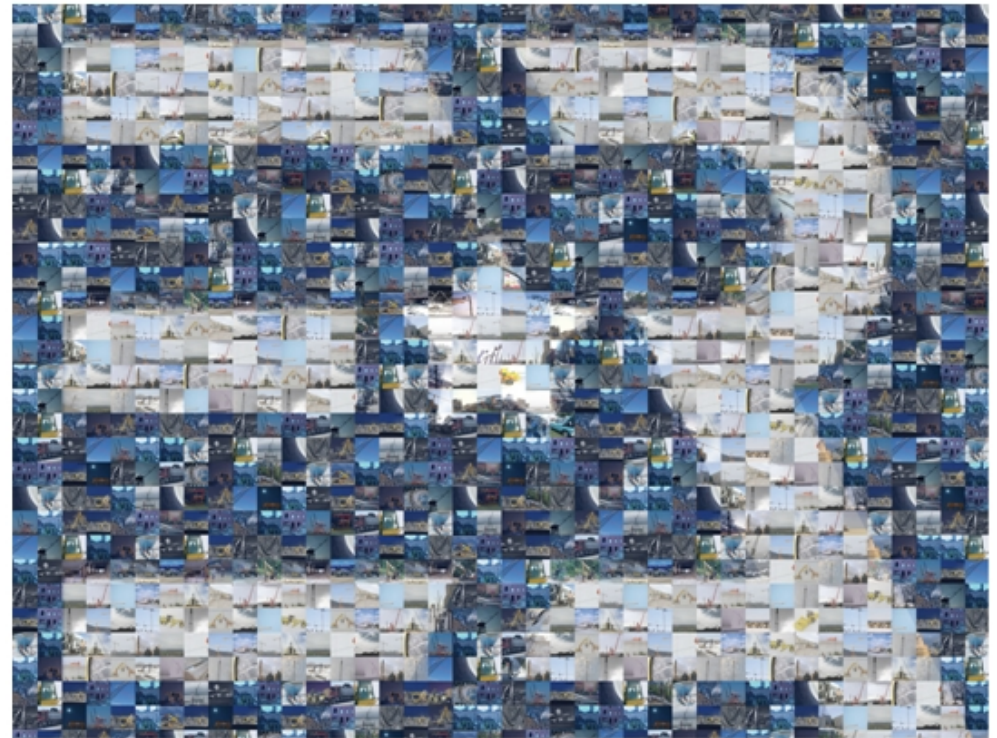


Roundtable: equal opportunities

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Context

§ The concept “Equal opportunities” is very broad

- Gender
- Age
- Disabled
- Race
- ...

European context

- § General equality clause was not included in initial EC Treaty
 - Ü Only the right of equal pay for equal work for men and women
- § The European Court of Justice considered equality an important enough principle to use as standard for review
- § The first equality legislations on EU level focused on gender and nationality



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European context

§ EU equality approach

Ü Specific anti-discrimination directives

- Racial equality
- Employment equality

Ü Gender equality



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European context

- § Gender equality has a well developed legislative framework

- § 13 EU Directives covering:
 - access to employment
 - working conditions & remuneration
 - social security schemes
 - protection of pregnant women & recent mother

European context

- § General facts on gender equality (source: Commission report)
- women work more part-time
 - women occupy fewer positions of responsibility
 - women are more active in precarious jobs
 - work-life balance is important barrier to women's employment and career advancement



European context

§ For the EU, gender equality is a precondition for fulfilling the overall objectives of:

- growth,
- employment
- social cohesion

} Lisbon Targets
(60% employment rate for women)

European Policy Measures

- § Supporting better work-life balance
- § Family related leave
- § EU network to promote women in economic and political decision-making positions
- § Eliminating gender stereotypes
- § Review of general legislation and in particular equal pay
- § European Institute for Gender Equality
- § EU Agency for Gender Equality (Vilnius)

European Policy Measures

- § European Court of Justice case-law to clarify practical implementation of EU law on national level
- § EU Roadmap on gender equality
 - 2006 – 2010
 - 6 targets
 1. Lisbon employment targets
 2. Eliminating gender pay gap
 3. Women entrepreneurs
 4. Gender equality in social protection/fight against poverty
 5. Recognising gender dimension of health
 6. Combating multiple discrimination (immigrants/ethnic minority)

Practical consequences

- § On EU level, many initiatives are being taken: policy and/or legislative
- § Effective enforcement on national level
- § Equality is an important aspect of a company's CSR policy (e.g.)
 - CSR Europe's equality toolkit
 - http://www.csreurope.org/pages/en/equality_between_men_and_women.html



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Practical consequences

- § How to integrate effectively equality concept in a company:
- simple equality policy statement vs. Integrated management approach
 - how to include different national approaches in a multinational company?