



Work-life balance in relation to workplace diversity

Lenka Formánková
Hana Maříková

ESA conference, Prague 28. 8. 2015

Objective of the presentation

- Mutual relationship of diversity management and the organisational work-life balance policies and practices.
 - *How does the current form of WLB measures in the given organisation support workforce diversity?*
 - *To what extent are certain groups of workers at a disadvantage?*

Theoretical framework

- Workplace diversity means diversity on the part of employees as well as customers and clients. In this case, it means primarily (though not exclusively) diversity in terms of gender, age, nationality or ethnicity or, for example, education, along with a variety of life experiences and worldviews and perhaps also life style, language or behaviour, etc.
- In the area of paid work, working diversity helps to raise tolerance and eliminate barriers that arise on the basis of discrimination, prejudice and because of a failure to include disadvantaged individuals or entire groups into the labour market.

Data collection and analysis

Public institution

Data collection: July to August 2014

Private company

August 2014

Data analysis: 3 steps

1st analysis of the workforce statistics

2nd analysis of the internal documents

3rd qualitative analysis of the attitudes

a) Focus groups (up to 8 by organisation)

b) Individual semi-structured interviews (up to 16 by organisation)

Workplace characteristics

- Private company: male-dominated technical field
 - No. of employees: 763
 - 31% women, 69% men
 - mostly of Czech origin
 - high percentage of insecure out of regular employment contracts
- Public institution: social focus, female dominated
 - No. of employees: 1,031
 - 75.5 % women a 24.5 % men

WLB measures

WLB measures	Type of organisation	
	Private company	Public institution
Childcare Facility	Kindergarten, child-minding, summer camp	2 children groups (of 20 children each) + 1 crèche
Flexible forms of work:		
- Part-time work	For all on Parental Leave, mothers with small children	About 7 % (51 W + 25 M)
- Homeworking	Patients, mothers on Parental Leave, management, specific positions	3% (26 W + 6 M)
- Flexible working hours + working time account	Everyone having office jobs	For all employees (9-14:30)
Cooperation while on Maternity and Parental Leave	Yes, by individual agreement	Limited, on an individual basis

WLB measures	Type of organisation	
	Private company	Public institution
Childcare Facility	Satisfaction, improves the company's image	Positively assessed, demand higher than supply
Flexible forms of work:		
- Part-time work	The advantage for mothers with children, very positive assessment	Especially mothers; more mothers are interested than those who actually use this
- Homeworking	Technical problems, isolation, loss of boundaries between the personal life and the work life	Interest on the part of mothers and fathers and those who are 50 years old and older
- Flexible working hours / working time account		Compensatory period not 2 weeks but 1 month
Cooperation while on Maternity and Parental Leave	Yes, regular contact is welcome, managed integration is lacking	The organisation's strategy is missing

Conclusion

- The analysis confirmed that there is still a reductionist approach to WLB, both in the public authority and the private sector.
- In both organisations, WLB is understood and conceived primarily as measures for mothers with children.
- The issue of the private lives of single people is ignored, as is the involvement of fathers in care and the issue of caring for other family members.
- The work-life balance needs of older workers and workers with caring responsibilities to their old parents or spouses are fully ignored.
- It can be said to show that universally conceived measures, as with partial ones, can have a varied and thus unfavourable impact on certain groups of workers.

Recommendations

- **Setting-up the corporate environment** – integrate the values of reconciliation of work and personal life into the corporate culture.
- **Understanding the issues on the part of the management staff** – share understanding of how important a successful reconciliation of private and professional lives is among the management staff.
- **Education and communication** – involve employees in the issue so that they understand their rights and act in their own interest. Establish clearly defined tools of reconciling work and private life, and publish manuals on how to proceed on the given workplace.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** – continually monitor the needs in the area of reconciliation of work and private life and assesses the impacts of measures and based on the results, prepare next steps.



Thank you for your attention!