

Gender and Wider Equal Opportunities Annual Reporting Template

For the period Jan. to Dec. 2009

1. Name of Activity: Equality Mainstreaming Approach

No.: ESF _2.9_

2. What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of gender and wider equal opportunities into the Activity?

(Examples: new objective created; new indicator developed; altered project selection criteria; collecting and/or reporting new data or collecting it in different ways; pursuing case studies; carrying out equality impact assessments; interpreting existing data in a different way; equality proofing exercises, promoting awareness and/or visibility of equality principle within activities, consultation with representatives of the wider equality grounds).

(a) Ongoing Actions:

The objective of this activity is to contribute to addressing labour market gaps for specific groups that are experiencing barriers to participation and employment, including those created by gender inequality and wider inequalities. The programme aims to put in place measures to improve labour market access and participation of groups experiencing inequality across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation.

Strand A Activity Support Packages for Programme Providers

The Irish Vocational Education Association in co-operation with the EMU developed a programme of support packages for VEC's to enable them to integrate an equality mainstreaming approach into their programmes. During 2009 the EMU supported 3 equality mainstreaming projects with the following VEC's

- County Dublin VEC
- County Wicklow VEC
- County Waterford VEC

All three VECs had completed their projects by December 2009. A number of equality mainstreaming tools were developed by the VECs including a set of equality mainstreaming guidelines.

The Measure Advisory Committee met twice during 2009. The membership is comprised of representatives of labour market, education and training providers and representatives from across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation. The EMU promotes gender balance on all the relevant advisory committees and selection committees. The Measure Committee also has representation from the National Women's Council of Ireland and the Men's Development Network who specifically advise on gender issues.

Strand B Supports to Enterprise

36 SME's were supported during 2009 to develop planned and systematic approaches to equality in the workplace. There was a total number of 1845 employees in all of the companies supported with a gender breakdown of 985 males and 860 females. A broad range of SME's availed of the scheme from across the following sectors:

- Accommodation and Food Service Activities
- Human Health and Social Work Activities
- Administrative and Support Service Activities
- Manufacturing
- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- Information and Communication
- Education
- Construction

Information from trade union and employer networks engaged with the SME sector would suggest that issues such as pregnancy related discrimination and redundancy practices are growing areas of concern within the workplace.

The second element of activity under this strand is developing and supporting sectoral approaches to promoting equality in the workplace

The IHI published their resource called "10 Steps to Equality and Diversity for the Hospitality Sector". These guidelines provide concrete and practical advice on how to incorporate equality and diversity into everyday work. This publication was launched at the IHI annual human resources conference and was disseminated to all members of the IHI during 2009.

Finally the work of this project culminated in the "10 Steps to Equality and Diversity for the Hospitality Sector" resource being mainstreamed as one of the selection criteria for the IHI Annual Diversity Awards which were held in November 2009. Traditionally these awards focused solely on the race ground but now include a broader equality focus including the gender ground. This project was also heavily profiled in the trade journal of the restaurant association in Ireland.

The Equality Mainstreaming Unit provided training at an equality seminar organised by the Local Government Management Services Board for equality officers across the local authority sector on the equality legislation and equality competency.

The EMU organised its fifth annual conference on promoting equality and accommodating diversity in Vocational Education and Training (VET). The conference was held on November 10th in Dublin Castle and was partnered by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the Department of Education and Science. The theme of the conference was on equality in a time of change and on the ongoing relevance of promoting equality and accommodating diversity in the design and delivery of vocational education, training and labour market programmes. It included both national and international speakers as well as practical case studies. The particular issues for both women and men as learners featured throughout the conference.

(b) New Actions:

3. Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Number of Enterprises Supported	Target to support 60 enterprises	36 enterprises supported in 2008

4. Taking account of the material presented under 2 and 3 above, what contribution is the measure making to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities?

Examples:

Gender:

Are participation levels of women or men increasing? Are different needs of women and men being addressed? Are different levels of access for women and men being addressed? Are differential outcomes for women and men being measured?

Wider Equal Opportunities:

Are participation levels of wider equality grounds increasing? Are needs of wider equality grounds being more systematically identified and addressed by programme providers? By policymakers? Are differential outcomes for the wider equality grounds being measured?

The objective of this activity is to contribute to addressing labour market gaps for specific groups that are experiencing barriers to participation and employment, including those created by gender inequality and wider inequalities. The programme aims to put in place measures to improve labour market access and participation of groups experiencing inequality across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation.

By facilitating and supporting institutional change within providers of vocational education and training, labour market programmes and within small to medium enterprises, this measure is contributing to the promotion of gender and wider equal opportunities and the needs of wider equality grounds will be more systematically identified and addressed by VEC's in particular.

5. Identify any issues arising that need to be drawn to the attention of the Managing Authority, the Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion Representatives or other Departments.¹

Given that ESF 2.9 does not have direct programme participants who are engaged in this measure, the Equality Mainstreaming Unit would propose that the upcoming Mid-Term Evaluation could have a specific focus on the treatment of the Horizontal Principles across the Operational Programme.

¹ The issues could relate to specific implementation concerns e.g. collection of data, or could relate to more general findings concerning the principle in question e.g. a particular policy in another department is obstructing your Activity from promoting the principle.

6. Please feel free to attach any relevant additional material to this reporting template.