



**Ideas for
diversity related
HR work for
union
representatives**

Foreword

This booklet is intended for use by union representatives in their workplace role as proactive partners in diversity-related HR work.

The booklet contains advice and suggestions as well as specific tools that you can use to kick-start anti-discrimination initiatives and increase job satisfaction for everyone. We are talking about equality and discrimination in the broadest sense, i.e. discrimination against individuals or groups based on gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion, political conviction or disability. The word “diversity” encompasses all these forms of discrimination.

As a union representative, you can help to ensure that your managers fulfil their formal obligations and social responsibilities by bringing your influence to bear so that HR and management work is carried out professionally and all-inclusively.

Diversity is about all employees being treated equally (though not necessarily the same) in all aspects of the employment relationship, from job interviews to pay and senior employees policy. Equality and diversity are also about no one being discriminated against either by management or by other employees.

We consider equality and diversity primarily from a human rights perspective, but also from a corporate resource perspective. The individual has the **right** to be treated equally and not be subjected to discrimination. At the same time, however, diversity is a **corporate resource** that is well worth fostering and utilising.

The booklet comprises 26 focus areas that are presented in alphabetical order and can be used as references when you are facing a specific challenge that you need to do something about. If you have a general interest in diversity and job satisfaction in your workplace, the booklet can also be read from cover to cover.

Enjoy your work!

Copenhagen november 2013

Susanne Fast Jensen

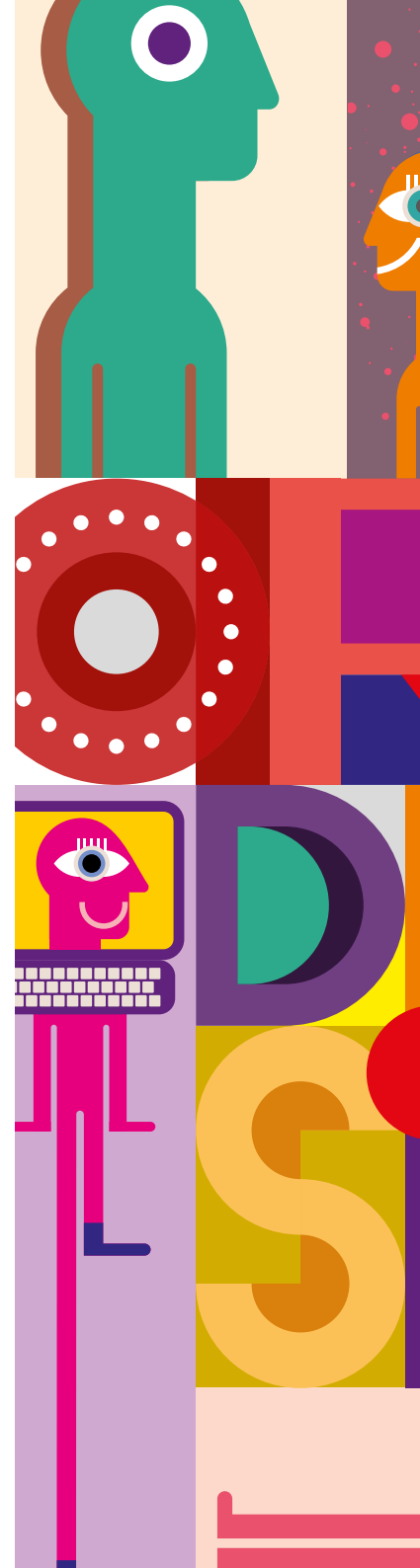
FIU-Equality



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Age discrimination

Age can be a cause for discrimination. In recent years, the number of cases of age discrimination has increased. Both older and younger employees are experiencing age discrimination, which is illegal under the “Act on the prohibition of discrimination in the labour market”.

This applies to discrimination in connection with recruitment, promotion, laying-off/dismissal, advertising, working conditions and pay. By way of example, employers cannot specify in a job advertisement that they are seeking applicants in a certain age group. Similarly, when making redundancies, employers cannot target their oldest employees or base their redundancies on age.

The Board of Equal Treatment is a public body that handles complaints about discrimination, including age discrimination, in the labour market. In 2012, the Board of Equal Treatment considered 71 cases of age discrimination, an increase on the previous year. The most common cause of complaint was age discrimination in connection with laying-off of employees.

One complaint of age discrimination that the Board of Equal Treatment heard and upheld concerned a group of airline pilots who lost their jobs in a round of redundancies. All those made redundant were of pension age, i.e. over 60, and as there was no other objective reason for laying off these particular individuals, the airline company was ordered to pay compensation of 9 months’ salary to all the pilots who were made redundant as their redundancies were indirectly based on age. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court with regard to the size of the compensation.

As a union representative, there are various ways in which you can work to combat age discrimination.

- ▶ You can help prevent age discrimination by collaborating with your management to develop a senior employees policy or a young employees policy. Find out more in “Senior employees policies”.
- ▶ You can inform your management about the “Act on the prohibition of discrimination in the labour market”.

Not all managers are familiar with the act; for example, some do not know that it is illegal to specify in a job advertisement that you are seeking an employee aged 20-25 (although advertising for employees under the age of 18 is permissible).

- ▶ If the need arises, you can help a colleague to pursue a case of discrimination. Contact your local branch to find out about the possibilities of bringing a case through the labour legislation system. If this is not possible, you and your colleague can file a complaint with the Board of Equal Treatment. Find out more in “Filing a complaint”.



Bullying and harassment

Anyone can be subjected to bullying and harassment, but research shows that there are differences for men and women.

Men experience being bullied more often than women (2006 working environment survey involving 3,200 respondents).

Women experience being ignored and excluded more than men.

Men experience being subjected to gossip and rumour-mongering more than women.

Women are subjected to sexual harassment more often than men.

Men own up to bullying more than women.

Bullying is costly in many ways: sickness absence, lack of job satisfaction, inefficiency, reduced productivity, increased recruiting/training because people leave the company. So there are a lot of good reasons to prevent bullying.

Bullying fails to thrive in workplaces that:

- ▶ Have a clear management structure and a clear division of authorities.
- ▶ Have a culture of recognition and respect.
- ▶ Have a culture where problems are resolved between those involved.
- ▶ Clearly formulate how employees should work and what the goals are.
- ▶ Address and resolve conflicts.

Employers must ensure that working conditions are appropriate in terms of health and safety.

“Executive order on the performance of work”, 20 June 2002

§ 9a

In respect of the performance of work, it must be ensured that the work does not entail a risk of physical or psychological harm to health as a result of bullying, including sexual harassment.

What can be done to prevent bullying?

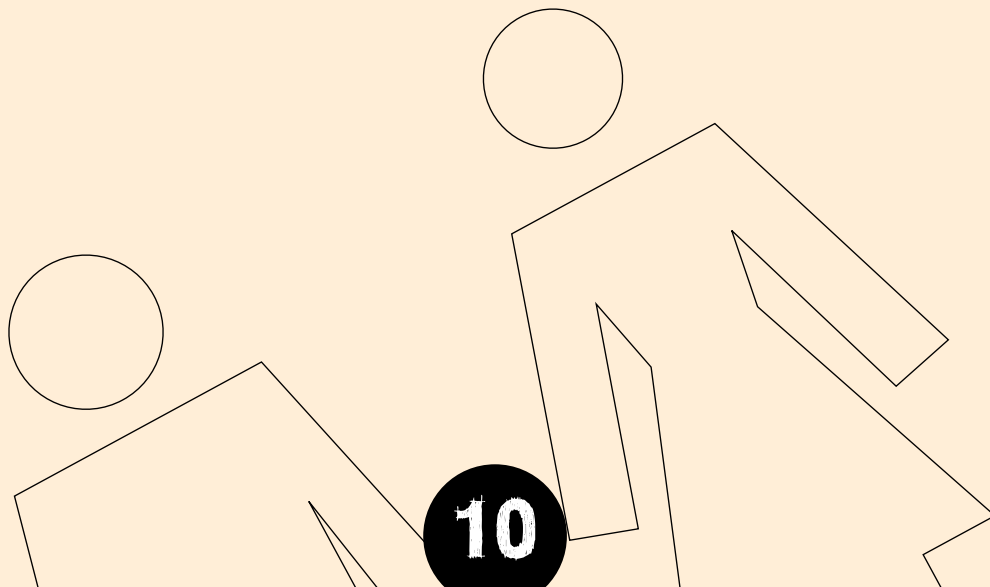
- ▶ Work with the psychological working environment, communication, etiquette and values.
- ▶ Increase the managers’ competence to prevent and handle bullying, including training in conflict management.
- ▶ Handle cases of bullying.
- ▶ Carry out regular workplace assessments of the psychosocial working environment.
- ▶ Create awareness of risk factors in the working environment.
- ▶ Establish an informal mediation system that can be used if conflicts escalate.
- ▶ Provide social support for victims.
- ▶ Provide information on what bullying and harassment are and clearly stipulate that they are not acceptable.
- ▶ Enforce sanctions against bullies.



Career development (equal opportunities)

People have a tendency to employ other people “like themselves”. This is done with the best of intentions because they consider that this is how people should be and that this is the “right” thing to do. This is known as the “Huey, Dewey and Louie effect”. However, it can be unfair and inappropriate because some (capable) potential employees are unintentionally excluded. There are many examples of the scenario that when people are too similar, they go off on the wrong tangent. We saw this, for example, in the worst functioning banks during the financial crisis, where the managers and boards comprised solely middle-aged men.

As a union representative, it therefore makes good sense for you to work to ensure equal opportunities for career development so that the best qualified people are appointed even if they do not resemble Huey, Dewey or Louie.



You can do this, for example, through your works council or equivalent body by introducing policies to the effect that:

- ▶ All positions are officially advertised and do not go to “someone somebody knows” or the next person in line.
- ▶ Advertisements directly state: “All applicants are welcome regardless of gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or religion”.
- ▶ The company supports “pre-management courses” for employees of the underrepresented gender or other minority groups.
- ▶ The appointments committee ensures the selection of men, women and representatives of ethnic and other minority groups.
- ▶ When selecting job applicants for interview, three piles of applications are deliberately made comprising the best male applicants, the best female applicants and the best applicants with non-Danish backgrounds; applicants from each pile should then be invited for interview.
- ▶ Employee development interviews pay special attention to the career development of minority representatives.
- ▶ Managers are rewarded for getting minority representatives on the career ladder. This could be financially, but it could also involve prizes, praise, etc.
- ▶ As a union representative, you can personally encourage minorities to seek out further training and new positions. It can often be personal encouragement that results in e.g. women taking up a challenge.

Disability

According to a study carried out by the Danish National Centre for Social Research¹, only around half of the 850,000 Danish people with disabilities are in work, but many more want to work.

One of the main reasons why so many people are involuntarily outside the labour market is that many managers and/or employers have very little knowledge and too many prejudices about employing disabled people. It is important to remember that disabled people represent a very broad cross-section of the working population, from unskilled workers to professionals or others with a high level of expertise. And it is important for managers and colleagues in a workplace to understand that disabled people are not a homogenous group. Disabled people offer a mass of resources, know-how and personal skills that are valuable for companies and for society. Disabled people want to be employed based on their qualifications and personalities - and that is what companies should focus on rather than fixating on reduced working capacity and any resultant barriers.

A job interview should be about qualifications and not about the applicant's disability. The barriers are not of primary concern because in many types of job the public authorities provide compensation.

¹ Study by the Danish National Centre for Social Research entitled 'Handicap og beskæftigelse i 2006. Vilkår og betingelser for handicappede på arbejdsmarkedet' [-Disability and employment in 2006. Conditions for disabled people in the labour market¹], 08:10, pp. 21-23 [Note: only available in Danish]

Many company managers do not realise that there are compensation schemes that make it cost-neutral to employ disabled people. For example, the employer can be reimbursed for fitting out the workplace and installing special equipment. As a union representative, it is important that you support your disabled colleagues and are familiar with the existing legislation and compensation schemes.

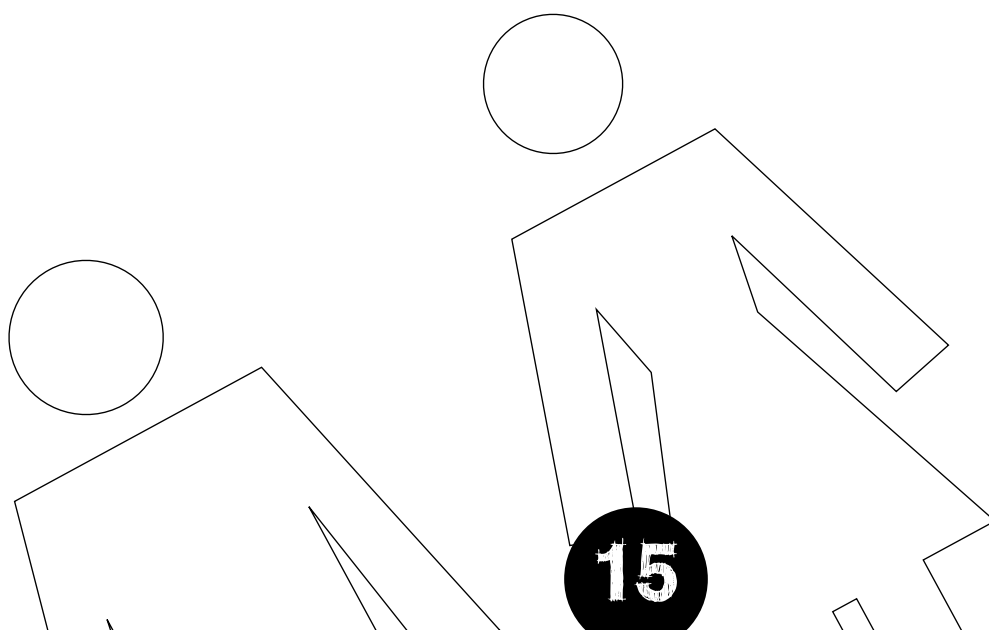
Similarly, you can help to create a working environment where all employees are treated equally. Disabled people sometimes find that they are patronised or experience other forms of discrimination. This is both illegal and unreasonable. It is important that your colleagues and managers understand that a disabled person is just like any other person but has a disability and therefore needs some form of compensation to be able to work on an equal basis with non-disabled people. For example, a person who cannot walk needs a wheelchair to be able to get around, while a blind person needs special IT equipment and a personal assistant to perform office functions.

Here are some tools and arguments that it is good for you to be aware of as a union representative when talking with your managers about recruiting or retaining disabled colleagues.



- ▶ Disabled people are often very loyal and motivated employees.
- ▶ Employing disabled people does not mean extra expense. There are various support and compensation schemes for disabled people in the labour market. Examples are the flexjob scheme, which provides compensation for reduced working capacity, and the § 56 agreement, which reimburses companies for disabled employees who have a higher rate of sickness absence than other employees and for fitting out the workplace, whether it be renovating or installing equipment and aids. As a union representative, it is important that you are aware of these schemes.
- ▶ Good management is important in a workplace with disabled employees. Unless managers understand and communicate about employees who are employed under special conditions, confusion and “envy” can arise if, for example, the employees in question are working fewer hours or are entitled to take rest breaks during the working day. It is important that all employees understand and support the decision that is taken. Among other things, they should understand that reduced working hours for a person with a functional impairment are equivalent to full time in terms of what the person in question can manage physically (or mentally). Managers should always take the lead in ensuring that employees employed under ordinary and special conditions experience mutual understanding and that working days can be organised flexibly.
- ▶ Many collective agreements have “social chapters” allowing employers to recruit and retain employees with functional impairments.
- ▶ Assigning a mentor to a disabled employee can be a good way of including him/her in the workplace. Find out more in “Mentor schemes - a tool for equality”.

- ▶ Fitting out the workplace can be of major importance for whether people with major or minor disabilities can move around. If as a union representative you become involved in renovation, expansion or new building projects, you should be aware of the issue of disabled access. Simple things that can help include: tactile floor indicators so that blind people can orientate themselves; no steps that wheelchairs are unable to negotiate; chairs that are easy to get into and out of; colours that help people find their way around; and many more. You can get inspiration from the House of Disabled People's Organisations in Høje Tåstrup, which is regarded as the world's most accessible office building.



Discrimination - general

Discrimination is unequal treatment based on ethnicity, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation. It is illegal, regardless of whether it is direct or indirect.

An example of direct discrimination would be if an employer declined to employ a person with reference to his/her ethnic background. An example of indirect discrimination would be if a job applicant were forced to take a Danish test at a level higher than required to perform the job.

Discrimination is often concealed and can often be unintended, but it is still illegal. It is therefore necessary to ensure preventive initiatives and to explore any norms in the company's culture that either favour or discriminate against certain employees.

- ▶ An employer has a duty to protect its employees against harassment and discrimination in the workplace - hold management to that responsibility!
- ▶ It is illegal for an employer to instruct its employees to discriminate against and treat individuals differently on the basis of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability.
- ▶ You can help and inspire your management to implement anti-discrimination initiatives.
- ▶ You could implement a workplace mentor scheme in which experienced employees help new or young employees to understand their rights.
- ▶ Find out more in "Age discrimination" and "Filing a complaint".



Diversity management²

Diversity management is a way of running a workplace where the employees' diversity is regarded as being positive for the workplace. Diversity management encompasses two perspectives:

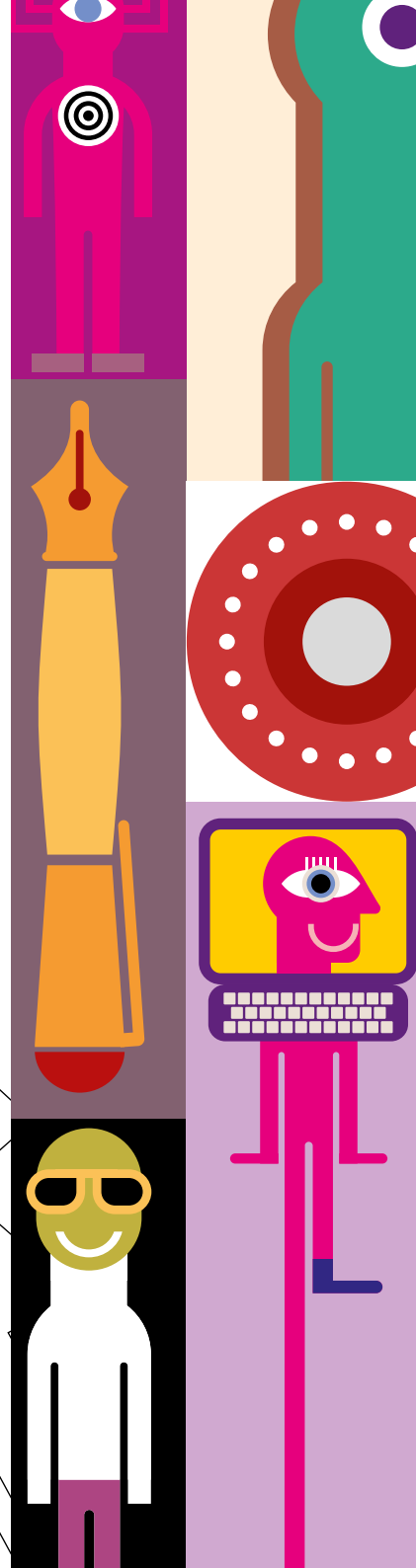
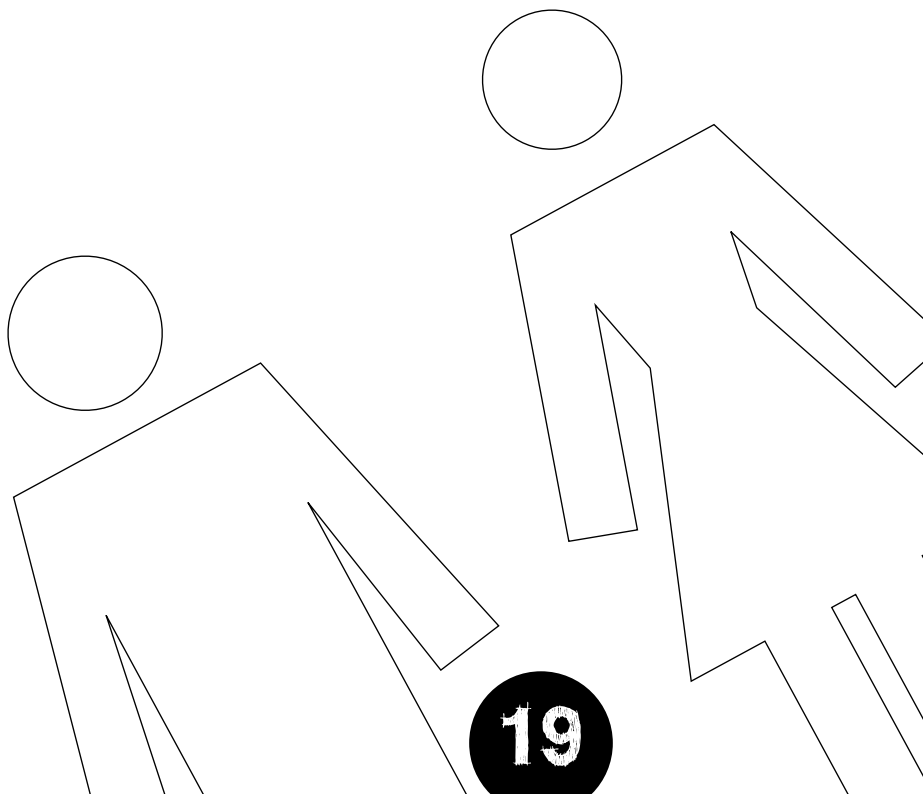
The first perspective is about utilising the resources that are created when employees with different group affiliations, experiences and self-knowledge work together. Because diversity is seen as a resource, this perspective is also about increasing the proportion of employees who are different from the majority and using the different resources that the group of employees offers.

The second perspective of diversity management is about focusing on the employees' rights. Diversity management is also therefore about preventing subjective unequal treatment, discrimination and harassment in the workplace so that all employees genuinely have equal opportunities, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation.

You should be aware that focusing on differences and the skills associated with those differences can involve a dilemma. In focusing on difference/diversity, you run the risk of creating or perpetuating stereotypes of the different employee groups. Sometimes it is strategically important to also focus on the similarities between employees.

² This section has been written based on the book "Mangfoldighed i arbejdslivet" ["Diversity in working life"] by Susanne Nour and Lars N. Thisted (ed.), 2005 [Note: only available in Danish]

- ▷ What is the value base in your workplace: is diversity seen as a resource?
- ▷ Do you have initiatives to prevent discrimination?
- ▷ Are all minority groups included?
- ▷ Are you focused on diversity in all aspects of employment - recruitment, pay, training and allocation of work duties?
- ▷ Are you succeeding in making the workplace more diverse and inclusive?



Diversity policy and management philosophy

In order to embrace human differences, which also represent differences in working capacity or potential working capacity, it is important to develop company policies based on international and national equality legislation.

In this regard, corporate management can adopt three extreme attitudes:

- ▶ Ignore the differences: *"It doesn't matter whether a cat is black or white as long as it catches mice!"* (Deng Xiaoping, chairman of the Chinese Communist Party and China's de facto leader 1978-97).
- ▶ Develop deliberate "blindnesses" - become "colour blind", "gender blind", etc., so you do not need to work specifically with people's special needs or circumstances. (For example, we have a deep-seated "gender blindness" in our educational and vocational guidance with the result that gender-determined choices are perpetuated!)
- ▶ Take the trouble to look at and analyse your **employees' differing potential** and needs and adjust your HR management accordingly.

The first extreme attitude can be seen within growth companies that have a high degree of specialisation. The second extreme attitude was well known throughout industrialisation. But although management made itself "blind", they were still subject to traditions for recruiting certain types of workers and to systems for their advancement in the company.

So management was still not “gender blind” or “colour blind”. The third extreme attitude, which is becoming more common, sees the individual employee but also runs the risk of discriminating if the prevailing culture is not addressed.

It is therefore vitally important for union representatives to **contribute** opinions and suggestions for shaping a diversity policy in their company.

Benefits (arguments):

- ▶ Diversity, broadness and social responsibility are important branding elements for attracting new employees.
- ▶ Diversity generates more innovation.
- ▶ Diversity attracts highly qualified workers.
- ▶ Diversity creates access to new markets, customer groups, supplier networks.



Domestic violence

Domestic violence is a global equality problem. Throughout the world, far more men systematically physically abuse their wives than vice versa. Women subjected to domestic violence find it hard to be active citizens, hard to summon up the energy to take part in the democracy of the workplace, hard to be a good, open and supportive colleague. Studies show that women subjected to violence have more sickness absence, are more likely to be off work sick long term and are at a higher risk of losing their job. There are thus many good reasons to tackle this problem in the workplace and get companies to take social responsibility.

You can help the company to formulate a clear position that domestic violence is unacceptable and that the company will support any employee in getting out of a violent situation.

Signs that an employee is being subjected to violence could be bruises (often covered up), frequent sick days, social isolation, difficulty concentrating, disrupted sleep, depression, withdrawnness and low self-esteem. If you encounter several of these signs and suspect that an employee is being subjected to violence, you can calmly ask whether you can help in any way. Say what you have observed, that you are concerned and that you would like to help the person by getting them access to a crisis centre, etc.

Possibilities for action:

- ▶ In the toolbook “Den voldsramte kan også være din kollega” [“Your colleague could be a victim of domestic violence”], you can get information on domestic violence and possibilities for action.
It can be downloaded at: www.FIU-Equality.dk
- ▶ Post information on domestic violence, crisis centres, etc., on the workplace notice boards.
- ▶ Use your works council or equivalent body to adopt policies that clearly state that women subjected to domestic violence can get help to escape the violence. For example, the company can help an employee to contact a crisis centre and give her a week or more off to sort out practicalities. The policy can also cover the provision of counselling or other therapies for victims of domestic violence.
- ▶ Look at your workplace’s HR and health & safety policy and find places where initiatives on managing domestic violence could be incorporated.
- ▶ Find out more at: www.awaw.dk, www.lokk.dk and www.voldmodkvinder.dk.

Equal pay

In the past ten years, the pay gap between men and women has been at around 17-20%³, which equates to women working one day a week for free. Similarly, women are accumulating considerably less in their pensions than men, partly because they are taking more parental leave and doing more part-time work than men.

You should be aware that equal pay is solely about difference due to gender; it is not about everyone being paid the same.

It is illegal to pay men and women differently for work of the same value. This has been the case since the 1990s. In the 1970s, it was made illegal to pay men and women differently for the same work. Note the difference: before the 1970s, it was legal and common for women to receive lower pay than men for exactly the same job, even if they worked side by side in the workplace. The terms “man’s pay” and “woman’s pay” were used, with woman’s pay understood to be lower. It is hard to imagine that today, but it is important to remember because we are still working with the historical aftermath to achieve the goal of equal pay.

For the unions, equal pay is a high-priority area, and union representatives in large workplaces can generate awareness and effect small changes in the right direction.

3 See more in the report by the Danish National Centre for Social Research entitled “Hvorfor har vi lønforskel mellem kvinder og mænd?” [“Why do we have unequal pay between women and men?”]. It can be downloaded at: <http://www.sfi.dk/rapportoplysninger-4681.aspx?Action=1&NewsId=2618&PID=9267> [Note: only available in Danish]

- ▶ Investigate whether there is equal pay in your workplace. Companies of a certain size are obliged to produce annual pay statistics. Hold your management to that responsibility! You can get help from your union.
- ▶ As a union representative, make sure that you are negotiating equal pay for male and female members, and also be aware of cases where this is not the case. Are you selling men's and women's quantities equally well?
- ▶ Also, check whether ethnicity is a factor in remuneration. Are employees from a non-Danish background getting paid less than their colleagues?

Equality legislation and institutions

If you need to familiarise yourself with the relevant legislation, here is an overview. The Danish equality legislation (generally) mirrors the EU legislation and international conventions. The legislation and conventions differentiate between general prohibitions on discrimination due to human and citizen rights and prohibitions on discrimination in the labour market.

For 40 years we have had EU directives and Danish legislation prohibiting gender discrimination and requiring equal treatment of women and men. This general Danish legislation is maintained by the Ministry for Gender Equality and Ecclesiastical Affairs. Subsequently, other related legislation has been introduced, e.g. the "Act on the prohibition of discrimination in the labour market".

The most important general acts on discrimination and equal treatment are:

- 1) "Act on gender equality", Act no. 1095 of 2007 with subsequent amendments: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/r0710.aspx?id=20929>
- 2) "Act on equal pay for men and women", Act no. 899 of 2008 with subsequent amendments: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=121176>
- 3) "Act on equal treatment of men and women in respect of employment", Act no. 645 of 2011: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=137042>
- 4) "Act on entitlement to leave and benefits in connection with childbirth", Act no. 872 of 2013: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=152510>

- 5) "Act on equal treatment of men and women within occupational pension schemes", Act no. 134 of 1998: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/RO710.aspx?id=25742>
- 6) "Act on the prohibition of discrimination in the labour market", Act no. 1349 of 2008. <https://www.retsinformation.dk/forms/r0710.aspx?id=122522>
- 7) "Act on ethnic equal treatment", Act no. 438 of 2012: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/RO710.aspx?id=141404>

Important institutions for statutory equality in Denmark:

Ministry for Gender Equality and Ecclesiastical Affairs: www.lige.dk

Board of Equal Treatment, which is an appeals body that handles complaints concerning discrimination both within and outside the labour market. The board comprises 3 judges and 9 legally qualified members. www.ligebehandlingsnaevnet.dk

Danish Institute for Human rights, which in partnership with government and civilian institutions implements human rights programmes in Denmark and internationally based on Denmark's commitments, including those under the UN conventions and the European social charter: www.menneskeret.dk

Find organisations working with equality through the links at: <http://miliki.dk/ligestilling/links/> and www.LGBT.dk

Filing a complaint

It is not illegal to treat employees differently, but it is illegal to treat them differently based on the factors set out in § 1 of the Danish Discriminatory Practices Act as follows:

§ 1. In this act, discrimination is understood as any direct or indirect discrimination based on race, skin colour, religion or faith, political conviction, sexual orientation, age, disability, or national, social or ethnic origin.

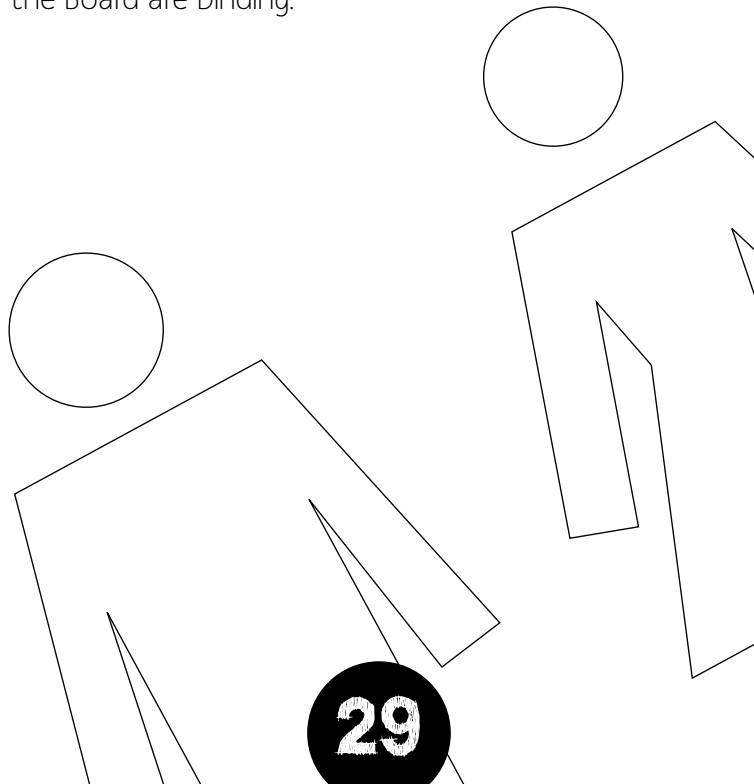
If a colleague has been subjected to discrimination and the case is not suitable for pursuit through the labour legislation system, help can be obtained from the Board of Equal Treatment. The Board of Equal Treatment is a public body that handles complaints of discrimination based on age, skin colour, disability, religion or faith, national origin, social origin, political conviction, sexual orientation, gender or ethnicity.

As a union representative or union, you can file a written complaint with the Board of Equal Treatment on your colleague's behalf with his/her authorisation and/or help him/her to gather evidence such as records of interviews or minutes of meetings. You could also record an interview documenting the discrimination, but only if you participate yourself.

A quick guide to filing a complaint:

- ▶ The person who feels discriminated against may file the complaint, but the union representative or the union can also complain on behalf of that person with his/her authorisation.
- ▶ The case cannot run concurrently in the labour legislation system or courts and in the Board of Equal Treatment.

- ▶ There is a shared burden of proof, i.e. the person filing the complaint must prove that he/she has been discriminated against and the individual/company accused of discriminating must prove that there has not been any discrimination.
- ▶ Remember to submit sufficient documentation. It is not enough to provide links; the actual newspaper article, ruling, etc., to which you refer must be submitted. In redundancy/dismissal cases, you must as a minimum submit the letter of employment, the notice of termination of employment and the last 3-6 payslips.
- ▶ The decisions of the Board are binding.



Freedom of expression

The Danish Discriminatory Practices Act prohibits discrimination based on political conviction. See more under "Filing a complaint".

One angle to political conviction is freedom of expression and, in particular, the freedom of public employees to express their views of managers and the professional prioritisations of public institutions.

This is a particular dilemma for women, who comprise the majority of public employees and are thus most affected.

This is a topical global issue, particularly with the publication of the USA's military and intelligence material. In Denmark, too, there has been debate on this issue over the years, resulting in the appointment of a committee in 2006. The committee is summing up 82 cases that the Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman, the courts, supervisory boards and the supreme political and administrative leadership have been investigating.

These investigations were triggered by complaints from public employees who were "punished" in one way or another, e.g. dismissals, warnings, demotions, moves, etc., for having voiced public criticism or defences of their own views. In the vast majority of cases, the inquiries and complaints resulted in criticism of the "punishments", which were reversed.

As a union representative, you should defend employees' and your own freedom of expression, naturally balanced with confidentiality. Confidential issues must not be discussed, but it is illegal for an employer to suppress political convictions.



Gender division

(counteract the gender-divided labour market)

Denmark has one of the world's most gender-divided labour markets, i.e. men and women seldom work closely together in the same function and profession.

Social stereotyping of what men and women are good at means that men and women largely study for, seek jobs in and are employed in so-called "male professions" or "female professions" or in particular job functions where one gender predominates. One example is that companies automatically look for a woman to fill a job as an office assistant or social/healthcare assistant, while they look for a man for a job as an industrial technician or carpenter. In some workplaces, there is often also gender division in functions: women working in the canteen or as cleaners and office assistants, men as caretakers, supervisors, machine technicians, etc. Studies show that the psychological working environment is usually best when the two genders are mixed, with an increase in both productivity and job satisfaction. We also know that unequal pay cannot flourish when workplace gender division is broken down.

You can reduce workplace gender division by:

- ▶ Using your works council or equivalent body to draw up rotation schemes so that men and women spend time in all functions, including those that are often dominated by the “other gender”.
- ▶ Checking whether any changes can be made in the physical or psychological working environment of a particular work function with a view to attracting the underrepresented gender. For example, one factory where a section of the packing plant was mostly staffed by men because the work involved moving heavy boxes introduced equipment so that both men and women could easily do the work.
- ▶ Adopting an HR policy that encourages men, women and minorities to apply for “non-traditional” jobs and positions.
- ▶ Ensuring that job advertisements are directed at men, women and minorities.
- ▶ Being aware of your own and other people’s gender-based prejudices when a job has to be filled, e.g. in a job interview.
- ▶ Ensuring that managers who succeed in mixing genders and ethnicities receive recognition.



Health from a gender perspective

Unfortunately, there is no equality in health. Men's, women's and minorities' physical and psychological health and working environment are topics that are particularly relevant to tackle in the workplace.

Men experiencing symptoms of illness are more likely than women to not seek medical help or to seek it out later. In respect of lifestyle, men generally get more exercise than women, while women generally eat more healthily than men. There is also a difference in the level of health between people with a short formal education and those with a long formal education; on average, people with a short formal education die four years younger.

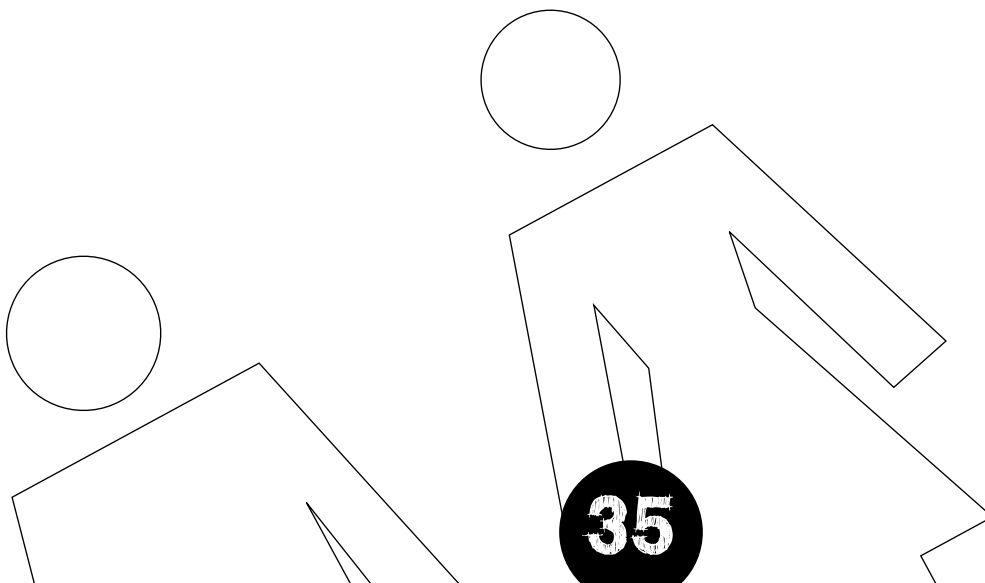
The workplace is a good place to take small steps towards greater health equality.

You can:

- ▶ Use your works council or equivalent body to agree with managers on healthier food in the canteen, fruit schemes, opportunities to exercise during working hours or fitness rooms for use outside working hours.
- ▶ Get your workplace to participate in "Men's Health Week". Find out more at: <http://www.sundmand.dk/Mens-Health-Week.php>
- ▶ Contact your union to find out whether they are running any health-related projects in which your workplace can participate.

You should know that:

- ▶ In all age groups, more men than women have alcohol problems.
- ▶ Older men smoke more than older women; younger women smoke slightly more than younger men.
- ▶ Men are generally worse at getting health check-ups and going to the doctor than women. You can motivate your male colleagues.
- ▶ When physically overloaded and unable to cope, women tend to look for help in the form of painkillers/sedatives, while men look for help in the form of amphetamines/stimulants; in both cases, the result can be misuse.



Humour (workplace humour must be inclusive)

Humour is something that can make the workday more enjoyable and increase job satisfaction. However, it needs to be monitored because a person who does not find a particular sort of humour funny can be made to feel uncomfortable in the workplace. Humour can create closeness and distance, friendliness and enmity.

Often people think that if they have a well-intentioned joke with a colleague, it is bound to be taken positively. But that is not always the case. In particular, you should be aware that jokes often make fun of people, and if it is the underrepresented gender, disabled people, ethnic minorities or sexual minorities who are routinely made fun of, these groups will experience the humour differently and find it less amusing than the majority. It is not necessarily wrong to make fun of a minority, but the angle and frequency of the humour will determine whether a person feels "on the inside" or "on the outside". Humour is only good if all parties find it funny and no one feels insulted.

Humour can be a way of intentionally or unintentionally exerting power and a way of discriminating⁴ that is very difficult to speak up about. If disparaging remarks are camouflaged as humour, it can be difficult to protest because you can easily be labelled as lacking a sense of humour or being oversensitive.

4 Humour or ridicule is one of the so-called domination techniques. Find out more in the FIU-Equality folder "De nye herskertechnikker - en opdatering af "de fem" ["The new domination techniques - an updating of "the five"]. You can download it at www.fiu-ligestilling.dk
[Note: only available in Danish]

Humour can be read as abuse of power:

- ▶ Be aware of whether the humour is directed at particular groups and therefore excludes certain people, e.g. ethnic minorities, women, disabled people or LGBT⁵ people.
- ▶ Enter into discussions to draw up common guidelines on what constitutes good etiquette (see also “Tone - an inclusive workplace culture”).
- ▶ Be aware that people have different boundaries for who can say what to whom. Do not assume that because two friends refer to each other in a certain way, you can do the same.
- ▶ Be aware of whether someone is making fun of others to make himself/herself look better. If that is the case, politely ask him/her to stop and explain clearly that you do not find that sort of humour funny.
- ▶ If a colleague asks for a certain type of humour to desist and one or more people continue with it, as a union representative you should intervene. If it continues, it is no longer a matter of inappropriate culture but of bullying.

⁵ LGBT stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.



Language and labelling

Language is not just language. With language we can label other people, directly or through the media. Even if general terms are used, we can feel affected because we identify with the category that is being discussed. These labels can include “bilingual”, “third-generation immigrant”, “Paki”, “gay”, “dyke”, “yokel”, “whore”, “pimp”, “spaz”, etc. Or statements such as “women can’t drive” or “men can’t clean”. It can be confrontational if we use these terms directly to another person.

You should be aware that nicknames in your workplace can help to discriminate against or exclude particular groups, e.g. ethnic minorities, women, disabled people or LGBT people⁶.

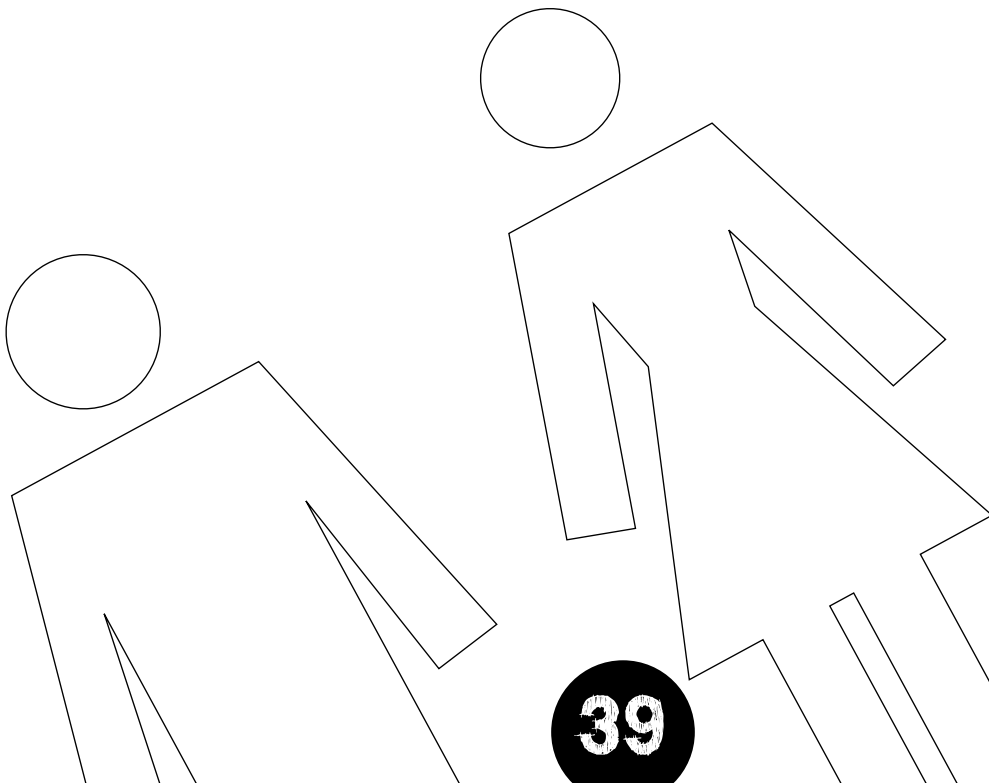
We should obviously strive not to attach negative labels to one another because in doing so we trigger negative feelings in them: anger, shame, worry. Using these forms of address makes the tone more and more crude - because how are you supposed to respond? Often in the same manner to defend yourself.

Some groups have chosen to appropriate a label and use it to actively combat marginalisation and oppression: in Denmark, “spasser” was used by those suffering from cerebral palsy in their fight to improve urban wheelchair access; in Russia, “Pussy Riot” is a protest movement against the authorities; and in the United Kingdom “queer” is sometimes used by gay men in referring unashamedly to themselves.

⁶ LGBT stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

Notice how language is spoken and written in your company, in particular how managers are addressing employees and whether they are using labels:

- ▶ Are these labels being perceived as insulting or neutral by the employees?
- ▶ Are the labels making the employees feel proud or ashamed?
- ▶ What company image do these labels project to the outside world?



Mentor schemes – a tool for equality

Mentor schemes can be a way of making the workplace more diverse and a good place to be for everyone.

In short, a mentor scheme involves an experienced employee (mentor) taking another employee (mentee) “under his/her wings” and, through support, coaching, advice and tips, helping that person to achieve his/her goals.

If a group is in the minority or not represented at all in the workplace, it can be a good idea to offer special support to persons from this group by assigning them mentors. Especially if you have a new employee or someone that you want to elevate in the organisation. If there are many different nationalities in a workplace, the need for a mentor scheme is greater than if there are only a few. If there are many employees of one gender and few of the other, it can also be a good idea to assign mentors to new employees of the underrepresented gender. If working conditions make communication and discussion difficult (e.g. noise or lone-work functions), a mentor scheme can be particularly important. A culture of clique formation or “everyone for themselves” can also increase the need for a mentor scheme.

A mentor scheme can help people to feel welcome and make it easier for them to establish a foothold and remain in the workplace. A mentor can help to “translate” what is going on in the workplace for a new employee who does not yet know the ropes. The mentor can be someone the new employee can lean on, ask questions of and have trust in. Having a mentor provides energy and security.

- ▶ Starting a mentor scheme requires support because it takes time, which has to come out of the day-to-day work. The idea of a mentor scheme can be touted in your works council or equivalent body, at staff meetings, member/club meetings, etc.
- ▶ FIU-Equality occasionally runs courses on mentor schemes and programmes in which both mentors and mentees can participate. See: www.FIU-Equality.dk
- ▶ You could also consider "reverse mentorship", where a manager is assigned a mentor from an underrepresented group to give the manager an insight into the company from that person's perspective.
- ▶ Good advice and tips for a mentor scheme:
 - ▶ Draw up a written agreement between the mentor and the mentee covering:
 - ▶ The mentee's goals.
 - ▶ How and with what frequency the mentor and mentee will communicate.
 - ▶ How continuous follow-up will be implemented, e.g. draw up intermediate goals.
 - ▶ When the mentoring will stop.
 - ▶ Who is responsible for initiating contact.
 - ▶ Be aware that the mentor and mentee do not need to be friends, but the mentor does need to positively support the mentee.

Parental leave – both parents' baby, both parents' leave!

Currently, women are taking an average of 92%⁷ of parental leave, although each parent is entitled to up to 32 weeks' leave. There is general agreement among researchers and equality policy-makers that it is best for all concerned if the father and mother share the parental leave roughly equally; best for the child, best for the father and best for the mother.

There are many reasons for the unequal distribution of parental leave.

A 2013 report by the Danish National Centre for Social Research shows that the four main reasons are:

- ▶ Finance (it can be financially beneficial for the family if the higher earner does not take as much parental leave).
- ▶ Leave schemes (where men have inferior rights to women).
- ▶ The leave behaviour of fathers and mothers in the labour market.
- ▶ Father-mother negotiations (where studies show that the mother's desire to take parental leave often takes precedence over the father's).

As a union representative, you can do something to help the process of fathers taking a greater share of parental leave. You cannot bring about an equal distribution on your own, but you can make a small difference.

⁷ This figure is from 2005; see the report of the Danish National Centre for Social Research: http://www.sfi.dk/resume_evaluating_af_den_fleksible_barselsorlov-3693.aspx

Among other things, you can:

- ▶ Talk about the benefits of both parents taking leave so that it is not considered taboo for men to take parental leave.
- ▶ Negotiate local agreements to improve the financial situation for parents taking leave.
- ▶ Through the works council or equivalent body, implement HR policies that support both parents taking parental leave.
- ▶ Make use of club meetings to inform fathers and would-be fathers of their rights and options and to prepare them for the father-mother negotiations.
- ▶ Seek help from your union if you are in doubt about anything. Parental leave is a high-priority issue in the union movement because it is also relevant for career development, equal pay and pensions.
- ▶ Give recognition to role models, i.e. men who take a large proportion of parental leave. Spread good stories.
- ▶ Through the works council or equivalent body, ensure that gay parents are treated equally with heterosexual parents.

In some workplaces, such as TDC, an employee who is in a registered partnership and whose partner has become a mother is entitled to two weeks' leave with full pay.

Recruiting processes

Invitations to join the company through a website or through job advertisements should be carefully worded. Inspiration for appropriate wording can be found throughout this booklet.

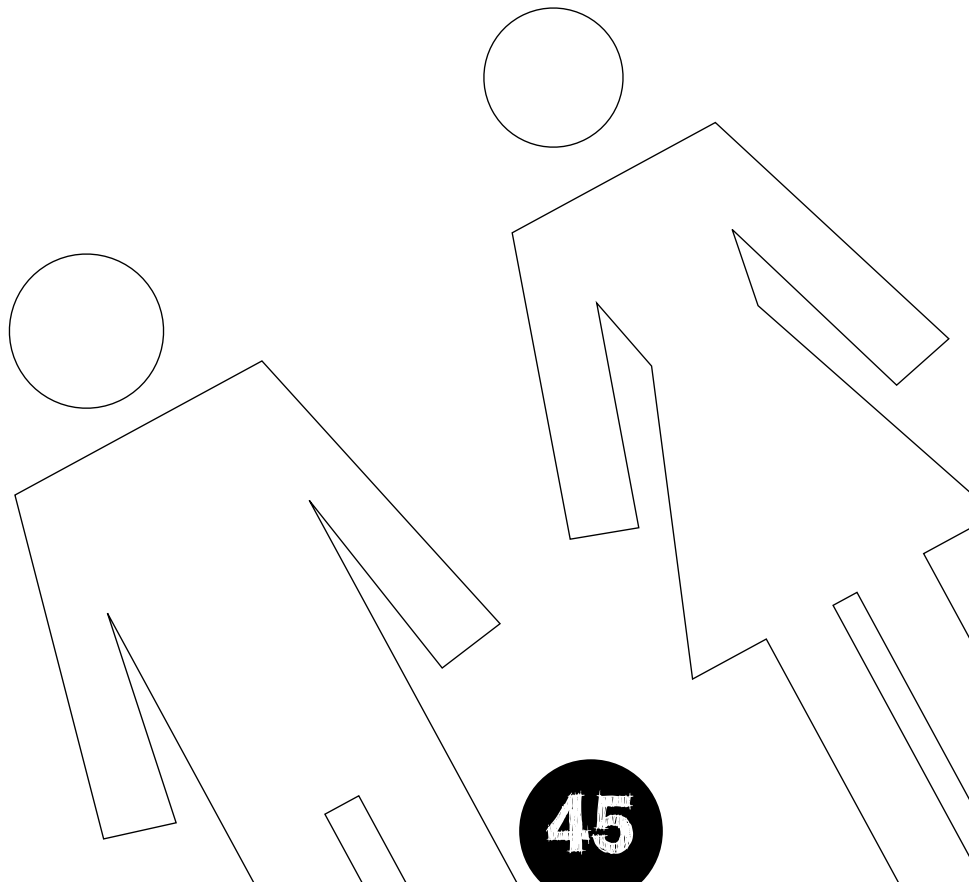
Draw up a profile of the specific job function and analyse it critically based on what the company needs in the short and long term. If necessary, draw up a chart of the technical skills that are required, but also what you are looking for in terms of personal qualities.

Make sure that the appointments committee or HR function divides up the applicants according to different criteria: skills/qualifications/work experience, personal qualities, etc. But also divide up the applicants into groups based on diversity:

- ▷ Age: junior/middle-aged/senior
- ▷ Gender
- ▷ Ethnicity
- ▷ Disability
- ▷ Any other groups

These latter groups are necessary so that you do not reject anyone in advance as a result of preconceptions that certain people are not suitable for the company. By dividing up applicants in this way, they can be viewed from different perspectives. (Examples: The recruiters at DSB largely rejected female applicants before the organisation started up extensive equality work in 1989. Many older, experienced applicants also experience being rejected in advance.)

Find out how you will be conducting recruiting interviews so that you can get a better understanding of the people you have invited for interview. Ask all applicants, regardless of gender, age and ethnic origin (including Danish), the same things. This is actually more difficult than you might imagine; for example, studies show that women are asked about family more often than men.



Religion

Religion is not just a private matter but something that is part of society and plays **a role in our workplaces**. Some Danish companies have not wanted to employ women who wear headscarves for religious reasons. Other companies have established prayer rooms for those who need them.

In the workplace, you can in principle adopt two attitudes:

- ▶ Try to accommodate people's religious practices, diet and clothing in the general company culture.
- ▶ Ban religious symbols and practices in the workplace and ask the employees to keep these private.

The United Kingdom as a society has adopted the first attitude and through its inclusion policy taken the trouble to find work headgear that accommodates those who wear religious headscarves, skullcaps, turbans, etc. In the USA, which has a complete separation of state and church, the majority of meetings and conferences begin with a prayer from one or more representatives of the various faith communities in the country.

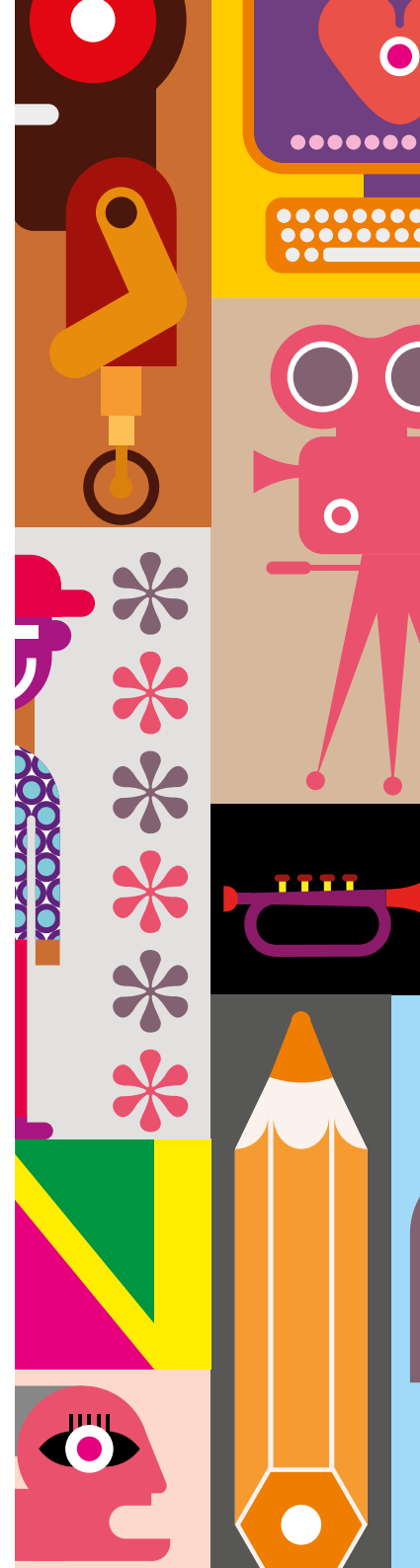
Since 2004, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland have adopted the second attitude by enacting laws banning religious symbols and clothing in all public institutions (schools, hospitals, government ministries, universities, etc.) and allowing private employers to also ban these symbols. In 2011, France introduced a ban on burkas and veils in public places.

You need to establish in your workplace how you will handle religion and culture; whether it will be eliminated from the workplace or whether it can be present in the form of clothing, customs and priorities and, if so, how? Perhaps with newly designed workwear and uniforms?

Various human rights declarations state that people must not be subjected to other people's religious practices against their will. This is because it can cause offence if these things have not been negotiated.

There are many considerations to be made, but compromises in which everyone has a say are also important.

It is essential to have a clear policy in this area.

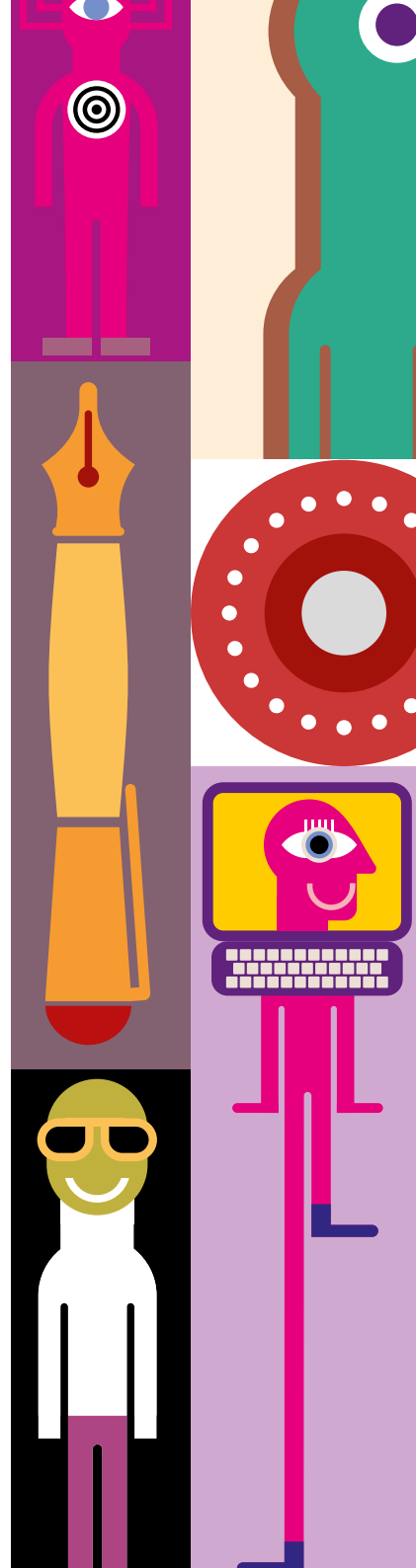


Senior employees policies

As a union representative, you must help ensure that no one is forced to leave the workplace due to age before they choose to do so. Among other things, you can secure a senior employees policy that benefits both older employees and the company, which can utilise the resources. A senior employees policy can include initiatives to maintain or develop older employees' skills, options for older employees to adjust their working hours, work areas or work quantities, and initiatives to prepare individuals to exit the labour market.

More women than men are leaving the labour market early. So there is a point in drawing up a senior employees policy that creates a working environment that makes it more attractive for women to stay longer in the labour market. Studies show that older women are more interested than older men in, among other things, exercise, learning, development and participation in activities. This can be incorporated in the senior employees policy as background information. Women may be more interested in cutting back their working hours slowly, participating in project work, moving into new areas, attending courses that equip them for an active senior life (both in the workplace and outside), etc.

- ▶ A senior employees policy can be adopted through your works council or equivalent body, ideally after good discussion between management and employees.
- ▶ There are two types of course that it makes sense to establish: “pre-senior courses”, which equip older colleagues to plan a life after their working life has finished, and “late-career courses”, which equip older colleagues (e.g. over 55) to develop a good late-career that might include new work functions such as mentoring young employees, adjusted working hours, etc. What constitutes a good late-career will be individual to the employee and the company.
- ▶ “Late-career courses” will mostly target women as women often stop working earlier than men. “Pre-senior courses” will particularly target men as men more often find it difficult establishing an active senior life.



Sexual orientation and gender identity

According to a survey conducted by the newsletter A4 in 2005, 39% of gay and lesbian people had experienced discrimination in their workplace.

Among other things, lack of recognition is expressed through unpleasant insinuations, exclusion, bullying, lack of promotion and laying-off/dismissal.⁸

Similarly, transgender people⁹ find it difficult to enter the labour market at all; it is estimated that only a small percentage¹⁰ of those who are able to work are actually in work.

There should be a culture in the workplace where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people feel secure enough to be as open about their sexuality or gender identity as heterosexuals. A survey conducted by Q-factor in 2011¹¹ shows that people who are open about their sexuality and gender identity in the workplace feel more comfortable and have greater job satisfaction than people who keep their sexuality and gender identity concealed. If a culture is created where LGBT people¹² can be themselves in their jobs, without discrimination, the company will get the positive benefit of increased job satisfaction among its employees, and hence greater efficiency.

8 <http://www.ugebreveta4.dk/2005/24/Baggrundanalyse/>

9 People who do not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth, e.g. a person who was born male and wants to be female. Also, people who consider that their gender identity differs from the norm in that they do not identify themselves as either male or female. Being transgender has nothing

10 <http://www.danner.dk/2011/04/12/transkonnethed-skal-pa-skoleskemaet/> to do with sexual orientation. [Bosseroglesbiskediskriminerespajobbet.aspx](http://www.bosseroglesbiskediskriminerespajobbet.aspx)

11 Status of the Danish LGBT Workplace 2011, Q-factor Denmark - read the whole survey at <http://www.qfactor.dk/projects>

12 LGBT stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

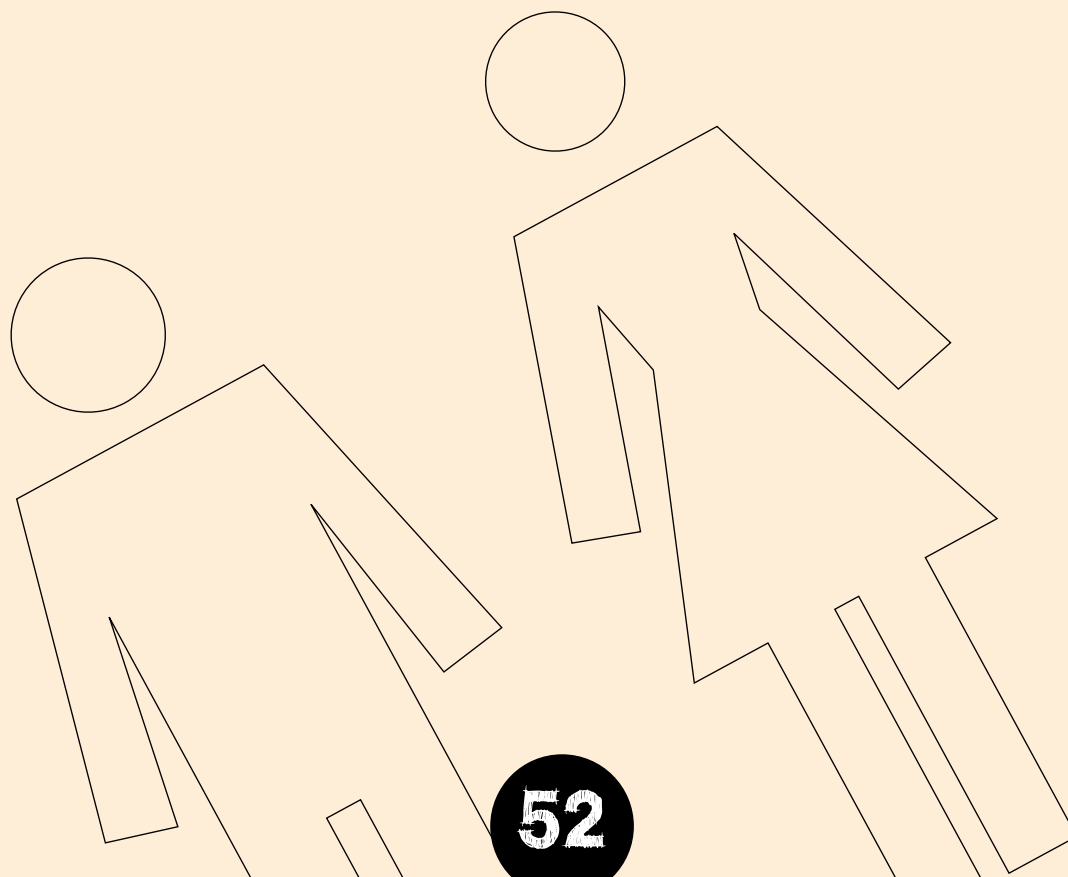
The survey also shows that young people (aged 14-29) and older people (aged 50+) are the most secretive, which in the case of young people is probably because they have not yet established a foothold in the labour market. They may therefore be more nervous about the potential negative consequences of being open. Secretiveness in older people may be due to the fact that they grew up in a society where homosexuality was banned and taboo. It is therefore important for the workplace to create a culture where employees can feel secure in being open.

What can you do?¹³

- ▶ Avoid assuming that everyone is automatically heterosexual. 5-10% of the Danish population is gay. Use gender-neutral words such as “partner” if you enquire about a new colleague’s family situation.
- ▶ Understand that LGBT people may feel compelled to lie about or keep secret their private circumstances to avoid being “outed”. Cultural and family background may be factors in the degree of openness with which a person is comfortable.
- ▶ Speak out if management or colleagues are derogatory about sexual minorities. Remember that it is illegal to discriminate indirectly.

¹³ Some of the recommendations are inspired by the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions’ folder “Kan du være dig selv på arbejdspladsen?” [“Are you able to be yourself in the workplace?”] [Note: only available in Danish]

- ▶ Stop showing misplaced deference by ignoring problems. Homophobic jokes and comments are illegal, harmful for the psychological working environment, insulting to those about whom they are made and result in poor work camaraderie.
- ▶ Register for the Open Opportunities mentor programme for young LGBT people, where older LGBT people help young LGBT people to establish a foothold in the labour market:
<http://open-opportunities.eu/>





Stress management (with an eye on diversity)

Everyone encounters stress in connection with work, but differences in gender and cultural background mean that the situation is different for men, women and minorities. Studies¹⁴ show that the amount of stress hormone in the blood of men decreases when they get home from work, while in women with children it increases. Women's double work - their paid job and their work in the home - thus helps to raise stress levels. Inequality and not being valued equally can be stress factors in themselves - it is stressful not to feel that you are good enough. This can affect anyone low down in the hierarchy, most often (but by no means exclusively) minorities and women). It goes without saying that minorities can encounter stress in situations that are not perceived as stressful by ethnic Danes, for example a fast working pace where language skills are central.

Psychological working environment and work culture also have an impact on stress levels. In a work culture where employees have to manage themselves, there is a high likelihood that they will suffer burnout.

Bullying can also contribute to stress, and here sexual minorities are particularly vulnerable.

Stress is a risk factor for a number of physical illnesses, including immunological conditions, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and depression, and is believed to contribute to gender differences in the spread of these diseases.

¹⁴ <http://www.ugeskriftet.dk/LF/UFL/2007/25/pdf/VP50321.pdf>

You can prevent stress, with an eye on diversity, by:

- ▶ Using your works council or equivalent body to secure HR policies that create good work/life balance. See the section "Work/life balance".
- ▶ Getting tools for gender-specific stress management via FIU-Equality's courses. See more at www.FIU-Equality.dk or in FIU-Equality's course catalogue "Naturligvis" ["Naturally"] [Note: only available in Danish].
- ▶ Using your works council or equivalent body to ensure that employee development interviews and sickness absence interviews take into consideration the employees' diversity and stress thresholds in different situations.
- ▶ Ensuring that managers set clear goals that employees can pursue and that these are communicated clearly to minorities.
- ▶ Giving affirmative feedback when an employee does a job satisfactorily. Recognition spreads!
- ▶ Providing clear, regular information on changes so that employees experience predictability.
- ▶ Helping to maintain good etiquette, including in stressful situations.
- ▶ Talking with colleagues who are struggling.
- ▶ Talking about causes of stress.
- ▶ Talking about tasks and expectations; as a union representative, you can take your colleagues' experiences to management and ensure that there is a match-up in expectations.

Tone – an inclusive workplace culture

It is not all workplaces where the tone and culture are all-inclusive. There may be a group that sets the standard for the tone, e.g. those who have been there longest. As a union representative, it is important that you are aware of whether there is a tone that makes room for everyone in your workplace. For example, is the workplace humour directed at employees with a non-Danish background?

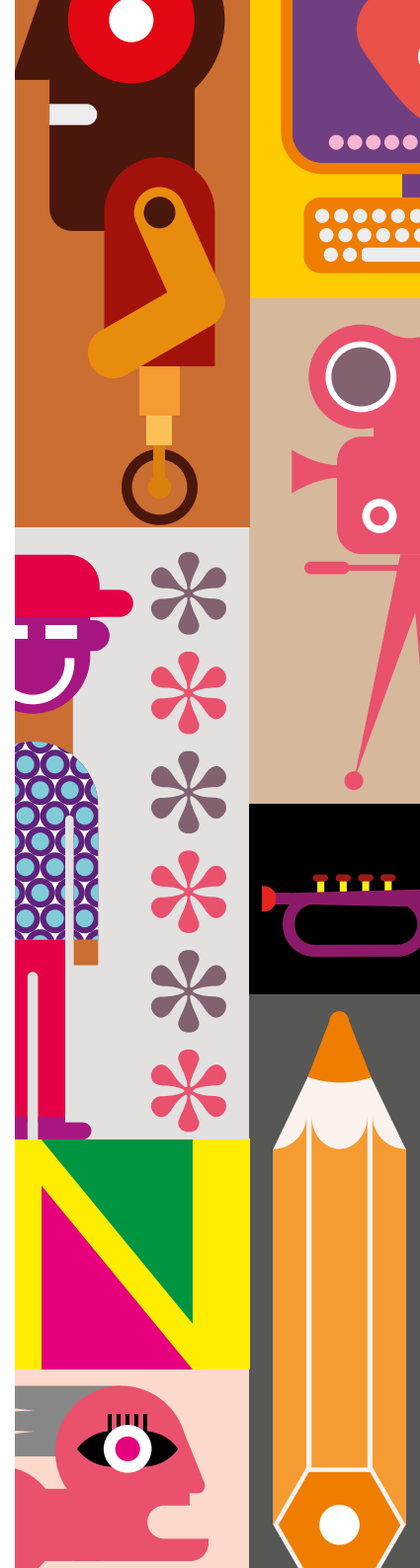
All workplaces have unwritten rules on how people conduct themselves. These rules can be difficult to understand for employees who come from a different (work) culture.

Similarly, there are different expectations for how men and women should conduct themselves in the workplace and they are therefore given different scope to act. For example, it can be regarded as self-evident that a woman will take parental leave, while it may be difficult for a man to go against the company culture if he wants to take parental leave.

In order to promote positive development in terms of creating an inclusive tone, you could take one or more of these initiatives:

- ▶ If you carry out a workplace assessment, the responses can be assessed from a diversity perspective. Try to break down the answers in terms of gender. If there are departments with a large number of minorities, then look at what picture the workplace assessment paints. Are there some groups that feel they are treated better or worse? If there are, you can speak up about what many would otherwise be blind to.

- ▶ Review the HR policies - is the focus on everyone being included?
- ▶ Carry out your own study of the humour in your workplace. Humour says a lot about the tone of the company, and hence who is "on the inside" and who is "on the outside". Write down the next ten jokes that you hear. Is there an uneven balance in terms of who is being made fun of? Can everyone understand the humour? If you find that the humour excludes some employees, you can address it calmly. In most cases, it is not intentional, and most people are happy to include everyone.
- ▶ Give positive special treatment to minorities and specifically ask these groups to help define the company's social activities by choosing the food or entertainment, decorating rooms, and through other "cultural" things that provide a context for socialising.
- ▶ Join with your colleagues in carrying out a brainstorming of your unwritten rules in the workplace. Write them down. Assess whether they are all appropriate. Consider whether some should be formalised and minorities duly informed of them.



Women in management

Denmark is doing badly when it comes to women in management, occupying 23rd place out of 27 EU member states¹⁵. 6.5% of Danish executives in private business are women, and at the next level down women managers make up 8.2%¹⁶.

There are many reasons to work to increase the percentage of women in management. It is about fairness and resources; about creating a situation where men and women have an equal opportunity to contribute and to have access to power and resources.

It is about utilising women's managerial talents and not letting various barriers deprive us of the benefits of these talents. It is about women having alternative experiences and perspectives to contribute that can strengthen a company. At the same time, Danish research shows that companies with women in their management are doing better financially.¹⁷ The Danish Parliament and the United Nations (UN) have formulated the goal of increasing the number of women in management. The goal is not up for discussion; it is the way to achieve the goal that we need to find. As a union representative, you have the opportunity to contribute to this.

Among other things, you can:

15 Figure from the EU Commission's 2007 report on equality between men and women - reproduced in "Knæk kønnets koder" ["Crack the gender codes"] by Betina Rennison (2012)

16 Figures from Statistics Denmark (2009) - reproduced in "Knæk kønnets koder" ["Crack the gender codes"] by Betina

17 A. M. Kossowska, N. Smith, V. Smith and M. Verner: "Til gavn for bundlinien - Forbedrer kvinder i topledelse og bestyrelse danske virksomheders bundlinier?" ["Benefiting the bottom line - Are women in top management and boards improving Danish companies' bottom lines?" (2005), Ministry for Gender Equality and Ecclesiastical Affairs (Note: only available in Danish)Rennison (2012)

- ▷ Demand that management targets both men and women when advertising jobs and invites both men and women to apply when recruiting internally.
- ▷ Demand that the appointments committee should have both male and female representatives; this can help to avoiding the “Huey, Dewey and Louie effect”.
- ▷ Work with management to formulate a strategy for ensuring representative percentages of men and women in management. The 1,100 largest Danish companies are required to formulate a strategy, but any company can do it. As a union representative, you can help initiate the process.
- ▷ Activities that can support the underrepresented gender in developing a career internally include “pre-management courses” and mentor schemes.



Work/life balance

Work/life balance is vital for ensuring that both parents have the same opportunities in the workplace. If work life cannot be combined with family life, mothers and fathers are indirectly prevented from thriving and pursuing a career. As it is often women who take the greater share of responsibility for children and the home and there are more single mothers than fathers, a workplace offering little opportunity for combining work life and family life often indirectly discriminates against women.

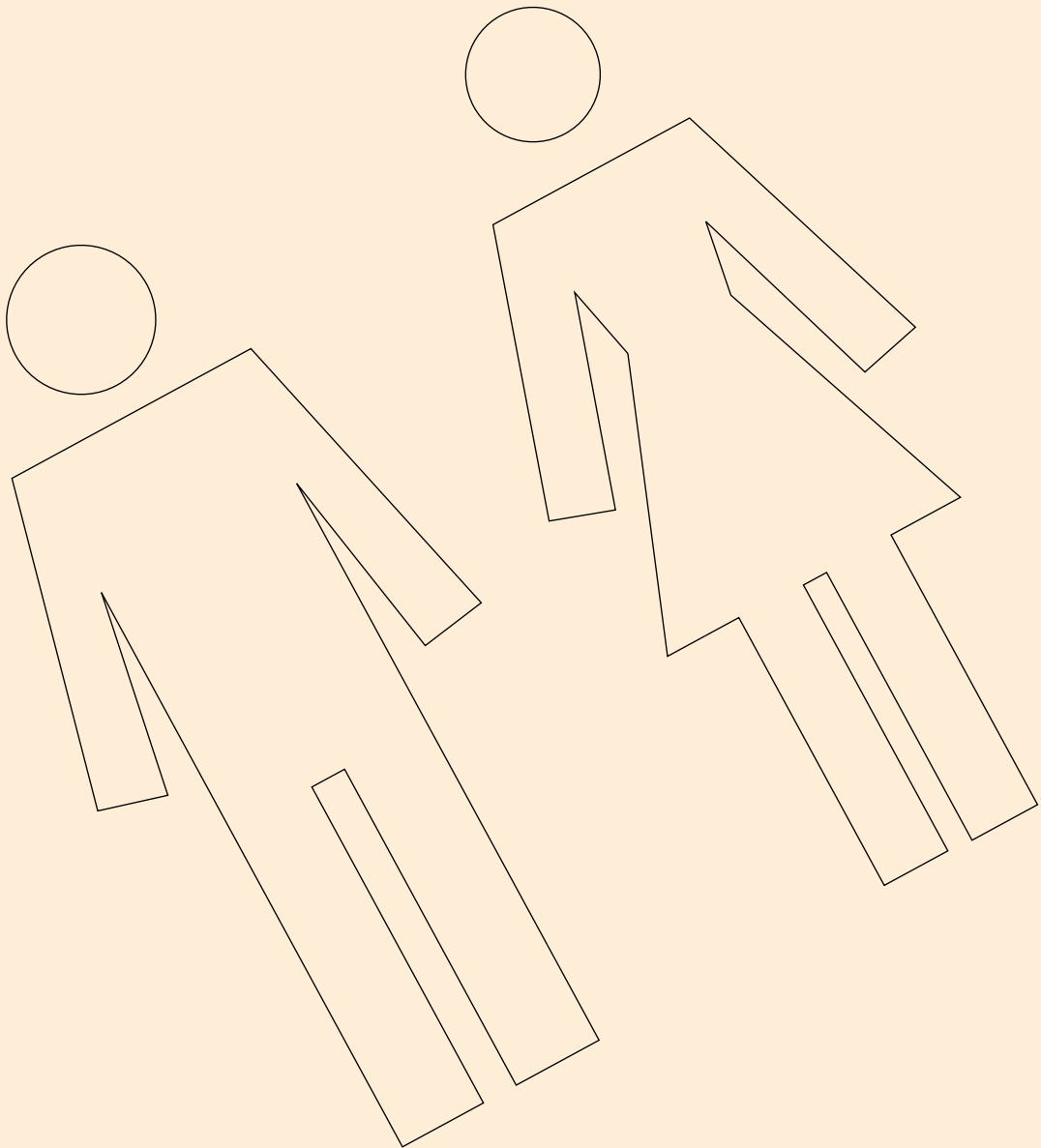
Many workplaces have found that sickness absence decreases and production/service improves when employees have a good work/life balance. There is a financial gain to be derived both for the company and for society.

You can improve work/life balance as follows:

- ▶ Put work/life balance on the agenda in your works council or equivalent body.
- ▶ Arrange a meeting with the specific purpose of reaching a common understanding of work/life balance.
- ▶ Conduct a workplace survey of your colleagues on work/life balance. If they are finding it difficult achieving a reasonable balance, you could consider implementing HR policies that address:

- 1) Flexible working hours that allow parents to collect their children from daycare.
 - 2) A culture that allows children to be brought to work in an emergency.
 - 3) Time off in the event of sickness in the family.
 - 4) Social events where families get to know the workplace.
 - 5) Flexibility in holiday planning.
 - 6) Provision of help and support in cases of domestic violence.
 - 7) Parental leave options for men.
 - 8) Time off or flexible working hours in the event of a home move, a death in the family, a child's first school day, etc.
- ▶ Take part in courses. FIU-Equality occasionally runs courses for union representatives on the subject of work/life balance. See: www.FIU-Equality.dk. FIU-Equality has also published a booklet on this subject that can be downloaded from the website.
 - ▶ Get inspiration from the folder "Work Life Balance - En guide til balance mellem arbejdsliv og privatliv" ["Work-Life Balance - A guide to balancing work life and private life]: <http://www.eurobalance-wlb.eu>.





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October 2013

Layout: Henriette Andresen, Andresen design

Published by FIU/FIU-Equality, Nyropsgade 38, 1780 Copenhagen V.

Available to download at www.FIU-Equality.dk.



