

Press release

## **WORK/LIFE: MANY PROGRAMMES, BUT NO REAL ENCOURAGEMENT**

### New survey shows: Companies are aware of the Business Case for Work/Life Balance, but fail to reap the full benefits

Cologne, 3 August 2007 – Leading employers in Europe offer a multitude of measures to enable successful careers under the consideration of private and social requirements: from emergency childcare to paid leave for eldercare to telecommuting. But the desired benefits are not fully utilized as companies do not promote their measures sufficiently. More than one third (34.8 percent) of the surveyed companies do not agree that ‘employees are encouraged to take advantage of available work-life options’. Another 18 percent disagree with the statement that managers are encouraged to use work-life measures. “To reach the full business benefits of improved work-life balance it is crucial not only to offer work-life-balance measures, but to encourage the work force to use them and to walk the talk”, comments Diversity expert Michael Stuber the results of the pan-European survey, entitled WLPS.

The study also underlines further contradictions of current work-life programmes: 46 percent of the companies name “changing societal roles” as a driver for their programmes. But traditional role allocations are still predominate in European companies. Many companies (40.9 percent) disagree with the statement “active fathers in our workforce are role models for an active and engaged fatherhood.” Only few men would work less or different in order to pursue an active fatherhood. “Companies are aware of changing societal roles but they do not provide a corporate culture and incentives that reflect these changes,” adds Michael Stuber.

A total of 115 organisations from 15 countries across Europe and 5 different sectors took part in the online survey. The survey analyses the current implementation status of work-life programmes and presents factors for their successful implementation in relation to corporate culture. Demographic changes and economic trends are imposing new challenges to the successful management of companies. In this regard, the effective navigation and integration of work and private life is becoming increasingly important. WLPS shows that European companies are aware of the business case for work-life balance: An overwhelming 87 percent of participating companies considered increased employee motivation as the most important motivating factor to implement work-life measures, followed by the aim to boost productivity (58 percent) and reduce employee stress and absenteeism (47 percent).

**European Diversity Research & Consulting:** We are a pan-European service and consulting firm in the field of Diversity Management and Marketing. Our clients include European/EMEA subsidiaries of global US corporations as well as European multinationals. We have been carrying out surveys and conducting ongoing research for almost ten years. This wealth of information is used in our extensive publications and frequent speaking engagements.

In 2001, European Diversity Research & Consulting conducted an international Corporate Practice Survey covering a broad range of issues including definitions, business case, Diversity bottom-up and top-down as well as the mainstreaming of Diversity into HRM or marketing. In 2004, we published a second survey on good practice in Europe entitled "European Diversity Survey, EDS2".

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need any additional information, statistical data or graphs.

Michael Stuber, President of European Diversity Research & Consulting, is available for interviews, statements and explanations of the study's key results.

**Press contact:**

European Diversity Research & Consulting  
Felix Wittig, Communication

Phone: \*\*49-221-22212-50

E-Mail: [office@europeandiversity.com](mailto:office@europeandiversity.com)