

CLOSING THE GENDER GAP IN THE MODERN WORKPLACE

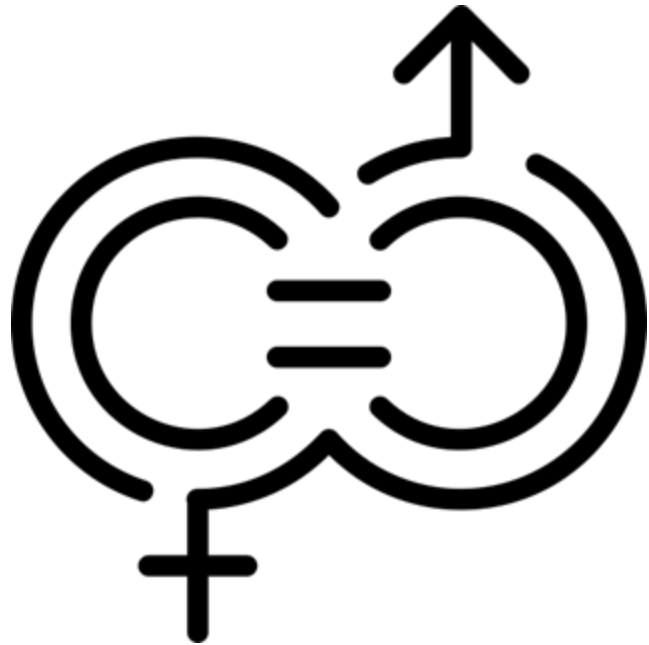


CULTURE OF
INCLUSION IN
ENTERPRISES



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-TABLE OF CONTENTS-



- 01** EQUALISER Project
- 02** Module Introduction & Outcome
- 03** Module 3-Balancing Act:
Women as Employees and
Caregivers
- 04** Summary
- 05** References

EQUALISER PROJECT



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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The EQUALISER project strives to promote **gender equality** in the modern **workplace** by assisting private firms in implementing gender mainstreaming strategies.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

EQUALISER aims to:

1. Raise awareness about workplace gender inequalities
2. Inform about the needs and gaps in organizational structure, processes, and practices contributing to this issue
3. Encourage decision-makers to make gender mainstreaming a continuous organizational process
4. Integrate a long-term change in the business culture, with fewer stereotypes and discriminatory behaviors
5. Create a safe and secure environment in which all employees can thrive and grow



THIS PRESENTATION

The material presented is part of **EQUALISER project** and seeks to support the employees of an enterprise in their working context.

The material is developed in order to help the target group overcoming **gender knowledge gaps and stereotypes** in order to transform the working environment and change the relationship dynamics in the workspace.



MODULES CONTENT

Modules

Module 1: Discovering Gender Equality Concepts & Principles

Module 2: Beyond the Norm: Shattering Gender Stereotypes

Module 3: Balancing Act - Women as Employees and Caregivers

Module 4: From Glass Ceiling to Open Skies (Leadership and Decision Making)

Module 5: Respect & Resilience: Tackling Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

MODULES CONTENT

Modules

Module 6 :Bridging the Divide: Understanding and Addressing the Gender Pay Gap

Module 7:Unleashing Women's Career Prospects

Module 8:A Catalyst for Change: Exploring EU Policies for Workplace Gender Equality

Module 9:Mindful Message: Gender-Sensitive Communication

Module 10:A Practical Guide Addressing Gender Inequality Conflict & Promoting Respectful Behavior

MODULE 3-BALANCING ACT: WOMEN AS EMPLOYEES AND CAREGIVERS

The aim of this module is to provide guidance and strategies for employers with regards to the employment of women and their rights to effectively balance their work & caregiving responsibilities. Women in the EU are heavily involved in caregiving, with around 80% of childcare responsibilities falling on them, where approximately 65% of women are part of the labour force. Compared to men, women spend nearly twice as much time on unpaid care work on childcare and eldercare.

Strategies covered include understanding legal rights related to parental leave, flexible working arrangements, exploring accessible childcare services, and building support networks within the family and community. By implementing these strategies, women can thrive in both their careers and caregiving roles, leading to a more equitable and balanced work-life dynamic.

MODULE 6-BALANCING ACT: WOMEN AS EMPLOYEES AND CAREGIVERS



This module will outline

- Balancing work and caregiving

- Rights and Parental Leave:

- Options related to Flexible Working Arrangements: Accessible Childcare Services and Highlighting the significance of building support networks within the family and community to share caregiving responsibilities.

MODULE 6-BALANCING ACT: WOMEN AS EMPLOYEES AND CAREGIVERS

The bad news is time flies.
The good news is you're the
pilot

Michael Altshuler



BALANCING ACT: WOMEN AS EMPLOYEES AND CAREGIVERS – TOPICS OUTLINE

- 01** Balancing both work and caregiving responsibilities
- 02** Employment Law
- 03** Flexible Working Arrangements
- 04** Parental Leave
- 05** Access to Childcare
- 06** Activity Support Networks
- 07** Conclusion

1. BALANCING WORK & CAREGIVING



<https://www.picserver.org/highway-signs2/w/work-life-balance.html>

- Many women assume caregiving responsibilities within their families and are often responsible for the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of their children, elderly parents, or other family members. Caregiving tasks may include providing childcare, managing household responsibilities, attending medical appointments, coordinating social activities, and addressing the emotional needs of their loved ones. This additional role requires considerable time, energy, and commitment.

1. BALANCING WORK & CAREGIVING



<https://www.altoadigeinnovazione.it/alto-adige-da-10-aziende-big-nasce-la-rete-welfare/>

- Women in the working world often find themselves navigating competing priorities, trying to excel in their careers while meeting the needs of their families. This balancing act can create challenges and tensions that need to be addressed for women to thrive in both areas.
- Effective communication with employers, colleagues, and family members becomes crucial in negotiating flexible work arrangements, such as flexible hours, remote work options, or adjusted schedules, to accommodate caregiving needs.

BALANCING WORK & CAREGIVING



- Employers and employees can play a crucial role by implementing family-friendly policies that on-site childcare facilities, or access to resources for eldercare. Encouraging a supportive and inclusive work culture where employees feel comfortable discussing their caregiving responsibilities fosters an environment that values and supports women in their roles as both employees and caregivers.
- Here are some considerations to help you navigate this balance:

<https://technofaq.org/posts/2018/10/5-lesser-known-ways-to-enhance-employee-engagement/>

2.EMPLOYMENT LAW

EMPLOYMENT
LAW



The EU has implemented various directives to protect workers' rights, including parental leave, flexible working arrangements, and anti-discrimination laws. As an employer, familiarizing yourself with employment and parental leave rights in the European Union (EU) is crucial for understanding the legal protections available to women in employment

<https://picpedia.org/handwriting/e/employment-law.html>

2.EMPLOYMENT LAW



- **Anti-Discrimination Laws:** The EU has implemented anti-discrimination laws to protect employees from discrimination based on various grounds, including gender, parental status, and family responsibilities. The EU's Equal Treatment Directive prohibits direct and indirect discrimination in employment on these grounds. This means that employers cannot treat employees less favorably due to their caregiving responsibilities, and they must ensure equal opportunities for career progression and advancement.
- **Maternity Protection:** EU member states have specific regulations in place to protect pregnant employees and new mothers. The EU's Pregnant Workers Directive provides for maternity leave, maternity pay, protection against dismissal during pregnancy and maternity leave, and the right to return to the same or equivalent position after maternity leave. These protections ensure that women can take time off to care for their newborns without fear of losing their jobs or suffering adverse consequences.

<https://workinprogress.oowsection.org/2014/06/23/do-maternity-leave-policies-hurt-mothers/>

2.EMPLOYMENT LAW



- Work-Life Balance Initiatives: The EU has been actively promoting work-life balance initiatives to support employees in managing their professional and caregiving responsibilities. These initiatives include promoting gender equality, improving access to affordable and quality childcare services, encouraging the sharing of caregiving responsibilities between parents, and creating a supportive and inclusive work environment.
- It is suggested that you consult the labour laws and regulations specific to your country within the EU. National legislation may provide additional protections and entitlements beyond the minimum standards set by the EU directives. It is advisable to review employment contracts, employee handbook, and consult with relevant authorities or legal experts for guidance specific to your situation.

3. FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS



The EU promotes work-life balance through measures such as part-time work, teleworking, flexible schedules, and job sharing. Flexible working arrangements can be instrumental in achieving a better work-life balance. Here are some key points to consider when discussing work arrangements with employees.

<https://www.peoplesmatters.in/news/life-at-work/88-of-indian-workforce-prefer-to-have-flexibility-of-working-from-home-study-26515>

FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS



<https://www.workingmums.co.uk/advertise-part-time-job/>

- Part-time Work: This allows employees to work fewer hours than the standard full-time schedule. Part-time work can provide more flexibility to both the employee and employers
- Teleworking: Teleworking, also known as remote work or telecommuting, enables one to work from a location other than the traditional office environment. The EU recognizes the benefits of teleworking in promoting work-life balance. It reduces commuting time.

FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS



- Flexible Schedules: Flexible schedules give both the employer and employee more control over when the work could be done
- Job Sharing: Job sharing involves two or more employees splitting the responsibilities of a full-time position. This arrangement allows one to share a role with another colleague, dividing the workload and responsibilities between you.

<https://www.marketingg1.com/job-sharing/>

FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS



- Legal Rights: Familiarize yourself with the legal rights and obligations related to flexible working arrangements in your country within the EU. EU member states may have specific laws and regulations regarding flexible working, including the right to request flexible working arrangements and the obligations of employers to consider such requests. Understand the procedures and requirements for requesting flexible working options and ensure you adhere to any applicable timelines.

<https://www.lawtendo.com/blogs/legal-rights-of-employees>

FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS



<https://www.insperity.com/blog/improve-employee-performance/>

- **Performance and Productivity:** When discussing flexible working arrangements with your employee, emphasize how these arrangements can positively impact your performance and productivity. Highlight how having a better work-life balance can contribute to overall well-being, job satisfaction, and motivation.
- Remember that it is essential to maintain clear communication, meet your work obligations, and find ways to effectively manage your time and tasks.

4. PARENTAL LEAVE



Parental leave is an important aspect of work-life balance for caregivers in the European Union (EU). EU member states typically provide parental leave entitlements for both mothers and fathers. Familiarize yourself with the specific regulations in your country, including the duration, eligibility criteria, and payment provisions.

.Here are some points to elaborate on:

<https://indoeuropean.eu/how-maternity-leave-parental-leave-are-guaranteed-in-poland/>

PARENTAL LEAVE



- Some EU member states have introduced shared parental leave schemes, allowing parents to divide the leave entitlement between them. This promotes greater involvement of fathers or non-birth parents in caregiving responsibilities and fosters a more equitable distribution of parental duties. Research the availability and provisions of shared parental leave in your country to explore this option.

<https://leman.ie/parental-leave-entitlements-on-the-rise/>

PARENTAL LEAVE



<https://www.nytimes.com/article/asking-for-parental-leave-guide.html>

- **Duration and Eligibility:** EU member states have varying regulations regarding the duration and eligibility criteria for parental leave. It is essential to familiarize yourself with the specific rules applicable in your country. Generally, parental leave is available to both mothers and fathers, allowing them to take time off to care for their children. Eligibility criteria may include requirements such as minimum length of employment or the age of the child.
- **Payment Provisions:** EU member states differ in the payment provisions for parental leave. Some countries provide full or partial payment during the leave period, while others may offer unpaid leave. Understanding the payment provisions in your country will help you plan your finances during the parental leave period. Additionally, some employers may provide additional benefits or top-ups to enhance the financial support during parental leave. Check with your employer and national authorities for specific details.

PARENTAL LEAVE

THE BEST COUNTRIES IN EUROPE FOR NEW PARENTS



Sorted by total parental leave allowed, allowance leave in days as paid at 100%.

#	Country	Allowance Leave	#	Country	Allowance Leave
1	Bermuda	742	15	Finland	251
2	Latvia	542	16	Spain	244
3	Lithuania	422	17	Hungary	221
4	Sweden	411	18	Poland	201
5	United Kingdom	371	19	Czech Republic	171
6	Iceland	351	20	Denmark	161
7	Bulgaria	311	21	Estonia	161
8	Austria	271	22	Croatia	151
9	Czech Republic	247	23	France	141
10	Norway & Luxembourg	231	24	Netherlands	141
11	Italy	211	25	Belgium	131
12	Germany	201	26	Turkey	121
13	Cyprus	191	27	Malta	111
14	Denmark	181	28	Malta	101
15	Portugal	161	29	Cyprus	71
			30	Ireland	51

European countries were ranked on the basis of their parental leave allowance, including both maternity and paternity leave. The allowance is calculated as the number of days of leave at 100% of the employee's salary. The allowance is calculated as the number of days of leave at 100% of the employee's salary. The allowance is calculated as the number of days of leave at 100% of the employee's salary.

- One of the key advantages of parental leave in the EU is that it offers you a commitment from the employee that they will return to work. Employees are entitled to return to their previous position or a similar role after the leave period. This protection ensures that caregivers can take time off to fulfil their caregiving responsibilities without the fear of losing their job or suffering adverse consequences.

PARENTAL LEAVE



- Plan and communicate your intention to take parental leave with your employer well in advance. Many EU member states require employees to notify their employers about their intention to take parental leave within a specified timeframe. By discussing your plans with your employee, you can coordinate work arrangements, ensure a smooth transition, and maintain open communication regarding your return to work.

<https://www.troophr.com/blog/why-you-should-build-an-inclusive-parental-leave-policy>

5. ACCESS TO CHILDCARE FOR EMPLOYEES



- Investigate the availability of childcare services that can be offered to your employees in your local area. The EU encourages member states to provide affordable and accessible childcare options, which can assist you in balancing work and caregiving responsibilities. Research different types of childcare facilities, subsidies, or vouchers that may be available to support your needs. These may include daycare centres, nurseries, preschools, or childminders.
- Government Subsidies and Vouchers: EU member states often provide subsidies or vouchers to support families in accessing childcare services. These financial aids aim to make childcare more affordable and accessible. Research the specific subsidies or vouchers available in your country and determine if you are eligible to receive them. Check with local government agencies, social services, or childcare regulatory bodies to gather accurate information about the application process and requirements.

<https://www.acaciahill.com.au/2013/01/06/childcare-options/>

8.ACTIVITIES

Activity Name: "Exploring Work-Life Balance for Women Employees"

This activity will not only provide employers with valuable insights into the work-life balance challenges faced by women employees but also empower them to take concrete steps towards creating a more inclusive and supportive work environment.



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The objective of this activity is to help employers gain a better understanding of the work-life balance scenario for women employees within their organization. By facilitating open discussions and gathering feedback, employers can identify potential areas for improvement and implement policies and practices that support a healthier work-life balance for women.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1 Guidelines

Activity Title: Exploring Work-Life Balance for Women Employees

Topics Covered: the work-life balance scenario for women employees within their organization, potential areas for improvement and implement policies and practices that support a healthier work-life balance for women.

Skills Gained: valuable insights into the work-life balance challenges faced by women employees but also empower them to take concrete steps towards creating a more inclusive and supportive work environment.

Duration Approximately 1.5 to 2 hours

Venue to facilitate an open discussion where participants can share their experiences and observations regarding work-life balance for women employee

Requirements:

Whiteboard or flipchart

Markers

Sticky notes and pens

Presentation slides (optional)

ACTIVITY

Activity 1 Content

Activity Name-Exploring Work-Life Balance for Women Employees

1.Introduction (15 minutes):

Start the session by welcoming all participants and introducing the purpose of the activity. Share a brief overview of the importance of work-life balance, especially for women employees, and its impact on employee well-being and productivity.

2.Data Sharing (15 minutes):

If available, present relevant data or statistics regarding work-life balance within the organization. This could include turnover rates, employee satisfaction surveys, or any other relevant information.

ACTIVITY

Activity 1 Content

Activity Name-Exploring Work-Life Balance for Women Employees

3. Open Discussion (30 minutes):

Facilitate an open discussion where participants can share their experiences and observations regarding work-life balance for women employees.

Encourage participants to discuss challenges and opportunities they have noticed within the organization.

4. Brainstorming Session (20 minutes):

Divide participants into small groups and provide them with sticky notes and markers.

Ask each group to brainstorm ideas and solutions for improving work-life balance for women employees. Encourage them to think both creatively and practically.

ACTIVITY

Activity 1 Content

Activity Name-Exploring Work-Life Balance for Women Employees

5. Group Presentation (20 minutes):

Have each group present their ideas and solutions to the entire group.

Use a whiteboard or flipchart to list these ideas and suggestions for everyone to see.

6. Discussion and Prioritization (20 minutes):

Engage in a group discussion to evaluate and prioritize the ideas and solutions presented.

Discuss the feasibility and potential impact of each suggestion.

ACTIVITY

Activity 1 Content

Activity Name-Exploring Work-Life Balance for Women Employees

7. Action Planning (15 minutes):

Based on the prioritized ideas and solutions, guide the participants in developing an action plan.

Assign responsible individuals or teams for each action item and set deadlines for implementation.

8. Feedback Collection (10 minutes):

Provide participants with a feedback form to gather their thoughts on the session. Ask for any additional insights or suggestions they may have.

ACTIVITY

Activity 1 Content

Activity Name-Exploring Work-Life Balance for Women Employees

9. Closing Remarks (5 minutes):

Conclude the activity by thanking participants for their valuable input and commitment to improving work-life balance for women employees.

Share the next steps for implementing the action plan and staying engaged in this important initiative.

10. Follow-Up (Ongoing):

Keep the lines of communication open with employees to track progress and make adjustments as necessary.

Schedule regular follow-up sessions to assess the impact of implemented changes and make further improvements.

This activity will not only provide employers with valuable insights into the work-life balance challenges faced by women employees but also empower them to take concrete steps towards creating a more inclusive and supportive work environment.

ACTIVITY 2

Watch the following videos and read more

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DMf8XrMO7w>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fiWob5X1rho>
- <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1311&langId=en>
- https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_864986/lang-en/index.htm
- https://coface-eu.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/COFACEAssessment_WLBDirective_2022.pdf

SUMMARY

The module aims to equip employers with strategies to support women in balancing work and caregiving, acknowledging that women in the EU typically carry a larger share of childcare and eldercare responsibilities.

With 80% of childcare falling on women and approximately 65% of women participating in the labour force, the need for such support is clear. Women, on average, also engage in nearly double the amount of unpaid care work compared to men. This module has focused on:

- Understanding how to balance work and caregiving effectively.
- Recognizing legal rights related to parental leave.
- Exploring flexible working arrangements to accommodate caregiving needs.
- Identifying accessible childcare services.
- Building support networks within the family and community for shared caregiving responsibilities.
- By adopting these strategies, employers can help women succeed both as professionals and as caregivers, fostering a more equitable and balanced approach to work-life dynamics.

CONCLUSION

- Remember to consult the official government sources, labour laws, and policies specific to your country to ensure accurate and up-to-date information regarding parental leave entitlements.
- Understanding the regulations surrounding parental leave in your EU member state allows you to make informed decisions, effectively plan your caregiving responsibilities, and maintain job security during your time away from work.
- Remember that work-life balance is a personal journey, and what works for one person may not work for another.
- It is essential to assess your entity's unique circumstances, preferences, and available resources to find the right balance for you.
- Utilize the support systems and resources available in the EU to help employers navigate the challenges of staff employment.

REFERENCES

Eurostat: (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>)

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE): (<https://eige.europa.eu>)

European Commission: (<https://ec.europa.eu>).

European Parliament: (<https://europarl.europa.eu>)

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development):
(<https://www.oecd.org>)

(Eurofound): (<https://eurofound.europa.eu>)

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