

## REPORT TRANSNATIONAL AND NATIONAL TRAINING COURSES WORK PACKAGE 4

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Author and partner in charge: Inger Danilda, Encounter AB  
Partner in charge: Encounter AB, Hågervägen 3, SE-122 39 ENSKEDE,  
SWEDEN  
Contact: Inger Danilda, tel + 46 733 428 176  
E-mail: [inger.danilda@encounter.se](mailto:inger.danilda@encounter.se)



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results from national and transnational training activities in the FRO Curriculum project funded by the European Life Long Learning Programme, Leonardo da Vinci. It is a compilation of the results from Work Package (WP) 4 in the project, which aimed at designing and implementing a European training activity for teachers and trainers in Vocational Education and Training (VET) and national training seminars focusing on Family Responsible Organisations (FRO).

FRO Curriculum is based on prior EU projects financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) where an International Reference Document was outlined providing organisations with instruments for how a FRO Management System can be integrated in other management requirements. The project aim is to provide teachers, trainers and consultants with key competencies essential for enhancing gender equality and FRO, especially in SMEs. Increased qualifications will enable these groups to offer adequate training for enterprises focusing on management systems for gender equal and family responsible organisations. VET is an important tool for reinforcing the implementation of management systems in these fields but there is a lack of training offers for SMEs, their entrepreneurs and managers.

During the course of the project two transnational training events and national events in Italy, Poland, Portugal and Sweden have been arranged and a basic training programme designed. The programme aims at providing the trainees with an overview over developments within the field of equal opportunities and reconciliation policies in Europe; and knowledge about management systems and practices for gender equal and family responsible organisations. After the training the participants are expected to be able to reflect on their own training practices in light of gender equality and work life balance issues; and stimulate organisational development towards FRO by designing new training offers.

The basic training programme, which is transferable between different European countries, covers three modules: M 1: Equal opportunity policy, legislation and trends; M 2: Social responsibility and M 3: FRO Management System. These modules can be delivered as a separate course or be integrated into broader training programs focusing on for example human resource development, diversity management or (C)SR. The minimum length of a basic course is recommended to be at least 8 hours and preferable the training is divided into different steps, which includes a follow up and possibilities for further training i.e. more advanced modules.

In order to ensure the success trainers delivering the programme should, if possible, be selected according to the following profile: Advanced knowledge on gender equality, equal opportunities, management systems and SR; previous professional experience in enterprises, preferably in SMEs; good

communication and moderation skills; and ability to master interactive training approaches. Trainees should, if possible, have basic knowledge about equal opportunities and reconciliation in order to reduce the risk of reproducing gender stereotypes when stimulating enterprises to implement policies and practices.

Even though it is possible to propose some basic modules for a FRO Curriculum it is important with a highly flexible approach due to the differences between countries. Concepts and terms linked to gender equality, diversity, reconciliation, work life balance and family friendly policies are often interpreted in various ways in EU member states How concepts and terms are used and applied differs between co-existing welfare regimes in Europe, which in turn affects how enterprises and other organisations approach gender equality and reconciliation. This flexibility should be reflected in the FRO training manual, which is suggested to have the following sections: (1) Introduction to FRO: (2) Aims and target groups (3) Key concepts (4) Profile of the trainer and training methodology (5) Basic European training modules (6) Training in different contexts

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## 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT AND FRO CURRICULUM

FRO Curriculum is a project funded by the European Life Long Learning Programme, Leonardo da Vinci, meeting the needs for increased professional qualifications amongst trainers, teachers and consultants within the field of gender equality and reconciliation policies. Increased qualifications will enable these groups to offer adequate training for enterprises focusing on management systems for gender equal and Family Responsible Organisations (FRO). European enterprises, especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are faced with growing global competition requiring new knowledge, skills and policies.

Studies have shown the correlation between gender equality, family friendly policies and profitability in enterprises. Gender equality has also been acknowledged as a “necessary condition for the achievement of the EU objectives of growth, employment and social cohesion”.<sup>1</sup> Vocational Education and Training (VET) is an important tool for reinforcing the implementation of management systems for gender equality but there is a lack of training offers in this field for SMEs, their entrepreneurs and managers. This can partly be explained by the fact that few trainers have the necessary knowledge and awareness of how work life balance influences equal opportunities.

Generally there is a lack of gender equality training in Europe. In a report from 2007 by the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), requested by the European Parliament, the urgent need for gender training at all levels of education is highlighted. The report presents an extensive overview of gender aspects in lifelong learning, including comparative studies between developments in different member states, EU best practice projects and gender dimensions of training methodologies.<sup>2</sup>

FRO Curriculum is based on prior EU projects, financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Equal programme, where an International Reference Document<sup>3</sup> was outlined providing organisations with instruments for how a FRO Management System can be integrated in other management

<sup>1</sup> European Commission, (2009) Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1&langId=en>, March 27<sup>th</sup>

<sup>2</sup> European Parliament (2007) Gender Aspects in Lifelong Learning,, Directorate General Internal Policies of the Union. Policy Department Structural and Cohesion Policies. Culture and Education. October 2007

<sup>3</sup> Equal (2007) Management System for Family Responsible Organizations (FRO) – Requirements with Guidance for Use. International Reference Document. 2007-03-01.

requirements.<sup>4</sup> A training programme was designed for auditors of the management system and this curriculum became the point of departure for the project.

Some of the management principles highlighted in the International Reference Document are promotion of a culture that encourages reconciliation of work, family and private life; equal opportunities; dialogues and employee participation; and approaches based on processes facts and continuous improvement. Three types of reconciliation practices are covered by the Document: Working practices in the organisations (e.g. flexible working time); Professional support and development offered by the organisation (e.g. training); and Services and benefits for the employees (e.g. income security).

FRO Curriculum aim is to provide teachers, trainers and consultants with key competencies essential for enhancing gender equality and FRO, especially in SMEs. Specific objectives are to adapt the curriculum designed for auditors to the new target groups, arrange pilot training activities, produce a training manual and integrate the FRO Curriculum into VET systems and practices. The partnership in the project consists of actors representing NGOs, SMEs and chambers of commerce in four EU member states – Italy, Poland, Portugal and Sweden – as well as two European associations.

This report presents the results from Work Package (WP) 4 in FRO Curriculum, which aimed at designing and implementing a European training activity and national training seminars focusing on FRO. Section 2 summaries the results from WP 2 in the project, which aimed at analysing training needs among the target groups in the involved countries, and is based on a report from the Italian partner in the project, CdIE. Section 3 presents the aims of the FRO training curriculum and section 4 the transnational and national training activities arranged. In the last section (5) results from the training events are analysed and input provided for a FRO training manual to be elaborated in WP 3 of the project.

## 2. ANALYSIS OF TRAINING NEEDS

A report from WP 2 in FRO Curriculum aiming at analysis of training needs reveal, as several other studies, that there are differences between EU member states in terms of investments in lifelong learning and training in and for enterprises. Nevertheless in all countries involved in the project there is still a lack of courses focusing on equal opportunities and work life balance, even though the number of training offers are constantly increasing.

Results from FRO Curriculum confirms the partnerships initial hypothesis that few trainers, teachers and consultants are aware of how work life balance influence equal opportunities. Training for SMEs, their

<sup>4</sup> Equal (2007) Management System for Family Responsible Organizations (FRO) – Requirements with Guidance for Use. International Reference Document. 2007-03-01.

entrepreneurs and managers rarely address gender equality, diversity and reconciliation policies. Also in Sweden, which has a variety of courses for managers focusing on equal opportunities, there are relatively few programs tailored for SMEs or more practice based training linked to different sectors. A majority of the programs targets managers in the public sector and/or large corporations.

The report highlights the importance of taking into consideration aspects such as the organisational context, methodologies, language and the trainee's personal background and qualifications when designing and delivering training. Policies and practices for training as well as for gender equality and reconciliation are “embedded in social and cultural contexts”, differing between countries, regions, sectors and enterprises. Gender stereotypes are reproduced in formal and non formal language, verbal and nonverbal language, and symbols.

Based on the results from interviews and questionnaires to teachers, trainers, organisations and enterprises the following pathways are recommended for training courses focusing on gender equality and FRO:

- Analyse the implications of gender issues and women's and men's position in society, on the labour market and in the work place.
- Stimulate dialogues around the trainers, teachers and/or consultants own personal experiences in their daily personal and working life.
- Propose gender equality and reconciliation policies taking into consideration the cultural context.
- Give examples of strategies for involving managers as well as workers – women and men – in formulation of policies and implementation of practices for gender equality and reconciliation.

### 3. TRAINING PROGRAMME

#### 3.1 Aims

The original aims of the FRO training programme described was to provide participants with

- an overview over developments within the field of gender equal and family responsible organisations in Europe;
- knowledge about management systems and practices for gender equal and family responsible organisations;
- tools and methodologies for designing and carrying out advanced training programs focusing on gender equal and family responsible organisations; and
- access to transnational networks for exchange of experiences and practices.

After the training programme, participants were expected to be able to

- reflect on their own training practices in light of gender equality and work-life balance issues;
- transfer the learning outcomes to their own working field and arrange “training of trainers”;
- cope with emotions and resistance aroused by gender equality issues in different training contexts; and
- stimulate organisational development towards family responsible organisations by selecting and using tailor made training approaches.

These ambitious aims were changed after the pilot training activities arranged in FRO Curriculum (see section 4) to the following:

**Aims:** The training programme will provide participants with an overview over developments within the field of equal opportunities and reconciliation policies in Europe; and knowledge about management systems and practices for gender equal and family responsible organisations.

After the training programme, participants are expected to be able to reflect on their own training practices in light of gender equality and work life balance issues; and stimulate organisational development towards family responsible organisations by designing new training offers.

### 3.2 Target groups

The target groups for FRO Curriculum are trainers and teachers involved in adult education from universities, training institutions, lifelong learning centres and private training companies; consultants providing advice and training for enterprises; and human resource managers providing in-house advice and training in organisations. Participants should preferably have 180–240 ECTS credits i.e. Bachelor's degree and be interested in gender equal and family friendly policies. Experience of or interest in working with and offering training for enterprises, especially SMEs, is a merit as well as experience of or interest in arranging training of trainers.

### 3.3 Content and length of the training

In the first phase of FRO Curriculum the content of the training was elaborated based on the curriculum for auditors mentioned in section 1. Partner's first analysis of possible content of the new curriculum besides a module focusing on FRO management principles highlighted fields such as gender mainstreaming, work life balance, gender awareness in recruitment, and gender equality and growth. Conclusions from prior experience in the partnership of gender equality training also highlighted the importance of specific pedagogical approaches. Attitudes, perceptions and gender stereotyping permeate the society and have to be dealt with in any training situation.

Through the needs analysis (see section 2) and training activities arranged on transnational and national levels (see section 4) the content of the new curriculum has been further developed. The length of the training has varied during the course of the project from 8 hours to 48 hours. These differences in time span can partly be explained by the fact that the content has varied between training events and that the training sometimes were combined with individual case studies. Differences between countries and difficulties to attract participants for training activities covering several days are other explanations.

### 3.4 Methodology

During the course of FRO Curriculum different methodologies have also been tested such as process oriented training with a stepwise approach based on interactive and cooperative learning, workshops, group sessions, discussions, lectures with inputs from experts and individual case studies.

## 4. TRANSNATIONAL AND NATIONAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES

### 4.1 Transnational training in Warsaw

#### 4.1.1 Training modules

The first transnational FRO training was arranged in Warsaw 24-26<sup>th</sup> of September, 2008 and covered in total 48 hours for those participants that attended the 24 hours course as well as a completed a case study in their own working environment. The training was explorative in terms of both content and methodology. It was designed according to a Scandinavian model of dialogue conferences instead of a traditional modular approach (see section 4.1.4). The training also tried to capitalise on the increased focus in the Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon countries towards a “doing gender”<sup>5</sup> perspective affecting training and organisational development practices. In terms of content the training covered the following themes:

- FRO Curriculum Project
- FRO Management System
- Gender Equality in Organisations
- Resistance to Change in Organisations
- Flexibility in Organisations and Flexicurity

<sup>5</sup> The concept of “Doing Gender” was introduced by West and Zimmerman in 1987 in the article “Doing Gender” in Gender and Society 1:125-51 where they argued that gender ought to be understood as a “routine, methodical and recurring accomplishment” in social and organisational interactions. The paradoxical part of doing gender in organisations is that while people often construct gender with a recursively precision this is not something that they are usually aware of or reflect upon. The process of gender works at three levels – an individual, an institutional and a symbolic.

- Research about Family Responsible Employers
- Reconciliation Practices
- Customised Training for SMEs
- Social Responsibility

In different workshops the participants worked with describing the ideal family responsible organisation (workshop 1); obstacles and opportunities for creating an ideal environment for FRO on individual, team respective organisational levels (workshop 2); communication strategies for FRO (workshop 3); and content of a FRO training in the different countries represented in Warsaw (workshop 4). The workshops were arranged in a distinct order beginning with vision-shaping in heterogeneous groups, followed by new constellations of heterogonous groups in workshop 2 and 3. In the last group work participants from the same country worked together, i.e. homogenous groups, outlining ideas on the national training content.

#### 4.1.2 Participants

The intended target group for the training i.e. trainers, teachers and consultants and especially participants with experience of “training of trainers”, gender equality and/or providing training for SMEs were not reached. Only a few trainees had this background and few were engaged in designing and delivering training. The programme mainly attracted participants working for organisations promoting women, gender equality and family issues. In total there were 20 (17 women/3 men) participants representing Belgium, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal respective Sweden.

#### 4.1.3 Reasons for attending and expectations of the training

Before the training event all participants were asked to send in an application describing why they were interested in the programme and their expectations. Only five participants completed the application form and notably these respondents represented the intended target groups for the FRO Curriculum training. Respondents underlined the importance of;

- broadening theoretical knowledge and practical experiences;
- possibilities of learning in a transnational context with other trainers and consultants;
- opportunities to learn of developments in the field of gender equality, family responsible organisations and management systems;
- an interactive learning process and listening to other people's points of view;
- learning about new case studies; and
- strategic plans for equality in collaboration with enterprises.

#### 4.1.4 Reflections on training methodology

The methodology used at the training has its origin in the modernisation of Scandinavian working life from the beginning of 1980s and the idea of democratic dialogue, inspired by Haberman's theory of communicative action.<sup>6</sup> Among criteria for a democratic dialogue are work experience as a point of departure, that everyone has expertise and the importance of listening to everybody who wants to be heard. A guiding principle in training based on democratic dialogue is a minimum of time for lectures and more time used in smaller working groups. The trainer takes responsibility for the design and management of the learning process, whilst the participants are responsible for the content and outcome. This methodology aims at empower participants and give them insight, new understanding and explanations linked to their own practice, cultural context and work environment. Participants learn how to learn in line with what has been labelled double – loop learning, which reinforces knowledge sharing, knowledge production and knowledge utilisation.<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately this methodology was difficult to apply due to the fact that participants came from different cultures and backgrounds as well as had different experiences of training in gender equality. Furthermore the intended target groups were not reached, which also affected the outcome of the training. Experiences from several Leonardo da Vinci initiatives focusing on gender equality show that the chosen methodology can be successfully applied in EU projects.<sup>8</sup> At the training in Warsaw some of the participants felt uncomfortable with the approach, whilst others were more familiar with the methodology. Due to the fact that some trainees did not feel comfortable with the approach it was changed at the second transnational training in Lisbon (see section 4.2).

#### 4.1.5 Conclusions from Warsaw

As indicated above the training activity in Warsaw did not reach the target groups and the chosen methodology was not suitable for FRO Curriculum. Furthermore it was difficult to introduce the concept of “doing gender”, which seems to be more well known and applied by practitioners – trainers, teachers and consultants – in Sweden than in other countries involved in the project. On one hand the training was not successful in terms of target group, content and method. On the other hand it provided important input both for a basic training programme that could be transferred to and implemented in several European countries as well as a number of additional advanced training modules. The participants at the Warsaw training had extensive knowledge of several of the key concepts for FRO Curriculum and could analyse

<sup>6</sup> Gustavsen (2001) Theory and practice: the mediating discourse. In Reason & Bradbury (eds.) Handbook of Action Research, Participative Inquiry and Practice. Sage, London

<sup>7</sup> Argyris, & Schon (1978), Organizational Learning: A theory of action perspective, Addison-Wesley

<sup>8</sup> See for example the Preface project, <http://www.eupreface.org/>

these in light of their own cultural contexts. Based on the results from the training and the participants own words the following potential training modules and key concepts emerged:

**M 1: Work Life Balance** – gender equality, diversity, involving women and men, policy and practice, valorisation of "best practices"

**M 2: Business Case for FRO** – profit, productivity, image, recruiting and retaining staff, innovation, cooperation with stakeholders

**M 3: FRO Management System** – a simple life work balance manual

**M 4: Cultures and Resistance to Change** – change management, ethical codes, unwritten rules, from values to practice, hindrances versus promoters, work place cultures

**M 5: Communication** – dialogues with key persons language, FRO labelling, informal behaviour, legislation, transparency, methods

**M 6: Organising and leadership** – responsible, advisor, manager, facilitator, change agent, integration of the FRO system, team work and team organisation,

## 4.2 Transnational training in Lisbon

### 4.2.1 Training modules

The second transnational training was arranged in Lisbon 20<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of April 2009 and covered in total 16 hours. In order to secure that the results would be transferable between different countries the training was not explorative as at the first event in Warsaw (see section 4.1). A more traditional methodology was used and a modular approach. The programme had three modules:

**M 1: Policy, legislation and trends in Europe** – European policies: gender equality roadmap, reconciliation policies and legal acts; definitions of equal opportunities, gender equality, diversity; European trends: gender equality and diversity management (4 hours)

**M 2: Social responsibility** – ethical codes; management and reporting systems for (C)SR<sup>9</sup>: responsible employer (4 hours)

**M 3: FRO Management System** – general introduction to FRO, definitions and references; reconciliation management policy; FRO management system requirements (4 hours)

### 4.2.2 Participants

The intended target groups for the training were reached to a large extent and there were participants with experience of "training of trainers", gender equality and/or providing training for SMEs. The training attracted participants from different organisations – SMEs, training organisations, NGOs, authorities and

<sup>9</sup> (Corporate) Social Responsibility

resource centres for women. In total there were 13 participants (10 women/3 men) representing Bulgaria, Belgium, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain respective Sweden.

#### 4.2.3 Reasons for attending and expectations of the training

The reasons for participating at the training differed between trainees depending on their background and main interest. Some were interested in European policies and practices, whilst other were mainly interested in the FRO Management System. ½ of the participants referred to personal development as a reason for attending the training, whilst 1/3 referred to the possibility to acquire new skills for their work. After the training a majority of the participants thought that the training would have relevance for their work.

#### 4.2.4 Reflections on training methodology

The methodology used combined theoretical introductions by key note speakers with discussions and presentations of best practices from different countries linked to the three different modules (see section 4.2.1). Presentations of practices showed a wide variety of ways to promote gender equal and family responsible organisations.

In general the methodology was appreciated but the participants would have preferred a more interactive approach, especially in terms of the presentations by key note speakers. “- The presentation method was to passive” (participant). Some lacked more theoretical and contextual background for the different topics, whilst other asked for more practical information. This might be explained by the fact that some trainees already had some theoretical background to the concepts covered by the training, whilst others did not.

#### 4.2.5 Conclusions from Lisbon

As indicated above the training activity in Lisbon reached the indented target groups and according to the evaluation the trainees perceived the programme content as relevant and valuable. The participants strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that “the overall quality of the programme were excellent”. The length of the course seemed adequate and there were few negative comments on this matter. In terms of the methodology a more interactive approach with a combination of short introductions to each module combined with dialogues and best practice presentations would have been preferable.

Module 3 – FRO Management System – was the most useful and easiest to apply according to the participants, whilst module 2 – Social responsibility – was perceived as the least useful. Some trainees would have liked more focus on gender equality, whilst others would have liked less focus on this topic. Even though there were different opinions on the focus of the training most participants thought that the programme should include all three modules.

A majority of the participants thought that they would be able to apply their new skills at their work for example by designing training or monitor social inclusion projects. They would be able to pass on their new expertise to colleagues and others in their working environment. One participant was negative to the training and would not recommend it, whilst all others would be happy to suggest the programme to colleagues.

### 4.3 National training in Portugal

#### 4.3.1 Training modules

The training covered in total 32 hours and the following three modules:

**M 1:** Introduction to the Situation of Equal Employment Opportunity Policy on the Labour Market (8h)

**M 2:** Social Responsibility and Equal Opportunities (8h)

**M 3:** Management System for Responsible Family Organisations (16h)

#### 4.3.2 Participants

In total 7 persons, (5 women/2 men), representing both trainers and professionals without experience of delivering training participated in the programme. A majority of the participants had no formal training in the field of gender equality or work life balance issues, which can be explained by the lack of training offers in these fields.

#### 4.3.3 Reasons for attending and expectations of the training

The trainees mainly referred to personal development as a reason for attending the training and fewer to the possibility for acquiring new skills for their work. Module 3 was perceived as the most useful, whilst module 1 (see section 4.3.1) as the least useful before the training event. Participants were interested in “acquiring new knowledge, especially on Family Responsible Organisations issues”.

#### 4.3.4 Reflections on training methodology

Concerning the methodology some participants asked for more case studies and practical applications of the FRO principles.

#### 4.3.5 Conclusions from Portugal

The conclusions from the training were that the content and methodology to a large extent were relevant and ½ of the participants thought that the programme was directly related to their work. Trainees strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that “the overall quality met their expectations”. All of them would recommend the programme to others but emphasised the importance of presenting more case studies and practical applications of FRO.

Especially module 2 – Social Responsibility and Equal Opportunities – was appreciated by the participants and was ranked as the most useful. In terms of the length of the training some participants thought that the training could be shorter, and especially module 1 – Introduction to the Situation of Equal Employment Opportunity Policy on the Labour Market – that was also ranked as the least useful.

A majority of the participants thought that the training would have impact on their professional activity and daily working practices. They planned to implement their new skills and design courses with relevance for entrepreneurs and managers in SMEs. In order to reach entrepreneurs and managers the participants thought it would be useful with information material such as brochures and supporting documents. Difficulties expressed by trainees in applying their new skills were for example lack of time, opportunities to use the skills and coaching or feedback. Some participants were not sure if the content had direct relevance for their work or whether they would be able to apply the new knowledge immediately.

## 4.4 National training in Italy

### 4.4.1 Training modules

The training covered in total 8 hours and the following three modules:

**M 1:** Introduction to Gender Policies

**M 2:** Brief Overview of the Main Women Labour Market Subjects

**M 3:** Corporate Social Responsibility and Equal Opportunities

### 4.4.2 Participants

In total 9 persons (all women), representing both trainers as well as other professions participated in the programme. Only one of the trainees had prior experience of attending courses focusing on equal opportunities or reconciliation policies. Some of the participants had no experience of acting as trainer or teachers.

### 4.4.3 Reasons for attending and expectations of the training

The reasons expressed by participants for attending the training were diverse such as for example personal interest in the topics of the training, usefulness for professional activities, prospects of future working opportunities, direct involvement in “reconciliation projects” with enterprises and/or involvement in vocational guidance for women. Expectations regarding “what skills they would like to acquire” were also diverse such as for example competencies on the practical tools and applications for FRO and ability to create innovative training. Participants were interested in gender equality and reconciliation policies and which tools businesses could introduce. A majority of the trainees thought that module 3 (see section 4.4.1) would be the most useful for them.

#### 4.4.4 Reflections on training methodology

Concerning the methodology the participants suggested a simple language and practical examples; presentations of the “business case for FRO” i.e. the benefits for businesses implementing reconciliation policies. Other reflections were that a theoretical introduction might be needed but the training should focus on real cases and a work methodology.

#### 4.4.5 Conclusions from Italy

The conclusions from the training were that the content and methodology to a large extent were relevant and all participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “the overall quality met their expectations”. Some trainees asked for more detailed description of best practices on reconciliation, access to teaching material as well as more time in order to go into further details, debates and discussions. Others highlighted the importance of courses involving both female and male participants. In terms of the length of the programme trainees thought it could have been longer than 8 hours and/or consisted of a basic course with a follow up.

Module 3 – Corporate Social Responsibility and Equal Opportunities – was perceived as the most useful among the trainees and this was also the most practical one. Even though the participants appreciated this module it is necessary to stimulate the interest for the parts of the training that are more theoretical and covers basic knowledge of gender equality and reconciliation i.e. module 2 and 3. Trainers, teachers and consultants need awareness of gender issues and what this entails in order to design training for and be able to promote sustainable change in organisations. Their interest has to go beyond a superficial approach in tackling equal opportunities.

Based on the results from the programme a dynamic and practical training, avoiding a traditional teacher-participant approach, is suggested where trainees are encouraged to speak about their own life and experiences.

### 4.5 National training in Poland

#### 4.5.1 Training modules

The training covered in total 8 hours and the following three modules:

**M 1:** Introduction to the Situation of Equal Employment Opportunity Policy on the Labour Market

**M 2:** Social Responsibility and Equal Opportunities

**M 3:** Management System for Responsible Family Organisations

#### 4.5.2 Participants

In total 5 teachers and trainers (4 women /1 man) with a background in management and organisational development participated in the programme.

#### 4.5.3 Reasons for attending and expectations of the training

All trainees referred to work related reasons for attending the course.

#### 4.5.4 Reflections on training methodology

This course had a structure as a non-formal learning process focusing on learning by doing, learning by dialogue and group dynamics. Methodologies applied were case studies, brainstorming and role play. Concerning the methodology the participants perceived it as relevant.

#### 4.5.5 Conclusions from Poland

The conclusions from the training were that the content and methodology was highly relevant for the trainees and all participants strongly agreed that “the overall quality met their expectations”. Everyone was happy to recommend the programme to others. In terms of the length of the training participants had no negative comments and the number of hours were adequate.

Module 1 – Introduction to the Situation of Equal Employment Opportunity Policy on the Labour Market – was perceived as the most useful and module 2 – Social Responsibility and Equal Opportunities – as the least useful amongst the trainees. But participants ranked the possibility for applying the knowledge as “very good” for all modules.

Participants strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that they would be able to “apply what they learnt immediately” and most trainees thought that the knowledge would impact their daily work routines. They planned to implement their new knowledge in different projects, in work relations and in management of human resources. The main barriers for implementing the new skills were lack of time, according to the trainees. A majority of the participants thought that they would be able to pass on their new expertise to colleagues and others in their working environment.

### 4.6 National training in Sweden

#### 4.6.1 Training modules

The training was arranged as a three step model with an initial basic training covering 4 hours of introduction to FRO (first step), a minimum of 4 hours of case studies in each participants own project and/or work environment (second step) and a follow up training linking theory and practices covering 4 hours (third step). In total 12 hours. After the initial step most of the trainees carried out a case study – analysis, training or advice for SME networks – in their own specific project working with enterprises.

Some participants analysed International Reference Document for FRO in light of the existing legislation and policies in Sweden.

In comparison to the other countries involved a strict modular approach were not applied since this is rarely used nowadays in these kinds of training activities in Sweden. If compared to a modular system the content of the training could be summarised as followed:

**M 1:** FRO Management System

**M 2:** Gender Equality, Sustainable Development and (C)SR

**M 3:** Methodologies and Management Systems for Gender Equality in Organisations

**M 4:** Training and Consultancy for SMEs

#### 4.6.2 Participants

In total 8 persons (7 women/1 man) attended the programme. All trainees had basic knowledge in the field of gender equality and some of them had extensive knowledge. Everyone had attended gender equality training and a majority had extensive experience of training of trainers. Participants had been, were involved and/or were about to initiate gender equality projects. A majority of these projects were carried out in cooperation with SME networks.

#### 4.6.3 Reasons for attending and expectations of the training

Before the training the participants were engaged in a focus group to discuss training needs and their expectations. All trainees were interested in a practice oriented courses in gender equality management in organisations. A majority of the participants were interested in learning more about available management systems for gender equality that could be applied also in SMEs. They expected that the training would give them practical tools for improving gender equality in SMEs in cooperation with managers and employees. Others were more interested in the FRO concept and expected the programme to give them an overview over European developments in the field and its implications for training and research. Some were also interested in the connection between FRO, gender equality and (C)SR.

#### 4.6.4 Reflections on training methodology

The methodology applied were a participatory led approach based on dialogues between the trainers – facilitators – and the participants as well as dialogues amongst trainees. Overall the methodology was appreciated but more individual support is needed according to the participants. They underlined the importance of linking the course to concrete projects aiming at promoting gender equality, (C)SR or a child permitted working life. The follow up session gave the trainees opportunities to compare their

individual experiences arising from the cooperation with enterprises and to discuss how resistance to gender equality and organisational change manifested itself, critical issues and possible solutions.

#### 4.6.5 Conclusions from Sweden

The conclusions from the training were that most of the content was relevant but as experienced in prior activities in the project it is difficult to use the FRO concept in Sweden. A training curriculum preferably should focus on gender equality and concepts such as for example a child permitted working life. The methodology was relevant for the trainees but more individual coaching is needed. In terms of the length of the programme it can be longer than 12 hours if it is connected directly to ongoing projects. In terms of gender balance the participants suggested that the training could target both gender equality trainers and consultants (often women) and managers from SMEs (often men). It would be good if managers from SMEs could attend the course together with trainers and consultants.

After the training the participants thought that the training had met their expectation in terms of giving an introduction to FRO Management System. But trainees asked for more overall knowledge about management systems such as for example ISO<sup>10</sup>, how to introduce CSR for SMEs and how to combine measures for gender equality and sustainable development.

## 5. ANALYSIS OF FRO TRAINING ACTIVITIES

### 5.1 Basic training programme

An analysis of all training activities carried out in FRO Curriculum show that a European basic training curriculum could cover the areas that was presented at the transnational training in Lisbon. The three modules were relevant in all involved countries despite the fact that trainees found different modules useful. In Portugal and Italy modules focusing on Social Responsibility were the most popular and in Poland the module introducing equal opportunity policies. In Sweden the training modules<sup>11</sup> focusing on management systems were perceived as the most useful, which was also the case at the second transnational training.

Experiences from FRO Curriculum indicates that the three modules should not be separated in order to for the target groups i.e. trainers, teachers and consultants “to be able to reflect on their own training practices in light of gender equality and work life balance issues; and stimulate organisational development towards family responsible organisations by designing new training offers.” Furthermore the results from the training events also highlight the importance of presenting practical examples – best practices – taking into consideration the different cultural contexts, during the programme.

<sup>10</sup> International Organization for Standardization

<sup>11</sup> In Sweden a modular approach were not used but this topic was given priority amongst the trainees.

Based on the activities in WP 4 a basic training programme with three modules is proposed to have the following content:

### **M 1: Equal opportunity policy, legislation and trends**

M 1.1 Introduction to and definition of equal opportunities, gender equality and diversity

M 1.2 Reconciliation policies, equality and labour laws

M 1.3 European trends in gender equality and diversity management

M 1.4 Best practices from different member states

### **M 2: Social responsibility**

M 2.1 Introduction to and definition of Social Responsibility

M 2.2 Social responsibility standards, codes, management systems and reporting

M 2.3 Business case for SR and motivation to be a responsible employer

M 2.4 Best practices from different member states

### **M 3: FRO Management System**

M 3.1 Introduction to the Management System and definition of family responsible organisations

M 3.2 Management system requirements

M 3.3 Reconciliation practices

M 3.4 Best practices from different member states

The modules can be delivered as a separate training programme or be integrated into broader programs focusing on for example human resource development, diversity management or (C)SR. Minimum length of a basic programme is recommended to be at least 8 hours and preferable the training is divided into different steps, which includes a follow up and possibilities for further training i.e. more advanced modules.

Even though it is possible to propose some basic modules for a FRO Curriculum it is important with a highly flexible approach due to the differences between countries. Concepts and terms linked to gender equality, diversity, reconciliation, work life balance and family friendly policies are often interpreted in various ways in EU member states as well as by different researchers and practitioners. How concepts and terms are used and applied differs between co-existing welfare regimes in Europe, which in turn affects how enterprises and other organisations approach gender equality and reconciliation policies and practices.

Anglo-Saxon countries is characterised by market oriented models; Nordic countries by social support system focusing on individual independence and public sector solutions; Continental European countries by social support system targeting families; and Mediterranean countries by a mix of universal and private services and benefits. In some countries, the prefix family might be difficult to use and here it will be easier to talk about for example parent friendly, child permitted and gender equal organisations. Some researchers and practitioners question the term “family-friendly workplace” because of the association to a male breadwinner model. Others argue that “worker-friendly” is a more accurate term since it covers workers regardless of her or his family status.<sup>12</sup>

Flexibility is also needed depending on different target groups and the trainees’ background, qualifications and experiences. Whether the group already have basic knowledge about gender equality and reconciliation policies? Whether the group is experienced trainers or not? Whether the group has experience of training of trainers? Whether the group has experience of working with SMEs or not? According to the results from the training activities in FRO Curriculum it seems that even though it might be more dynamic with a heterogeneous group representing different professions and backgrounds the immediate results might be better with a group that is more homogenous.

In order to ensure the success trainers delivering the programme for other trainers and teachers, consultants and human resource managers should, if possible, be selected according to the following profile: Advanced knowledge on gender equality, equal opportunities, management systems and SR; previous professional experience in enterprises, preferably in SMEs; good communication and moderation skills; and ability to master interactive training approaches. Trainees should, if possible, have basic knowledge about equal opportunities and reconciliation in order to reduce the risk of reproducing gender stereotypes when stimulating enterprises to implement policies and practices and to achieve sustainable results in organisations.

In terms of methodology this clearly has to be adapted to differing contexts both in terms of the country where the training is arranged and in terms of the group of trainees. Nevertheless a mix of lectures, group work, presentation of best practices and individual case studies linked to each participant’s on work environment is preferable. A methodology based on practical training activities more than on theoretical expositions. For each module trainers should develop didactical material such as case studies and exercises adapted to the specific circumstances.

<sup>12</sup> Reingardiene, eds (2006) Between Paid and Unpaid Work: Family Friendly Policies and Gender Equality in Europe. Social Research Center, Vytautas Magnus University Center for Equality Advancement.

## 5.2 Training manual

Based on the results from WP 4 in FRO Curriculum the training manual to be elaborated in WP 3 is suggested to have the following content, sections and headlines:

### Section 1 – Introduction to FRO

- Section 1.1 FRO Curriculum project
- Section 1.2 International Reference Document
- Section 1.3 Role of VET in Promoting FRO

### Section 2 Aims and target groups

- Section 2.1 Aims
- Section 2.2 Target groups and profile of trainee
- Section 2.3 Beneficiaries

### Section 3 Key concepts

- Section 3.1 Definitions of concepts
- Section 3.2 European policies
- Section 3.3 Suggested readings

### Section 4 Profile of the trainer and training methodology

- Section 4.1 Profile of the trainer
- Section 4.2 Methodologies
- Section 4.3 Resources and material

### Section 5 Basic European training modules

- Section 5.1 Equal opportunity policy, legislation and trends
- Section 5.2 Social responsibility
- Section 5.3 FRO Management System

### Section 6 Training in different contexts

- Section 6.1 Surveys of training needs
- Section 6.2 Design of training
- Section 6.3 Proposal for advanced training modules