



PRESS RELEASE

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GENDER EQUALITY ON LABOUR MARKETS: SOCIAL PARTNERS ACTIVE TO REDUCE THE REMAINING GAPS

Today, the European social partners ETUC, BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME and CEEP released a report showing progress in the implementation of their joint strategy in the field of gender equality. This report describes how the four priorities identified in the “framework of actions on gender equality” adopted in March 2005 have been incorporated in the social partners’ activities on gender equality in 20 countries. It also gives useful information on follow-up actions taken at European, national, cross-industry, sectoral and company levels.

The report shows that the introduction of the joint European “framework of actions” in the various national contexts has provided a new impetus for social partners’ work on gender equality. A range of actions has been taken such as the negotiation of collective agreements, the discussions with public authorities, the design of new gender equality policies or the development of projects tackling gender gaps. In the first year of implementation, activities to translate and disseminate the framework of actions constituted an important part of the actions taken.

This report also reveals that many organisations focussed their activities during the first year of implementation on facilitating work life balance. Social partners have developed various tools to ensure that work organization responds both to workers’ and companies’ needs (introduction or extension of care leave, prevention of long working hours, promotion of flexible and innovative forms of working such as telework etc.). Social partners have also worked on the issue of equal pay between women and men through different types of activities (development of information and guidance tools, training schemes, studies and/or statistics to better understand the underlying causes of the gender pay gap, company strategies etc.). In addition, efforts have been made by social partners to come to grips with the problems of labour market segregation and of under representation of women in decision-making.

European social partners will officially present the first results of their work to Minister van der Leyen and Commissioner Spidla at the launch of the “European Year of Equal Opportunities for All” in Berlin on 30 and 31 January 2007.

For more information please contact:

Maria Fernanda Fau, BUSINESSEUROPE Tel.:+32(0)2 237 65 62
Francesco Longu, UEAPME Tel.:+32(0)2 230 75 99
Gin Ngan, CEEP Tel.:+32(0)2 229 21 58
Patricia Grillo, ETUC Tel.: +32(0)2 224 04 30

www.businesseurope.eu

www.ueapme.com

www.ceep.eu

www.etuc.org