



Education and Culture  
Lifelong Learning Programme  
GRUNDTVIG

# Work life balance

**LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME  
GRUNDTVIG LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS**

**“I learn all my life:  
the joy of learning through experience”**

# POLAND

## Centre for the Advancement of Women Foundation



### Anna Jancewicz, Dorota Jaślan

#### Work life balance

- One factor is common to all the countries surveyed. Both in the 20 European countries surveyed and in the USA, people generally put more effort into their jobs than their free time. In Western Europe work comes first for one in three. This also applies to four in ten respondents in Eastern Europe and in the USA almost one in two believe this to be the case. Portugal and Turkey top the list, with two in three respondents saying that most of their energy goes into work.
- The work life balance of the Dutch, Swiss, Swedes, Belgians and Italians is more or less 50-50. The British are the Europeans who focus most on their leisure time, with one in three putting more energy into their free time than their work. In Germany, the USA, Italy, Finland and Sweden this applies to around one in four.
- The survey also revealed differences between the sexes, irrespective of nationality. While around fifty per cent of men believe their job to be more important, only 40 per cent of women share this view. Other socio-demographic features such as income, education, wealth and geographical region have no impact on people's attitude to work and life.

[http://www.marketingmanagement.cz/press/press105\\_en.htm](http://www.marketingmanagement.cz/press/press105_en.htm)

#### Relaxing at home - the world's favourite pastime

- All nations agree when it comes to their favourite pastime. Three in four respondents unanimously state that relaxing at home, watching TV, listening to music or reading are their favourite activities to while away the time. US

citizens and Greeks are particularly keen on watching TV, with over 80 per cent preferring to unwind in front of the box above all other activities. In Western Europe this applies to only 66 per cent of respondents.

- With regard to people's second most favourite leisure activity there are clear differences. In Central and Eastern Europe, DIY, including gardening and redecorating, is consistently cited as the No. 2 favourite pastime.
- Western Europeans also like to make home improvements, but they still prefer to go out to eat or for a drink. In twelve of the fourteen Western European countries, this ranks as the second most favoured free time activity. In Finland, the picture is different and sport reigns supreme, with going to restaurants and bars being less popular.
- In Germany, after relaxing at home (70 per cent), DIY and going out come equal second. Around one in three respondents state these two among their three favourite leisure activities. One in four like to go to the cinema or do sports.
- Surprisingly, US citizens rarely state sport-related activities as their favourite pastimes, with only one in five considering sport and fitness to be favourite activities and one in six having a preference for spectator sports.

[http://www.marketingmanagement.cz/press/press105\\_en.htm](http://www.marketingmanagement.cz/press/press105_en.htm)

## Why is work life balance important?

- **Work life balance has influence on:**
  - More work activity of persons who look after young children;
  - **More intensive work activity of persons aged 50+** (according to research, in 2003 merely 26.9% of persons aged 55-64 were employed, whereas, at the same time, the EU average was 41% (www.stat.gov.pl));
  - Retaining mental health;
  - Preventing „professional burnout” – the disease of the 21st Century, in order to extend our professional activity and help us not to withdraw from professional and social life;
  - **Lifelong learning.** Finding time not only for work but also for learning. Preserving the balance between work and the need for training;
  - Increased childbearing rates, preventing the ageing of the society. (The number of persons of mobile age (18-44 years) is gradually

decreasing from 40% in 2002 to 31% in 2030).  
[www.epp.eurostat.ec.eu.int](http://www.epp.eurostat.ec.eu.int)

## **RECONCILING CAREER AND FAMILY LIFE:**

Source: EQUAL, project „A PARENT – AN EMPLOYEE” United Nations Development Program

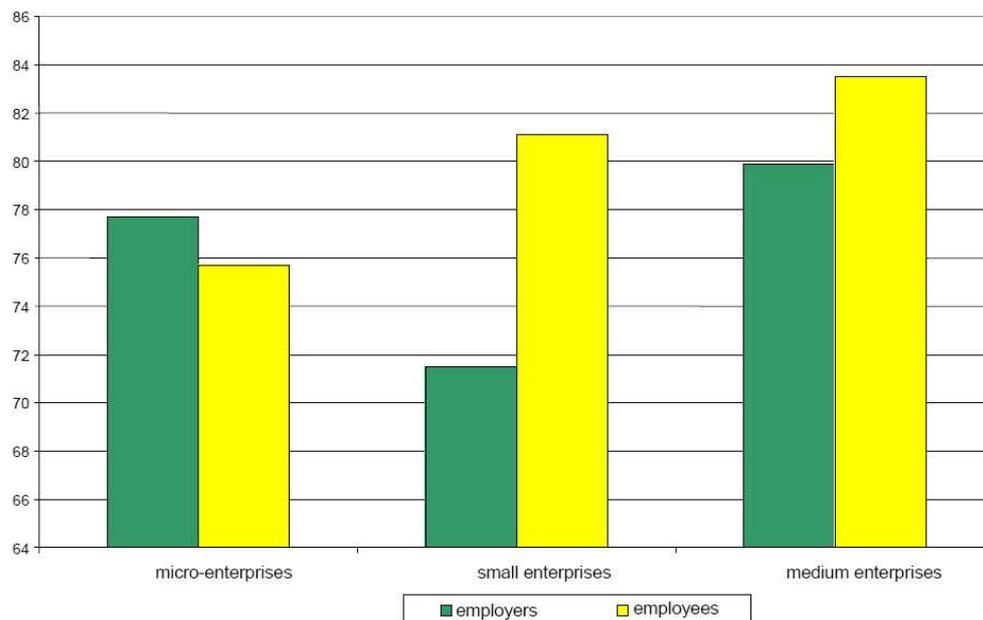
- Development of flexible forms of work, including telework

### **Telework in Poland**

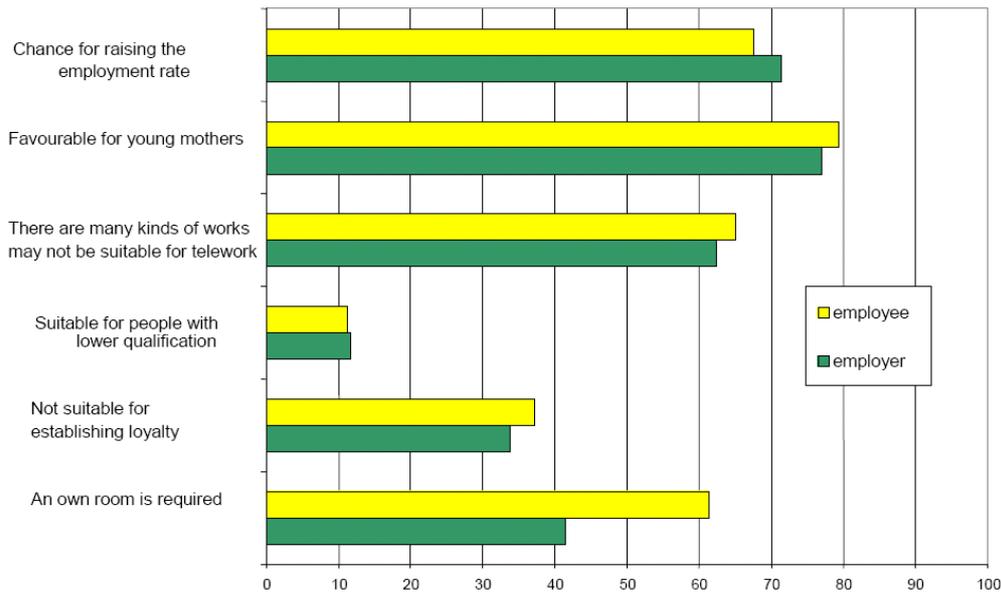
#### **Telework – a chance for young mothers?**

- According to most employees – independently of sex or age – telework is a very good opportunity for young mothers to continue their work.

*Figure 2: Attitude to telework as a form of employment for young mothers depending on the size of workplace*



**Figure 1: Telework as employers and employees see it**



- Telework provides an opportunity for the employment rate to increase in Poland – according to more than 70% of employers and employees.
- The attitudes to telework as an opportunity to improve the situation of young mothers are especially positive – almost 80% of entrepreneurs and workers think that it may be a good solution as a form of employment for the first period of motherhood.
- Although employers have a quite positive picture of telework only a little more than 50% of businessmen think that telework becomes a popular form of work in Poland in the next 10 years.
- More than 50% of employees think that telework is much less stressful than being at a workplace, at the office, although not necessarily more efficient.
- According to every 4th employee the low-level development of telecommunication infrastructure in the country is a serious obstacle in propagating telework.
- Two of every three employees think that only certain types of jobs are suitable for teleworking.
- *Increased training participation of persons performing care-giving functions in families, whether on parental leave or flexibly employed as they try to combine household and professional duties*

- Promotion of a *partnership* family model and co-responsibility for upbringing of children,
  - Introduction of a new solution – *obligatory partial paternity leave taken by the male partner, at least for the period of 3 months* within the entire parental leave period
- *Better availability of kindergartens*
    - Today in Poland only 16% of families make use of the public childcare system

## **Occupational passivity vs. family obligations**

### **Occupational activity vs. having children**

- Women's household duties are strongly linked with having children, thus the larger number of children and the younger they are, the less frequently women take up work.
  - When women have only one child, their occupational activity is at the level of 64.1%
  - When women have three children or more, their occupational activity is merely at the level of 56.4%
  - If the youngest child is less than 3 years old, then 46.7% of women is active, if the child is between 4 and 6 years old, that group expands to the level of 70.6%.
- Among women aged 18 - 64 lat, the group of women who are occupationally passive, who do not seek employment and do not study (which would interfere with their potential work), a large number mainly looks after their families and households. They account for approximately 1/3 of that population (32.4%).
- A substantial part of currently passive persons used to work but interrupted their professional career due to family, personal reasons – 19.3% of occupationally inactive women, only 2.7% of men faced such a situation. Occupationally inactive women in 40.6% cases performed care-giving functions towards children and elderly or disabled persons, in the case of men this group comprised 26.8%.

## **Work and maternity**

Source: Project „Mommy is back at work” survey conducted by Instytut MillwardBrown SMG/KRC. October 2006

### **How long on maternity leave? Expectations vs. reality.**

- For 60% of mothers the ideal time to get back to work after childbirth is at least 2 years (average +/-36 months).
- Women start work after 12 months on average. Only 23% of women resumed work immediately after ending of maternity leave.
- Almost 90% of mothers is of the opinion that up to the age of 3 the child should spend as much time with its mother as it is possible.
- 64% of mothers think that it is very difficult for mothers to reconcile their work-related duties with raising children.
- 60% of mothers think that it is harmful for a small child if its mother works.

Merely 1 in 9 mothers thinks that mothers should go back to work as soon as possible after giving birth.

### **Back to work: fears and facts.**

- More than half of the mothers covered by the survey (66%) think that women returning to work after (paid) maternity leave or (unpaid) child rearing leave are very often laid-off.
- Almost 1 in 3 mothers (27%) taking advantage of maternity or child-rearing leave expects to be laid-off after going back to work.
- 1 in 6 women (16%) going back to work after maternity or child-rearing leave was laid-off or forced to leave her job.
- After return to work women were usually given the same position. In rare cases it was a comparable position (12%) or a worse position (2%).
- After return to work, most frequently, the relations with superiors and colleagues do not change. Similarly, their salaries do not change, either.

### **Facilitations and barriers.**

- Mothers' opinion: most serious barriers to return to work after childbirth are of psychological nature – they miss their children.
- The most important facilitating elements for working women with young children were, in the opinion of mothers, approval of flexible working hours and establishment of kindergarten facilities in the workplace.

- The majority of firms offer women the possibility to work shorter hours and allows breastfeeding breaks. Only 1 firm out of 10 allows mothers to work from home.
- Kindergartens for employees' children are provided by merely every eighth company (12%).

### **General practices applied in Poland:**

Source: the project of PSZK (Polish Association of HR Management) „Working Mamma” 2006

- Awards granted to employees for coming back to work earlier than after the period within which the employee is entitled to parental benefits;
- Part-time employment;
- Application of flexible working hours;
- Granting paid parental leaves;
- Offering employees the possibility of working at home, teleworking;
- Offering health insurance covering all family members of the employee.

### **Examples of practices applied in Poland**

Source: the project of PSZK (Polish Association of HR Management) „Working Mamma” 2006

#### **Hewlett-Packard**

- **Extended maternity leave program**

(maternity two months longer than the period envisaged by the labour code, if the woman decides not to take advantage of the (unpaid) child-rearing leave; the employer pays for the additional maternity leave).

- **Program of gradual return to work**

(after returning to work, for half a year, women have the right to work part-time: for the first 3 months  $\frac{1}{2}$  of regular working hours, and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of regular working hours for another 3 months).

## **Xerox Polska**

- Program *Policy Maternity* for women returning to work after maternity leave (element of the company working regulations);
- Retaining of all existing benefits for the duration of maternity leave (e.g. company car, mobile phone, participation in training provided by the company);
- Company's pledge to retain the position for the returning employee;
- In the course of maternity leave, the company makes efforts to enable their employees on maternal leave to participate in corporate life, without excessive involvement in work-related duties / activities;
- Award for women in the amount of 3 monthly salaries in the first month after returning to the company;
- Until the eighth week after coming back to work women can work part-time (not fewer than 16 hours a week).

## **Vos Logistics**

- Possibility to work from home;
- Shortening of working hours and adjustment to individual needs of the employee;
- At the firm there is a special room which can be used by young mothers, as well as a special section in the refrigerator for her things.

## **Motorola, Citibank, Warta, Procter&Gamble**

- Parent friendly policies;
- Convenient working hours for female employees;
- At Motorola each young father receives 3 days off.

## **Balancing of roles vs. Having children**

### **POLISH STATISTICS**

Source: CBOS – STATE POLICY TOWARDS FAMILY AND DISCRIMINATION AT THE WORKPLACE OF PREGNANT WOMEN AND MOTHERS OF SMALL CHILDREN. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESULTS, WARSAW, MARCH 2006

#### **What are the main reasons for lower number of births in recent years?**

- Women's fears of losing their jobs – 62 %
- Poor living conditions, insufficient number of flats - 58 %
- Lack of state support, assistance (i.a. as regards upbringing, education, medical care) - 42%
- Fear of lowered standard of living - 36%
- Women's willingness to pursue a professional career, widespread popularisation of the model of financially independent woman - 29%
- **Difficulty with balancing of family and professional life – 22%**
- Comfort, desire to enjoy life, concerns regarding the ability to fulfill family obligations – 16%

#### **The most effective approaches as regards assistance for women returning to work after childbirth comprise:**

- Making it possible for mothers to work in the hours which are convenient for them or work part-time - 56%
- Development of inexpensive and readily available childcare facilities, such as nurseries, kindergartens, day-care rooms - 41%
- Financial incentives for employers hiring mothers returning to work after maternity leaves (e.g. return of a part of employment costs, such as social security contributions) - 39%
- Changes in the labour code to make it easier for women to combat discrimination on the labour market and in the workplace - 24%
- Free of charge professional training and courses - 14%

**Tabl. 30.**
**Wskaźnik zatrudnienia i aktywności zawodowej w 2006 roku**  
**The employment and activity rate in 2006**

w / in %

Wyszczególnienie / Specification	Wskaźnik zatrudnienia / The employment rate*						Wskaźnik aktywności zawodowej / The activity rate**					
	ogółem / total	według płci / by gender:		według wieku / by age:			ogółem / total	według płci / by gender:		według wieku / by age:		
		kobiety / females:	mężczyźni / males:	15-24	25-54	55-64		kobiety / females:	mężczyźni / males:	15-24	25-54	55-64
		15-64	15-64					15-64	15-64			
Unia Europejska-15 / The EU-15	66,0	58,4	73,5	40,1	78,7	45,3	71,7	64,2	79,2	48,0	84,5	48,3
Unia Europejska-27 / The EU-27	64,4	57,2	71,6	36,3	78,0	43,5	70,2	62,9	77,6	44,0	84,2	46,4
Austria / Austria	70,2	63,5	76,9	54,0	83,5	35,5	73,7	67,0	80,5	59,4	87,1	36,8
Belgia / Belgium	61,0	54,0	67,9	27,6	78,4	32,0	66,5	59,5	73,4	34,7	84,5	33,6
Bułgaria / Bulgaria	58,6	54,6	62,8	23,2	75,7	39,6	64,5	60,2	68,8	28,9	82,3	43,0
Cypr / Cyprus	69,6	60,3	79,4	37,4	82,6	53,6	73,0	63,8	82,7	41,5	86,2	55,5
Dania / Denmark	77,4	73,4	81,2	64,6	86,1	60,758,5	80,6	77,0	84,1	69,9	88,9	63,2
Estonia / Estonia	68,1	65,3	71,0	31,6	84,2	58,5	72,4	69,3	75,8	35,9	89,1	61,0
Finlandia / Finland	69,3	67,3	71,4	42,1	82,4	54,5	76,8	75,0	78,7	60,8	87,9	58,1
Francja / France	63,0	57,7	68,5	29,3	80,2	37,6	69,4	64,1	74,8	39,4	86,5	39,6
Grecja / Greece	61,0	47,7	74,6	24,2	75,3	42,3	67,0	55,0	79,1	32,4	82,0	43,9
Hiszpania / Spain	64,8	53,2	76,1	39,5	75,8	44,1	70,8	60,0	81,4	48,2	82,0	46,2
Irlandia / Ireland	68,6	59,3	77,7	50,0	78,4	53,1	71,3	61,3	81,0	52,4	81,5	54,7
Litwa / Lithuania	63,6	61,0	66,3	23,7	81,7	49,6	67,4	64,6	70,5	26,3	86,2	52,9
Luksemburg / Luxembourg	63,6	54,6	72,6	23,3	81,0	33,2	66,7	58,2	75,3	27,8	84,5	33,6
Łotwa / Latvia	66,3	62,4	70,4	35,9	81,1	53,3	71,3	66,7	76,2	40,8	86,4	57,1
Malta / Malta	54,8	34,9	74,5	44,7	64,4	30,0	59,2	38,3	79,7	53,3	68,0	30,8
Niderlandy / The Netherlands	74,3	67,7	80,9	66,2	84,2	47,7	77,1	70,3	83,9	69,8	86,7	50,5

Wyszczególnienie / Specification	Wskaźnik zatrudnienia / The employment rate*						Wskaźnik aktywności zawodowej / The activity rate**					
	ogółem / total	według płci / by gender:		według wieku / by age:			ogółem / total	według płci / by gender:		według wieku / by age:		
		kobiety / females:	mężczyźni / males:	15-24	25-54	55-64		kobiety / females:	mężczyźni / males:	15-24	25-54	55-64
		15-64	15-64					15-64	15-64			
Niemcy / Germany	67,2	61,5	72,8	43,3	78,8	48,4	75,6	69,5	81,5	50,4	87,0	55,9
<b>POLSKA / POLAND</b>	<b>54,5</b>	<b>48,2</b>	<b>60,9</b>	<b>24,0</b>	<b>71,8</b>	<b>28,1</b>	<b>63,4</b>	<b>56,8</b>	<b>70,1</b>	<b>34,2</b>	<b>81,7</b>	<b>30,7</b>
Portugalia / Portugal	67,9	62,0	73,9	35,8	81,3	50,1	73,9	68,4	79,5	42,7	87,7	53,5
Republika Czeska / Czech Republic	65,3	56,8	73,7	27,7	82,5	45,2	70,3	62,3	78,3	33,5	88,2	47,7
Rumunia / Romania	58,8	53,0	64,6	24,0	74,7	41,7	63,6	56,6	70,7	30,6	79,9	42,8
Słowacja / Slovakia	59,4	51,9	67,0	25,9	77,2	33,1	68,6	60,9	76,4	35,3	87,6	36,7
Słowenia / Slovenia	66,6	61,8	71,1	35,0	84,2	32,6	70,9	66,7	74,9	40,6	89,0	33,4
Szwecja / Sweden	73,1	70,7	75,5	40,3	84,7	69,6	78,8	76,3	81,2	51,3	89,4	72,8
Węgry / Hungary	57,3	51,1	63,8	21,7	74,2	33,6	62,0	55,5	68,7	26,8	79,6	34,9
Wielka Brytania / United Kingdom	71,5	65,8	77,3	53,2	81,1	57,4	75,4	69,2	81,7	60,5	84,6	59,0
Włochy / Italy	58,4	46,3	70,5	25,5	73,3	32,5	62,7	50,8	74,6	32,5	77,8	33,4

Aktywni zawodowo to osoby pracujące i bezrobotne / Economically active persons include employed and unemployed persons.

\* obliczone jako stosunek pracujących ogółem do populacji w wieku 15-64 lat ogółem / is calculated as the ratio of total employment to the total population aged 15 to 64 years.

\*\* obliczone jako stosunek aktywnych zawodowo do populacji w wieku 15-64 lat ogółem / is calculated as the ratio of economically active persons to the total population aged 15 to 64 years.

 Źródło / Source: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.eu.int>  
 Eurostat. Main Economic Indicators, 2007.

# **ITALY**

**Work Life Balance  
e-Laborando Group**



**Valentina Rivolta**

Work and Life balance over the time

- The concept enters the social debate during the 60s and 70s but is related only to women. Work could be accepted by women only if it won't interfere with being a mother and a wife
- The idea of a "share of rights and responsibilities" enters the social debate in the middle of 70s: the policy is focused on the creation of laws against professional discrimination
- Nowadays balance is perceived as a social matter and not as an individual one. Balance has to do with both individual and organizations, moreover it has to do with all the aspects of life (and not only family)

## Tools for work-life balance

1. Tools that reduce or organize working time in a different way
  - Tools that free the time
  - Tools contributing to create a new idea and a new concept of time

## Tools that reduce or organize working time in a different way

- Part-time
- Job sharing (still rare in Italy)
- Telework
- Banks of time
- Turnover

## Tools that free the time

- Laws (measures sustaining maternity and parental leave)
- Study halls
- Kindergarden at work
- Family nursery

## Tools contributing to create a new idea and a new concept of time (work related)

- Professional training concerned on the importance of care duties

- Trainings on parenting and on reinsertion after maternity leave
- Employees tutoring
- Presence of a "work family" coordinator in enterprises

Tools contributing to create a new idea and a new concept of time (cities related)

- Access to public and private services
- Organization of cities infrastructure and timings

Still these mainstreaming actions contribute somehow to promote or perpetuate inequalities!!!

Employed women: an overview on their daily schedule

- WORK → 6h 32'
- WORK AND ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE FAMILY → 5h 1'
- SLEEP, FEED AND SELF CARE → 10h 59'
- FREE TIME → 2h 28'
- 8% of employed women spends less than 10' for free time

Employed men: an overview on their daily schedule

- WORK → 8h 5' (more)
- WORK AND ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE FAMILY → 2h 02' (less)
- SLEEP, FEED AND SELF CARE → 10h 31' (less)
- FREE TIME → 3h 22' (more)

Inactive people in Italy\*





**\*With inactive people is intended all people that are not counted as labour force, that means they are not considered either employed or unemployed.**

What can be done?

- Reflect on gender difference and on its related concepts
- Develop a new conception of time and life
- Promote collective awareness on work-life-balance



# SLOVAKIA

## WORK FAMILY LIFE BALANCE



# WORK FAMILY LIFE BALANCE – THE SOCIAL MATTER

Work and life balance is perceived as a social matter, not as an individual one.

This is mainly connected to working women and men with family obligations (responsible for unprovided children - preschool and younger school age) and dependent family members, if this responsibility limits possibility of education, access or return to the employment, professional or career growth, or is a barrier to maintain work.

Primarily, women have to face the work – family life balance problem. This is not only due to general public, or employers opinion, but also women themselves consider this **their** problem.

**Reason of such phenomenon is the necessity of two incomes in a family. Usually men's incomes are not enough to cover all basic family needs. One income absence creates a risk situation in the family and potential poverty and social exclusion.**

The problems come from persisting stereotypes as indicated in this paragraph/part. Most women work, take care of children and keep the household in more portion. Women experience a double burden, as they combine care of their own families with assistance to their children's families and care for elderly relatives – this effect becomes more significant. These facts make stress for parents to organise work duties and family life. Slovakia is significant by gender segregation which appears in work offers for women with gender stereotypes. Also gender discrimination occurs in recruitment of young people with family duties. In Slovakia we can distinguish following of persisting stereotypes :

- less women (50,9%) are employed then men (64,4%)
- higher female unemployment (17,2%) then men (15,5%)
- wage gap is significant, average female salary/wage is 28% lower when they do

- the same job, and this gap still deepens
- prevail the significant gender segregation in some occupations in certain economic activities and professions, that again deepens the wage gap
  - few women are in the highest occupation class (30,7%) and in management
  - most of women work in services (75,9%), that means they earn less
  - private sector employ less women (38,9%) than men, few women are entrepreneurs (24,1%)

Not only these findings, but many more are the reason, why we face the problem work – family life balance.

- e.g. : interrupted female work career due to maternity leave, but ongoing male career
- division of labor at homes,
- most of inhabitants are persuaded about women´ discrimination at the labor market – in recruitment, remuneration, work conditions, work regime, career,...

The theme Work – family life balance should be considered from the gender aspect, not the sex one. The gender aspect allows more complex insight into the issues. This aspect, if applied properly, includes justice and from the human-legal insight shall assure the equality opportunities and the gender equality.

## **WORK – FAMILY LIFE BALANCE OVER THE TIME**

Work- Family life balance is a theme, that has a wide spectrum of insights, circumstances and last, but not least, consequences. To get a complex view, we should consider the historical point of view for the content of this theme.

From the historical point of view the theme is affected by existence of certain social and political

system/regime. (E.g.: Tribal, developed or developing countries, many kinds of social systems). This also means, that men and women have different roles in a society.

In Slovakia conditions of this theme can be seen in 2 ways : 1. before and 2. after the Velvet Revolution (and as a EU member later.)

### **History of Slovakia (before the year 1989)**

- Before socialism : father was the only family provider, mother took care of children and housekeeping, usually did not work. The labor market access has

appeared to women in 50-ties and 60-ties of the last century.

- Under the socialism : all people in “active age” had general obligation to work, combined with the need of two incomes to provide for the family, the state provided : good state of health care, (not paid, wide accesability, famous for its high standard), generous social policy supporting young families: easy to get a loan with no/low interest, deductions when child was born, nurseries, kindergardens, companies and its trade unions provided family friendly policy : recruitment contributions, stabilise flats, nurseries, kindergardens, camps, trips, company events – culture, sport, and what was more, grand parents´ supported young families as well.
- The only problem was ..nivealization,, when an individual´s added value has not been evaluated, that affected motivation negatively, planned economy in all branches – government and ministries set profit qoutas, not knowing the situation – no connection among outputs/outcomes caused a lot of imbalance in the future (negative economy result in non-production branches, ageing of production equipment, schools with no required specialization, did not reflected employers requirements...)

Typical family behaviour was famous for 3 starts at the same time:

- early marriages (1.st place)
- parenthood (2.nd place)
- work (3.rd place)
- over 90 % children were born in marriages, 2,1 child/family, mothers were 20-24 years old

#### **Current situation and trends:**

differs significantly from that before 1989.

Composition of families and households and the population structure has changed:

- low birth rate, the postponement of parenthood, the increased number of extra-marital births, the decreasing number of marriages with older age of brides and grooms, increasing divorce rate
- relatively high mortality rate (among men), ageing of all population, especially women, incomplete families, interrupted female carrers,
- 75 % children born in marriages, less then 1,2 child/family, mothers 25-29 years old

## **STATISTICAL INSIGHT INTO THE THEME**

**Some examples of the main problems in maintaining work – family life balance**

**Families and households have changed in recent years. There has been recorded an increase of 1-parent´ families and big increase of lonely individual´ households (over 30%), increase of “informal living”. All these trends call for new challenges to face in health care, education system and social insurance which has to be reflected in public policy.**

To support these claims, look at following areas and figures, and compare them to realize some threats of reality : *"Women, men and Labor Market statistics"*

### **1. Labor Market Demography in context.**

Ageing of population, prolonging work age of men and women, circumstances on the labor market pushing out women aged 45+ . These findings should lead towards training activities (gender trainings, workshops, life long learning) for the unfavourable groups. Natality and mortality is the most stable process (men: 70,1 average age, women: 77,9 average age) that worsens the situation. High heterogeneity in Slovakia regions in social, living and cultural conditions has an important impact affecting the local labor market and vice versa.

## **Employment in statistics**

As indicated in the chart below, the employment rate differs according to the age and gender significantly. Generally said, less Slovak men and women are employed, than in other EU-15, or EU-25 countries.

The employment rate according to the age and gender criteria in Slovakia, EU-15, EU-25 (in %)

Age	Gender	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
15 - 64	M - W	62,2-51,5	62,0-51,8	62,4-51,4	63,3-51,4	63,2-50,9	64,6-50,9	67,0-51,9
25 - 54	M - W	79,6-69,8	79,0-70,7	79,5-70,6	80,5-71,5	80,0-69,3	81,4-69,2	84,1-70,2
25 - 54	EU-15	87,2-65,8	87,3-66,7	86,8-67,3	86,5-67,7	86,4-68,8	86,6-69,1	87,2-70,2
25 - 54	EU-25	86,0-66,1	85,9-66,8	85,4-67,1	85,2-67,6	85,2-68,5	85,5-68,9	86,3-70,0
45 - 64	M - W	60,8-45,1	62,1-45,9	61,1-45,1	60,2-45,5	62,1-46,2		
55 - 64	M - W	35,4- 9,8	37,7- 9,8	39,1- 9,5	41,0-11,2	43,8-12,6	47,8-15,6	49,9-18,9
55 - 64	EU-15	48,0-28,0	48,9-29,1	50,1-30,7	51,6-32,2	52,2-33,2	53,3-35,5	54,1-36,9
55 - 64	EU-25	46,9-26,9	47,7-27,8	48,8-29,2	50,3-30,7	50,7-31,7	51,9-33,8	52,8-35,0

Source: Slovstat SO SR, Bratislava 2005, Eurostat 2007

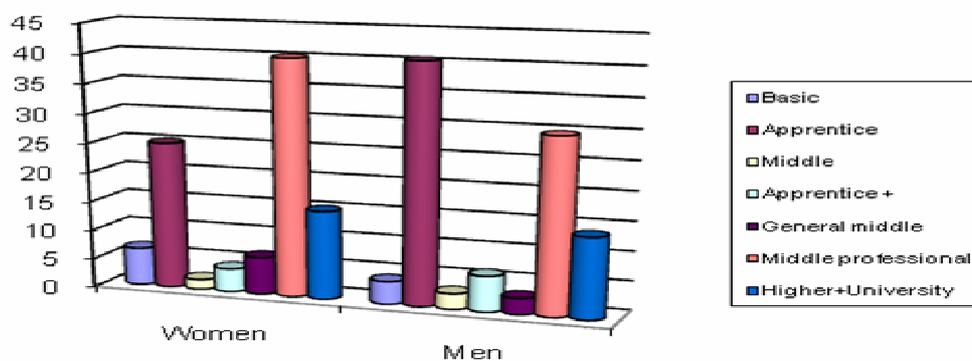
The Group 25-54 is the largest on the labour market. There are only few, who are still studying and few retirees. In comparison with EU-25 and EU-15 there is a different situation, when less Slovak men are employed, but more women work in Slovakia than in EU countries.

The Group 55-64 do not reach the EU average employment. The difference is 15,7% vs.14,2% (EU-15, EU-25). A big gap, especially in the women employment area, is modified by an earlier retirement age. This advantage will soon disappear, after a recent increase of retirement age which has been prolonged continuously to the age of 62 years both for men and women.

On the other hand, Slovak women work in full time jobs almost all their lives and start soon, after the maternity leave.

One of the most important factors at the labor market placement is the education degree. Education and professional orientation – is rapidly increasing, especially women reach higher education, but in different fields than men. That should be an advantage, but reality is different in employment.

### Education degree in %



People involved in economic activities: in 2004: 2 658 600 – active/working people, 2 721 100 – inactive (out of them 1 029 100 retirees, 958 900 younger than 15, 491 900 students, 53 800 individuals on parenthood leave). The following chart shows how Slovak elderly working population is divided (out of all working population) according to gender and age groups.

*Working men and women in Slovakia, (certain age categories out of all working)*

Absolute figures	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Women *	964 400	977 900	970 200	987 500	976 700	983 100	1 010 300	1 035 600
50 - 54	221 000	242 700	243 200	244 100	266 900	140 700	146 000	148 400
55 - 59	87 100	93 100	93 500	101 500	115 000	37 000	49 000	55 900
60 - 64	13 200	12 700	14 600	15 100	21 300	8 000	8 500	9 500
65+	5 600	5 700	5 200	7 200	7 700	3 100	2 700	3 800
Men *	1 373 300	1 145 800	1 156 800	1 177 100	1 193 700	1 233 000	1 291 100	1 321 600
50 - 54	105 200	116 300	117 000	119 600	130 300	146 700	154 500	156 400
55 - 59	21 500	20 700	20 800	25 000	29 200	94 600	104 700	111 400
60 - 64	3 900	4 700	4 000	4 200	5 700	20 900	23 900	27 500
65+	1 500	1 500	1 000	2 600	3 000	5 100	4 500	3 400
Total working *all	2 101 700	2 123 700	2 127 000	2 164 600	2 170 400	2 216 200	2 301 400	2 357 300

Source: Slovstat 2008

This trend is also typical for most of European countries. Work ability and needs of elderly will be handled more carefully, that requires to conduct researches, to find out the key development at the labor market in connection with ageing workforce. The aim is to find out, what is their satisfaction with work content and conditions, what work contract they prefer, or whether they want to stay at retirement.

Otherwise, the national action plan depending on the Lisbon strategic goal – to reach 60 % employment of women in 2010, seems not to be fulfilled. State and public policy should dedicate special attention to the group 45+.

## 2. Population Structure in Age and Gender

Slovakia is expecting "intensive ageing" - the peak of it is assumed in 2020. We distinguish 3 basic groups : pre-productive (till 14), productive (15-54-57/60\*,62), past-productive(over 65 like in EU)

*Structure of men and women in absolute figures*

2006	% vs. absolute figures(all age)	45 - 49	50 - 54	55 - 59	60 - 64	65 - 69
women	51,5-2 775 353	196 078	207 162	180 437	134 606	116 678

men	48,5-2 618 284	194 998	197 319	162 850	108 070	83 919
total	100-5 393 637	391 076	404 481	343 287	242 676	200 597

Source: Slovstat 2008

\* The retirement reform adjusted the age of retirement to 62 for both women and men.

The female group aged 45 – 64 tends to be dynamic in growth within following 20 years. Due to this fact, employers and state should prepare active – helpful policy, because these **women face a “double burden” and a lot of other threats, that do not allow them to join the labor market.**

Flexible work forms are the key aspects to employment increase and work ability and adaptability of employees by :

**a)** work contract. Slovakia ranks among the lowest rate limited work contracts countries (5%). Temporarily such employment occurs in services, agriculture and building industry.

**b)** work time. The work time forms represent the labor market flexibility and employment increase tools and use these forms:

- overtime work (350 hours/year), cause wage level, prevail men
- shift work, often used, about 25 % of employed
- flexible work time, especially used by administration, about 6,3 %
- shorten work time, used by handicapped, 1,9 % women, 0,8 % men

**c)** innovative forms of work. **Work at home**, by using ICT, or traditional occupations – craftsmen, longlasting work at home, 4 %, special form is telework

The research results from the previous years approve, that women prefer flexible work forms, not shortened work time, due to full monthly incomes of both partners. According to statistics,(Christel Aliaga: “Gender gaps and work – family life balance”), employed women aged 20-49 with children to 12 years prevail in all neighboring countries. 80 % in Slovakia, but EU-25 average is 60%. Out of the same age category 66 % of women in Slovakia worked fulltime, but only 45 % in EU-25. These findings indicate the necessity of new work strategies – family life balance adoption.

With pressure to create services for pre-school age, establishments for the elderly and handicapped. The lack of them is one of the main obstacles in work – family life balance.

### 3. Gender and Age Dimension of Employment and the Labor Market

#### Life – long learning statistics

Statistical data shows the importance of active policy tools aimed especially to the group of elderly unemployed and other unfavourable groups in training activities and after completing, their involvement into the labor market.

The statistics comes from the sources of Ministry of work, social affairs and family:  
*"Realization of Labor market active policy tools"*

	2004		2005		2006		2007 (1.st half)	
Agenda	Abs.figures	In %	Abs.figures	In %	Abs.figures	In %	Abs.figures	In %
1.N of applications	n/a	n/a	71 646	n/a	15 427	n/a	11 789	n/a
2.Included	27 168	n/a	35 689	50	8 374	54	3 260	28
2.1 women	16 458	n/a	21 925	61,43	5 011	59,83	1 957	60,03
2.2unfavourable	15 734	n/a	21 092	59,10	4 674	55,81	1 668	51,17
2.2.1 50+	3 645	23,16	5 425	25,72	1 169	25	467	28
2.2.2 LTU	10 937	69,51	13 269	62,91	2 290	49	784	47
2.2.3.graduates	2 170	13,79	2 993	14,19	560	12	167	10
3.Succesfulness	n/a	n/a	12 624	35,4	6 269	74,8	1 027	32,5

Legend: 1.Number of applicants, 2.Those, included to education, 2.2 Unfavourable group, 2.2.1 50+, 2.2.2 Long-term unemployed, 2.3 Graduates, 3. Those, after education placed at the Labor market

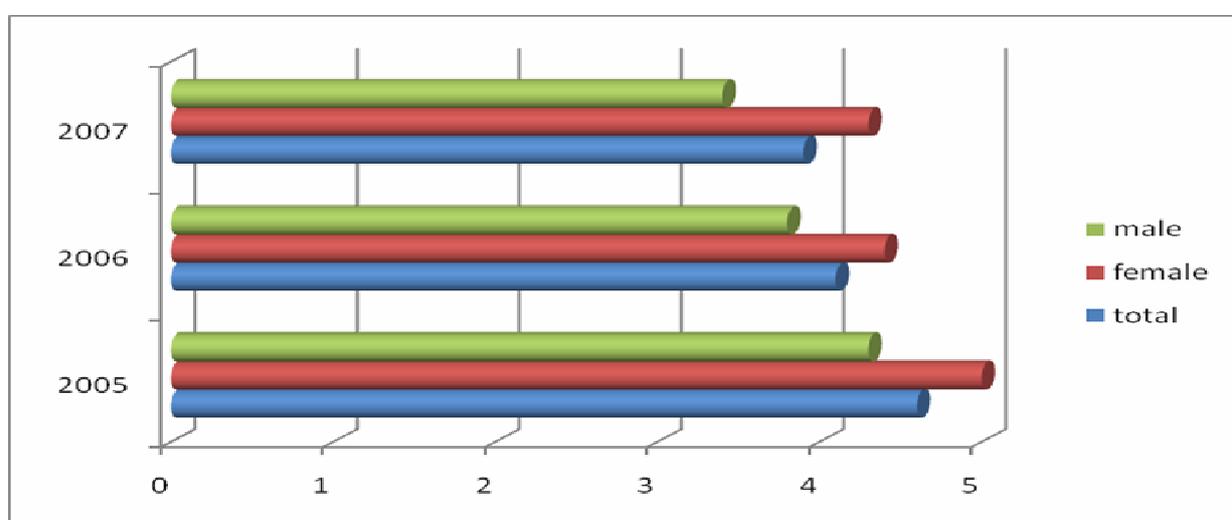
Older statistical data have not been collected. In 2003, only Annual report has been issued, but comparable data were not included.

Rapidly changing conditions in a society, labor market and other areas of life require adequate response of those, who are affected. New skills, knowledge and experience replace the out-dated ones. There is an arising necessity for training, requalification, courses, self-teaching and other forms of life-long learning for people with out-dated education and skills. Comparison of the situation in Slovakia with other EU member countries is presented in the chart bellow.

## Life-long learning

The low percentage in life-long learning arises from the system of further education in Slovakia, frequently based on self-financing. The elderly face threat of job loss, health problems and other life situations which are directly linked to regular income. The mentioned facts affect the low involvement of people in further studies.

*Life-long learning population aged 25-64 in % in Slovakia*



*Life-long learning statistics, 25-64 years, in %, men - women*

gender/country	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Slovakia Men	8,2 – 8,8	3,5 – 3,9	3,8 – 4,8	4,3 – 5,0	3,8 – 4,4
EU - 15	7,5 – 5,4	9,1 – 6,6	10,0 – 7,5	10,4 – 8,4	10,2 – 8,6
EU - 25	6,9 – 8,2	8,3 – 9,7	9,1 – 10,6	9,4 – 11,1	9,2 – 11,1

Source: Eurostat 2007

## 4. Gender and Age Dimension of Unemployment

Situation in unemployment in Slovakia has some specific features. In spite of the fact, that overall percentage remains stable, or slowly fall down, there is an unemployable group of people. These people come from marginal groups and are not educationable. They lost motivation for work, job habits. Except from them, there is

another unfavourable group, as mentioned above. This negative trend reflects employers' unwillingness to employ both of them.

#### 4. Rate of unemployment in Slovakia versus EU-25, EU-15 in % :

M-W	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Slovakia	18,9-18,6	19,8-18,7	18,6-18,7	17,4-17,7	17,4-19,2	15,5-17,2	12,3-14,7	10,0-12,8
EU - 15	6,7 - 8,9	6,4 - 8,3	6,9 - 8,5	7,3 - 8,7	7,4 - 8,9	7,5 - 8,9	7,1 - 8,5	6,4 - 7,7
EU - 25	7,6 - 9,8	7,6 - 9,4	8,0 - 9,6	8,3 - 9,8	8,3 - 9,9	8,3 - 9,7	7,5 - 9,0	6,6 - 7,9

Similar situation is in longlasting unemployment. In recent years this trend caught men and women over 45+.

The possible way how to solve this negative situation in unemployment, is to involve more elderly to work in flexible work forms. Such forms of work are popular in the EU (31-35% vs.4,2%), but not in Slovakia (the reason is obvious – necessity of 2 incomes...). Shift work belongs to most widespread flexible work form, then limited work contract. Employers should focus better on recruitment process and keep loyal qualified employees with family obligations in a company.

The tools supporting state policy towards employment are on the European base adopted

documents :

In 2004, Slovakia became a member country of EU. Since then, a lot of documents has been agreed to be adopted. One of them, the Slovak Government issued, was the document *"The proposal of countermeasures for work – family life balance for the year 2006 with the outlook to 2010"*:

This document altogether with the goal of Lisbon strategy requires 60 % women' employment in 2010. (current situation is 52% in 2006). To reach this goal means to increase employment for the people with family obligations by creating helpful environment. Remuneration plays an important role in employment. Female salaries of all EU countries fall behind these of men. In Slovakia the portion was about 74% in 2001-2005. This gap occurs in all branches and sectors of national economy.

**IDEAS AND CONCEPTS CREATING BALANCE – different forms of activities which emphasise the work – family life balance**

In fact, there do not exist any special learning programmes linked with the theme, but there exist official competition on the labor market. Under the guarancy of the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family, (MLSAaF) a pilot project was based in 2000 - **“Employer helpful to family”** - at the occasion of International Day of Families. The main goal of this competition is to motivate employers to create conditions sensitive to employees’ family obligations, and after that to evaluate employers publicly, because of their systematic attention to work – family life balance and equal opportunities for men and women. In 2008, the competition comes to the 7<sup>th</sup> year of existence. Employers compete in 3 categories : 1. category – Family policy, 2. category: Equal opportunities for men and women, 3. category: Small and middle businesses create the most original measure for families.

Education process should start with informing and presenting it to public, explaining what the stereotypes are, so that they realize the problem. Further, organize seminars, propagate more positive examples by pointing at good results, especially in companies which have participated in the competition under the MLSA aF security. On the local level, inhabitants should require actions from their deputies to make proposals linked with the agenda and push them to forward it to VUC, parliament. Furthermore, include the thema to schedule university students (at least those, who study Human Resources and/or Management). Educate women/parents at local maternity centres.

Another way how to educate people are non-government institutions/entities activities. They provide researches under the EU projects (esfem, ivo, mymamy.sk “Work versus family?- work-family life balance throuhg the eyes of employers and employees), and after the results are processed, they organise workshops on the theme in colaboration with local autohorities/entities.

## **PARTICIPATION OF THE STATE**

Shifts in the population and households structure set pressure on the health care system, education, social welfare and social care. Various family models occur in a society, altogether with various kinds of labor force and work contracts. In most of 2 parents’ families both of them have to work (necessity of 2 incomes). At the same time an increase of 1- parent’ s families, usually mother, that has to work, is more remarkable.

The state should apply the policy with respect to parents’ decision whether to work or to stay at home and take care of children.

The state will help parents to find the ways how to take care of their children, provide them with a sufficient support when coming back to work, especially by labor market flexibility, by stimulating of employers to the family policy.

The state should create a some kind of mechanism, that will support private and work life balance, and it will also support change of division roles among men and women in housekeeping.

**The goal of work - family life balance measurments is to support freedom and responsibility of individual when deciding how to balance difference aspects of her/his life.**

One of the most important task will be the work environment improvement for elderly, increase of employees loyalty, decrease an absenteism and concentration on life-long learning.

Work – family life balance is a part of gender equality. That´s why it is necessary to apply the principles of gender mainstreaming in all flexible forms of work .

Gender Mainstreaming strategy means, that governments examine the impacts of their policies onto women and men situation in all political areas and check how adopted measures improve specific female disadvantages. Recently, the EU member countries agreed to apply Gender Mainstreaming (GM) in their politics as a binding principle in the Amsterdam Contract from 1996.

ELABORATED ON THE BASIS OF THE FOLLOWING SOURCES OF MATERIALS :

1. Inštitút pre verejné otázky, Institute for Public Affairs, Bratislava, 2007, "Plus pre ženy 45+"- " Plus for Women 45+", Project of the EU Community Initiative EQUAL
2. Štúdie a materiály, Jarmila Filadelfiová, Bratislava 2007, Studies and documents, "Ženy, muži a vek v štatistikách trhu práce" - "Women, Men and Age in Labor Market Statistics"
3. EsFem, Občianske združenie, The civic association EsFem, "Rodová rovnosť na trhu práce" - "Gender equality at the labor market" brochure, 2007
4. Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny, Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family, "Prognóza vývoja zamestnanosti do roku 2015" – "Employment development prognosis by 2015"
5. Vláda SR, návrh opatrení na zosúladenie rodinného a pracovného života na rok 2006 s výhľadom do roku 2010, Slovak Government "Proposal of countermeasures for work-family life balance for 2006 with outlook by 2010"
6. Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny, Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs

and Family, "Operačný program Zamestnanosť a sociálna inklúzia pre programové obdobie 2007-2013" – "Operational program Employment and social inclusion for programming period 2007-2013"

## **Work - family life balance**

### **Slovakia**

➡ is mainly connected to working women and men with family obligations (responsible for unprovided children - preschool and younger school age) and dependent family members, if this responsibility limits possibility of education, access or return to the employment, professional or career growth, or is a barrier to maintain work.

- is a **theme with a wide spectrum of insights** :
- ➡ **Historical point of view**
- **Gender Mainstreaming**
- ➡ **European context**
- **Law and legislature**
- ➡ **Slovakia conditions**
- ➡ **Goal of the work-family life balance**

### **History and presence**

**Generally : Different political systems-regimes – different roles of women and men in a society**

- **Slovakia before :**
  - **Socialism, obligation to work, 2 incomes, a lot of advantages, planned economy, nivelization, family behaviour – 3 starts at the same time**
  - **over 90%children, 2,1ch./family, mothers 20-24 years old**
- **Slovakia now :**
  - **Democracy, the EU member, a lot of choice and possibilities – responsibility, shifts in population and household structure**
  - **75%children, 1,2ch./family, mothers 25-29 years old**

## European context & GM

Trends in Europe : ageing of the population,different conditions in employment, social welfare,...

- Common strategies and goals : Lisbon 70 % total employment, 60 % female employment within 2010, focus on those with family duties
- Gender Mainstreaming aspect (GM) : gender equality apply in all political areas, examine the impacts on women and men, check adopted measures and improvement
- Gender segregated labor market, gender gaps

Consequences of applying/not applying GM

## Law and legislation

**Labor Code** §§ related to Work-family life balance :

- ➡ Recruitment,work conditions, remuneration,career,professional growth
- ➡ Flexible organization forms: Work contract – limited, shorten,
  - work time – flexible, overtime, shift regime
  - innovative work forms – telework, work at home

Other legislation :

- employment services, contribution of service for a family with children to cover some expenses of stay in a preschool facility
- parent's allowance,...
- lump sum children allowance tax bonus for working parents
- social insurance
- retirement pension savings
- social services

## Slovakia conditions

Copy the EU trends, falling behind them, apply a lot of reforms, significant by gender segregation, „double burden“

## ■ 1. Employment statistics 50+

- The Group 25-54 is the largest on the labour market. There are only few, who still studying and few retirees. A big gap, especially in the women employment area, is modified by an earlier retirement age.
- *The employment rate according to the age and gender criteria, in %*

Gender	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
M - W	62,2-51,5	62,0-51,8	62,4-51,4	63,3-51,4	63,2-50,9	64,6-50,9	67,0-51,9
M - W	79,6-69,8	79,0-70,7	79,5-70,6	80,5-71,5	80,0-69,3	81,4-69,2	84,1-70,2
EU-15	87,2-65,8	87,3-66,7	86,8-67,3	86,5-67,7	86,4-68,8	86,6-69,1	87,2-70,2
EU-25	86,0-66,1	85,9-66,8	85,4-67,1	85,2-67,6	85,2-68,5	85,5-68,9	86,3-70,0
M - W	60,8-45,1	62,1-45,9	61,1-45,1	60,2-45,5	62,1-46,2		
M - W	35,4- 9,8	37,7- 9,8	39,1- 9,5	41,0-11,2	43,8-12,6	47,8-15,6	49,9-18,9
EU-15	48,0-28,0	48,9-29,1	50,1-30,7	51,6-32,2	52,2-33,2	53,3-35,5	54,1-36,9
EU-25	46,9-26,9	47,7-27,8	48,8-29,2	50,3-30,7	50,7-31,7	51,9-33,8	52,8-35,0

## ■ 2. Lifelong learning statistics 50+

- Data from EUROSTAT and Ministry of labor, social affairs and family (UPSVaR), collected from local UPSVaR workplaces are used in following charts:

*Life-long learning statistics, 25-64, in %, men - women*

gender/country	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Slovakia	8,2-8,8	3,5-3,9	3,8-4,8	4,3-5,0	3,8-4,4
EU - 15	7,5-5,4	9,1-6,6	10,0-7,5	10,4-8,4	10,2-8,6
EU - 25	6,9-8,2	8,3-9,7	9,1-10,6	9,4-11,1	9,2-11,1

- The statistics comes from the sources of Ministry of labor, social affairs and family: *"Realization of Labor market active policy tools"*
- Legend: 1.Number of applicants, 2.Those, included to education, 2.2 Unfavourable group, 2.2.1 50+, 2.2.2 Long-term unemployed, 2.3 Graduates, 3. Those, after education placed at the Labor market

Agenda	2004		2005		2006		2007 (1.st half)	
	Abs.figures	In %	Abs.figures	In %	Abs.figures	In %	Abs.figures	In %
1.N of applications	n/a	n/a	71646	n/a	15427	n/a	11789	n/a
2.Included	27168	n/a	35689	50	8374	54	3260	28
2.1 women	16458	n/a	21925	61,43	5011	59,83	1957	60,03
2.2unfavourable	15734	n/a	21092	59,1	4674	55,81	1668	51,17
2.2.1 50+	3645	23,16	5425	25,72	1169	25	467	28
2.2.2 LTU	10937	69,51	13269	62,91	2290	49	784	47
2.2.3.graduates	2170	13,79	2993	14,19	560	12	167	10
3.Succesfulness	n/a	n/a	12624	35,4	6269	74,8	1027	32,5

**3. Examples of the main problems in maintaining work – family life balance** come from persisting stereotypes. In Slovakia we can distinguish following of them :

- less women (50,9%) are employed then men (64,4%) & higher female unemployment (17,2%) then men (15,5%)
- wage gap is about 28 %, connected with gender segregation, work in services
- few women are in the highest occupation class (30,7%) and in management
- private sector employ less women (38,9%) than men, few women are entrepreneurs (24,1%)
- interrupted female work career due to maternity leave, but ongoing male career
- division of labor at homes,
- most of inhabitants are persuaded about women´ discrimination at the labor market – in recruitment, remuneration, work conditions, work regime, career,...
- also women themselves consider this their problem.
- **Reason of such phenomenon is the necessity of two incomes in a family. Usually men´s incomes are not enough to cover all basic family needs. One income absence creates a risk situation in the family and potential poverty and social exclusion.**
- *The unemployment rate in Slovakia versus EU-15,EU-25 in %*

M-W	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Slovakia	18,9-18,6	19,8-18,7	18,6-18,7	17,4-17,7	17,4-19,2	15,5-17,2	12,3-14,7	10,0-12,8
EU - 15	6,7-8,9	6,4-8,3	6,9-8,5	7,3-8,7	7,4-8,9	7,5-8,9	7,1-8,5	6,4-7,7
EU - 25	7,6-9,8	7,6-9,4	8,0-9,6	8,3-9,8	8,3-9,9	8,3-9,7	7,5-9,0	6,6-7,9

#### 5. How can we educate people in work-life :

- inform and present to public, what are the stereotypes, so that they realize the problem
- show them on good results, especially in companies which participated at the competition under the MPSV a R security.
- on local level, inhabitants should require actions from their deputies to make proposals linked with the agenda and push them to forward it to VUC, parliament.
- include the thema to schedule university students (at least those, who study Human Resources and/or Management)
- educate women/parents at local maternity centres. (how described in research "mymamy.sk")

#### 4. Good practises in work-family life balance – learning programmes:

- The Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family, a pilot project was based in 2000 - "**Employer helpful to family**" - at the occasion of International Day of Families. Main goal of this competition is to motivate employers to create conditions sensitive to employees' family obligations, and after that to evaluate employers publicly, because of their systematic attention to work – family life balance and equal opportunities for men and women. In 2008, the competition comes to the 7<sup>th</sup> year of existence. Employers compete in 3 categories : 1. category – Family policy, 2. category: Equal opportunities for men and women, 3. category: Small and middle businesses create the most original measure for families.
- Another way how to educate people are non-government entities activities. They provide researches under the EU projects ((esfem, ivo, mymamy.sk "Work versus family?- work-family life balance through the eyes of employers and employees), and after the results are processed, they organise workshops on the theme in collaboration with local authorities/entities.

## Goal of the work-family life balance

The goal of work - family life balance measurements is to support freedom and responsibility of individual when deciding how to balance different aspects of her/his life.

- State will help parents to find the ways how to take care of children, provide them with a sufficient support when coming back to work, especially by labor market flexibility, by stimulating of employers to the family policy (flexible work...)
- creation of mechanism, that support private and work life balance, change of division roles among men and women in housekeeping
- improve work environment for elderly, increase employees loyalty, decrease absenteeism, concentrate on life-long learning
- Necessity : pressure to create services for pre-school age, establishments for the elderly and handicapped. The lack of them is one of the main obstacles in work – family life balance.

## Conclusion:

This trend is also typical for most of European countries. Work ability and needs of elderly will be handled more carefully – to conduct researches to find out the key development at the labor market in connection with ageing work force. To find out, what is their satisfaction with work content and conditions, what work contract they prefer, or whether want to stay at retirement.