



A Toolkit for Gender Equality in Practice - Initiative

Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia (LBAS)

Initiatives on Gender equality

Summary of the initiative

The Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia (Latvijas Brīvo arodbiedrību savienība; LBAS) is the only national trade union centre in **Latvia**. It was founded in 1990 and it protects the interests of professional trade union members and employees at sectoral and intersectoral level. LBAS coordinates the cooperation between 23 independent Latvian trade unions.

In 2011 LBAS (the Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia) organised a special discussion on the equal treatment in the labour market in Latgale region of Latvia. Two years after the economic crisis induced a major recession and a substantial growth of unemployment, its impact on economy and employment was not fully identified. Therefore one of the goals set by LBAS was to assess social aspects of the recession and the consequences and problems caused by it as well as to find possible solutions. Since at this point young people and women are risk groups, which are discriminated against in the labour market, these were the groups chosen as the object of discussion.

In 2012 LBAS updated the publication “Gender Mainstreaming in Work Place” and distributed it to affiliated organisations and companies. Both LBAS and LDDK (the Employers’ Confederation of Latvia) continue to organise special events using gender equality criteria among others to identify best employers’ organisation and best trade union organisation of the year: Sustainability Index, the Best Employers’ Award and the Best Trade Union Award.

Throughout all these years LBAS has a high representation of women in all its decision-making institutions. In 2013 together with the representatives of ministries LBAS leaders and Gender Equality Council members discussed the European Commission’s proposal for a Directive of the EP and of the Council on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures. The common view of the participants was not completely supportive to the proposal as according to statistics Latvia has one of the best results in this regard in the EU and the positive trend continues.

At a national level both LBAS and LDDK experts are active in promoting work-life balance by taking active part in the work of different Government Commissions, e.g. in elaboration of State Family Policy Guidelines 2011-2017 with a special view to reconciliation of work and family life. Besides, following social partners’ recommendations the Government has adopted new family policies which have a positive impact on women’s participation in the labour market: in 2012 the Government re-examined a lot of policies and the situation has improved, e.g. child benefits increased from 50 LVL in 2012 to 100 LVL in 2013. Also parental benefit has increased from 63 LVL to 100 LVL. Childcare benefit for children aged twelve to eighteen months has increased from 30 LVL to 100 LVL, etc.



In May 2011 a special conference “Nurse Profession in Labour Market” was organised by the Trade Union of Health and Social Care Employees of Latvia to claim for decent wages and an adequate certification system. In March 2012 LBAS organised a discussion on inequality of men and women in the labour market of Latvia, where LBAS experts together with the representatives of European Commission Latvia office, employers’ organisations and municipalities covered following issues: gender pay gap in EU and Latvia, activities of employers’ organisations to reduce it, trade union role and initiative of municipalities in reconciliation of work, private and family life. Together with its affiliated unions LBAS leaders and experts are negotiating increased wages for teachers and health sector employees where more than 80% are women.

In March 2013 LBAS and LDDK presented social partners view and possible solutions to tackle the gender pay gap in a special discussion organised by the Ministry of Welfare

Priorities

Addressing gender roles, Promoting women in decision-making, Supporting work-life balance, Tackling the gender pay gap

Type

Social Partners

Country

Latvia

Model of social partnership

Unilateral / Trade Unions, Bipartite

Launch date

2010

This initiative was submitted by:

LBAS (ETUC)

Website

<http://www.lbas.lv/>