

Work-life balance: A Gender Perspective

Yannis Sidiropoulos

Hellenic Federation of Enterprises - SEV



Who we are?

SEV – Hellenic Federation of Enterprises has consistently fostered business development in Greece since 1907. It is the independent voice of businesses, representing a broad spectrum of the country's economic activity, including manufacturing and services.

- A transformation leader
- A key partner in the social dialogue
- A powerful representative of the Greek business community
- An effective networking actor
- A knowledge creator

What we do to promote gender equality?

Women in Positions of Responsibility Working Group

Consists of business owners and senior executives of SEV member-companies. Undertakes actions for the promotion of professional empowerment of women and for equality at the workplace.

Women in Leadership SEV Learning Series

Pioneer program, launched for the first time to the Greek business community by Alba and SEV in 2014. Addressed exclusively to women executives that manage teams and/or that are currently facing the challenges of a leadership transition.

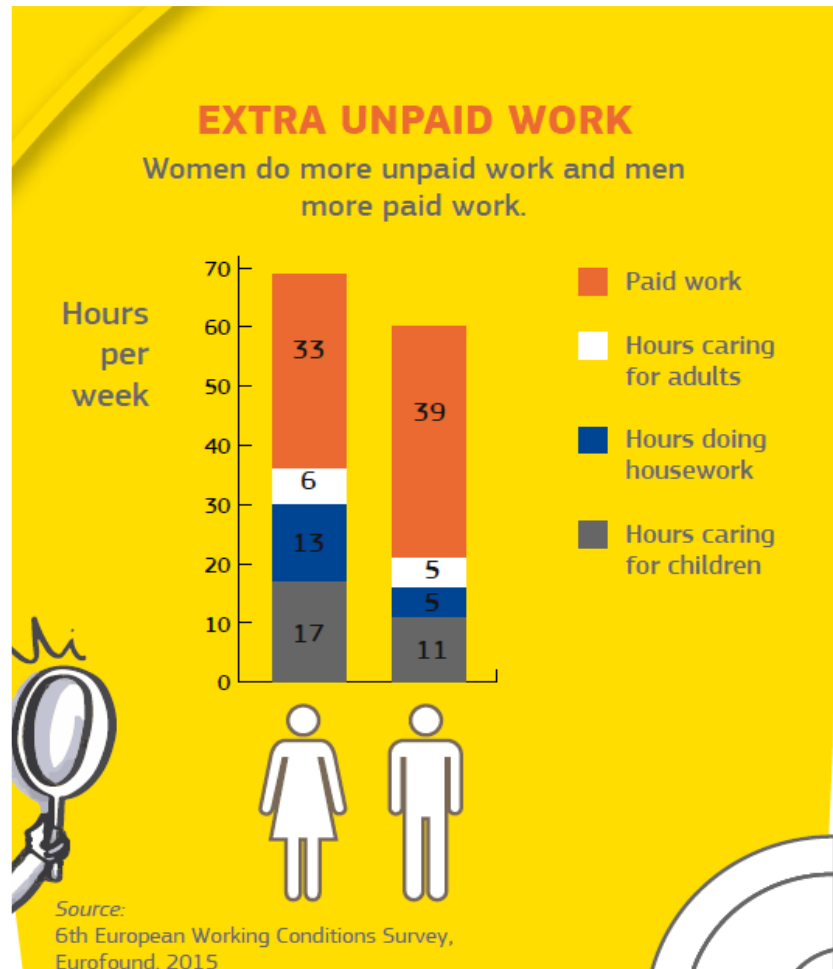
EMBRACIVE “Embracing Diversity and Fostering Inclusion in the Workplace

A new and innovative project, which aims to promote diversity in business both in Greece and in Cyprus, a tool for businesses to engage with diversity ethics.

Leading by example

56 % of our current staff are women

Why do we need a gender perspective on work-life balance?

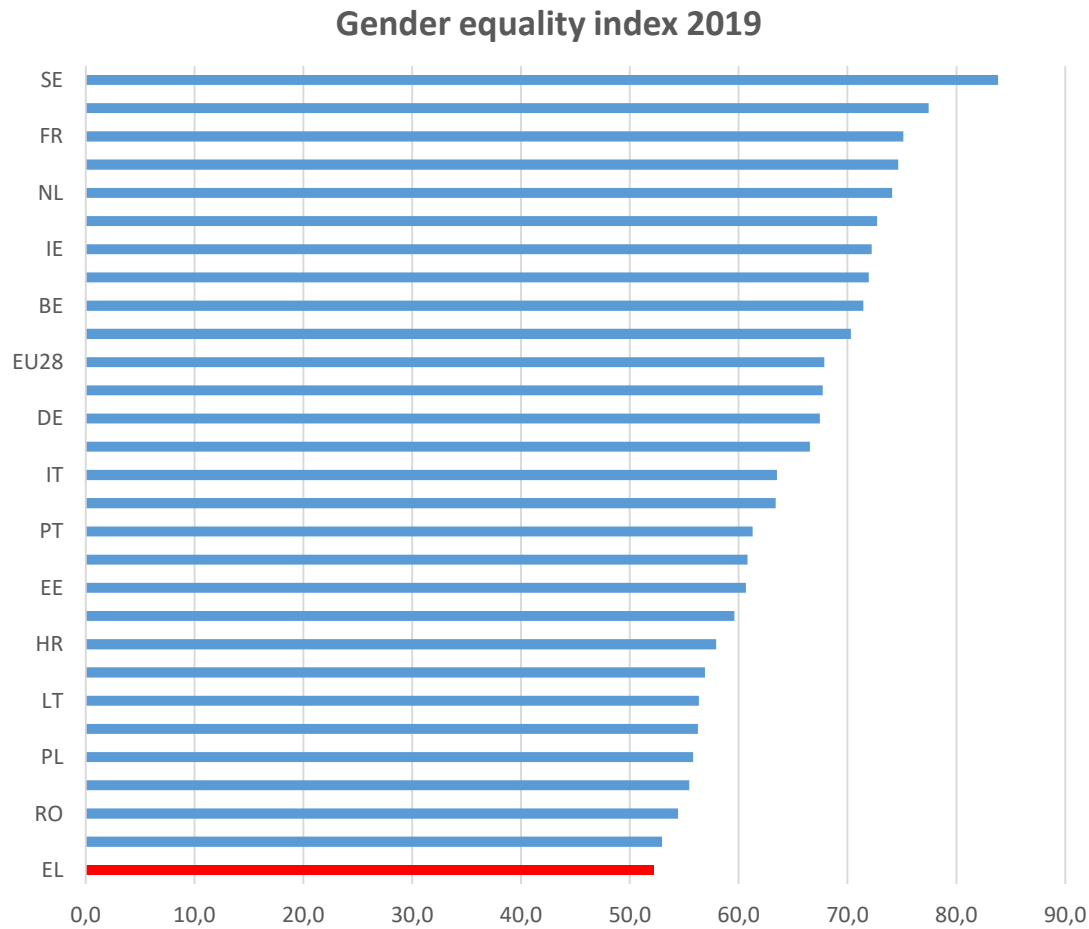


TAKING CAREER BREAKS TO CARE FOR OTHERS

Women take more time off from work to care for others. This is why the EU has adopted the Work-Life Balance Directive. In this Directive we introduced 10 days paid paternity leave and 2 months paid, non-transferable parental leave for each of the parents, promoting a more equal sharing of childcare responsibilities.



Greece is a laggard on gender equality issues...



What does your life look like?

As a Woman ▾

from  Greece ▾



On average, you are likely to earn **1359€** every month, while a **man** is likely to earn **1647€**.

A wind of change?



Law 4604/2019 on promoting substantive gender equality and averting gender based violence

- “Gender mainstreaming”, “positive discrimination”, equality action plans



Law 4706/2020 on Corporate Governance of Listed Firms

- Minimum 25% women on Boards



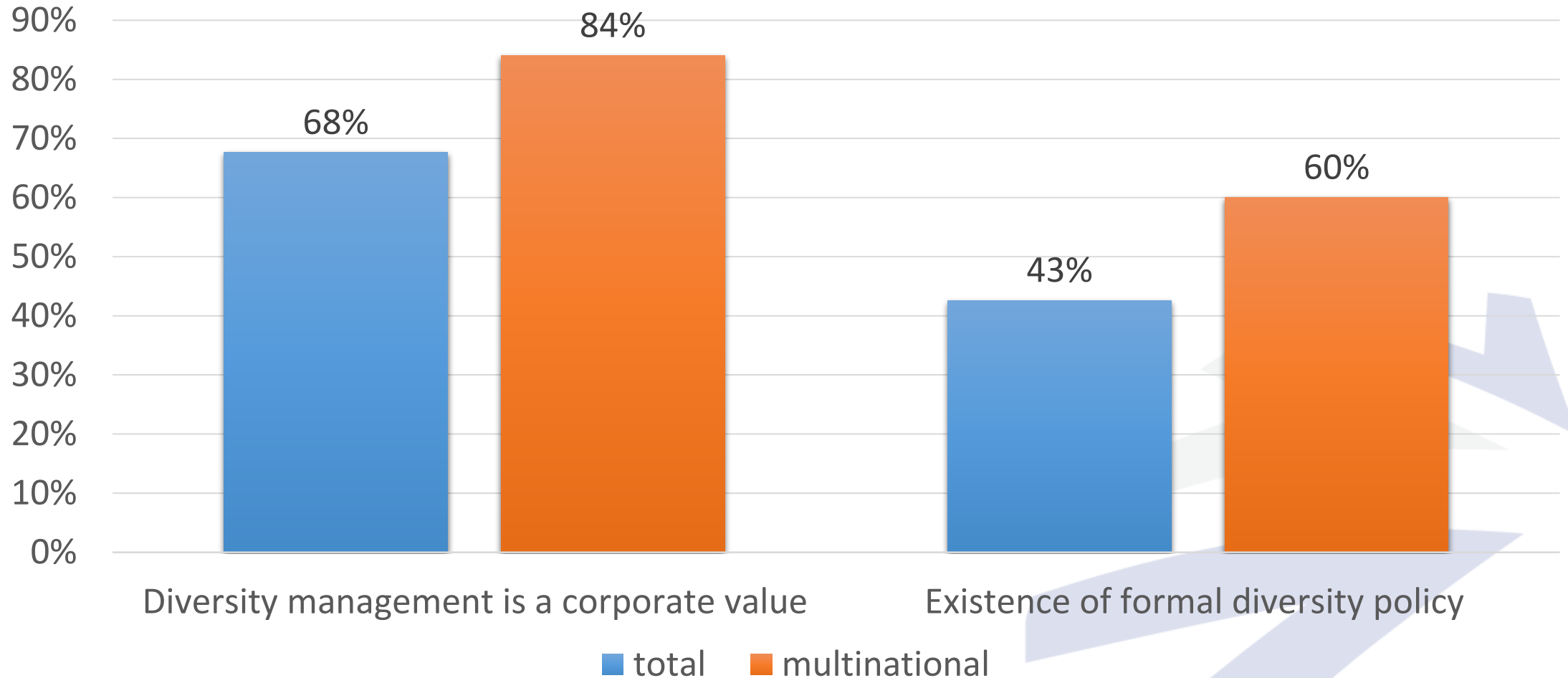
New post - Deputy Minister of Labour with competence on demographic, family and gender equality issues



Gender equality badge

- Accorded to firms that meet a set of criteria on equal treatment (including equal pay), presence of women in decision-making, work-life balance and corporate culture

Business (especially multinationals), lead the way!



However there is room for improvement

- Many companies, especially Greek-family owned, do not have a comprehensive strategy on creating inclusive workplaces – gender equality is addressed ad hoc
- Gender equality is often seen as a Corporate Social Responsibility issue and not as a business issue
- Discrimination in hiring based on potential and realized fertility is quite common, especially in small business
- 25% women have experienced sexual harassment at work (80% in some professions)

Good practice 1: Return to Work Programme

- Company profile: Multinational - consultancy
- Focused on employees who are returning from an extended career break
- Five step process:
 - Notification: The employee notifies of intention, reasons and estimated time of absence.
 - Remain in contact: Designation of a contact point. Frequency and reasons for contacting the employee are mutually agreed in advance.
 - Return to work interview: The purpose is to identify challenges that the employee may face upon returning
 - Return plan: Designed by HR and the team Leader. Specifies timeframe and modalities of return (e.g. part-time transition period, flexible working hours etc.)
 - Support: Specification and implementation of support measures (e.g. coaching) to facilitate reintegration of employee

Good practice 2: Targeted job-placement for women

- Company profile: Multinational – IT consultancy
- Objective is to improve gender balance in workforce (currently dominated by men)
- A reskilling programme addressed to women who are science graduates
- Programme characteristics
 - Includes training in a programming language, depending on the needs of the company.
 - Training is conducted in cooperation with external providers, 4 times a year, for 15 women each time (60 women/year).
 - Duration of training is 1 month and attendance is free for the participants.
- After finishing the programme participants may be absorbed as software engineers, but there is no guaranteed job placement

Other good practices

- Menopause policy
- Exemption from night shifts for employees with “extensive family responsibilities (i.e. single mothers).
- Parental leave to men employees (over and above what is required by law)
- Manual on writing inclusive, gender neutral job adverts

Thank you

Questions