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## First Report:

EU and Turkish legislation on equal opportunities  
and women's access to managerial positions

Analysis of Turkish and Italian  
company policies in the private sector  
April 2015



Project  
Women in Management  
(Yönetimde Kadın)  
TR2010/0135.01-01/329



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## 0. INTRODUCTION: AIMS OF THE REPORT

The present report was drafted within the framework of the Project “*Women in Management. Strengthening the mutual cooperation of Italian and Turkish CSOs in the field of occupational equal opportunities and women's access to managerial positions*” (Yönetimde Kadın) TR2010/0135.01-01/329, as a tool for Italian and Turkish Civil Society Organizations, company employees, and union representatives, for better analysing and understanding the role played by women in accessing managerial positions, in both Turkey and Italy.

The specific objective is to promote women’s representation in managerial positions in the private company sector, by establishing direct contacts among Italian and Turkish CSOs working in the field of women’s empowerment, gender equality, and equal opportunities. The project will provide specific tools of knowledge and establish a long-term cooperation among them. Furthermore, through the networking among CSOs, the involvement of their policy makers, and the presence of European and Turkish institutional actors, it will be possible to promote an effective participation in the Turkish policy-making process.

The strengthening of contacts and mutual exchange of experiences among all sectors of civil society is an essential step in the promotion of political themes such as human rights, anti-discrimination policies, democracy, and rule of law. With specific reference to gender equality, the European Commission affirms that “*through close links between women’s rights and equal opportunities organizations in the EU and in Turkey, the civil society dialogue will contribute to the objectives of strengthening the position and participation of women [...]*”. Furthermore, “*particular consideration will have to be given to women’s representation in the labour market, their representation in political decision making, whether on national level or on regional and local level.*”<sup>1</sup> It is considered therefore essential to address the topic through a synergic and mutual cooperation among different Civil Society Organizations, both at European and national level.

The research phase is made up of two different sections, aimed at providing a better overview and contextualization of the topic. It investigates the “vertical segregation” that “*refers to the under-/overrepresentation of women and men in hierarchical levels*”<sup>2</sup> and analyses the different actors and policies currently in place.

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2005) 290 final. Communication From The Commission To The Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions. *Civil Society Dialogue between the EU and Candidate Countries*

<sup>2</sup> European Commission, Directorate-General Justice, The current situation of gender equality in Turkey – Country Profile, 2013

The first section of the report starts by making a case for the advantages for private companies of having a gender-diverse board, then continuing with a brief overview of the current situation when it comes to gender equality in decision-making bodies. After reviewing the evolution of the numbers related to women on boards it also tackles the initiatives of the European Union related to gender equality, women, and the labour market, as well as women's access to managerial positions.

It then shifts the focus from EU legislation and zooms onto individual national policies, where we will briefly explore the three types of approaches related to women's access to boards: binding legislation, self-regulatory measures and lack of any official instrument. A closer look is given to the situation in Norway, Belgium, France, Italy, Latvia and Turkey.

The legislative review and comparison is complemented by a section which identifies the greatest barriers encountered by women in acceding to management positions and a series of initiatives and tools implemented by private companies all over Europe in order to ensure equal treatment.

The second part is based on interviews with relevant "privileged witnesses". The interviews, conducted using a specific template, involved actors from both private company and union environments. Private company management and union representatives were invited to provide detailed information on the presence of policies on equal opportunities and women's access to managerial positions.

The companies covered by the interviews range from multinational companies to small and medium-sized enterprises operating in different industry sectors, based in Turkey and Italy. The selection of the private companies<sup>3</sup> and union representatives was carried out with the support of project partners, operating in the field. The analysis starts from the evaluation of tools used by companies to comply with equal opportunity principles, such as corporate social responsibility codes, annual reports, and transnational framework agreements. It overviews the data on the presence of women on management boards and in executive positions, and then focuses on the central role played by HR policies.

Companies' policies were analysed with reference to working hours, corporate services, allowances and benefits, facilitation services, career support, training, and recruitment policies. Best practices were highlighted and used to identify the main priorities addressed by company management.

Turkish union representatives provided an interesting overview of the main barriers faced by women in accessing decision-making positions within the union confederations and in Turkish society, because of

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[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/epo\\_campaign/131128\\_country-profile\\_turkey.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/epo_campaign/131128_country-profile_turkey.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> The Companies selected for the interviews were the following: Türkiye Garanti Bankası A.Ş., Eczacıbaşı Group, Vodafone Turkey, Boyner Grup, BP (Turkey); Ferrero S.p.A., Enel S.p.A., BP, Unicredit Group, Porta Sole, Levico Acque (Italy).

cultural, social, and patriarchal structures. The role of unions, in their quality as CSOs involved in industrial relations with employers' representatives, becomes crucial for addressing the enhancement of women's professional growth and gender equality, especially through collective bargaining agreements.

This report is also conceived as a tool for supporting the analysis and strengthening the debate during the training course that will be held in Istanbul in June 2015. Thanks to the evaluation of best practices and policies adopted, participants will be invited to share their experiences, and will be trained to gain a broader perspective on the topic. The mentorship approach will also enhance their abilities and will allow them to share their experiences in the field.

## 1. CURRENT LEGISLATION AT EU AND NATIONAL LEVELS

### a. Brief overview of the economic arguments for women in decision-making positions

In recent years, a growing number of studies, conducted by both international institutions and consulting firms, have continued to show the positive economic impact of the presence of women on management boards; this stance is supported by leaders in the private sector, who consider gender diversity a driving force for performance. More diverse leadership equals diverse opinions, resulting in more complex approaches and refined results, which have a positive impact on economic performance.

According to a 2007 study by McKinsey & Company, the companies that perform best are the ones where women are strongly represented at the board level.<sup>4</sup> The same study offers several reasons, in addition to the egalitarian one, why gender diversity on boards should be of interest for the business sector:

#### a. A response to the demographic challenge

According to the above-mentioned study, based on the women's employment rate in 2005, if the status quo remains unchanged we are going to witness a shortage of 24 million people by 2040, compared to the estimated needs of the labour market. This shortfall of labour force is expected to increase especially for highly qualified jobs. A response for this scenario could be to tap into the underused pool of skilled women. At the moment, women represent 51% of the population and 60% of university graduates in Europe, but their representation in decision-making bodies is much lower than the expected 50%.<sup>5</sup> This measure would place the estimated shortfall at just 3 million.<sup>6</sup>

#### b. Women: the driving force behind purchases – reflecting the market

McKinsey & Company have also identified women as the decision-making factor behind 70% of household purchases in Europe<sup>7</sup>, although women account for 51% of the population. Women do not make up the majority of buyers in the household sector alone; they also account for more than 50% in sectors in which men would normally be considered the traditional buyers, such as cars and PCs. A gender-diverse board would offer a competitive advantage, through its knowledge of the buyer.

#### c. Positive impact on the organizational excellence/improved economic performance

The same study conducted by McKinsey & Company found that companies where women make up a third of

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<sup>4</sup> McKinsey & Company, Women Matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver, 2007, available at [[http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women\\_matter](http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women_matter)].

<sup>5</sup> EC, Women on boards – Factsheet 1: The economic arguments, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/womenonboards/factsheet-general-1\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/womenonboards/factsheet-general-1_en.pdf)].

<sup>6</sup> McKinsey & Company, Women Matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver, 2007, available at [[http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women\\_matter](http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women_matter)], p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> McKinsey & Company, Women Matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver, 2007, available at [[http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women\\_matter](http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women_matter)].

the board members (at least three women on an average board of 10 people) are scoring higher in several dimensions measuring the organizational excellence of a company (leadership, direction, accountability, coordination and control, innovation, external orientation, capability, motivation, work environment, and values). The study proved that there is a correlation between a high score in these dimensions and the company's financial performance, advocating for greater gender diversity in managerial bodies.

d. Better quality of decision-making

Diversity among board members brings together complementary knowledge, skills, and experiences, a factor that contributes greatly to better decision-making (and thus better performance) due to the fact that more approaches and alternatives are being considered as compared to those of a more homogeneous board.

## b. Current situation/trends regarding women in decision-making positions

The European Union started monitoring the participation of women on boards in 2003, through the "Database on women and men in decision-making". At least once a year, the EC has been releasing data regarding gender balance in the decision-making process.

For the past 12 years a clear evolution can be noticed, though at a much slower pace than hoped for. While in 2003, when the first numbers were released, women made up only 9% of the members of the boards of public listed companies, in October 2014 the EU average was 20%: a sign of progress, certainly, but well below gender parity on boards, and also below the 40% that the EU would like to reach by 2020.

The evolution varies from country to country, as will be shown in the following sections of the report, some registering a successful improvement (France + 20% since October 2010, Italy + 19.6% in the same period, Belgium +11.9%), while others unfortunately registering spectacular drops (Romania -10.4%, Czech Republic -8.7%).

As we will see, the issue of having more women on boards has started to move to the centre of the EU political agenda, as well as to the centre of the political agenda of several EU Member States. The past 5 – 10 years may be characterized by the experimentation of several approaches both at EU and national levels, using several tools such as voluntary quotas, strategies for equality and, more recently, binding legislation (binding quotas).

First introduced by Norway, binding quotas were, and still are, gaining momentum, with several countries adopting the system in 2011: Germany's Parliament, for example, recently passed a similar law. Alternatively, several countries have also introduced voluntary instruments and targets. These may consist of business-led

voluntary targets (as in the UK), non-binding targets set independently by national governments (as in Austria), or targets set for state-owned companies (in Finland and Denmark).

### c. Brief review of the *acquis communautaire* regarding equal treatment and opportunities

The European Union has a long-standing commitment towards ensuring equality between women and men, as it is one of its founding values. The first written mention appears in the EEC Treaty (1957), enshrining the right to “equal pay for equal work”.<sup>8</sup> Over the years this provision, limited to the labour market, has progressively evolved into numerous initiatives, instruments and proposals, covering equal access to employment, working and living conditions, and including the principle of non-discrimination regarding sex or sexual orientation.

An important supplement to the provisions of the treaties regarding gender equality is represented by EU directives – laws that go into more detail regarding the goals the Member States have already agreed upon in treaties.<sup>9</sup> The first directives adopted by the European Community between the 1970s and the '90s aimed to promote women in the labour market, as well as an equality of opportunity. Equal attention has been given to better conciliation of work life and family life for women, with the EU adopting several texts, including communications and initiatives.<sup>10</sup>

To this purpose, we have a Council Directive from 1975 reiterating the principle of equal pay for equal work and work of equal value; the principle of equal treatment for men and women was also extended in matters of social security, access to vocational training and promotion, and working conditions. With regard to discriminatory practices, the Equal Treatment Directive, prohibiting direct or indirect discrimination, was passed in 1976. This Directive was complemented by another one stating that in cases of discrimination based on sex, the burden of the proof falls on the suspected employer, who is the one who has to show that there was no discrimination based on gender in the workplace.<sup>11</sup>

After decades of reinforcing its position on gender equality through legislation and positive action, the 1990s represented a new period for the EU, with the introduction of a systemic approach through the policy of

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<sup>8</sup> EC, Briefing No 26 Women's rights and the enlargement of the European Union, available at [[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/briefings/26a2\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/briefings/26a2_en.htm)].

<sup>9</sup> Social Innovation Fund, Gender Equality in European Union, available at [[http://www.gender-equality.webinfo.lt/results/european\\_union.htm](http://www.gender-equality.webinfo.lt/results/european_union.htm)].

<sup>10</sup> EC, Briefing No 26 Women's rights and the enlargement of the European Union, available at [[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/briefings/26a2\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/briefings/26a2_en.htm)].

<sup>11</sup> Social Innovation Fund, Gender Equality in European Union, available at [[http://www.gender-equality.webinfo.lt/results/european\\_union.htm](http://www.gender-equality.webinfo.lt/results/european_union.htm)].



gender mainstreaming. With this new strategy the EU aims to include gender perspective in all other policies. In 2001, based on this new policy, a five-year plan offering a structural approach to achieving gender equality was introduced: the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality, covering equality in economic, social, and civil life, equal participation and representation, and changing gender roles and stereotypes.<sup>12</sup> Under this framework, the EC had a visibility study conducted for the establishment of a European Institute for Gender Equality. Although the results of the study indicated that there are clear tasks for such an Institute, which are not carried out by existing institutions, the European Institute for Gender Equality had to wait until 2006 to come into being. EIGE is an independent centre for excellence which collects, analyses, and disseminates reliable and comparable data on gender equality, another strong sign of EU's commitment to the promotion of equality, intended to speed up the equal treatment process.<sup>13</sup>

Complementing the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality, in 2006 a roadmap for equality between women and men was introduced, and in 2010 the EC adopted a Women's Charter, committing itself further to mainstreaming gender equality in all its policies. The Charter represented the basis of the Gender Equality Strategy<sup>14</sup>, a five-year work programme (2010-2015) aiming to promote equality between men and women. In addition to the issue of the low numbers of women present in decision-making bodies, the strategy also addresses other issues related to women in the labour market, such as the gender gap in employment and the gender pay gap.

This work programme was the first step the European Commission took towards meeting its goal of increasing women's representation in decision-making bodies. It was followed in 2011 by a call to credible self-regulation by companies, aimed at ensuring greater gender balance on company boards. Since no clear progress was registered, the call was followed by a proposal of the Commission to introduce mandatory quotas in boards.

However, despite the EU's effort, women are still underrepresented in decision-making bodies and overrepresented in the lower-paid sectors.

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<sup>12</sup> Social Innovation Fund, Gender Equality in European Union, available at [[http://www.gender-equality.webinfo.lt/results/european\\_union.htm](http://www.gender-equality.webinfo.lt/results/european_union.htm)].

<sup>13</sup> EIGE, A brief EIGE history, available at [<http://eige.europa.eu/content/brief-eige-history>].

<sup>14</sup> EC, Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/index_en.htm)].



Figure 1 - Summary EC intervention; representation of women and men on boards of large listed companies (October 2003 – October 2014)<sup>15</sup>

#### d. The EC's proposal directive on Women on Boards

In November 2012, the European Commission proposed legislation<sup>16</sup> aiming at increasing the number of female non-executive board members to 40% in publicly listed companies, with the exception of small and medium-sized enterprises.

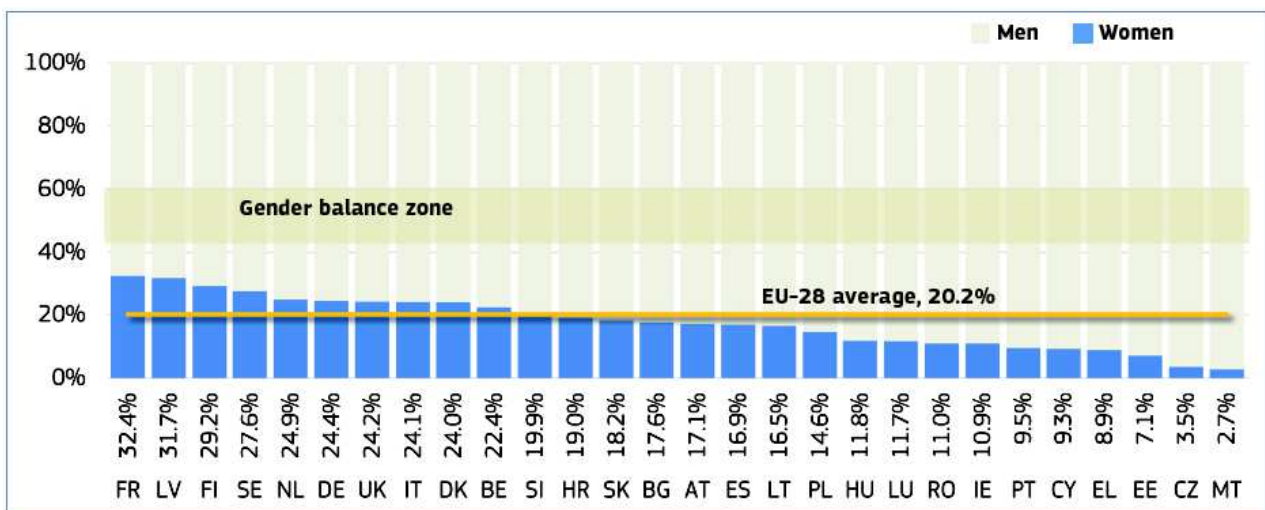


Figure 2 - Representation of women and men on boards in publicly listed companies in the EU, October 2014  
Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/womenonboards/wob-factsheet\\_2015-01\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/womenonboards/wob-factsheet_2015-01_en.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> EC, Gender balance on corporate boards: Europe is cracking the glass ceiling, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/140303\\_factsheet\\_wob\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/140303_factsheet_wob_en.pdf)].

<sup>16</sup> EC, Women on Boards: Commission proposes 40% objective, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/news/121114\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/news/121114_en.htm)].

Currently, women represent half of the population and 60% of university graduates in Europe, but according to the latest numbers issued by the “Database on women and men in decision-making”, women represent only 20% of board members of large publicly listed companies in the EU.<sup>17</sup>

Even though starting in 2003 – the year data collection began – progress was registered in the presence of women on boards, it was considered too slow-paced, with an average growth of just 0.6 percentage points per year.<sup>18</sup> As a consequence, the European Commission decided to accelerate this process by presenting a proposal for a Directive. The goal of this proposal is to reach a 40% presence of the underrepresented sex among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges. Companies having less than 40% of the underrepresented sex among the non-executive directors will be required to make appointments to those positions on the basis of a comparative analysis of the qualifications of each candidate, by applying clear, gender-neutral and unambiguous criteria. Given equal qualification, priority shall be given to the underrepresented sex.<sup>19</sup> This 40% target is to be reached by 2020 in the private sector, and by 2018 for public undertakings, over which public authorities exercise a dominant influence. As mentioned previously, small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as non-listed companies, are exempt from reaching the quota.

The proposal also includes a complementary measure called “flexi quota”, which is an obligation for listed companies to set themselves self-regulatory targets regarding the representation of women among executive directors, which they will have to meet by the same deadlines listed above.

There are no sanctions established by the proposed Directive; Member States themselves will have to lay down appropriate sanctions for companies breaching the Directive. The Directive is a temporary measure and is set to expire in 2028.

In November 2013, one year after making the proposal public, the European Parliament voted on it, adopting it at its first reading and endorsing the approach of the EC. At the time of writing this report, the proposal is still being discussed by the Council of the EU, which was not able to agree on a general approach during the discussion from December 2014.

As expected, the proposed Directive has aroused strong reactions, both for and against it. At the national

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<sup>17</sup> EC, “Database on women and men in decision-making”, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/business-finance/supervisory-board-board-directors/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/business-finance/supervisory-board-board-directors/index_en.htm)].

<sup>18</sup> EC, Women on Boards: Commission proposes 40% objective, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/news/121114\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/news/121114_en.htm)].

<sup>19</sup> EC, Women on Boards: Commission proposes 40% objective, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/news/121114\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/news/121114_en.htm)].

level, several countries have expressed their disagreement with the draft legislation, and plan on blocking its adoption. At the international level, lobbying organizations such as the “European Women’s Lobby” have expressed their support of legislative action for achieving gender equality, but criticize the proposed legislation, considering it too weak.<sup>20</sup> In their view, the measures should not be limited to large enterprises, and stronger sanctions should be introduced.

**e. Regulatory and self-regulatory measures in Member States for women on boards**

Independently from the European Commission’s Directive proposal, several European countries have already taken measures to increase the number of women on company boards. The types of measure differ from country to country, but they may mainly be broken down into two: legal and self-regulations.

At the present time, five EU Member States – Belgium, France, Italy, Netherlands, and Spain – have passed legislation to promote gender balance on the boards of various types of companies. To these countries may be added Norway and Iceland, of the broader European region, while Germany’s Parliament has passed a law very recently whereby its largest businesses must ensure that 30% of their supervisory boards are women.

A different approach to the legal one is that being tried by several other countries within the EU, such as Austria, Denmark, Finland, Luxembourg, Poland, Sweden, and the UK.<sup>21</sup> This approach was initiated by the business world, which has taken steps towards self-regulation. It should also be mentioned that self-regulation was a first step for several of the countries which have since introduced legislative provisions.

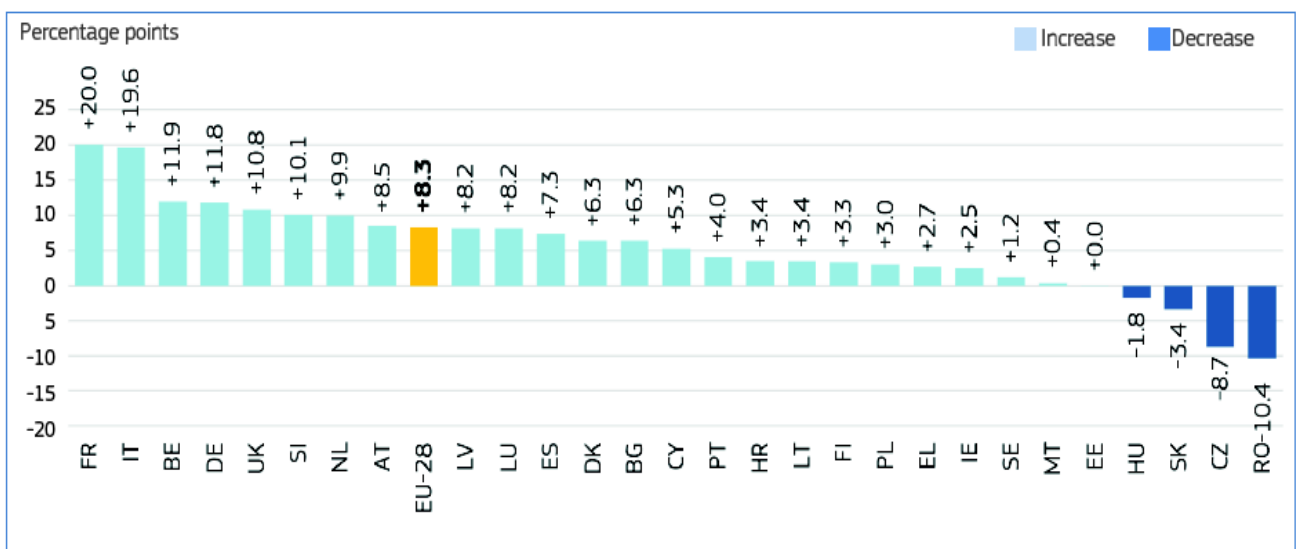


Figure 3 - Change in the share of women on boards: EU-28, October 2010 – October 2014  
 Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/womenonboards/wob-factsheet\\_2015-01\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/womenonboards/wob-factsheet_2015-01_en.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> EWL, The European Commission’s Directive on Women on Boards, available at <http://www.womenlobby.org/news/european-international-news/article/the-european-commission-s?lang=fr>.

<sup>21</sup> EC, Women on boards - Factsheet 2 Gender equality in the Member States, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/womenonboards/factsheet-general-2\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/womenonboards/factsheet-general-2_en.pdf).

## f. Country in-depth analysis

### i. Norway

In 2005, when it adopted the binding quota law, Norway became the first country in the world to adopt binding legislation for non-state-owned companies. Today, 10 years after the measure was implemented, women represent 38% of board members in the Norwegian companies covered by the law. The threshold applies to listed and non-listed public limited companies, inter-municipal companies, state companies, municipal companies, and co-operative companies. The law is reinforced by sanctions: if an enterprise fails to comply with the law it will face dissolution.<sup>22</sup>

The presence of women on boards had not been regulated directly by a binding law. In 2003, a non-binding commitment (voluntary by the companies) with a similar target had been implemented, but it failed to reach the expected result, thus leading to the introduction of the binding legislation.

Although Norway is one of the countries with the highest number of women on boards, the European Women's Lobby (EWL), the largest alliance of women's non-governmental associations in the European Union, has identified several challenges, for example<sup>23</sup>:

- There are companies which are not covered by the legislation, and there has been no spill-over effect from the companies affected by the quotas to those that aren't.
- Figures for privately owned companies stand at around 15-18%, in comparison to the 40% of the public limited companies.
- There has been no further progress for the companies that have reached the 40% mark.

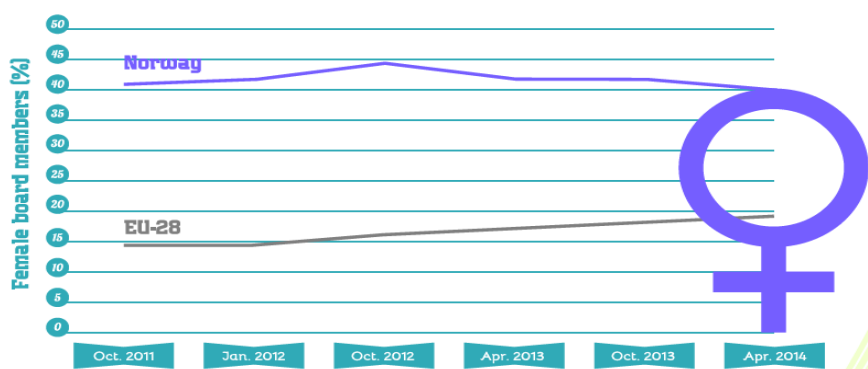


Figure 4 – Evolution of women on boards: Norway, October 2011 – April 2014

Source: <http://www.womenlobby.org/news/ewl-news/article/women-on-boards-2nd-progress-7110?lang=fr>

<sup>22</sup> EWL, Women on Boards in Europe – From a Snail's Pace to a Giant Leap?, pp. 12 – 13, available at [[http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?action=acceder\\_document&arg=1414&cle=c2d993373741245ae62ff99905e3030f497cf139&file=pdf%2Fewl\\_report\\_women\\_on\\_boards\\_in\\_europe\\_27\\_february-2.pdf](http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?action=acceder_document&arg=1414&cle=c2d993373741245ae62ff99905e3030f497cf139&file=pdf%2Fewl_report_women_on_boards_in_europe_27_february-2.pdf)].

<sup>23</sup> EWL, Women on Boards - 2nd Progress Report - Country in Focus NORWAY, available at [<http://www.womenlobby.org/news/ewl-news/article/women-on-boards-2nd-progress-7110?lang=fr>].

## ii. Belgium

Together with several other EU countries, Belgium joined the ranks of those with binding regulations in 2011, through the adoption of the Act of 28th of July 2011. The goal of the Act was to amend the Company Code, concerning companies which are quoted on the stock exchange, and the laws regulating state-owned enterprises.<sup>24</sup> According to its provisions, at least one third of board members of publicly-listed companies and state-owned companies must be of the underrepresented sex.

The amendment started to be implemented in 2012, but will become fully applicable only in 2019. As in the case of Norway, sanctions were put into place for the cases in which the quota is not fulfilled, consisting of the suspension of any advantages, financial or otherwise, attached to the position of director for all the members of the board as long as its composition does not comply with the quota.

## iii. France

Like Belgium, France adopted the relevant legislation in 2011, through the Law of 27 January 2011.<sup>25</sup> Under this law, companies have to ensure that women will make up 20% of the board three years after the adoption of the law, and 40% after six years. The legislation applies to companies listed on the stock exchange and non-listed companies with at least 500 workers and with revenues of over €50 million over the previous three consecutive years. Public companies regulated by commercial law, such as state-owned companies, are also covered.<sup>26</sup> In cases of non-compliance, the companies face nullification of their board elections, although the decisions adopted by the board remain valid. Also, the directors of infringing companies face suspension of benefits.

According to EWL, the challenges France still faces are related to the fact that the law only applies to non-executive directorship positions driving the proportion of female executive directors to fall below the EU-28 average.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> EWL, Women on Boards in Europe – From a Snail’s Pace to a Giant Leap?, p. 8, available at [[http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?action=acceder\\_document&arg=1414&cle=c2d993373741245ae62ff99905e3030f497cf139&file=pdf%2Fewl\\_report\\_women\\_on\\_boards\\_in\\_europe\\_27\\_february-2.pdf](http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?action=acceder_document&arg=1414&cle=c2d993373741245ae62ff99905e3030f497cf139&file=pdf%2Fewl_report_women_on_boards_in_europe_27_february-2.pdf)].

<sup>25</sup> EC, Women in economic decision-making in the EU: Progress report, pp. 17 – 18, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/women-on-boards\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/women-on-boards_en.pdf)].

<sup>26</sup> EWL, Women on Boards in Europe – From a Snail’s Pace to a Giant Leap?, pp. 9 - 10, available at [[http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?action=acceder\\_document&arg=1414&cle=c2d993373741245ae62ff99905e3030f497cf139&file=pdf%2Fewl\\_report\\_women\\_on\\_boards\\_in\\_europe\\_27\\_february-2.pdf](http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?action=acceder_document&arg=1414&cle=c2d993373741245ae62ff99905e3030f497cf139&file=pdf%2Fewl_report_women_on_boards_in_europe_27_february-2.pdf)].

<sup>27</sup> EWL, Women on Boards - 2nd Progress Report - Country in Focus FRANCE, available at [<http://www.womenlobby.org/news/ewl-news/article/women-on-boards-2nd-progress-7088?lang=fr>].

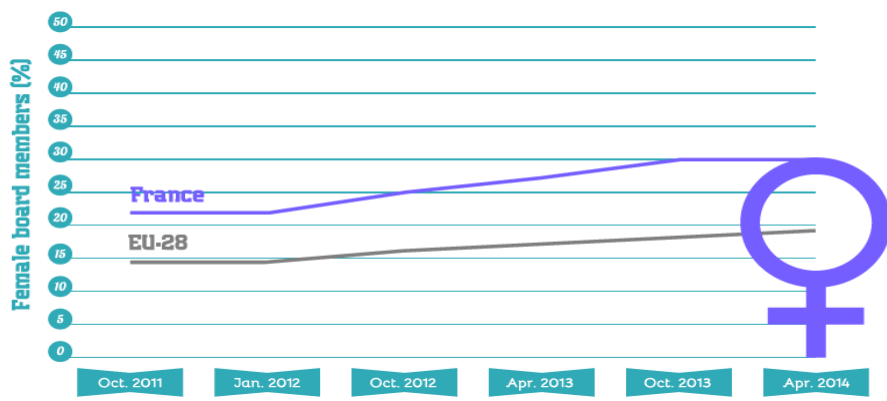


Figure 5 - Evolution women on boards France, October 2011 – April 2014

Source: <http://www.womenlobby.org/news/ewl-news/article/women-on-boards-2nd-progress-7088?lang=fr>

#### iv. Italy

In 2011, at the time of the adoption of the “Gender Parity Law”, Italy had one of the lowest representations of women on boards EU-wide, just 6%. With the new law set in place, Italy is aiming for women to receive 20% of the positions at the first renewal of the board of directors (after the law takes effect) and 33% at the second and third renewal. In cases of non-compliance, the law has established a three-step sanction: warning, fine (up to 1 million) and, lastly, stripping the board of its power and legal mandate.<sup>28</sup>

The law is applicable to companies listed on the stock exchange and to state-owned companies.<sup>29</sup>

According to EWL, the problems with the legislation lie with the lack of application of sanctions, the temporary nature of the measure (it expires after the third renewal of the board), and the fact that women on Italian boards are disproportionately concentrated in non-executive board positions.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> EWL, Women on Boards in Europe – From a Snail’s Pace to a Giant Leap?, p. 11, available at [[http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?action=acceder\\_document&arg=1414&cle=c2d993373741245ae62ff99905e3030f497cf139&file=pdf%2Fewl\\_report\\_women\\_on\\_boards\\_in\\_europe\\_27\\_february-2.pdf](http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?action=acceder_document&arg=1414&cle=c2d993373741245ae62ff99905e3030f497cf139&file=pdf%2Fewl_report_women_on_boards_in_europe_27_february-2.pdf)].

<sup>29</sup> EC, Women in economic decision-making in the EU: Progress report, p. 18, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/women-on-boards\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/women-on-boards_en.pdf)].

<sup>30</sup> EWL, Women on Boards - 2nd Progress Report - Country in Focus ITALY, available at [[http://womenlobby.org/news/ewl-news/article/women-on-boards-2nd-progress-7103?lang=en&afficher\\_footer=oui](http://womenlobby.org/news/ewl-news/article/women-on-boards-2nd-progress-7103?lang=en&afficher_footer=oui)].

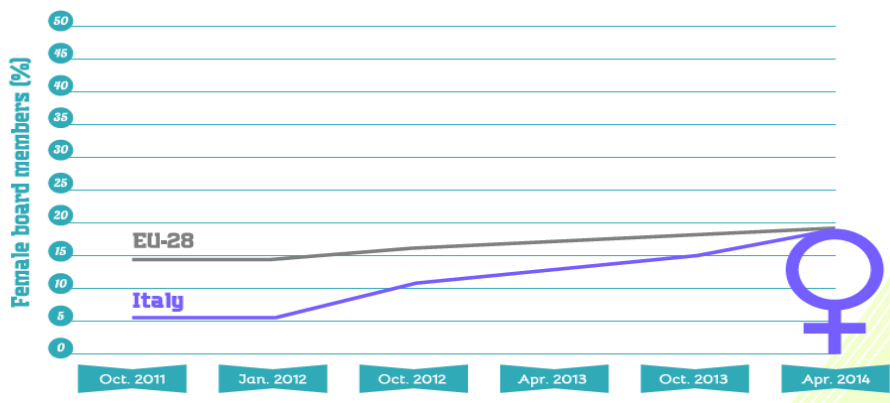


Figure 6 - Evolution women on boards: Italy, October 2011 – April 2014

Source: [http://womenlobby.org/news/ewl-news/article/women-on-boards-2nd-progress-7103?lang=en&afficher\\_footer=oui](http://womenlobby.org/news/ewl-news/article/women-on-boards-2nd-progress-7103?lang=en&afficher_footer=oui)

## v. Latvia

The countries presented above are characterized by two elements: they have all introduced binding legislation regarding the share of women on boards (supported by sanctions), and they have all registered great progress over the past four years, in comparison with the other countries. Although each of their models has weaknesses as mentioned above, they present one tool in reaching gender parity.

Now we would like to address the alternative case of Latvia, which in October 2014 had a rate of 32% of women on boards, the same as in France and one of the highest within the EU. But unlike France and the other countries mentioned above, it hasn't enacted any kind of measures, either legal or voluntary. One of the possible explanations offered is related to the promotion of women during the time of the former Soviet Union, particularly in the services sector. Another explanation is related to the higher education among women.<sup>31</sup>

While Latvia has a high percentage of women in executive positions, in comparison with other countries, their number is still 9 percentage points lower than the number of women in non-executive positions. Also, although it is one of the countries with the highest number of women on boards, since 2012 its progress has been slow.

<sup>31</sup> EWL, Women on Boards in Europe: Second Progress Report, pp. 16 – 18, available at [[http://womenslobby.eu/spip.php?action=accéder\\_document&arg=4201&cle=54593ff5c0d9d8d8a95c757cb2811f83bd951ca5&file=pdf%2Fewl\\_cracks\\_in\\_the\\_glass\\_ceiling\\_or\\_just\\_a\\_trick\\_of\\_the\\_light\\_hr.pdf](http://womenslobby.eu/spip.php?action=accéder_document&arg=4201&cle=54593ff5c0d9d8d8a95c757cb2811f83bd951ca5&file=pdf%2Fewl_cracks_in_the_glass_ceiling_or_just_a_trick_of_the_light_hr.pdf)].



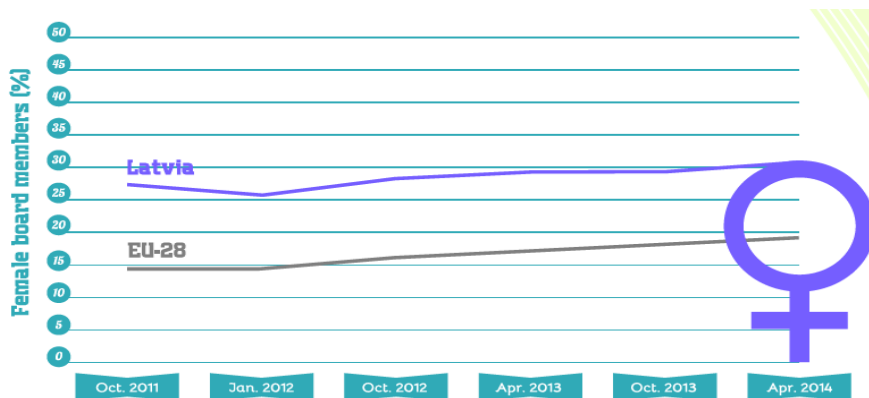


Figure 7 - Evolution women on boards: Latvia, October 2011 – April 2014

Source: <http://womenlobby.org/news/ewl-news/article/women-on-boards-2nd-progress-7104?lang=en>

## vi. Turkey

The current Turkish legislation does not establish any specific rule on the application of female quotas on Management Boards. However, some improvements in gender equality have been achieved through the legislative system. In 2004, the Constitution of Turkey<sup>32</sup> was amended with reference to the Article 10 on gender equality. It strengthened the principle of constitutional equality between men and women. Moreover, in 2009, The Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men was established, with the aim of developing policies on gender equality.

### CONSTITUTION OF TURKEY, EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW

#### Article 10.

Everyone is equal before the law without distinction as to language, race, colour, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such grounds. (Paragraph added on May 7, 2004; act no. 5170) Men and women have equal rights. The state has the obligation to ensure that this equality exists in practice. (Sentence added on September 12, 2010; act no. 5982) Measures taken for this purpose shall not be interpreted as contrary to the principle of equality. (Paragraph added on September 12, 2010; act no. 5982) [...] No privilege shall be granted to any individual, family, group or class. State organs and administrative authorities are obliged to act in compliance with the principle of equality before the law in all their proceedings.

Additional amendment proposals of the Constitution are currently under evaluation. Another important element of change is the inclusion of the former General Directorate for the Status of Women (KGSM) under the umbrella of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. In 2009 and 2010, two important Prime Minister Circulars addressed the issues of equal pay for equal work and the prevention of mobbing at the workplace.

<sup>32</sup> The Grand National Assembly of Turkey, [http://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution\\_en.pdf](http://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution_en.pdf)

In addition, a number of family-friendly laws were adopted by the governments, in order to provide support to workers, such as a regulation on maternity leave for civil servants (Law n. 6111, known as the Omnibus Law). However, the voluntary policies, or the “soft law” legislation, have not achieved considerable results in Turkey, due to several factors, such as the social, cultural, and economic framework.<sup>33</sup>

With regard to statistical data, in the largest publicly listed companies in Turkey, the number of women on Boards of Directors reaches 6% in the case of female Presidents (compared to 7% in EU-28), and 9% in the case of female members (compared to 20% in EU28)<sup>34</sup>. The incidence of female Presidents can be explained by the presence of members of the controlling family on the Board. It should also be emphasized that *“The members of insider-dominated boards rarely change as board seats are predominantly occupied by representatives of the controlling shareholders and their trusted affiliates. Male or female, there is simply no room for outsiders in these entrenched boards.”*<sup>35</sup>

## g. Women entrepreneurs

When it comes to entrepreneurship, not many people in the EU consider it a better alternative than working as an employee in a firm. This is the case for both men and women, resulting in the EU having a small number of people setting up their own businesses. The difference is that when we compare the number of men entrepreneurs to those of women entrepreneurs, we see that women are being underrepresented in this sector as well: only 30% of all entrepreneurs are women, according to a report on women entrepreneurs in Europe from 2014.<sup>36</sup> Even more, women represent 78% of one-person enterprises in Europe.

A 2008 study of the European Commission on women innovators and entrepreneurship showed that there are 3 types of obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs:<sup>37</sup>

- Contextual obstacles: related to educational choices, traditional views, and stereotypes about

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<sup>33</sup> EU Twinning Project TR 08 IB SO 01, “Promoting Gender Equality in Working Life”, [http://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Publikationen/a801-quality-gender.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](http://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Publikationen/a801-quality-gender.pdf?__blob=publicationFile)

<sup>34</sup> European Commission, DG Justice, Gender Equality, data 2012, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/business-finance/supervisory-board-board-directors/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/business-finance/supervisory-board-board-directors/index_en.htm)

<sup>35</sup> Independent Women Directors Project, Sabanci University, Corporate Governance Forum of Turkey, “2014 WOMEN ON BOARD, Turkey 2<sup>nd</sup> annual report”, available at [http://research.sabanciuniv.edu/25068/1/Women\\_on\\_board\\_Turkey\\_2014\\_2nd\\_Annual\\_Report.pdf](http://research.sabanciuniv.edu/25068/1/Women_on_board_Turkey_2014_2nd_Annual_Report.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> EC, Encouraging women entrepreneurs, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/women/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/women/index_en.htm)].

<sup>37</sup> EC, Encouraging women entrepreneurs, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/women/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/women/index_en.htm)].

women, science, and innovation;

- Economic obstacles: related to women being less credible financially than men; and
- Soft obstacles: related to lack of business training, role models, and entrepreneurship skills.

In order to counterbalance these obstacles, the EU has provided support in various forms. For example, the EC has launched the European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship (WES). With a membership of 31 countries (EU28, Iceland, Norway, and Turkey), its delegates provide advice, support, information, and contacts regarding existing support measures for female entrepreneurs.<sup>38</sup> The members of the network also help in the identification of good practices. Among its aims, we can include raising the visibility of existing female entrepreneurs, increasing the number of new women entrepreneurs, creating a climate that is favourable to female entrepreneurs, and increasing the size (scale) of existing women-run businesses.

When it comes to offering a role model to would-be women entrepreneurs, the European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors goes into action. The aim of the network is to inspire women of all ages to set up their own businesses, by presenting success stories and raising women's confidence.<sup>39</sup>

## h. Barriers in women's leadership

In their first study of the "Women Matter" series<sup>40</sup>, McKinsey & Company set out to identify the most common barriers to women's leadership, in order to try to understand the underrepresentation of women in top positions, disproportionate with the number of women present on the labour market.

One of the first barriers identified in the study is the corporate model. Despite the fact that social policies can be favourable to women's employment and advancement, the corporate models are historically designed by men under the form of the "anytime, anywhere" model. This type of model is difficult to follow for women, who have to deal with both work and domestic responsibilities, in their various forms.

Another key element in advancing to the top is the promotion of oneself and assertiveness about one's performance. But unlike men, who tend to overrate their contributions, women do the opposite and minimize them.

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<sup>38</sup> EC, WES - the European network to promote women's entrepreneurship, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/women/wes-network/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/women/wes-network/index_en.htm)].

<sup>39</sup> EC, Encouraging women entrepreneurs, available at [[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/women/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/women/index_en.htm)].

<sup>40</sup> McKinsey & Company, Women Matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver, 2007, available at [[http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women\\_matter](http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women_matter)].

The psychological factor should also be taken into account. Faced with family responsibilities and having to compete in a male-dominated world, many women end up choosing to opt out of a business career.

Women also have difficulty in identifying with success, due to the lack of female role models, a factor which also might affect their professional ambitions. In order to address these issues, private companies have implemented several policies; some of them will be further explored in the next pages.

### i. Lines of action

In order to achieve gender diversity and overcome some of the obstacles identified above, several studies have been conducted, with a strong input from the private sector. Interviews with EU employers have been conducted regarding the initiatives and practices they implement in their companies with a view to improving the underrepresentation of women in managerial positions. Several of their instruments may be found below:

<b>Setting up gender diversity indicators</b>	<b>Objective: Creating a tool for defining and directing priorities for action</b>
	<p>The creation and monitoring of gender diversity indicators appears as a proposal in the first study of the “Women Matter” series by McKinsey &amp; Company<sup>41</sup>. This suggestion comes as a result of an interview with several companies which registered notable progress in the number of women on boards and management position.</p> <p>The creation and monitoring indicators is seen as the first step towards achieving change. The indicators include various dimensions, such as the proportion of women in the company’s various business lines, at each level of management and among new recruits, pay levels and attrition rates between men and women in similar functions, and the ratio of women promoted to women eligible for promotion.</p> <p>These performance indicators and their monitoring should offer an insight into the magnitude of the gaps and represent a tool for defining and implementing priorities for action.</p>
<b>Developing “business case</b>	<b>Objective: Developing specific diversity policies and activities</b>

<sup>41</sup> McKinsey & Company, Women Matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver.

In order to ensure that women are systematically included in the recruitment and promotion processes, it is recommended for the companies to adopt “Diversity & Inclusion” (D&I) policies.

In the case of Accor, the company’s diversity policy is outlined in a document called the “Group International Diversity Charter”<sup>42</sup>. Its diversity policy is based on the principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment, and is achieved covering the following four areas: gender, disability, age, and origin.

Some of the key messages in the Charter are:

- “Diversity is based on a fundamental principle: the completely unbiased welcome of others based solely on professional skills.”
- “A permanent source of shared enrichment, social and commercial dynamics, innovation, and adaptability to change, diversity is one of the keys to our future performance.”
- “We have a goal of equality among employees with equivalent professional skills, in particular regarding men and women, in terms of training, compensation, and career development.”

In order to achieve its goals, the Charter includes mandatory monitoring, diversity trainings, yearly action plans, and annual reporting to the Executive Committee.

The trainings are done through two e-learning modules, called “How to act to prevent discrimination?” (45 minutes) and “Make diversity real in my hotel” (60 minutes). The trainings are structured like a game: a group of tourists comes to the hotel and the manager (employee undergoing the training) has to find an answer to their different situations based on the company’s diversity policy. Feedback is given to the employee, as well as information on several legal aspects, recognition of stereotypes, and practical drills.

Specifically, one exercise on recruitment teaches managers how to make sure that the recruitment of a new employee is done solely on the basis of

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<sup>42</sup> CEC et al., Promoting Women in Management, pp. 39-40, available at [<http://www.womeninmanagement.eu/images/CEC-PWIM-report.pdf>].

	his or her training, experience, and skills. As part of this exercise, the manager is asked to delete parts of the CV which might trigger discrimination or bias, such as picture, name, address, gender, marital status, children, physical ability, religion, and age.
<b>Diversity managers</b>	<b>Objective: Scouting and promoting female talent</b>
	Diversity managers conduct personal interviews with female employees with the goal of getting to know them well in order to bring them to the fore and make them visible for upcoming management positions. Their role is to match female leaders with vacant managerial positions. <sup>43</sup>
<b>Managing resistance</b>	<b>Objective: Positive management of men's and women's reactions to gender diversity programmes within companies</b>
	<p>McKinsey and Company highlight in a 2013 study the fact that there is a need to build awareness among men when it comes to the difficulties that women face in reaching management positions.<sup>44</sup> It is believed that, through awareness-raising, beliefs and behaviours evolve and unconscious biases can be removed. This could have a changing influence on men's tendency to recruit and promote men.</p> <p>In addition, the conviction that what is good for women is equally good for men should be nurtured.</p> <p>In the case of H&amp;M, Spain's country manager has stated that it is very important for top management to set the example for this approach. According to her, the conduct of the CEO has an important impact on corporate culture and the behaviour of employees. "Show off" behaviours are not rewarded.<sup>45</sup></p>
<b>Work-life balance (flexible working time arrangements and career flexibility)</b>	<b>Objective: Allowing women enough flexibility to meet both work and domestic demands</b>

<sup>43</sup> CEC et al., Promoting Women in Management.

<sup>44</sup> McKinsey & Company, Gender diversity in top management: Moving corporate culture, moving boundaries, 2013, p. 15, available at [[http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women\\_matter](http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women_matter)].

<sup>45</sup> CEC et al., Promoting Women in Management.

Flexibility, in all its forms – remote working, part-time work, or flexitime – is highlighted as an important part of the general development of the company’s business model. This will require the company to find a way to adapt its organization and culture. Besides benefiting women, by allowing them more flexibility in combining work and domestic responsibilities, it also has a strong positive impact on the company itself, by using its resources to the fullest.<sup>46</sup>

In this case of flexible working, the head office of Accor (France) is experimenting with a pilot programme for employees to work from home one day per week.<sup>47</sup>

Career flexibility has also been highlighted as a very important element for women since, generally speaking, women’s careers do not evolve in a linear way, but instead need periodic breaks during their course. The biggest break in a women’s career is usually maternity leave; this and other types of breaks need active management in order to ensure that women will return to work. The companies that have shown they manage the best maternity leaves are those who keep in touch with the employee during the break, and organize personal meetings before and after to ensure that the employee is properly reintegrated into the workforce when the time comes.

In the cases of some companies, their managers receive some light training, explaining to them how to act.<sup>48</sup>

**Adaptation of the human resource management process**

**Objective: Raising the awareness of front-line managers**

The human resource management system has a great impact on the professional development of women. McKinsey and Company are addressing the issue of faulty management in this sector and its negative influence on women’s advancement.<sup>49</sup> As an example, the process for identifying high potentials should be adapted in order to be more flexible; it shouldn’t focus simply on the age of the proposed future manager, but

<sup>46</sup> McKinsey & Company, Women Matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver.

<sup>47</sup> CEC et al., Promoting Women in Management.

<sup>48</sup> McKinsey & Company, Women Matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver.

<sup>49</sup> McKinsey & Company, Women Matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver.

	<p>should also take into consideration the number of years in the company, allowing for the career breaks such as maternity leave, and thus not eliminate possible candidates from the start.</p> <p>Human resource policies also have a great influence on raising the awareness of front-line managers and spotting potential women candidates. In some companies, training is organized for recruiters, with the goal of raising awareness on the importance of diversity in leadership positions as well as identifying prejudices that may affect their decisions.</p>
<p><b>Implementing recruitment and selection processes</b></p>	<p><b>Objective: Encouraging more women to apply for positions</b></p>
	<p>It has been noticed that for job offers, men generally apply in larger numbers than women. In order to change this, recruiters in Sweden have been trained to write job descriptions that are more appealing to women. Since women tend to underestimate their abilities, it was found that job ads with numerous bullet points discourage women from applying.<sup>50</sup> Also, trainings on how to design the ads in order to attract women were organized.</p>
<p><b>Coaching, network building, and mentoring</b></p>	<p><b>Objective: Empowering women, mastering the dominant codes</b></p>
	<p>Already mentioned in the section above, women generally underestimate their contributions and end up limiting themselves in a male-centric work environment.</p> <p>In order to counterbalance this attitude, programmes involving coaching, network-building, and mentoring are being proposed<sup>51</sup>, with the goal of raising women’s awareness as to the limitations they impose on themselves and help them better manage their careers.</p> <p>Two steps are envisaged within this framework: raising women’s awareness about the importance of networking, and actually implementing networking/mentoring opportunities. Setting up networks within a company addresses both steps: it both raises women’s awareness and gives them the opportunity to identify possible role models.</p>

<sup>50</sup> CEC et al., Promoting Women in Management.

<sup>51</sup> CEC et al., Promoting Women in Management.



In France and the UK, special programmes have been set up with this goal: the FTSE-100 Cross-Company Mentoring programme in the former and the CAC 40 programme in the latter. These programmes not only bring together female high-fliers with the heads of the largest corporation in their country, but they also offer mentoring and new career prospects. Besides expanding their network within the company, mentees end up gaining better understanding of the corporate culture. Another important feature of these types of programmes is that usually the mentor and mentee are not hierarchically connected. Results of these types of programmes show that mentees feel encouraged and motivated to fulfil their ambitions.

**Sponsoring**

**Objective: Empowering women, mastering the dominant codes**

For many, sponsoring and mentorship are more or less synonymous. Traditionally, mentors provide mentees with advice, help define career objectives, and provide guidance and support, but it is seen that women need more than this to reach the top. Sponsors have a more active approach: they can open doors, recommend women for promotions, and actively push women for advancement.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> McKinsey & Company, Gender diversity in top management: Moving corporate culture, moving boundaries, 2013, p. 16, available at [[http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women\\_matter](http://www.mckinsey.com/features/women_matter)].

## 2. INTERVIEWS WITH TURKISH AND ITALIAN COMPANIES

Starting from the assumption that specific policies on gender equality can support the access to managerial positions of women within the company and encourage women to apply for job positions, it is important to evaluate the presence of gender equality policies and supporting measures. Considering the different causes that hinder women's access to managerial positions – such as cultural mindset, corporate governance, and family duties – specific company policies can represent a significant step toward the inclusion of women from the entry level to the management positions.

The interviews were conducted with both company management and union representatives. The interviews involving private companies' management were conducted using a specific template. It included a preliminary identification of company size, industry, and workforce features. It focused on the identification of best practices implemented in the field of equal opportunities and policies aimed at supporting family-friendly policies and women's professional growth.

The people interviewed were also asked to provide further information about any current corporate social responsibility codes and/or transnational framework agreements. Some examples of company policies were mentioned in the interview form, in order to support and categorize the identification of best practices and company policies. The sections mentioned were: Working Hours, Corporate Services, Allowances and Benefits, Career Support, and Facilitation Services.

On the union side, the interviews were conducted with three representatives of the Turkish Confederations, with the aim of determining women's experiences in acceding to trade union executive positions and their roles within these positions. One of these women is a member of the Auditing Commission of a trade union operating in the commerce sector, and another is the branch secretary in a metalworkers' trade union. The third was appointed Deputy General Secretary in a trade union confederation. She took this professional position after having gained experience as research department coordinator in the Confederation and having held the role of General Advisory President in another affiliated union. In the commerce sector represented, the unionization ratio of women compared to men is approximately the same, while in the metalworkers' union the percentage is just 9%. The high numbers of female members in a union do not always indicate a high representation of women in executive union positions. Two union representatives confirm that access to executive positions is usually achieved by elections.

## a. The corporate social responsibility codes and transnational framework agreements

Companies can use various tools for ensuring their compliance with the principles of gender equality and promotion of women's access to managerial positions.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies are self-regulatory forms promoted by companies for monitoring and guaranteeing that their policies are in line with ethical principles, and comply with national legislation and international standards and provisions. They address a company's stakeholders, represented by several actors, such as consumers, investors, employees, local communities, etc. CSR policies can be adopted unilaterally by companies, without any involvement of employees' representatives, and are usually published yearly in the form of annual reports.

On the other hand, transnational framework agreements (TFAs) involve social partners in their drafting and signing. TFAs are signed by both company management and union representatives (due to the heterogeneity of these agreements, the signatories may vary from Global Union Federations and European Federations, to National Unions and European Works Councils). TFAs are focused on the enhancement of fundamental social rights, core labour standards, industrial relations, and social dialogue, and can represent an alternative dispute resolution mechanism.

While the implementation of CSR policies is based on the monitoring carried out by the management or external auditors, TFAs *"follow a different logic of implementation, mainly dialogue-based and dependent on soft mechanisms of conflict regulation and joint problem-solving"*<sup>53</sup>. The use of indicators for measuring the results could be improved in both TFAs and CSR codes of conduct. Concerning the legal framework, both these tools are not legally binding. However, *"even if these IFAs are not legally binding and may not be considered as collective agreements, the assumption is that these agreements are more effective and legitimate than unilateral codes of conduct."*<sup>54</sup>

With reference to the companies interviewed, ENEL signed a Global Framework Agreement in June 2013.<sup>55</sup> It refers to the 10 Principles of the UN Global Compact and highlights the role played by the Multilateral Committee on Equal Opportunities in strengthening the importance given to the principle of equality and

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<sup>53</sup> Voss, Wilke, Sobczak, Schömann, Codes of conduct and international framework agreements: New forms of governance at company level, Eurofound, 2008

<sup>54</sup> Voss, Wilke, Sobczak, Schömann, Codes of conduct and international framework agreements: New forms of governance at company level, Eurofound, 2008

<sup>55</sup> Enel Group, Global Framework Agreement, 2013

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/empl\\_portal/transnational\\_agreements/enel\\_gfa\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/empl_portal/transnational_agreements/enel_gfa_en.pdf)

opportunity. Thanks to the Committee, the company commits itself to the implementation of several activities in this area, with the aim of gathering information on initiatives and projects to be implemented, conducting studies and research on the roles, of women in the workplace, removing subjective and objective barriers to equal opportunities, and improving the concept of diversity management, through the implementation of specifically oriented projects. According to the agreement, the activities and proposals of the Committee will be analysed and discussed during the annual meeting held with the Global Works Council.<sup>56</sup> Within this framework, company representatives will be required to provide data and feasibility studies.

Unicredit Group also signed a Transnational Company Agreement, with specific focus on diversity management and equal opportunities. Following the establishment of two joint commissions in 2008 aimed at drafting joint statements on common guidelines in line with the corporate social responsibilities principles and integrity charter values, the Italian financial group Unicredit has committed itself to the definition of a “Joint Declaration on Equal Opportunities.”<sup>57</sup> The text was signed on May 2009 by the Head of Human Resources and Head of Industrial Relations of UniCredit Group, Chairman, and Select Committee of the UniCredit European Works Council (UEWC). It addresses the main topics of equal opportunities, non-discrimination, and diversity, and also deals more in depth with the issues of social dialogue, work-life balance, and family-friendly policies, training, performance evaluation, compensation systems, and management of career paths.

In particular, the Declaration refers to the Sixth Principle of the UN Global Compact, which focuses on the concept of non-discrimination in the working environment and the “Framework of Actions on Gender Equality” adopted by European Social Partners UNICE/UEAPME, CEEP, and ETUC.

The Declaration sets forth several fundamental principles to which the parties commit themselves:

- Equal treatment and same dignity for each diversity;
- The culture of diversity as a joint and cross-organizational process;
- Meritocracy as the basis for equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

These objectives attempt to address the existing gaps and develop gender initiatives, considered as cornerstones in the promotion of awareness on the topic. According to the contents of the Declaration, the monitoring of the activities is guaranteed by the meeting held with the European Works Council, in order to share updates and data on the results achieved.

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<sup>56</sup> The Global Works Council is made up of trade union representatives in proportion to the overall workforce of the Enel Group by country, representatives of European Trade Union Federations, Global Trade Union Federations, and the Coordinator of the European Works Council.

<sup>57</sup> EC Database, Joint Declaration on Equal Opportunities  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=978&langId=en&agreementId=183>

On the other hand, Garanti Bank refers to its CSR code and highlights the importance played by the signing of the UN Global Compact and adherence to the Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs)<sup>58</sup>, as well as to compliance with Turkish legislation. As stated in its annual report, Garanti Bank aims at creating a work environment based on a full respect of human rights, and it is committed to extending this vision to all its stakeholders. In particular, the Company commits itself to compliance with the tools established by international bodies and agencies, being Turkey a signatory party:

- 1) The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- 2) The principles on workers' rights established by the International Labor Organization (ILO).

Moreover, in 2012 Garanti Bank voluntarily signed the United Nations Global Compact principles, which commit businesses to the alignment of their operations and strategies with the Ten Principles adopted in July 2000 (the 10th principle was adopted in June 2004). The UN Global Compact aims at promoting the involvement of private business sector and multinational companies in respecting several crucial ethic principles related to human rights, environment, and workers' rights. Among the principles mentioned, the sixth principle refers to gender equality at the workplace, by affirming *"the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation"*.

Garanti Bank also strengthens its compliance with the Global Banking Alliance for Women (GBA), Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs), and HeforShe campaign. In its role as the first bank in Turkey to have signed the WEPs, in 2012 a specific Steering Committee was set up for monitoring the integration of these principles into HR policies, and for the improvement of gender equality among employees.

According to the company's Ethical Principles, Garanti Bank ensures that the work environment is protected from any type of harassment, discrimination, or mistreatment that may occur, either in the workplace or outside. Managers are in charge of supervising employees and are obliged to report any suspected case to the HR department. In its CSR report, Garanti Bank views *"equality of opportunity and diversity as a fundamental value and a driving force of its corporate culture"*<sup>59</sup>. In line with this purpose, the company was

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<sup>58</sup> The principles, established by the United Nations, were launched on International Women's Day in March 2010. They are conceived as a set of principles for business, aimed at increasing women empowerment in the workplace, labour market, and community environments. The principles are the following:

1. Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality
2. Treat all women and men fairly at work – respect and support human rights and non-discrimination
3. Ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of all women and men workers
4. Promote education, training, and professional development for women
5. Implement enterprise development, supply chain, and marketing practices that empower women
6. Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy
7. Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality

<sup>59</sup> Garanti Bank, Annual Report 2013, available at [[http://www.garanti.com.tr/en/our\\_company/sustainability/developments/reports.page](http://www.garanti.com.tr/en/our_company/sustainability/developments/reports.page)]

able to ensure the presence of a high number of female employees in its workforce (57% overall and 40% in senior/middle-level management).

Thanks to this commitment to gender equality, in 2012 Garanti Bank was acknowledged as one of the first to implement the Equal Opportunities model. As for the compensation system, the same principles and values of gender equality are applied. It uses balanced performance targets that ensure a measurable and transparent indicator, based on the principles “equal pay for equal jobs” and “pay for performance” for salary raises based on measurable results.

The monitoring of the expected results is carried out each year through Global Reporting Initiatives. These report various data, including the workforce make-up based on employment contract by gender, race, and region, remuneration ratio, career development by gender, and return to work and retention rates after parental leave.

## b. Women on management board and managerial job positions

Several companies that took part in the interview provided positive data on the percentage of women included on their management boards. Despite some differences in the ratio of each company, overall the presence of women is ensured. However, some companies perform better than others, and in all cases the percentage remains in favour of men. In Garanti Bank, there is one female member on the Board of Directors, while the other nine board members are men. However, this 10% ratio increases to 13% for executive vice president level and 32% for senior vice president level. The ratio for other managerial positions is 41% for women. On the other hand, the numbers of women in managerial positions other than on the Board of Directors are significant in all the companies interviewed.

### BOYNER GROUP AND WEPs

Boyner Group highlights the role played by its management in achieving positive results in the field of equal opportunities within the company. Cem Boyner, President and Chief Executive Officer, received the 2014 Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) Leadership Award at the United Nations Headquarters. The award was part of the Benchmarking for Change category, which recognizes compliance with the principles by metrics, indicators, and reporting, aimed at tracking the effective inclusion of women at all levels. Boyner Group was also recognized by the Turkish Ministry of Labour in 2012, within the framework of the Gender Equality in the Workplace Competition. It also received the World Bank’s Gender Equality certificate. Moreover, Cem Boyner was recognized as Male Champion of Change in the 5<sup>th</sup> Middle East and Africa Women in Leadership Forum held in Dubai in 2013. According to Boyner, workplace democracy and gender equality are fundamental principles in a company’s agenda. Fair selection processes for recruitment and promotion represent the basis for supporting non-discrimination and ensuring that female employees can benefit from equal opportunities.

The Turkish branch of BP highlights the importance of its D&I approach for making business leaders accountable for progresses in diversity. More specifically, BP set as its goal the achievement of 25% female group leaders and 30% female senior level leaders by 2020.

Boyner Group offers a balanced ratio of men and women executives. Furthermore, Ms. Ümit Nazli Boyner, member of the Board, is among the co-founders of the women entrepreneurs' association KAGİDER.

In Eczacıbaşı Group companies in Turkey, 28% of all management positions are occupied by women, while within the whole Eczacıbaşı Group (Turkey & abroad) the ratio of women at all management levels is 26%.

As for Italian companies, Ferrero can count on 118 women involved in managerial positions and ENEL has 3 women on its Board of Directors, while in other positions it employs 143 women executives, including 88 managers.

## c. Company policies

### i. Working hours

Flexible working conditions help employees, both men and women, to ensure work-life conciliation. The balance between professional duties and personal life can be achieved through specific work programmes set up by companies. Thanks to these policies, women can be supported in their unpaid labour at home, especially in assisting children and elderly and disabled relatives. Flexibility in working time does not refer only to part-time work or overtime, but also to the timing of entrance and exit. This is often associated with fewer family conflicts, less stress at the workplace, and an overall better wellbeing of employees.

Since 2013, Eczacıbaşı Group has introduced a flexible work schedule, availing itself of communication technologies. The flexible working time applies to white-collar professionals, who have the option to start their daily working activity in a different timeframe, according to their requirements. Usual working hours are between 8:00 am and 5:30 pm, but the company considers the core working hours as running from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Employees are thus allowed to plan their own daily schedules in such a way as to work the regular 8 hours per day. This flexibility allows employees to arrange their working timetable, by starting earlier or finishing later. The trust between employer and employees is strengthened by this internal arrangement, because working time is not tracked by any system and it relies on a mutual trust relationship. According to an internal survey distributed among employees, this company policy has gained strong consensus, especially among workers doing unpaid reproductive labour. The survey obtained a positive feedback of 82% and employees appreciated the possibility to balance their workload and their parental responsibilities.

The Italian company Ferrero has also introduced flexible working hours, offering the employees two options. They may enter at 8:00 am and leave at 4:30 pm, or choose to take 2 or 4 hours of unpaid leave per day, without limitations regarding the age of their children.

Furthermore, Ferrero also provides the classical part-time flexibility. It refers to the horizontal part-time of 50% of the working hours envisaged (working hour reduction ranging from 4 to 6 hours per day). This type of flexible work schedule applies to employed women and men with long-term fixed contracts, when they return to the workplace after parental leaves. It can be extended until the child is three years old.

## ii. Corporate services, allowances and benefits

Corporate services are often required as a counterpart to social policies put in place by national governments. The more social policies are weak or not structured, the more the role played by private companies becomes crucial. Childcare services, in particular, are considered an efficient tool for guaranteeing a contribution to reproductive labour of women engaged in working activities outside the home. An absence of these services and/or barriers to their affordability, quality, and availability have consequences on the entry of women into the labour market. Furthermore, family-friendly policies can represent a significant support in women's career, because of the possibility to better ensure life-work conciliation.

The Italian company Ferrero provides a kindergarten service for its employees' children, the access to which is regulated according to internal rules and a waiting list. Furthermore, the company organizes summer camps for employees' children. These holiday breaks are usually held in the summer months during school closing (July and August) and they have an average duration of 10-12 days. Children aged between 6 and 12 years can participate.

As for corporate services regarding maternity leave, Enel has developed a programme of counselling and training aimed at supporting employees during their return to the workplace after long-term leaves. In particular, the company has implemented a project in partnership with the financial support of the Regional administration. It is called the "Parental Programme" (2013-2014), and is made up of three main activities for assisting employees from the request for maternity leave through the phase of their return to the workplace.

1. The first activity, called "Parental Leave Management", was conceived with the aim of defining the rights and duties of company officers and employees in charge of the management of parental leaves, by facilitating the reconciliation between parental role and professional growth within the company. This phase involved the organization of structured meetings among head officers,



assistants, and HR officers. The tools created within the framework of the programmes became a guide to parental leave and the related legislation on maternity leave, available on the company intranet; the guidelines aimed at supporting HR managers in the maternal leave procedure. The project started at regional level and will be extended throughout all of Italy in 2015.

2. The second activity, called “Moms in Balance”, was based on several classroom meetings involving the presence of a psychologist. Participants were invited to share their experiences on motherhood and their return in the workplace after maternity leave.
3. The third activity focused on six conferences on parenting, which involved parents to establish a fruitful comparison among co-workers who have had the same experiences. Conferences were held by professionals in emotional psychology. These activities were recorded and published on the company intranet, for disseminating the contents among co-workers.

In 2012 Garanti Bank launched the project “Good Work Life Relation” (IYI), as a result of the Employee Value Proposition programme that expresses employees’ need for a better work-life balance and leisure time. The Department in charge of the programme provides employees with several activities, such as:

- Motivational meetings and outdoor activities for improving internal communication among employees;
- Garanti Women’s Club and its online portal, used by women employees for sharing their experiences and know-how;
- Seminars and courses;
- Corporate hobby clubs.

Among the activities implemented by the programme, an Employee Assistance Programme is set up for sharing confidential information, counselling, consultation, and referral service for providing professional support in family- and work-related issues. This comprehensive programme of confidential counselling services is accessible to employees 24/7. The company also offers a transportation system based on green energy, a programme to manage the flow of emails, special discount agreements for Garanti Bank employees, and several facilities in the company’s headquarters building, including a gym and hairdresser.

Unicredit Group conducted the pilot project “Progetto 90” (currently implemented only in Italy), which aims at facilitating the balance between work and private life by assisting mothers in bringing their children to the workplace during their working time. Children are looked after by professional nannies and the service is offered for 90 days (the period of school holidays).

The Italian company Ferrero provides its employees with allowances and benefits for their families.

These include paid permits for children's specialized medical examinations. The employee can use three half-days of paid permits per year. This policy is intended for all employees, including part-time workers, short-term contracts, temporary workers, and managers). The children must be aged between 0 and 14 years old. Furthermore, employees have parental leave days for the birth of their children, adoption, and pre-adoptive custody. Paternal leave is encouraged. Employees can also benefit from loans, mortgages, and indemnity in case of death. Furthermore, Ferrero offers specific facilitation services to its employees' children, by offering training internships abroad and scholarships for attending the first academic year.

### iii. Facilitation services, career support and training

Facilitation services, career support, and trainings are crucial for the management and development of human resources, in terms of skills, abilities, and career path. With specific reference to gender equality and women's equal opportunities in professional frameworks, these policies become of central importance for professional growth and identification of the gaps that keep women from advancing in their profession. Trainings are also considered an effective solution for awareness-raising among companies, for developing a new corporate culture, and for achieving concrete results in terms of skills improvement and transfer of knowledge.

Boyner Group implements its training according to the annual operation objectives, individual projects, and the vocational development needs of its employees. Store and head office staff are the target groups of the trainings. According to its statistics, in 2013, over 8,000 employees throughout Turkey took part in these trainings and, in particular, women accounted for 52.15%, i.e. over half of all participants. Training programmes are also provided for recently hired employees participating in orientation programmes, with specific technical trainings based on store requirements. Also, cohesion and motivation programmes are implemented.

Boyner Group also promoted a specific project for its Supply Chain. It was conceived as a tool for supporting women entrepreneurs in Boyner Group's Supply Chain, thanks to the partnership between IFC and Boyner. The pilot programme was launched in November 2014 and aimed at training 40 female owners and managers of small businesses that supply Boyner, from the İstanbul, İzmir, Samsun, and Eskişehir regions. The interest in addressing the supply chain is due to the importance of improving compliance with Boyner's environmental and social standards, among which equal opportunities policies are of crucial importance. The training thus focuses on governance, labour, and production in the retail sector's supply chain. The stress on productivity and business performance underscores the central role played by garment retailers in creating professional opportunities for women entrepreneurs in Turkey.

Garanti Bank focuses on training programmes aimed at supporting women entrepreneurs and encouraging their activities. The project “Women Entrepreneur Executive School (WEES)” started in September 2012 in collaboration with Bosphorus University Lifelong Learning Center. The aim was to provide free training to women entrepreneurs on specific topics such as innovation, sustainable governance, customer relations, and institutionalization. During the implementation of the training, which lasted 1 month, approximately 1,300 women in 10 cities received certificates. Garanti Bank also conducted the project “Women in Business”, for the support of women in business (female owners or managers of SME) by providing a US\$ 60 million credit line in cooperation with EBRD. Technical skills were also provided by the project “Women Entrepreneurs Meetings”, in which Garanti Bank organized Women Entrepreneurs’ Meetings in collaboration with the Women Entrepreneurs’ Association of Turkey (KAGİDER). This specific training, aimed at supporting female entrepreneurship, can be considered a successful best practice, due to its geographical dissemination (seven Turkish cities) and the number of women participating (around 1,000). The Bank is committed to empowering women in the acquisition of financial literacy and in gaining appropriate skills for being more confident on financial issues.

The Boyner Group also conducted a successful project titled “Pomegranate Arils: Stronger Young Women, Happier Futures”, recognized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Labour Organization as an important Case Study of social responsibility. Pomegranate Arils, already an exemplary project in Turkey, will be presented as a worldwide case study and shared with global companies and organizations which are signatories to the UN Global Compact. The project started in 2009 in cooperation with the Turkish Ministry of Family and Social Policies, and with the support of UNFPA, the General Directorate of Child Services, and the Human Management Association of Turkey (PERYÖN). It continued in 2013, with the support of the Family Health and Planning Foundation of Turkey (TAPV). The project targeted young women subject to social and economic exclusion, to support their entry into the labour market and to strengthen their job-hunting skills. Gender discrimination was a focal aspect of the topics addressed by the groups of mentors involved in the programme. The programme was able to target 162 women across Turkey, who completed a two-week educational programme and were supported by a one-year mentorship programme.

Unicredit Group conducted several training projects in the field of equal opportunities and diversity management, among which the following are worthy of note:

- The “Project on Women’s Leadership” targeted women directors and managers for an enhancement of their role in the career path and in the balance between work and private life. The project was conducted in Italy, Germany, Austria, and Poland.

- The “Gender Balance Programme”, started in 2012 and still ongoing, aims at creating a shared culture enhancing diversity. It is structured as a path focused on providing information for promoting awareness among the UniCredit staff. It was based on the pillars of MEASUREMENT for tracking and monitoring HR processes to assess the number of female executives being recruited and promoted throughout the Group; CAREER DEVELOPMENT, in order to establish tailored career plans and a mentoring programme with a focus on female workers, and to define a monitoring process for evaluating results; WORK LIFE BALANCE, introducing new work-life programmes aimed at helping employees, both male and female, and evaluating programmes that offer greater work-life flexibility with respect to working hours (e.g., part-time employment, telework); COMMUNICATION & SUSTAINABILITY, aimed at updating the communication plan and related internal and external tools to ensure that stakeholders are informed and involved in the gender diversity initiatives; BEST PRACTICES, to ascertain internal and external best practices and to extend their implementation Group-wide. Some videos on the topic of inclusion were posted on the intranet platform of the Group. Moreover, a survey was distributed to UniCredit employees, with the aim of analysing their perception of the themes of inclusion and diversity. The survey proposed by UniCredit within the framework of the activity “Gender Balance Programme” can be considered a monitoring tool. Furthermore, at the national level the legislation commits the companies to the monitoring process through the use of specific indicators. The Commission on Equal Opportunities of the UniCredit Group is in charge of gathering these data.

In May 2013, Eczacıbaşı Group launched a project titled “Gender Equality Training Programme”, aimed at implementing a training programme on gender equality for the employees of the Group in Turkey. Starting from the assumption that the most significant barriers to gender equal opportunities are posed by the gender construction created by culture and society, the project focused on awareness-raising trainings on this topic. The initiative involved the participation of over twenty companies in Turkey and several hundred employees. The Vodafone branch in Turkey has also implemented two significant projects on women empowerment and enhancement of skills:

- The “Women in Technology Mentorship Programme” addresses the specific field of Technology where the presence of female employees and executives is still relatively poor. Thanks to the platform set up by the project, women just starting their career (mentees) in a specific Technology function are supported by more experienced female colleagues (mentors) operating in senior management roles. The mentorship programme becomes crucial for transferring competences, sharing experiences, and focusing on mentees’ career advancement and personal growth. The pilot project involved six mentor/mentee pairs. The match between mentees and mentors is made based on pre-defined criteria such as age, performance results, and managerial experience, and both

parties receive specific training on how to manage the mentorship process for achieving the best results in terms of the mentee's development goals. The success of the mentorship project encourages sharing this best practice throughout the entire Vodafone Group. Furthermore, the project scope will be increased thanks to the involvement of a larger group of women employees and the enrolment of male mentors.

- "Diversity & Inclusion" training courses were launched by Vodafone Turkey in 2014 in accordance with the culture of the company, focused on the promotion of a diverse workforce. Vodafone acknowledges that a diverse human capital can provide a heterogeneity of perspectives, backgrounds, and lifestyles, able to meet the needs of the customers, business partners, and improve the company's performances. Diversity and Human Resources teams structured the implementation of these training courses to promote this corporate vision. In the first phase, the training courses were made available to senior management members, for raising awareness on the importance of diversity and inclusion among all employees throughout the organization.

#### iv. Recruitment policies

Recruitment policies represent an important step in ensuring gender equality. Companies develop specific policies through their Human Resources departments by defining selection processes that support employees during their entire professional path. Starting from entry level up to senior manager positions, recruitment policies reflect a company's priorities and business strategies, as well as its corporate values. Companies are therefore interested in ensuring that the selection process is fair and transparent, based on the recognition of skills and knowledge for the job positions required.

Vodafone Turkey has adopted specific recruitment policies. It requires its recruitment agencies to carry out the selection process by listing an equal number of female and male candidates for senior and middle management job applications. In order to ensure gender equality, the list provided by recruitment agencies must include candidates on a 50%-50% basis, split by gender. Otherwise the Vodafone Resourcing Team rejects it. Once the "long list" is received, the next step in the selection process is carried out following the principle "the best-fit candidate among equals" and taking the internal organizational requirements into account. Since its adoption in 2013, Vodafone Turkey has registered an increase in the number of executives by 4% at the senior management level and 3% at the middle management level.

The Turkish branch of BP also encourages gender equality in its HR processes. The role played by the Diversity & Inclusion policies (D&I) is crucial. During the recruitment processes, the company ensures the presence of female interviewers on the selection panels and female candidates in the short-listed candidate pool.

Another interesting example of recruitment policies based on women's inclusion is the case of the Italian company Porta Sole. This medium-sized enterprise took part in the project "W.E.L.L." founded by the Italian regional administration, whose aim was to support the employment of university graduates of more than 30 years of age. The funding provided by the Regional administration offered financial exemptions to those companies who decided to hire young people after a preliminary period of internship. Specific relevance was assigned to the hiring of women. Porta Sole successfully implemented the project by hiring two women with fixed-term contracts.

On the other hand, a different example of recruitment policies is that provided by the Eczacıbaşı Group. The Turkish enterprise launched on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2011, International Women's Day, a specific recruitment policy called "positive discrimination". Mr. Erdal Karamercan, President and CEO of the Eczacıbaşı Group, sent an email to all employees announcing the new HR policies aimed at giving priority to women during the selection process, professional skills being equal among male and female candidates. Starting from the assumption that equal opportunities should be given to all candidates according to their competences and skill-set suitability for the job, the Turkish HR departments were instructed to give priorities to women in the selection process. According to the Group, this led to a significant increase in the share of women employed. Internal data show that the number of female professionals increased from 40% to 42% from 2010 to 2014.

Eczacıbaşı Group considers this approach an important strategy for better supporting women's career development during their professional path. However, these recruitment policies were adopted only in Turkey because in the Group's European subsidiaries the European labour laws prohibit discrimination during the selection process, considering this policy discriminatory against men. In Turkey, the absence of regulations on this subject allowed the Group to implement their "affirmative action" without any legislative restrictions. Eczacıbaşı Group also promoted a project called "Women in Sales" for increasing the percentage of women among the new recruits in sales department positions. The HR indicators showed that women who applied for advertised job vacancies in this sector were below 50%, compared to other positions where the percentage of women applicants was much higher.

#### d. Turkish unions and equal opportunities

With reference to the interviews conducted with Turkish union representatives, the expert from the metalworkers' union stressed the lack of supporting policies, even if women showed little demand for these executive positions. She mentioned family responsibilities as one of the reasons for this absence. She affirmed that the unionization rate of women in the Turkish labour market and metalworking sector is low, because of several reasons such as discrimination in the labour market, women's low employment ratio in formal sectors, general opinion about machismo in the metal industry, women's high presence in specific professions and sectors, and gender stereotypes.

The union representative in charge of the professional associates' confederation also points to women's general problems in society, their responsibilities in their households, with family, elderly and child care, the lack of diversity in trade union activities and working environments, and career-sharing among men within the trade union.

Quota application for women in accessing executive positions within trade unions is considered a positive and necessary practice by the three women interviewed. However, the need for consideration and reflection on the ratio of male/female members in unions and industry sectors is emphasised.

The metalworkers' representative and the woman who had worked as Deputy General Secretary in the Confederation believe that women's opinions are taken into consideration in union decision-making mechanisms. However, the woman from the commerce sector affirms that there is no equality because of the absence of equal representation in decision-making mechanisms.

With regard to the good practices implemented at the union level for the promotion of gender equal opportunities and women's executive skills, the representatives interviewed point out the absence of this kind of practice in the commerce and office work sector. The metalworkers' trade union representative mentions training activities and states that her trade union organized activities during International Women's Day, at the main union headquarters. The third woman who had worked as expert and Deputy General Secretary mentions the long-term idea of women managers having a place on the executive committee of the Confederation as a good practice. She also emphasizes the role played by the current General Secretary of the Confederation, a woman who comes from democratic struggles in the organization.

With regard to the union policies and practices concerning the enhancement of gender diversity, the representative from the commerce sector underscored the importance of seminars and preparation of reports on this issue. She also mentioned the definition of policies aimed at favouring women's interests (e.g. maternal leave with pay, spans of maternal leaves, kindergarten, shifts, working hours, etc.) in the drafting

of collective bargaining agreements. The woman from the metal sector lists her trade union's policies concerning gender sensitivity as follows: conveying legal rights which are provided by the union to female workers, raising the awareness of female workers, listening to women's gender-based problems, production of initiatives for solving these problems within the enterprise or through workplace visits, activities for increasing the membership of women with female union representatives, and training activities for strengthening the leadership capacities of women specifically for collective negotiation and organization tactics. She also mentions the project currently implemented by a branch of her trade union. The project is carried out in partnership with a university in the region and aims at increasing the culture concerning women's security.

The woman from the commerce and office work sector states the patriarchal structure of unions and familial and social barriers as reasons for the low number of women in executive positions. She mentions the role played by family members and the organization of household duties and child care. She states that: *"The woman is readied for wifehood and motherhood since she was born. The socialization process of a woman is prepared and personality values are expected to be developed according to this. Due to these reasons, when she starts to work, her perspective has been shaped mostly by these interiorized roles. Expectation of active roles from women in unions with patriarchal structures is not realistic. Creation of interest in trade union activities among women should be provided. Trade unions are the main organizations for supporting the struggles against discrimination in the work life. Women have to protect their interests not only as a class, but also as gender identity, by acceding to active positions in unions above and beyond being union members. There is a great potential of women who would like to be active in trade unions."* Additionally, she underscores employers' methods used for preventing women workers' unionization: putting pressure on female workers thanks to the role played by their husbands or families, keeping women away from unions, starting from the assumption that "women should not be in trade unions", extension of working hours of pregnant women or women with children to obtain their resignation from the union, and physical and sexual harassment against unionized women.

The woman from the metal sector explains the situation: *"Our cultural values and gender roles prevent women's roles in management. However, women's access to managerial positions is only possible by a common and joint struggle among men and women. Quantitative targets for women's placement in each unit of union should be determined. Unionization of women in the entire society should be encouraged for women's presence in congresses, execution and decision-making mechanisms, committees, collective negotiations, and training programmes"*.

The woman who had worked as Deputy General Secretary explains the situation further: *"Definition of professional unionism as a patriarchal situation and ignorance of women's problems in similar organizations. Absence of a comprehension of positive discrimination for women."*



The glass ceiling symbolizes invisible obstacles for women's access to executive positions, according to the representative from the metal sector. She thinks that these obstacles are not set up only by men. She states: *"These obstacles are also built by women. Their unwillingness to assume executive positions and priorities for their gender roles prevent the elimination of these glass ceilings. A woman who remains in between her business and family primarily prefers her family and children. Women prefer functions as a continuation of housewifery and motherhood. For this reason, women do not choose to work in the metal sector, especially on shifts. Even if women work, their main responsibilities are thought to be accountable to their families. So it is difficult to be accepted equally with men in the work life. A change of consciousness necessitates a long term struggle..."*

The representative from commerce also agrees with this assumption and considers it problem, but in the opposite sense. She thinks the widespread opinion concerning women's union participation is related to the lack of relevance women workers have within trade unions: *"This is expressed by male managers and also by women who have moved up to some positions thanks to their personal efforts and struggles. But this background is not always taken into consideration"*.

Also, the Deputy General Secretary in Confederation affirms that the glass ceiling symbolizes the patriarchal world's criteria.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis provided by the report has a dual aim. First, it serves as a tool for better understanding and evaluating the current legislative policies adopted and implemented at the European level. It provides an overview of current best practices or company policies, both in Turkey and in Italy. It also includes the perspective of Turkish union representatives on women's access to managerial positions.

The union perception confirms that the barriers posed to women in acceding to managerial roles are created by social and cultural contexts. This is translated at the union confederation level into a lack of family-friendly policies aimed at supporting women in their career path. The priority given to family responsibilities is not supported within the workplaces, thus creating a lack of opportunities for women and reinforcing the patriarchal structure of the unions.

As underscored in the report, awareness-raising on gender equality and women's access to managerial positions requires a synergy of policies, including institutional, legislative, or voluntary-based agreements. Promoting women's access to managerial or executive positions requires several preliminary steps toward this ultimate goal. Changing companies' corporate culture, promoting gender equality in each job position, and starting from the recruitment phase through to career-supporting policies become crucial elements. The adoption of specific legislation on equal opportunities is limited in hostile workplace environments and where corporate values underestimate the importance of gender diversity and the benefits it can provide. Furthermore, soft law or voluntary-based codes often prove to be less productive and effective than expected, and many differences can be seen, depending on the national contexts.

Secondly, the report aims at stimulating the debate among employees, company managers, union representatives, and CSOs involved in this field. The number of stakeholders interested in the topic is significant, because of the relevance that equal opportunities and women's professional empowerment have on the society as a whole. According to the specific objectives envisaged by the project "Women in Management", Italian and Turkish CSOs will conduct a joint analysis of the main difficulties and challenges of equal opportunities and women's access to managerial positions. The comparison between Italian and Turkish contexts is therefore not aimed at creating a contraposition of practices and outcomes, but is conceived as a comparative scheme for involving both countries in a fruitful debate on similarities and gaps.

The question is whether or not these policies can effectively become a successful strategy for improving women's access to managerial roles, by changing the corporate culture and enhancing more opportunities

for women's career growth. Furthermore, the tools used by companies for communicating their policies to stakeholders are usually characterized by corporate social responsibility codes. The reference to transnational framework agreements remains an option not frequently chosen by many multinational companies, especially in Turkey. Therefore, company policies on equal opportunities lack any involvement with union representatives and policies are often not based on a mutual agreement, also for that which concerns the monitoring process and the selection of priorities to be addressed.

The report thus opens a further debate on the role played by institutional and political decision-makers in ensuring compliance with gender equality policies, and women's empowerment in the access to managerial positions within the workplace. Private companies' policies can define a path for changing corporate culture, just as unions can strengthen the social dialogue on the topic and provide important support in drafting and implementing the policies.

The training course and European roundtable to be held in Istanbul are the next crucial activities of the project. The debate among project partners and stakeholders will become pivotal for the drafting of a second report containing a proposal addressing Turkish institutional policy-makers. The holistic approach of the project considers the role played by each actor in the definition of effective and appropriate measures for the improvement of gender-focused policies in women's access to managerial positions. Furthermore, the long-term relationship among the parties will pave the way for an analysis of evolutions in the current situations and will encourage a pro-active role in the definition of new paths, based on the European and Italian experiences.

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