today's workforce, offering employees more control over their work schedules and locations. In this article, we'll explore the reasons behind the popularity of flexible work and provide real-world examples to inspire you.

Flexible work arrangements facilitate better management of personal obligations such as childcare, resulting in fewer distractions and improved overall well-being.

This leads to reduced stress, lower risk of burnout, and higher productivity among employees. Employers benefit from reduced absenteeism, increased loyalty, and the ability to attract a diverse pool of talent.

Common Types of Flexible Working Arrangements

Remote Work: Remote work, often used interchangeably with telecommuting, allows employees to work from anywhere globally, as long as they have the required equipment and internet access. Unlike telecommuting, physical attendance at the workplace is typically not required for remote workers, who may be based in different countries. Remote work enables individuals to perform their job duties independently from any location, contributing to increased flexibility and autonomy. While remote workers may participate in virtual meetings, they are not obliged to attend office-based events, distinguishing remote work from telecommuting arrangements. Working from home or other remote locations offers benefits such as increased employee happiness and productivity, broader talent acquisition, cost savings, and higher retention rates.

The Four-Day Workweek: Employees work four days per week instead of the standard five, resulting in benefits such as lower burnout, better mental health, and increased productivity.

Flextime: Flextime, or flexitime, allows employees to determine their start and end times within a flexible framework, provided they fulfill their contracted hours. This arrangement enables individuals to adapt their working hours to accommodate personal commitments or preferences, enhancing work-life balance and commuting flexibility.

Hybrid Work: Hybrid work entails a working arrangement where employees have the flexibility to work both on-site and off-site, either through telecommuting or remote work, depending on individual circumstances, preferences, and job requirements. This approach emphasises how employees work rather than where they work, providing a variety of options within the same organisation to promote a happier and more productive workforce. In this setup, some staff may choose to work on-site, while others opt for remote work, with the freedom to alternate between the two based on their needs and objectives. This flexibility extends to when work is completed, allowing employees to achieve tasks before agreed deadlines. Hybrid work arrangements are particularly beneficial for those who prefer working outside conventional hours, require focus away from office distractions, or balance work with other responsibilities such as caregiving duties. This model allows employees to work both remotely and in-office, offering flexibility while maintaining team collaboration and engagement.

Results-Only Work: Employees are evaluated based on outcomes rather than hours worked, providing autonomy and flexibility in completing tasks.

Shift work: It entails dividing the working day into various shifts assigned to employees, allowing different groups to work at different times, especially in businesses operating around the clock. This means employees may work non-traditional hours, including night shifts, and schedules may vary from day to day or week to week.

Job Sharing: Job sharing is another flexible work arrangement, where two people are employed on a part-time basis, combining to carry out the work that would otherwise be done by one person employed on a full-time basis. For employees, the appeal of job sharing is similar to the appeal of a part-time job, allowing greater flexibility to work alongside other commitments. For employers, it may sometimes be easier to find two people willing to work part-time hours, and theoretically, the amount of work done is the same as if a full-time employee were hired. It can also be beneficial in instances where one employee takes leave, meaning the role can still be fulfilled in some capacity. Successful job-sharing arrangements rely on work being divided up cleanly so that everyone knows what they are doing at all times. Good communication between the employees sharing the role – and between the employees and the employer – is also necessary. Aside from greater flexibility, the reduced hours can have benefits in terms of reducing absences and improving well-being, especially in stressful roles.

While these are some of the most widely adopted flexible work arrangements, other options include annualised hours, job sharing, and voluntary reduced work time. These arrangements offer employees greater flexibility and organisations the opportunity to enhance productivity and work-life balance.

Organisational Policy for gender-based violence

An organisational policy on gender equality and violence prevention serves as a guiding framework for fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful workplace environment. This policy outlines the organisation's commitment to promoting gender equality, preventing all forms of violence and harassment, and providing support to employees who experience such behaviours. Here are key components to include in the organisational policy:

1. **Purpose and Objectives:** Clearly state the purpose of the policy, emphasising the organisation's commitment to fostering gender equality, diversity, and inclusion. Outline the specific objectives of the policy, such as creating a culture of respect, eliminating discrimination, and preventing gender-based violence and harassment.
2. **Scope and Applicability:** Define the scope of the policy, specifying which employees, contractors, and stakeholders it applies to. Ensure that the policy applies to all aspects of organisational operations, including recruitment, employment, training, and interactions with clients or customers.
3. **Prohibited Behaviors:** Clearly define prohibited behaviors, including but not limited to sexual harassment, discrimination, bullying, and retaliation. Provide examples of unacceptable conduct to help employees understand what constitutes inappropriate behavior.
4. **Reporting Mechanisms:** Outline the procedures for reporting incidents of gender-based violence or harassment. Encourage employees to report any observed or experienced incidents promptly and assure them of confidentiality and protection from retaliation.
5. **Investigation and Response:** Detail the process for investigating complaints of gender-based violence or harassment. Specify the roles and responsibilities of managers, HR personnel, and other relevant parties in conducting fair and impartial investigations. Describe the disciplinary measures that may be taken against perpetrators.
6. **Support Services:** Highlight the support services available to employees who experience gender-based violence or harassment. This may include access to counseling, legal assistance, medical support, and flexible work arrangements.

7. **Training and Awareness:** Emphasise the importance of training and awareness-raising initiatives to prevent gender-based violence and harassment. Require all employees to undergo regular training on the policy, their rights and responsibilities, and bystander intervention strategies.
8. **Review and Monitoring:** Establish a process for regularly reviewing and updating the policy to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with legal requirements. Monitor the implementation of the policy and track key performance indicators related to gender equality and violence prevention.
9. **Communication and Enforcement:** Communicate the policy to all employees through multiple channels, such as employee handbooks, intranet portals, and training sessions. Clearly communicate the consequences of violating the policy and enforce disciplinary actions consistently.
10. **External Commitments:** Align the organisational policy with external commitments and legal obligations, such as EU directives on gender equality and human rights conventions. Demonstrate the organisation's commitment to upholding international standards of human rights and gender equality.

Establishing the Policy Development Team

Organisations often establish a policy development team to ensure equality within their structure and combat acts that violate equality, typically led by the Human Resources department. This team should comprise individuals from relevant units and administration in line with their job descriptions, such as policy development, implementation, monitoring, and assessment. Regular meetings should be organised to facilitate information exchange and ensure the participation of various municipal employees.

If the organisation has a union, it's advisable to include union representatives in the team or form an advisory board alongside the team. Additionally, involving non-governmental organisations working in the field of gender on advisory boards can be beneficial. The core or coordinating team responsible for gender equality should possess relevant experience or undergo training in this domain.

Key representatives to consider for the team include:

- Human Resources department manager and subject experts
- Sustainability/Social Compliance officer
- Legal Affairs department representative
- Industrial Relations department representative
- Management team representative responsible for operations
- Corporate Communications representative
- Occupational Health and Safety unit representative
- Ethics Committee/Internal Audit representative
- Representatives of trade unions (if applicable)
- Diversity and Inclusion Group representative (if applicable)
- Procurement unit representative for cases involving suppliers, subcontractors, and subcontractors.

Team members should possess awareness and knowledge of the subject matter, ideally undergoing gender training before commencing their duties. Authorisation from senior management empowers the team to carry out its work effectively.

Identifying Risks, Capacities, and Resources

The alignment of organisational efforts to ensure gender equality with the overall business strategy is crucial. Therefore, creating a strategy document covering the economic justifications, potential risks, and opportunities of these efforts adds depth to the policy framework.

Each company faces unique risks based on its sector, workforce demographics, project nature, and stakeholder interactions. Identifying these risks at the outset enables policies and guidelines to address them effectively.

Risk, capacity, and resource assessments can be conducted at the beginning of the policy development process or during its progression. These assessments help prioritise policy areas, ensure relevance to the current situation, gauge implementation efficiency, set realistic targets, and identify areas for improvement.

Additionally, attention should be paid to workplace and employee differences. New risk analyses may necessitate additional regulations tailored to workplace

variations. Consideration should also be given to the awareness levels of staff regarding the subject matter, with approaches adjusted accordingly.

Identifying risk areas and groups allows organisations to plan preventive activities for employees and suppliers, making policies inclusive. Regular surveys and research within the organisation aid in determining effective methods and tools. Barriers to women's participation, such as childcare responsibilities and transportation issues, should be addressed to fully involve female workers. Support from non-governmental organisations or universities specialising in gender equality can enhance the data collection process.

When formulating policies to address gender-based violence, organisations should tailor their objectives by considering their roles as both employers and service providers, as well as by assessing their unique circumstances. Some exemplary goals that may be adopted include:

- Establishing an egalitarian, safe, healthy, and non-violent work environment.
- Promoting awareness among all employees and suppliers about gender equality and various forms of violence, fostering an environment of internal trust.
- Aligning the organisation's gender equality policies with its corporate mission, vision, and strategy, and extending policy-making to suppliers and other stakeholders.
- Adapting the organisation's general gender equality policies to the specific characteristics of the sectors in which it operates.
- Defining mechanisms to address gender-based violence within the organisation.
- Outlining mechanisms to address violence among employees and within the supply chain.
- Ensuring that employees adhere to the policy text, contracts, and guidelines.

The corporate policy aims to combat repetitive patterns or situations of violence and harassment by establishing zero-tolerance policies for detecting such incidents, documenting successful problem-solving examples, and addressing encountered difficulties, thereby creating the necessary infrastructure for effective policy implementation.

Furthermore, the following principles should underpin all efforts to assess, prevent, respond to, and monitor gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the workplace:

- **Victim-centred:** Prioritise the rights and needs of individuals who have experienced gender-based violence and sexual harassment, and listen to their preferences.
- **Safety:** Protect individuals who experience, witness, or report such incidents, as well as those working to combat them.
- **Context-specific:** Base all actions on a thorough understanding of the local legal and social context.
- **Collaborative:** Work with internal and external stakeholders to identify risks, prevent incidents, and respond to reports.
- **Inclusive:** Provide access to impartial and non-judgmental spaces for specific groups to address their increased risk and concerns.
- **Integrated:** Incorporate prevention efforts into existing processes and management systems.
- **Non-discriminatory:** Address gender-based violence and sexual harassment as part of broader approaches to promoting inclusivity and diversity.
- **Well-informed:** Utilise expertise, including that of gender-based violence and sexual harassment specialists, to inform and support responses as needed.

These guiding principles, which will define the organisational policy, will also aid in preventing the occurrence of new cases of gender-based violence and sexual harassment.

Key steps for implementation Gender Equality at workplaces

Main areas of Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

The first strategic area focuses on promoting work-life balance and fostering an inclusive organisational culture. This entails implementing policies and practices that support employees in balancing their professional responsibilities with personal commitments. Initiatives may include offering flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting or flexible hours, providing parental leave options for both mothers and fathers, and promoting a culture that values work-life balance. By prioritising the well-being of employees and creating a supportive work environment, organisations can enhance employee satisfaction and productivity while fostering a culture of inclusivity and respect.

The second area aims at achieving gender balance in management, recruitment, and career advancement. Organisations can achieve this by implementing strategies to eliminate gender biases in recruitment and promotion processes, ensuring equal access to career development opportunities, and actively promoting women's representation in leadership positions. This involves conducting regular assessments of recruitment and promotion practices to identify and address any disparities, as well as implementing mentoring and leadership development programs to support the career advancement of women within the organisation. By creating equal opportunities for all employees, organisations can foster a more diverse and equitable workforce, ultimately leading to better decision-making and organisational performance. Integrating gender perspectives in research initiatives and organisational events constitutes the third strategic area. This involves ensuring that gender considerations are systematically integrated into research projects, programs, and events. Organisations can achieve this by promoting gender-balanced participation in research teams, incorporating gender-sensitive research methodologies, and ensuring that research outcomes consider the diverse experiences and needs of both men and women. Additionally, organisations can organise events and activities that promote gender diversity and inclusion, such as workshops, seminars, and panel discussions on gender-related topics. By mainstreaming gender perspectives in research and organisational events, organisations can

contribute to the production of more robust and relevant knowledge while fostering an inclusive organisational culture.

Lastly, addressing and preventing gender bias and harassment in the workplace is crucial for creating a safe and respectful work environment. Organisations can achieve this by implementing clear policies and procedures for reporting and addressing incidents of gender bias and harassment, providing training and awareness programs to employees on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and fostering a culture of zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment. By actively addressing and preventing gender bias and harassment, organisations can create a workplace where all employees feel valued, respected, and able to contribute their fullest potential, thereby reducing gender inequality and challenging stereotypes.

Key steps for implementing a Gender Equality Plan

Audit and Control phase

During the audit and control phase, organisations begin by collecting gender-disaggregated data to gain insights into the current state of gender equality within the organisation. This involves analysing various aspects of organisational processes and practices to identify any gender-based inequalities or biases that may exist. Additionally, this phase includes a review of relevant national laws, regulations, and funding requirements to ensure that the Gender Equality Plan aligns with legal and regulatory frameworks.

Roles and Involvement:

- Human Resources (HR): Leads data collection and analysis.
- Internal Audit Team: Reviews processes and practices for biases.
- Legal Department: Ensures compliance with national laws and regulations.
- Stakeholders: Includes a representative sample of at least 10% of employees from various departments to ensure diverse input.

Planning phase

In the planning phase, organisations set both interim and final objectives for the Gender Equality Plan, outlining clear goals to be achieved. Detailed actions and measures are recorded to address identified gender inequalities and biases effectively. Resources are allocated, and responsibilities are assigned to ensure that the plan is implemented efficiently. Furthermore, organisations establish specific timelines for the implementation of actions, allowing for clear monitoring and progress tracking.

Roles and Involvement:

- **HR and Senior Management:** Collaboratively set objectives and goals.
- **Finance Department:** Allocates resources and budget.
- **Department Heads:** Assign responsibilities and develop departmental plans.
- **Gender Equality Committee:** Oversees the planning process, ensuring alignment with organisational goals.

Implementation phase

During the implementation phase, the Gender Equality Plan is published and communicated to all stakeholders within the organisation. This phase involves putting the plan into action according to the specified timeline. Organisations may establish working groups or committees dedicated to developing and implementing new policies and processes aimed at promoting gender equality. Additionally, informative, awareness-raising, and training actions are conducted to foster understanding and support for the objectives of the Gender Equality Plan across the organisation.

Roles and Involvement:

- **Communications Team:** Publishes and disseminates the GEP.
- **HR:** Organises and conducts training sessions.
- **Working Groups/Committees:** Develop and implement policies.
- **All Employees:** Participate in training and awareness programs.

Monitoring and Evaluation phase

In the monitoring and evaluation phase, organisations regularly assess the progress of the Gender Equality Plan and its alignment with stated objectives. Findings and progress are reviewed to identify areas for improvement, and actions and objectives are adjusted accordingly. Data from implementation activities are utilised to inform future planning and optimize results. This phase fosters a reflective process where implementing actions provide feedback for their initial planning, allowing for continuous improvement and progress towards gender equality goals.

Roles and Involvement:

- **HR and Gender Equality Committee:** Lead monitoring and evaluation.
- **Internal Audit Team:** Conducts regular assessments and reviews.
- **All Departments:** Provide feedback and data on progress.
- **Employees:** Participate in surveys and feedback mechanisms to inform evaluations.

In summary, implementing a Gender Equality Plan involves a comprehensive and collaborative approach, engaging various stakeholders at each phase to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the plan. By setting clear indicators and defining roles for those involved, organisations can systematically address gender inequalities and foster a more inclusive and equitable workplace.

Steps to prevent gender-based violence and harassment

Implementing arrangements within workplaces of private or public companies from a gender equality perspective will aid in removing barriers stemming from gender inequality as well as other forms of disparities.

1. Increasing the representation of tenured and insured female employees across various roles, including supervisors, managers, civil servants, security officers, and cleaning staff, to promote safety through equitable participation.
2. Providing safe transportation options during off-peak hours for employees commuting to and from work, as well as ensuring safe transport for work-related visits during business hours. Enhancing safety measures within municipal working spaces, addressing issues such as lighting improvements and accessibility enhancements based on staff feedback.
3. Implementing security measures within organisational accommodations, including securing door locks, improving lighting, and enhancing transportation to and from accommodation areas.
4. Establishing mechanisms to prevent and respond to potential violence incidents, such as implementing panic buttons and establishing designated response teams and offices for reporting incidents. Providing management training on violence and harassment, as well as educating employees on their rights and responsibilities.
5. Developing an awareness-raising plan to address the diverse needs of employees, including gender equality training at all levels and guidance on responding to incidents of gender-based violence and harassment.
6. Incorporating clauses promoting gender equality and violence prevention into contracts with companies and supply chain employees, with provisions for penalties in cases of gender-based violence and harassment.
7. Delivering gender equality training to employees at all levels, emphasising their role in responding to incidents of gender-based violence and harassment and promoting a culture of accountability and support within the organisation.

8. Raising awareness about gender equality and encouraging employees to report incidents of violence or harassment through posters, videos, and organisational announcements, reaffirming the organisation's commitment to addressing these issues.

Example of workplace violence policy

The [Name of Company] does not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against employees. Employees are prohibited from making threats or engaging in violent activities. This list of behaviors provides examples of conduct that is prohibited: Causing physical injury to another person.

The Policy Statement [Name of Company] is committed to providing a safe environment for all its employees, free from discrimination on any ground and harassment at work, including sexual harassment. [Name of Company] will operate a zero-tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment in the workplace, treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment. Any person found to have sexually harassed another will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment. All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and treated with respect and confidence. No one will be victimised for making such a complaint. For more details: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilosuva/documents/policy/wcms_407364.pdf

Steps to prevent Gender Pay Gap

Addressing the gender wage gap in Europe is paramount, considering it's a central objective of the [Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#). This strategy acknowledges the multifaceted nature of the issue, recognising that structural inequalities, occupational segregation, and caregiving responsibilities all contribute to the gap. Women's overrepresentation in low-paying sectors and their disproportionate share of unpaid caregiving duties are key factors perpetuating this disparity. By delving into the root causes outlined in the Gender Equality Strategy, policymakers and stakeholders can better devise targeted interventions to address the gap effectively. Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 outlines various policy interventions aimed at reducing the gender wage gap and promoting gender equality in the European workforce. These include legislative initiatives such as the proposal on pay transparency and the Work-Life Balance Directive. These policies seek to ensure equal pay for equal work, facilitate the combination of family and career responsibilities, and increase female representation in leadership positions. Aligning with the objectives of the Gender Equality Strategy, European policymakers can leverage these measures to drive tangible progress in closing the gender wage gap.

1. **Enhanced Workplace Flexibility:** Introducing policies that offer flexible working arrangements, such as telecommuting, flexible hours, and compressed workweeks, can help accommodate employees' diverse needs and responsibilities. Enabling workers to balance their professional and personal lives more effectively, organisations can promote greater workforce participation and retention among women, thereby mitigating the impact of career interruptions on earnings.
2. **Investment in Childcare Infrastructure:** Expanding access to affordable, high-quality childcare services is crucial for supporting working parents, particularly mothers, in maintaining employment and advancing their careers. Governments can invest in childcare infrastructure, subsidise childcare costs for low-income families, and promote employer-sponsored childcare programs to alleviate the burden of childcare responsibilities on working women and facilitate their full participation in the labor market.

3. **Promotion of Pay Equity Audits:** Encouraging employers to conduct regular pay equity audits can help identify and address gender-based pay disparities within organisations. By systematically analysing salary data, evaluating compensation practices, and implementing corrective measures to rectify inequities, employers can ensure fair and equitable compensation for all employees. Additionally, incentivising companies to voluntarily undergo pay equity audits through tax incentives or certification programs can foster a culture of transparency and accountability in pay practices.
4. **Expansion of Women's Leadership Development Programs:** Investing in leadership development programs tailored to women's needs and experiences can help cultivate a pipeline of diverse talent and empower women to pursue leadership roles within their organisations. Providing mentorship, networking opportunities, and skill-building workshops can equip women with the tools and resources they need to overcome barriers to advancement and succeed in senior-level positions. Moreover, establishing sponsorship programs that pair women with influential advocates can help amplify their voices and visibility in the workplace.
5. **Implementation of Gender-Neutral Recruitment and Promotion Practices:** Adopting gender-neutral recruitment and promotion practices can help mitigate biases and promote fairness in hiring and advancement decisions. Employers can implement blind recruitment techniques, such as removing identifying information from job applications, and use structured interview processes to assess candidates based on merit rather than gender. Additionally, establishing clear criteria for performance evaluations and promotion decisions and providing unconscious bias training for hiring managers and decision-makers can help minimise the impact of gender stereotypes and promote meritocracy in the workplace.
6. **Support for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Ownership:** Facilitating women's entrepreneurship and small business ownership can provide alternative pathways to economic empowerment and financial independence. Governments can offer financial incentives, access to capital, and business development support services to women-owned enterprises, enabling them to thrive and grow. Moreover, fostering

networking opportunities, mentorship programs, and peer support networks for female entrepreneurs can help overcome barriers to entry and promote gender diversity in the business community.

7. **Advancement of Gender-Responsive Fiscal Policies:** Incorporating gender considerations into fiscal policy design and implementation can help address structural inequalities and promote women's economic empowerment. Governments can adopt gender-responsive budgeting practices, allocate resources to support women's employment and entrepreneurship initiatives, and invest in social infrastructure, such as healthcare, education, and social protection, to enhance women's economic security and well-being. Moreover, ensuring equitable access to public services and benefits, such as affordable healthcare and childcare, can help reduce the financial burden on women and support their full participation in the economy.

8. **Expansion of Legal Protections and Remedies:** Strengthening legal protections against gender-based discrimination and harassment in the workplace is essential for safeguarding women's rights and promoting workplace equity. Governments can enact and enforce anti-discrimination laws, establish mechanisms for addressing workplace grievances and complaints, and provide access to legal aid and representation for victims of discrimination. Additionally, extending statutory protections to cover a broader range of workers, including gig economy workers and independent contractors, can help close gaps in legal coverage and ensure that all workers are afforded equal rights and protections.

Good practices for recruitment and promotion

Gender bias can infiltrate every phase of the recruitment and promotion process. From the language and imagery used in job advertisements to the unconscious and conscious biases present in shortlisting, interviewing, and decision-making, gendered stereotypes can significantly impact hiring, salary negotiations, and career advancement opportunities. It is crucial to recognise that promoting gender equality necessitates gender-equitable recruitment and promotion practices. Prioritising diversity in recruitment, development, and promotion efforts, organisations can better reflect and serve the diverse communities they operate in, particularly in the context of the Victorian community. Additionally, fostering a diverse workforce enables organisations to demonstrate inclusive and equitable career pathways for individuals of all genders, setting a positive example for the broader sector.

The importance of fostering a diverse and gender-balanced public sector cannot be overstated. Such a workforce not only reflects the broader population it serves but also brings about numerous benefits. A diverse and gender-balanced public sector is associated with heightened productivity and innovation, as well as the development of more effective and inclusive policies and programs. Moreover, it enhances public trust and confidence in government and public administration, crucial for maintaining societal cohesion and stability.

Furthermore, a diverse public sector can play a pivotal role in redefining its image and rejuvenating its workforce. While the public sector is often perceived as more accommodating to women and families compared to the private sector, systemic barriers persist in hiring and staffing practices. Overcoming these barriers and promoting merit-based recruitment and staffing, the public sector can attract a broader pool of diverse talent at all levels, from entry positions to management and leadership roles. Targeted recruitment initiatives can also help improve gender balance within public employment, ensuring a more inclusive and representative workforce.

Given that the public sector serves as the largest national employer in many countries, it carries a significant responsibility to lead by example in promoting gender equality. By fostering transparency and meritocracy in recruitment and

staffing processes, the public sector can increase the representation of women in leadership positions, thus advancing gender equality both within its own ranks and throughout society at large.

Recommendations

Implementing Gender Equality Data Collection in Recruitment, Selection, and Onboarding Processes. This recommendation emphasises the importance of embedding gender equality data collection throughout recruitment, selection, and onboarding processes. Leading organisations in gender equality recognise the necessity of ongoing monitoring and evaluation to gauge progress towards gender-balanced recruitment and selection. In these organisations, performance evaluation regarding gender equality outcomes is integrated into every stage of the recruitment and onboarding processes for new employees. Data collected is then utilised to identify and address any identified inequalities effectively. Furthermore, some organisations extend their evaluation to include career development processes like promotions and performance reviews. Metrics such as development opportunities, distribution of higher duties, and approvals for professional development leave are considered to support these evaluation processes. Specifically:

To foster gender balance and diversity in recruitment and hiring processes within public sector institutions, a range of actions can be explored, including:

1. **Blind Recruitment Techniques:** Removing identifying information such as name, gender, and age from resumes during the initial screening process to prevent unconscious bias from influencing hiring decisions. Also, leveraging technology and tools, such as blind resume screening software, to mitigate unconscious biases in recruitment processes and promote fair and equitable candidate evaluation.
2. **Diversity Goals:** Establishing specific, measurable targets for gender representation within your organisation and regularly tracking progress towards these goals. Holding leadership accountable for achieving diversity targets can help drive meaningful change.

3. **Equal Opportunities for Advancement:** Ensuring that opportunities for career growth, such as promotions and leadership positions, are equally accessible to all employees regardless of gender.
4. **Involve More People in the Interview Process:** Broadening the participation of stakeholders in the interview process can help mitigate bias and promote gender diversity in hiring. Instead of relying solely on the judgment of a single interviewer, consider involving multiple team members from diverse backgrounds in candidate evaluations. This diverse panel can provide different perspectives and insights into candidates' qualifications, strengths, and cultural fit, helping to mitigate the impact of individual biases. Additionally, including representatives from underrepresented groups in the interview process can signal a commitment to diversity and inclusion within the organisation, making it more attractive to diverse candidates.
5. **Training and Development Programs:** Implementing training and development programs aimed at raising awareness about unconscious biases and promoting inclusive hiring practices among hiring managers and decision-makers.
6. **Mentorship and Sponsorship Initiatives:** Establishing mentorship and sponsorship initiatives to support the career advancement of underrepresented groups, providing guidance, networking opportunities, and advocacy within the organisation.
7. **Utilisation of Gender-Inclusive Language:** Promotion of the use of gender-inclusive language throughout organisational communications, policies, and procedures. Ensure that language used in job descriptions, company materials, and interactions with employees and clients is inclusive and respectful of diverse gender identities.
8. **Work – life balance:** Recognise the importance of work-life balance for all employees, regardless of gender. Offer flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting options or flexible scheduling, to accommodate diverse needs. Provide support programs for caregivers and promote a culture that values both professional and personal well-being.

9. **Inclusive Job Design:** Ensuring job descriptions and qualifications are inclusive and free from gender bias, allowing candidates from diverse backgrounds to see themselves represented and encouraged to apply.
10. **Employee Resource Groups:** Establishing employee resource groups focused on diversity and inclusion, providing forums for employees to connect, share experiences, and advocate for inclusive policies and practices.
11. **Community Partnerships:** Building partnerships with community organisations and educational institutions to create pipelines for diverse talent, including outreach programs, internships, and apprenticeships.
12. **Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regularly monitoring and evaluating recruitment and hiring practices to identify areas for improvement, track progress towards diversity goals, and hold stakeholders accountable for promoting gender balance and diversity.

What to avoid

To ensure effective promotion of gender balance and diversity in recruitment and hiring processes within public sector institutions, it's crucial to steer clear of the following pitfalls:

Overlooking Gender Biases: Failing to recognise and address gender biases present in recruitment and hiring procedures can perpetuate disparities and hinder progress toward achieving gender balance. It's imperative to acknowledge and actively mitigate these biases through awareness-building and targeted interventions.

Neglecting Specialised Training: Failure to offer specialised training focused on identifying and mitigating gender bias for public sector recruiting and hiring managers can contribute to biased decision-making and reinforce existing inequalities. Providing training programs tailored to the specific needs of hiring personnel is essential for fostering fair and unbiased recruitment practices.

Examples of good practices

Canada: Canada has implemented an innovative initiative led by the Public Service Commission of Canada aimed at testing the efficacy of name-blind recruitment practices within the federal public service. This project seeks to evaluate the sustainability and impact of screening job applicants without knowledge of their names. Six departments are participating in this initiative, which aims to mitigate unconscious bias in the hiring process and enhance diversity and inclusivity within the public service by attracting, recruiting, and retaining a diverse pool of talented individuals.

France: In France, significant strides have been made to ensure non-discriminatory recruitment practices through a Memorandum of Understanding on professional equality between women and men in the civil service signed in 2013. This agreement has outlined specific measures to verify the fairness of recruitment processes, including:

- Empowering members of professional exam juries and selection committees to provide transparent evaluations.
- Providing specialised training to enhance awareness of harmful stereotypes and combat discrimination among jury members and administrative representatives.
- Requiring the publication of gender-disaggregated data on job candidates at various stages of the recruitment process, including registration, attendance, eligibility, and admission, as well as for internal promotions.
- Mandating selection committees and exam juries to adhere to a minimum quota of 40% representation for each gender.
- Ensuring gender parity in the leadership of juries and selection committees through equal rotation between male and female presiding officers.

Case studies and success stories

This section will showcase successful initiatives and programs implemented by other organisations to promote gender equality and inclusion, providing inspiration and practical guidance for other companies.

To achieve Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality) by 2030, the private sector's scale resources, and influence are imperative. Urgent action from all stakeholders, including companies, is critical to move the world toward gender equality faster. Below, there are some case studies and examples of corporate action toward gender equality.

Laing O'Rourke on targeting and tracking promotions

Laing O'Rourke undertook a significant review transforming their promotions process and communications to accelerate the progression of women into more senior roles. They introduced a sponsorship program, in partnership with Cultivate Sponsorship, matching Executive and Senior Leaders with high potential women. The program focussed on women who are progressing through project delivery and engineering streams into Construction Manager and Project Leader roles.

Kimberly-Clark Australia Pty Ltd: Gender segregated industries

Kimberly-Clark Australia made changes in their advertising and recruitment processes to remove the gender bias in operational roles in their Millicent Mill site. The manufacturing sector is largely male dominated.

Motorola: Zero Eligibility Paid Parental Leave

Motorola Solutions Australia Pty Ltd is determined to attract and retain the best talent to their business. As a male-dominant business in a solutions-based industry, the attraction and retention of talented women and men is a fundamental strategic imperative. Motorola wants to ensure their employee value proposition is consistent with the challenges faced by their workforce, reflects their customer base and continues to deliver a distinct, competitive advantage.

Goldman Sachs: Educating women in business

In 2008, Goldman Sachs Group, a global investment banking firm, founded the 10,000 Women programme. 10,000 Women aims to provide educational opportunities in business and management to women, mostly from developing

countries, through the creation of partnerships with women's development organisations. Courses include marketing, accounting and strategic planning. The company has already set up partnerships to help women in Afghanistan, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Kenya, Liberia, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa and Turkey.

An independent [report](#) of the programme, produced in 2014, found that by 18 months of graduating 69% of participants had increased their revenues, 58% had been able to create new jobs at their businesses, and that 90% of participants were involved in mentoring other women.

Newmont Mining: Addressing teenage pregnancies and domestic violence – Ghana

Newmont Mining Corporation, a multinational corporation primarily producing gold, has created a gender team as part of an effort to engage with local communities in relation to the Akyem mine north of Accra in Ghana. Following a study commissioned to look at gender within the scope of the project, the company identified a number of challenges which it is addressing through discussions with community members. These include alcohol consumption, teenage pregnancies, domestic violence, HIV/AIDS and prostitution.

Training and development resources for Companies

Training and development play a crucial role in fostering a workplace culture that prioritises gender equality, diversity, and inclusion while preventing gender-based violence and harassment. By equipping managers and employees with the necessary knowledge, skills, and awareness, organisations can create environments where all individuals feel valued, respected, and safe.

This chapter provides a comprehensive guide to training and development resources aimed at addressing gender equality, diversity, inclusion, and the prevention of gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace. It encompasses a range of materials and initiatives tailored to various organisational levels and job roles, promoting a culture of respect, equality, and safety.

European Obligations and Frameworks

Companies operating within the European Union (EU) must adhere to a robust framework of legal and regulatory obligations concerning gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence and harassment. The EU has enacted several directives and regulations to ensure that member states promote gender equality and protect employees from discrimination and harassment:

1. **Directive 2006/54/EC** on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation. This directive mandates member states to ensure equal treatment and opportunities for men and women in the workplace, covering recruitment, pay, and working conditions.
2. **Directive 2010/41/EU** on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity. This directive extends equal treatment principles to self-employed individuals.
3. **Directive 2019/1158/EU** on work-life balance for parents and carers aims to promote gender equality by encouraging a balanced sharing of care responsibilities between men and women.

4. **Directive 2019/1937/EU** on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law, which includes protections for whistleblowers who report instances of gender-based violence or harassment.

These directives form the foundation of national laws in EU member states, mandating companies to implement policies and training programs that promote gender equality and prevent harassment.

Internal Training for Employees

Training programs for employees are essential for raising awareness, understanding, and adherence to organisational policies on gender equality and violence prevention. These programs should cover fundamental concepts of gender, definitions of violence and harassment, relevant legislation, and organisational policies and procedures. They should be designed to be accessible and inclusive, catering to diverse learning styles and literacy levels.

1. **Fundamental Concepts of Gender:** Training should begin with basic concepts of gender, including its history, roles, and equality principles. This foundational knowledge helps employees understand the broader context of gender equality initiatives.
2. **Definitions and Forms of Violence and Harassment:** Employees need to be able to identify and understand various forms of violence and harassment. This includes recognising behaviors that constitute sexual harassment, abuse, and discrimination.
3. **Legislation and Rights:** Familiarising employees with relevant EU and national laws, as well as their rights and employer responsibilities, is crucial. This includes understanding reporting procedures and protections available to them.
4. **Organisational Policies and Procedures:** Detailed training on company-specific policies regarding gender equality and harassment is necessary to ensure that employees know the steps for reporting incidents, the investigation process, and the support services available.

Training on the Institutional Policy

Training sessions focused on the institutional policy serve to ensure that all stakeholders comprehend and support the policy's objectives and implementation. The purpose, principles, and complaint mechanisms of the policy should be clearly articulated, employing varied communication styles and media to effectively reach a diverse workforce. Infographics, plain language materials, and interactive sessions can enhance accessibility and understanding.

1. **Purpose and Principles of the Policy:** Clearly explain the goals and principles underpinning the institutional policy. This helps stakeholders understand the importance of the policy and their role in upholding it.
2. **Complaint Mechanisms:** Guide employees through the steps for reporting harassment or discrimination, emphasising confidentiality and the support systems available to them.
3. **Witness and Bystander Responsibilities:** Educate employees on the role of witnesses in preventing and addressing incidents of harassment or discrimination. This includes strategies for bystander intervention and supporting affected colleagues.
4. **Privacy and Confidentiality:** Highlight the importance of maintaining privacy and confidentiality throughout the complaint and investigation process. Practical steps to ensure confidentiality should be discussed to protect all parties involved.

Internal Training for Senior Management

Senior management plays a pivotal role in driving organisational change and fostering a culture of gender equality and safety. Targeted training for senior management should emphasise their roles, responsibilities, and obligations as leaders within the organisation. This includes understanding the policies, developing monitoring competencies, and creating a safe and inclusive workplace environment.

1. **Leadership Responsibilities:** Training should equip senior management with the knowledge to lead gender equality initiatives, emphasising the strategic importance of gender equality and their role in modeling positive behaviors and setting organisational standards.

2. **Policy and Legal Framework:** Senior managers need a comprehensive understanding of relevant policies and laws, including best practices and case studies that illustrate successful implementation of gender equality initiatives.
3. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Develop skills for monitoring and evaluating gender equality efforts within the organisation. This includes techniques for policy implementation monitoring, measuring effectiveness and impact, and data-driven continuous improvement.
4. **Supporting a Safe Workplace:** Reinforce the importance of creating a safe and inclusive workplace environment. Training should cover strategies for responding to incidents effectively and supporting employees who experience harassment or discrimination.

Resources and Support

1. **External Expert Organisations:** Partner with organisations specialising in gender equality and harassment prevention for training and resources. Examples include the International Labor Organisation (ILO), United Nations Global Compact, and local NGOs.
2. **Academic Partnerships:** Collaborate with universities and research institutions for access to the latest research and expert training programs. For instance, Sabanci University Corporate Governance Forum offers programs on workplace violence prevention.
3. **Government and EU Initiatives:** Utilise resources and guidelines provided by government agencies and EU bodies. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and the European Commission provide valuable resources and toolkits.
4. **Train-the-Trainer Programs:** Develop internal capacity by training select employees who can then train others within the organisation, ensuring sustainability and continuity of training efforts.

Leveraging these resources and implementing comprehensive training and development programs, companies can create workplaces that are not only compliant with legal requirements but also thrive on the principles of gender equality, diversity, and inclusion. Continued investment in education and awareness-building ensures that organisational policies remain effective and relevant in addressing contemporary workplace challenges.

All in all, empowering companies to implement comprehensive training strategies for gender equality and violence prevention requires a multifaceted approach. By establishing dedicated policy development teams, designing internal training programs for employees, conducting specialised training on institutional policies, and providing targeted training for senior management, companies can create a culture of respect, equity, and safety.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the journey toward gender equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace is an ongoing endeavor that requires dedication, collaboration, and continuous improvement. This guidebook has provided a comprehensive roadmap for organisations committed to fostering a culture of respect, equality, and safety.

Throughout the guidebook, we have explored key principles, strategies, and best practices for promoting gender equality, preventing gender-based violence and harassment, and creating inclusive work environments. From conducting audits and developing policies to implementing training programs and monitoring progress, organisations have been equipped with actionable insights and practical tools to drive meaningful change.

However, achieving gender equality is also a strategic business decision with far-reaching benefits for individuals, organisations, and society as a whole. Prioritising diversity and inclusion, companies can unlock the full potential of their workforce, drive innovation, enhance employee well-being, and contribute to sustainable economic growth.

As we navigate the complexities of the modern workplace, let us remain committed to upholding the principles of fairness, equity, and justice. Let us continue to challenge gender stereotypes, dismantle systemic barriers, and create opportunities for all individuals to thrive and succeed.

Ultimately, the pursuit of gender equality is a collective responsibility that requires the engagement of leaders, managers, employees, policymakers, and stakeholders at all levels. By working together, we can build a future where every individual, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or background, has the opportunity to reach their full potential and contribute to a more equitable and inclusive world.

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