



Public Defender of Rights
OMBUDSMAN

The Public Defender of Rights

has the pleasure to invite you
to a conference with international
participation

Work-life balance

23rd and 24th October 2014

in the Otakar Motejl conference hall

Office of the Public Defender of Rights

Czech Republic

Brno, Údolní 39

The conference is organized under the project "Together Towards Good Governance" (reg. number CZ.1.04/5.1.00/81.00007) funded by the European Social Fund through the Human Resources and Employment Operational Programme and the state budget of the Czech Republic. The beneficiary and the project implementer is the Office of the Public Defender of Rights.



**HUMAN RESOURCES AND
EMPLOYMENT OPERATIONAL
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Basic information

The competences of the Public Defender of Rights as an equality body include the issue of discrimination and assistance to victims of discrimination. In this respect, the traditional “Ombudsman” role of the Defender, consisting in protecting persons from maladministration, is supplemented with another area of activity. The area of work and employment is one of the most important areas where discrimination is forbidden.

The issue of balancing work and private life is discussed in particular with respect to employment of women with children and their overall position in the labour market. However, other groups of persons are interested in balancing their work and private lives too. In essence, this concerns all groups of people who want to strike a balance between their family life and work. Insufficient measures supporting the balance between work and private life, be they legislative measures or measures taken by the individual employers, may disadvantage members of certain groups of people and thus lead to their discrimination. Those who take care of dependent persons (children, persons with disabilities, the elderly) are especially vulnerable and potentially exposed to discrimination.

In what way could we assist in the adoption of individual measures supporting work-life balance? Are the measures applied in other European countries applicable to the situation in the Czech Republic? Should the government intervene in this area, or should the choice of approach to this issue be left to the employers? How will the adoption of the act on children’s groups affect the situation? What obstacles are preventing the employers from adopting balancing measures? These questions will be discussed at the conference.

The conference is split into two parts. The plenary session takes place on the first day. Prominent Czech and international experts in the area of work-life balance will present their contributions. The plenary session will continue during the first part of the second day of conference. The second part will include workshops on issues of work-life balance in the area of science and research, employer opportunities and practices in introducing balancing measures, and balancing and equal opportunities. A meeting of representatives of selected Ombudsman institutions and anti-discrimination bodies will be held in parallel to discuss equal opportunities and balancing.

Online registration form for the Conference is available at: http://www.ochrance.cz/no_cache/spolecne-k-dobre-sprave/konference-seminare-a-kulate-stoly/ - the deadline for registration is **16 October 2014**. The organiser reserves the right to reject participants in case of full conference hall and workshops capacity.

Participation in the conference is free of charge. Interpreting from Czech/Slovak into English and from English into Czech will be available during the conference.

Please note that the Office of the Public Defender of Rights cannot provide the participants of the conference with parking spaces.

PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE

23 October 2014

9:00 a.m. – 9.30 a.m. Registration of participants

9:30 a.m. – 9.55 a.m. Introduction: Anna Šabatová, *the Public defender of Rights*, Zuzana Jentschke Stöcklová, *Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs for social and family policy*, Kateřina Valachová, *Deputy Minister for Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Legislation and Director of the Section of the Government Legislative Council*

9:55 a.m. – 10:40 a.m.

II. Plenary session: Balancing private and work life on the European level

Moderator: **Barbara Havelková** (*Oxford University*)

Maurizio Mosca (*European Institute for Gender Equality*), **Steven Saxonberg** (*Dalarna University*)

10:40 a.m. – 10:55 a.m. Coffee break

10:55 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.

II. Plenary session: Balancing private and work life on the European level – continued

Moderator: **Barbara Havelková** (*Oxford University*)

Agnes Uherezky (*Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union - COFACE*), **Jean-Marie Jungblut** (*European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions - Eurofound*), **Dana Kovařiková** (*the Representation of the European Commission in the Czech Republic*)

III. Plenary session: Balancing private and work life in the individual countries – the views of equal treatment and Ombudsman institutions

Moderator: **Petr Polák** (*Office of the Public Defender of Rights*)

Ilaria Volpe (*EQUINET – the European Networ of Equality Bodies, Belgium*), **Tiago Pereira**, (*Commision for Equality in Labour and Employment – CITE, Portugal*), **Sabine Wagner** (*Ombud for Equal Treatment, Austria*)

12:25 p.m. – 1:25 p.m. Lunch break/ Press briefing

1:25 p.m. – 2:25 p.m.

III. Plenary session: Balancing private and work life in the individual countries – the views of institutions for equal treatment and Ombudsman institutions – continued

Moderator: **Petr Polák** (*Office of the Public Defender of Rights*)

Andrea Mesárošová (*Office of the Public Defender of Rights, Slovakia*), **Lóránt Csink** (*Office of the Commissioner of Fundamental Rights, Hungary*), **Anna Mazurczak** (*Office of the Human Rights Defender, Poland*)

2:25 p.m. – 2:40 p.m. Coffee break

2:40 p.m. – 4:10 p.m.

IV. Panel discussion: Experiences of employers applying measures to balance private and work life

Moderator: **Jana Kvasnicová** (*Office of the Public Defender of Rights*)

Michaela Kadeřábková (*GE Money Bank*), **Václav Mach** (*Microsoft*), **Ivana Hlochová** (*Průmstav*), **Lucia Zachariášová** (*Office of the Government of the Czech Republic*)
Tomáš Dombrovský (*LMC*)

Closing of the first day of conference, invitation to the second day of conference.

24 October 2014

9:00 a.m. – 9.15 a.m. Welcoming of the participants to the second day of conference

9:15 a.m. – 10.00 a.m.

I. Collecting data on the level of balance between personal and work life

Marek Řezanka (*Czech Statistical Office*), **Lenka Formánková** (*Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic*)

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Coffee break

10:15 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

II. Workshops

1. Balancing in science – discussion about obstacles which could prevent parents and other caring persons from pursuing a career in science

Working language: Czech, room: Press Centre

Moderators: **Marcela Linková** (*Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic*), **Kateřina Lišková** (*Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University*), **Irena Smetáčková** (*Faculty of Education of Charles University*)

Do women have enough opportunities to balance their private lives with work in the area of science? Is it possible to strike an optimal balance between parenthood and utilisation of grant funding? Can research workers effectively defend themselves if their employment is not extended during their parental leave? How do gender culture and gender stereotypes influence the employment of women in research and research/educational institutions? What kind of support could be offered to parents in order to enable them gain employment in the area of science and research? Come and discuss the possible solutions of these issues.

2. Employers for balancing – Employer possibilities and experiences in implementing balancing measures

Working languages: English, Czech, professional interpretation is provided, room: Otakar Motejl conference hall

Moderators: **Lukáš Talpa** (*The League of Open Men*), **Jana Kvasnicová** (*Office of the Public Defender of Rights*)

In what ways are employers supporting their employees in achieving a balance between their family and job obligations? What kind of problems do the employers offering flexible forms of employment face? Under which circumstances can work be done remotely and what difficulties can this cause to the employers? Are the employers motivated to provide day-care for their employees' children? Will the situation change following the adoption of the act on children's groups? Is Czech legislation suitably prepared to support work-life balance? Come and join the panel discussion with employers and organisations trying to support work-life balance.

3. Balancing and equal opportunities

Working languages: Czech, room: Small conference hall

Moderators: **Barbara Havelková** (*Oxford University*), **Linda Sokačová** (*Alternativa 50+*)

The workshop will focus on the relationship between discrimination in pay and treatment and balancing work and care. It will be interactive. The following questions will be discussed, among others: What are the negative impacts of care for children in employment and on the labour market? Is there discrimination of employees who balance their work and care? In which situations and how can it be prevented?

4. What can the equality bodies and Ombudsman institutions do for better balancing of family and work life? Lessons and challenges.

Closed workshop for invited international guests.

Working language: English, room: Oval Office

Moderator: **Petr Polák** (*Office of the Public Defender of Rights*)

In accordance with Article 20 of Directive 2006/54/EC, equality bodies are to provide independent assistance to the victims of discrimination, conduct independent surveys and publish recommendations. Ombudsman institutions often inquire into the activities of public administration bodies in the areas of social policy and employment. Do they successfully implement the tasks following from European and national legislation? Where do they see the greatest obstacle in the push for balance? How can they change the situation – do they have sufficient resources and legal instruments? The workshop for the staff of the aforementioned institutions will serve to share their experiences in the area of work-life balance. The workshop aims to formulate strategic recommendations for the institutions concerning how they should proceed to promote gender equality and good public administration.

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Lunch break

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Workshop results, summary, discussion and the closing of the conference.