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EDITORIAL

In 2012-2013 CEC completed a project on the demographic situation regarding the managerial workforce of Europe, thereby dealing with an issue which has been at the top of the European agenda for some years. The project addresses the EU 2020 vision of economic growth and stability, which demands access to a well-educated workforce and competent managers.

One of the most important conclusions of the project was that several regions in Europe will face a lack of managers within the next decades, unless something is done to widen the perception of who is fit to lead. The most obvious solution would be to make it possible for the well-educated women of Europe to work as managers and to advance to top positions.

In order to pursue this topic CEC decided in late 2013 to apply for support for a new project with the title "Promoting Women's Leadership – Strategies and Best Practices to increase the share of Women in Middle and Higher Management Positions".

The ambition to work for a gender equal society is shared by all of the social partners and we were proud to welcome as project partners not only two national members of CEC, CFE-CGC from France and Ledarna from Sweden, but also Eurocadres, one of the other six social partners on European level. The project is also supported by the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise.

The project, which started with a kick-off meeting in Madrid last autumn, is now well underway. Two studies has been commissioned, one dealing with the social structures on a national level in six European countries, the other with business strategies to support women managers in different companies. The general idea behind this approach is that social reforms and company initiatives will have to go hand in hand to make any real change possible.

In late June more than 100 participants gathered in Cannes for a two days conference, with the purpose to learn and discuss more about this topic, which

is a cornerstone in the pathway to a better and stronger Europe. Among the speakers were representatives of European institutions, social partners and successful companies.

The conclusion – still only halfway into the project – is that the issue of women's representativeness in management must be attacked on several levels at the same time. By joining forces with other social partners CEC will be able to raise awareness and to spread good examples of best practice, which will move us all a little further ahead.

The final results from the project will be presented in autumn 2014.



Annika Elias
President CEC European Managers

The core of the project : analyzing the current state of play and collecting examples of best practices to increase the share of women occupying managerial positions



Prof Linda Senden, University of Utrecht

As previously anticipated in other articles and on our website, the Conference of Cannes has been organized with the main purpose of disclosing to a wider public the first, provisional results of the study on women in management, which represents the very core of the European project on women in leadership.

Thanks to the financial contribution of the European Commission this study (structured around two distinct but complementary researches) has been commissioned to Mirella Visser, international expert on management issues and CEO of the Center of Inclusive Leadership, a consultancy supporting businesses deal with diversity. EU law Prof. Linda Senden, from the University of Utrecht, has ensured the scientific coordination of the academic study assessing the current state of female representation in managerial positions and evaluating the effects legislative and voluntary provisions have had in recent years on the increase of women's share in management. The study is based on a cross-country comparison among six European countries (Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Sweden, UK and Norway) of both statistical data and review of legal provisions adopted in each of the selected countries.

On the morning of the first conference day (June 26th), Prof. Senden illustrated to the participants the first findings of her work. These show that the overall rate of women occupying managerial positions is still rather low, with differences (both in terms of actual percentage and speed of change) between women occupying high-level (board) positions and women in middle level ones. As far as the state of regulatory initiatives is concerned, the study reveals a wide range of different approaches, varying from complete self-regulation (without any form of legal provision, be it "soft" or "hard") like in most Eastern European countries, to specific legislative acts setting precise quotas for female representation in boards and sanctions in case of violation (as it is the case of Italy and France). The latter approach seems to be the quickest and most effective, but only applies to board positions and doesn't seem to have much effect on female presence at lower levels; on the other hand, softer approaches might have a positive effect on the increase of female participation also at lower levels, but at a much slower pace.

The results shown by Prof. Senden seem therefore to show the efficacy of combining the two approaches, insisting on the positive effect of

voluntary compliance rules and the spread of best practices adopted by companies on a voluntary basis. To achieve this, the commitment of all involved parties is essential, including the ownership and workers' representatives.

The second part of the study consists in a collection of best practices adopted by European companies to promote gender equality within their business structures, supporting women in their career paths and improving the reconciliation of professional and private life. Interviews to senior female managers and HR directors of six selected European companies (of different countries and industrial sectors) have been conducted by Mrs. Mirella Visser, with questions including how diversity is integrated in the business culture, what specific employment policies are adopted and what concrete measures are put in practice. In her intervention Ms. Visser anticipated some of the results (based on the feedback given by only a part of the selected companies) of the interviews; a more complete picture will be available at the end of the interview process.

The final version of the study will be ready by the end of 2014; copies will be available for download on the website www.womeninmanagement.eu and on the CEC website.



Ms. Mirella Visser, Centre for Inclusive Leadership

Different contributions offered various points of view on gender equality and how to improve it



initiatives adopted by European social partners (including CEC) to promote gender equality; the Toolkit for Gender Equality, part of the 2012-2014 joint working programme of the European social partners. The toolkit is a database of more than 100 initiatives adopted at national level by companies and social partners to increase gender equality; initiatives are categorized under four priorities: addressing gender roles, promoting women in decision-making, supporting work-life balance and tackling gender pay gap. To conclude the activities

of day one, Ms Visser animated an interactive workshop with conference participants, offering them the opportunity to exchange on the various issues discussed during the day and further reflect on personal attitudes and behavior to gender roles.



Ms Claudia Menne, ETUC Confederal Secretary

Besides the presentations held by Prof. Senden and Mirella Visser on the preliminary results of the study, several other speakers have taken the floor in Cannes to present their own contributions on the issue of women representation in the managerial workforce. These were consultants and HR experts of companies, representatives of social partners having engaged in initiatives promoting gender equality at national and European level and finally a researcher from Eurofound, the agency of the European Union making studies on employment and working conditions in Europe.

On the first day, after a first round of welcome speeches by the representatives of the project partners (Ms Annika Elias, President of CEC and Ledarna, Mr Martin Jefflen, President of Eurocadres and by Mr Christophe Lefevre, representative of CFECGC), a general presentation of the project was given by Dr. Andreas Bücker, CEO of Politicomm, a consultancy for European affairs. After that, Ms Ina Wietheger, HR and

management expert for the German consultancy firm Roland Berger, presented an initiative launched by the Directorate General for Justice of the European Commission called "Equality Pays Off". This initiative, open to businesses from 34 European countries, aimed at promoting gender equality within companies and helping them understand the value of setting a business and working environment open to diversity and equal opportunities. Ms Wietheger was then followed by Ms Sabine Müller from Deutsche Post, who presented the strategy adopted by the company to promote the integration of diversity in the business model of the company. Gender differences being a component of diversity, several programs and measures have been launched to adapt the working environment, provide career support and promote the necessary changes in business attitudes.

In the group of social partners Ms Claudia Menne, Confederal Secretary of ETUC, took the floor on the first day to discuss one of the most recent



supporting the opportunity that such welfare provisions are made available to both women and men.

Finally, two more speakers brought to the conference participants different perspectives on gender equality. Ms Isabella Biletta, from Eurofound, presented the participants some of the conclusions of the 5th European Working Conditions Survey, a study conducted among more than 40.000 workers living and working in different European countries. The figures presented, not yet released to the public, covered specially the working situation of managers and workers in their relation with their supervisors and showed some (minor) improvements in the number of women holding supervisory post. Again on the second day Mr Fons Trompenaars, one of the world's most reputed motivational speakers, business consultants and experts in diversity management, explained his theories on the relevance of cultural differences and how learning to identify and manage cultural dilemmas can prove a key to successful diverse companies.

All presentations given by speakers during the Conference are available for download on www.womeninmanagement.eu.

The series of contributions from social partners continued on the following day with two interventions from representatives of two CEC Member organizations. First Ms Marina Montegiove from CIDA (Italy) introduced the case of Italy, making reference to the many stereotypes that still influence the Italian society and the perception of the professional role of women. Her presentation focused also on the current Italian legislation on the work-related aspects of gender equality and the respective figures and included the description of some of the initiative adopted by CIDA and Federmanager (one of CIDA's sectoral federations) to

support women who work. Ledarna, the Swedish member organization part of CEC and partner to the project, contributed with a presentation on the Swedish situation of women managers and the effects of cultural attitudes and personal assumptions, stressing the importance of fighting against personal, individual assumptions first as a way to steadily promote gender equality. Ms Ellen Landberg, Ledarna's expert on diversity alternated in her intervention by Dr. Anna Thoursie, chief economist of the Swedish organization, who accompanied the conclusions of Ms Landberg with some figures on the functioning of the Swedish parental leave system,



Participants of the Conference