

For Diversity



Against Discrimination

**DIVERSITY**

in small and medium-sized enterprises

EUROPEAN CONFERENCE 2006

## Workshop III3

# Diversity Strategies – your company's needs and where to start

Patrycja Flavia Finster,  
Executive Manager, GVL Poland  
Sara Piskor,  
Confederation of Polish Employers

Poland



An initiative of the European Union

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## Diversity policy in Poland - General overview

- Diversity policy towards minorities:
  - people with disabilities
  - women
  - young / older workers

**Starts to play an active role in setting up long-distance business strategies of Polish enterprises** because:

- Labour market regulations enhance diversity
- Massive emigration and demographic change increasingly shape the labour market
- Employers see the benefits that result from in-house training between different age groups of workers and from team diversity





## Actions taken to promote diversity in Poland

- Are of general nature; i.e. CSR and Equal Opportunities' awareness raising campaigns;
- Are carried out by individual big companies on the basis of their corporatist culture;
- Also start to be carried out by SME's of Polish origin in their local communities,
- Attention:  
As the unemployment problem in Poland is still of high importance, employers feel responsible for solving it - however they apply the diversity standards on performance – related shaping of staff profile. They perceive diversity as a factor of competitiveness raising by creativity, flexibility in client satisfaction, and effectiveness



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# **Actions taken by the members of the Confederation of Polish Employers in order to promote diversity**



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## **Diversity policy towards people with disabilities in a workplace**

- ICEBRAKERS – action of POPON (Polish Organisation of Employers of Handicapped Persons) presentation of disabled people as full performative workers based on media awareness raising campaigns
- INTEGRATION by Provident Poland (credit company) – employees together with people with disabilities form a local community in order to resolve local problems, which results with development of new products





## Diversity policy towards women in Poland

Is targeted to resolve the problem of unequal pay.

Women in Poland are still unequally paid because:

- They are employees rather than managers (only 10% of women are managers)
- They run activity in less paid sectors of the economy (as education, health care, social security, tourism in which they represent over 70% of workers)

Equal professional opportunities for women are blocked because of weak working and private life balance

In parallel, women in Poland are better educated than men (58% have college education against 34% of working men), but still wage difference between male and female workers in 2005 amounts to 25%





# Diversity policy towards women in Poland

Examples of programs against women' discrimination

- Motorola Poland, Krakow: competition enhancing of young girls to studying technology and computers, by demonstrating that technology programming is a (well paid) profession for everybody. Motorola has its own diversity program favouring women in the workplace
- Alcatel Poland, Warsaw: "Women in leadership", an in-house training program focused on experience sharing between women of high professional position with those who begin their carriers, including practical advices on how to became manager within and outside the company





## Diversity policy towards young people

- Above integrating its efforts with public institutions of labour market in promoting employment of young people ( internships, recruitment programs for students), Polish business helps young people to diminish the 'skills gap' between education and labour market requirements.
- Example:  
ABB (member-company of the Confederation of Polish Employers, energy sector) provides a self-presentation, self-promotion and entrepreneurship courses for youth, in cooperation with regional labour offices, universities and business people.
- Specifications for jobs that do not apply an age ceil just starts to be perceived as a „professional approach“ to recruitment. Recruitment of young people is related to understanding of their lack of experience.





## Stop old-age workers discrimination

- Poland has the lowest rate of old age workers professional activity (only 26%)
- It is a national specificity that old age workers are so poorly present on the labour market, because the benefits system and pre-retirement policy likely promotes an early retirement.
- But there is a trend of appreciation for old age workers' experience





## Diversity policy in GVL Group, how it works:

- Locally (Berlin-Brandenburg) (Gorzów – Lubuskie Voivodship) this is where our office is located and where I work.
- Independent from home and international corporations
- Is responsible, as a medium sized enterprise, to ensure a steady growth of the company.
- Innovation and flexibility set new standards and form new products.





## **GVL's strategy in the fight with discrimination on the labour market**

We hire:

- People from the immediate environment
- People with disabilities
- Young persons
- Women
- Older workers





## Cross-border nature of the GVL Group

- Creation of new work places in the Euro-region Pro Europa Viadrina (Brandenburg – Lubuskie Voivodship)
- Professional retraining for the unemployed (incl. women) from Poland in Germany.
- New technologies transfer from Germany to Poland – a chance from mutual development.
- Creation of a limited liability company with German capital with a partner (woman) in Poland.





## Company's success from exchange of national groups in a broader time perspective

- The capital of two nations and its influence on limiting unemployment in Poland and on increasing the work efficiency in Germany.
- People from over Poland for professional training szansa rozszerzenia produkcji na nowe grupy odbiorców w obu krajach ??? A chance to extend production to new target groups in both countries?(hospitals, nurseries, kindergartens, schools).
- Economic growth and lower social costs as a result of employment of persons discriminated on the labour market.



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**Employers that plan to hire persons discriminated on the labour market, in respect to work efficiency, contribute to the overall success of the company.**



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