



## **Sweden. Report on assessment Aug 31<sup>st</sup> 2015**

This is a report of the counselling in the four Swedish companies, a process that is designed as a network for improvement and learning. This is a process oriented approach, where the companies are committed through trust which is built up by recognition of their specific conditions and their active participation in process planning (form and content).

There is a thorough theoretical and practical knowledge basis in our project organisation on equal opportunity issues, facts, policies, analyses, research and methods. Our objective is to see how this knowledge could be of benefit to the companies involved within the frames of project resources.

The first steps in Sweden of the company counselling have been to get an understanding of the companies' view on the issue of equal possibilities in the carrier of the company. These contacts have also served the purpose of getting trust to the process, which is important in building stabile networks for change and improvement.

### **Dialogues with the four companies, the project cases**

The CEOs of the companies were contacted, and they were booked for an opening interview. In two of the cases, it was the HR responsible that we actually met. During these discourses we have

- introduced the project framework
- investigated basic facts about the organisation
- assessed the status of equal opportunity issues in the organisation
- oriented on support resources on equal opportunity issues for companies and organisations
- discussed the issue of HR strategies for structural change
- decided how to proceed with support that would be meaningful for the company

These meetings had a duration for about one hour, and took place as follows: Holms May 27<sup>th</sup>, Östenssons and Poppelstaden June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Aleris June 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Analyses**

The resulting analyses of the assessment have been disseminated back to the companies involved and to the local stake-holders. It will also be communicated at a more superficial level to the member companies in the company network of Tillväxt Motala.

- The different companies all have strategies and active work for equal pay, and say that they have control so that equal work is paid equally.



- Two of the companies are family businesses, and two are part of larger chains, but have independent units in Motala. They think respectively that being family businesses has provided conditions that have helped to break down carrier obstacles for women. Women are well represented at management level in all the companies.
- Three of the companies have a clear overrepresentation of one sex in the working force: the industry lack women, the food store company and the caring company lack men. One company (the service provider) describe their problem with balanced workforce as difficult to influence, as the end customers (the persons who needs care) choose their support, and they are quite traditional in their preferences.
- All four companies describe problems to recruit the underrepresented sex: the industry wants more women on all levels; the food store company and the caring sector want to recruit more men.
- Some of companies are active in dialogues and activities with training providers and schools to promote non gender biased profession choices, and want to improve that kind of effort. Their problem is that their time for this strategic work is limited, and activities are often ad-hoc ones.

#### **Activities, resulting directly from the assessment**

- **A think-tank workshop.** The four companies have been invited to a joint **workshop** Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>, with the purpose to build a network for strategic work for equal recruitment and carrier paths. We think of this as a joint think-tank to raise the question of gender based profession choices with schools and media locally. One of the inputs will be a product from a former transnational Equal project: Equal Professional Guidance in Schools<sup>1</sup>, a material that discusses what role school can have in nongender-biased carrier choices.
- **Network.** Our objective is to build sustainable **network activities** from the nucleus of the four companies, starting with promotion of non-gender biased profession choices for young people, but also for carrier guidance for unemployed/job searching adults. The next steps for this network will be planned in co-operation with the companies. It can be expected that also further company internal processes will grow from the network learning process.
- **SWOPS meeting.** The companies will also participate at parts of the SWOPS **transnational meeting** in October.

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<sup>1</sup> Roland Cox, Jämställt vägval (2005). ISBN 91-975616-0-6



- **Tutoring/counselling.** All four companies have been offered **tutoring/counselling**, but have declined further actions during summertime. (Motala is a tourist city, and all of the companies have for this reason, or else vacations and extra workforce during June to August, a situation that they think is unsuitable for this kind of activities.) They will get new offers in September; tailor-made counselling for each of the companies, one-to-one.