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Work life balance policies in Spain

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Prom project



INDEX:

NATIONAL LEVEL.....	3
REGIONAL LEVEL	7
SUPRAMUNICIPAL LEVEL.....	13
LOCAL LEVEL.....	15
OTHER KIND OF ORGANIZATIONS	18
PRIVATE COMPANIES	19

Work life balance policies in Spain

This document does not intend to be an exhaustive recompilation of the work life balance policies implemented in Spain. What it intends is remark some identified policies that can result innovative and interesting in this subject. Since this point of view, it can be useful to know what kind of work life balance policies and actions are carrying out public administrations to national, regional and local level in our country at this moment.

I. NATIONAL LEVEL:

The juridical Spanish regulation has experimented numerous and deep changes in the last years searching for formulas that develop work life balance. In this sense, different laws have introduced important improvements.

Very recently has been approved the Organic Law 3/2007, March 22, for the effective equality of women and men. This law aim to attack the still existing manifestations of discrimination, direct or indirect, because of the sex; and to promote the real equality between women and men, removing barriers and social stereotypes.

It proposes performances to favour the access of women to employment, to facilitate their professional career and to get work life balance. Particularly, it improves some benefits for maternity and recognizes a permission of paternity of 15 days independent of the mother's permission. Besides, it promotes a balanced composition of men and women on the electoral lists and in the Board of Directors of big companies and makes obligatory the existence of an Equality Plan in the companies with more than 250 workers.

According to the present regulation in Spain, we can say that there are the **following work life balance rights:**

1. Permissions with retribution:

- For birth or adoption of children: the duration will be of **two days** (four days if displacement is needed).
- For prenatal examinations and preparation of the childbirth: during the **indispensable time**.
- For death, accident, disease or relatives' hospitalisation: for **two days** extendable to four days if displacement is needed.

2. Reduction of the working day:

- For lactation of children: reduction of the working day in two half an hours or during an hour per day "for lactation of a **minor of nine months**". This right is foreseen indistinctly for the father or the mother in case both work. The law 3/2007 has introduced the possibility of joining these hours in whole working days.
- For the attention to relatives until the second degree of consanguinity or affinity who for reasons of age, accident or disease be dependent persons and does not have any rewarded activity (Law 39/1999 to promote work life balance).
- For legal guard of minors: to do possible the attention or direct care of a eight-year-old minor (before law 3/2007 the age was of 6 years) or a physical, psychic or sensory handicapped person who does not have any rewarded activity. It will consist in a reduction of, at least 1/8 (before law 3/2007 the minimum was 1/3) and, a maximum, of the half of the working day of the person. It is foreseen the proportional reduction of the remuneration.
- For the case of premature children or children that need hospitalisation: the law 12/2001 has introduced this right. The maximum duration is **two hours per day** with a proportional reduction of the salary.
- As a modality of the permission for maternity: the RD 1251/2001 has opened the possibility that the permission of maternity be enjoyed to part-time with the proportional extension of its duration.

3. Permission of maternity (and paternity)

- For simple childbirth: the duration of the permission will be **16 weeks**. Six of them have to be enjoyed by the mother immediately after the childbirth. The rest of the permission (according to the law 39/1999, of November 5, to promote work life balance) can be enjoyed by the father or the mother or both of them successively or simultaneously (without excess of a total period of 16 weeks). The law 3/2007 has introduced the **permission of paternity autonomous** of the permission of maternity. The total duration of the permission is of **15 days**. In case of a premature birth or that the child needs hospitalisation, it is allowed to interrupt the permission by request of the father or the mother. In case of death of the mother, the father will be able to use the totality of the permission.
- For multiple childbirth: the duration of the permission in this case is extended 2 more weeks by every child from the second one. 6 weeks are of obliged enjoyment for the mother immediately after the childbirth. The law 3/2007 extend the duration in two more weeks also in the case of disability of the child.
- For adoption: the duration of the permission is of 16 weeks for children minor than 6 years old and children affected of a disability or if some personal

circumstance provoke special difficulties for the familiar and social insertion of the child.

- Premature births and cases in which the new born has to be hospitalised: The law 3/2007 has introduced the possibility of extend this right until 13 weeks more.
- Part-time maternity / paternity: the RD 1251/2001 has developed the possibility that the permission by maternity is enjoyed to part-time, with the proportional extension of its duration. A previous agreement between the worker and the company is needed. In any case the 6 weeks after the birth have to be enjoyed full-time by the mother. It tries to promote the distribution of the familiar responsibilities among mothers and parents as well as to make possible that women remain linked to their working place, so maternity be never an obstacle for their professional promotion.

4. Leave of absence for the care of the children: the duration is until three years of duration for every child, being calculated this period from the birth or from the date of the judicial resolution that determines the adoption. This is a permission with right to reservation of the working place.

5. Leave of absence for attention of relatives or dependent persons: for the care of relatives until the second degree of consanguinity or affinity, that for reasons of age, accident or disease can not develop any reattributed activity. This is an extended leave of absence with right to reservation of the working place introduced by the law 39/1999. The law 3/2007 has extended the duration of this leave of absence until a maximum of 2 years (with the law 39/1999 the duration had a maximum of one year).

6. Suspension of the contract for risk during the pregnancy: the law 39/1999, of November 5, to promote work life balance, has introduced this case. It is a protection measure of safety and health that implies the suspension of the contract without remuneration, but with possibility of acceding to the economic help of social security.

7. Economic incentives for companies that contract provisional personnel for substitution in case of leave of absence for care of children, permission of paternity and risk of pregnancy: with the RD 5/2001 it is foreseen a bonus of 100 % in the employer contribution. This way, the company will not pay for the employer contribution of the provisional person or for the worker who has the permission. The law 3/2007 has extended this bonus to self-employees persons.

Another improvement introduced by the **law 3/2007** is the following: if any right linked to maternity coincide with the holiday's period, the person will have right to enjoy it, although the natural year has already finished.

In 2005 the government of Spain approved a **Plan of 54 measures to favour equality of women and men**. The approved measures **concerning work life balance** are addressed to civil servants working at the public administration, as follow:

- Establishment of a specific modality of part-time for the civil servants of the public administration, with the corresponding remunerative decrease. People who have to take care of old persons, twelve-year-old minor children or persons with some kind of disability can invoke this right.
- The competent authorities are enabled, previous negotiation with trade unions organizations, to authorize, with personal and temporary character, the modification of the fixed schedule of the public employees, so they can have a flexible and whole working day.
- It approves a program of creation of 25 infantile schools in military establishments of Madrid, Galician, Extremadura, Andalusia, Aragon, Murcia, Canarias and Castilla La Mancha. This measure will be extended to the public administration of the state.

The law of promotion of the personal autonomy and attention to dependent persons, approved on November 30th of 2006, will also contribute to promote the work life balance of a lot of Spanish women in charge of the care of dependent relatives. This law establish economic aids for these persons as well as its incorporation to the social security.

“Work life Balance Plan” for civil servants:

The Department of Public Administrations has developed an integral work life balance plan for the General Administration of the State, which concern to 500.000 workers. The “Work Life Balance Plan” is a package of measures that constitute the most complete regulation approved in our country in this matter, since it gathers the most advanced initiatives of public and private sector on the question.

Some of the main measures adopted by this plan are the following:

1. To go out at 6 p.m. as very late.
2. Possibility of accumulating vacations, maternity, lactation and paternity.
3. Possibility of extending the period of permission for maternity.
4. Reduction of working day for parents with 12-year-old minor children.
5. More flexible schedules.
6. Modification of the fixed schedule.
7. 50 % reduction of working day for one month to attend to a very sick relative.
8. Extended leave of absence to three years.
9. Two hours of daily flexibility for parents with handicapped children.
10. Right to request movement to another unit or to another locality.

11. Right to an extended leave of absence without need to a minimal time of services and without an obligation of remaining.

12. Schedules and telework. The Department of Public Administrations has carried out a pilot action of telework based in the achievement of foreseen aims with 40 civil servants. It has been a very successful experienced since the foreseen aims have been widely achieved and it has allowed getting the work life balance of all them. The experience has been proposed for certain working places and with a maximum of 40% of time at home.

Balance of the implementation of the first year of the program:

. Near 10.000 civil servants have benefited from the Conciliate Plan during its first year in effect.

. Flexible schedule for the care of children, the extension of the period of maternity and the new permission of paternity are the most demanded performances.

. Women are who have requested 6 of every ten measures.

. Women between 30 and 45 years with small children, it is the picture of the main beneficiary of these measures.

The Work Life Balance Plan introduces important innovations in flexibility of schedules and work life balance of civil servants of the General Administration of the State, in line with the remarked labour regulation of the countries of our environment.

II. REGIONAL LEVEL:

Community of Madrid

The **Employment Department of the Community of Madrid**, in collaboration with CEIM and financed jointly by the Social European Fund, has started an initiative addressed to put at the disposal of SMEs of the Community of Madrid all the necessary tools to implement measures of work life balance.

Among the services that they offer, it is important to remark the **technical assistance addressed to companies in order to offer them accompaniment and specialized advice in the way of defining and implanting measures of work life balance**. For carrying out this project have been contracted a consulting that gives this service in three stages:

- Diagnosis: detailed analysis of problems and needs of conciliation of the company.
- Elaboration of the Work Life Balance Plan: in this stage are identified the different measures to lead to end, there is realized a valuation of the cost of implantation of the different identified alternatives and the direct and indirect

benefits that these measures will contribute to the companies elaborating, finally, a implantation plan for the selected measures.

- Implantation and monitoring: finally, the consulting team will help and monitor the start up of the identified measures. They will help companies to make the implantation and start up with the work life balance measures. They also evaluate the impact of these measures in the organization and help them to solve the problems and overcome barriers that appear in the implementation of the measures.

The Department of Employment and Women of the Community of Madrid has also the **prizes Flexible Company** that already are in its third edition. The aim is to promote the implantation of practices of flexibility in the companies and to spread the best experiences in order to get that they be used as a model in other organizations. The awards have three categories: great company, medium company and small company. In the past edition they award to Banesto, Nokia and Otto Walter respectively.

Autonomic government of Catalonia:

The law 8/2006 systematizes all the measures related to work life balance for civil servants working at the public administration of Catalonia. This law incorporate the advances introduced by the basic regulation of the State (until that moment) and for the law of support to the families, as well as some innovation.

As innovation, it's necessary to remark the **permission of paternity for 4 weeks**, which has to begin with the ending of the permission of maternity or since the 16 week after the delivery or adoption, always that the mother works. This permission has a double purpose: of one hand, to extend the time of permanency of the baby in the family area and, of another hand, to allow a bigger implication of the father in the care of the child. The mother can use this permission when the father does not have the custody of the child or in case of death of the father.

Besides, it is necessary to emphasize the advance that supposes the **extension of the reservation of the working place until three years of voluntary leave of absence to take care of a child and for the relatives' care**; until the approval of this law the reservation of working place existed only during the first year of leave of absence.

At the same time, the permission without remuneration to attend a relative can be asked with this law for a minimum of 10 days and a maximum of 3 months; before this law the minimum was 3 months. Permission for death, accident or serious disease have a duration of 2 days (4 days if displacement is need) and, in exceptional cases and with a justified reason, can be of six working days.

Among the innovations that this regulation incorporates stands out the possibility of join the hours of reduction or lactation to enjoy whole days of work (this right has also been contemplated now at the organic law 3/2007 of the state).

With regard to the improvements, stands out the reduction of a third part of working day for taking care of a son/daughter, receiving 100 % of the retribution. This reduction of the working day has a maximum duration of one year since the ending of the permission of maternity or since the 16 week after the adoption.

Initiative of the Catalan Institute of Women:

The Catalan Institute of Women has carried out the project "TO SHARE IS TO ADD UP" in the framework of the community initiative Equal. This project is born with the aim to get work life balance developing flexible and innovative forms of organization of the work and services of support.

The project consists in the following performances:

Study and offers:

It includes the theoretical draft of the framework and normative in which it is necessary to establish the measures of work life balance, the knowledge of the situation of work life balance in the companies that take part in the project and of the public services of support in each of the territories, as well as the proposal of the measures that can be implemented in the studied companies.

The agent of conciliation:

It is a question of defining the profile of the person who can assume, inside the company, the role of making sure that progresses become in the establishment and application of measures of work life balance. This person will facilitate all the information in the processes of collective negotiation between the managerial part and the working part, and will accompany to the practical implantation of the agreements established between the parts.

The definition of the profile has to be completed by a suitable and specific formation addressed to the person in charge of developing the work life balance measures.

Diffusion:

The diffusion is a basic aim of the project. It will be created a web page that allows a high level of information and of participation. It has to be taken into account the edition of spreading materials, formation and support to the campaigns.

Forum of conciliation:

The last performance of the project is foreseen in the framework of a Forum where the results are debated and known.

Andalusia Government

At present, **is being processed a law on the Promotion of Equality addressed to the civil servants working at the public administration of Andalusia.** Recently (22/05/2007) has been approved the project of law by the Council of Government.

Among the innovations that the project of law includes, it is necessary to remark the **extension of the permission of paternity to the parents or adopters of the same sex.** The civil servants of the autonomic administration **will enjoy this right for 4 additional weeks** (added to the 15 days established to national level).

The text gathers as general principles: the work life balance, the development of measures of positive action in favour of women, the balanced representation of both sexes among the high charges of the autonomic Administration and the promotion of a language and a public image not sexist.

With regard to the employment, the text considers as principal aim increasing the participation of women in the labour market. To get it, it **incentives the stable contracting of women, fundamentally in those sectors where have a small presence.** Besides, it will watch over the equality in the remunerations and there will be paid special attention in women with several reasons of discrimination (disability, victims of violence, old than 45 years).

According with the text, the government of Andalusia and the public companies will elaborate, with certain periodicity, **plans of equality of opportunities, adopting measures of flexibility to get the work life balance in the public employment.** With regard to the private companies, the law propose the creation of grants to favour the **establishment of childcares and other services in the working centres.**

In the educational area, is foreseen to **promote the coordination between labour and educational schedules;** to guard over the fulfilment of the values of equality through the services of inspection.

In all the managerial centres dependent on the government of Andalusia, the representation of both sexes among the persons who have high charges will have to be at least of 40 %.

The other hand, the **department of Employment of the government of Andalusia** has thrown a **call for tenders addressed to support projects that promote the work life balances of self-employment people.** The aim of this call for tenders is to support projects of study, investigation or actions on this matter. It is addressed to public and private entities.

Navarre Government:

The purpose of the Program "**Agreements for work life balance**" is to support the local authorities and other agents of the local environment in the search of shared solutions to face the challenges and needs that rise from the incorporation of women to the labour

world. It also aims to favour the development of a common responsibility with regard to the tasks derived from the private and family life.

The above mentioned program **aims the signature of a Local Agreement in every local authority of the Navarre territory**. The document that be signed, will have to be formulated from the participation and the local commitment.

This Program arose from the effort of the administration of the government of Navarre, through the Navarre Institute for Equality in collaboration with the Navarre Federation of Municipalities and Councils, for finding formulas of cooperation in the local environment that facilitate progressively a commitment in order to get a work life balance.

In 2005 there were signed 14 Local Agreements and in 2006 two more. 16 signed agreements that affect to 31 municipalities with a total population of 145.641 inhabitants, 72.885 men and 72.756 women.

The Plan of Work foreseen in the programme has the following steps:

1. Call for tenders addressed to the entities, agents and relevant persons of the municipalities.
2. Organization to elaborate the agreement. Establishment of the organizational structure.
3. Design and draft of the Agreement.
 - Diagnosis of the situation
 - Aims of the agreement
 - Definition of actions
 - Calendar
 - Resources
4. Signature of the commitment in the framework of a "Local Agreement for Work Life Balance".
5. Public diffusion.

The aim of the programme is formulate a Local Agreement for Work Life Balance in which are annually defined the measures to implement, the persons in charge of carrying out this measures and the involved organisations as well as the convenient budgets. The agreements will have in consideration the available resources in the municipality as well as those more general to disposal of the government of Navarra.

Castilla y León Government:

The Government of Castilla y León has assigned more than one million euros to promote **work life balance in the rural area**.

The project, named Regional Strategy of Work life balance, which have more than 100 measures to promote the policies of work life balance is considered one of the priorities of the regional government.

The aim of the programme is the **creation of public services addressed to take care of children minor than three years old in the municipalities of rural areas.**

Castilla la Mancha Government:

The Institute of Women of Castilla y La Mancha have several initiatives addressed to favour work life balance.

Kanguras programme:

The KANGURAS programme is a free service of support to women with familiar responsibilities by part of qualified staff. The beneficiaries have to be women who live in Castilla la Mancha with a series of economic, social, educational and familiar difficulties. The evaluation of each case will be realized by the technical services of the correspondent municipality.

This programme (and corresponding aid) can be applied by the city councils of Castilla La Mancha that have resources for the management of the above-mentioned service in its territorial area, or that demonstrate its commitment to create them.

The general aim of this programme is increase the quality of life of families made up by a woman with dependent person to her charge, as well as improves the professional qualification of these women fomenting its access to the labour market.

In addition, the service has the following specific aims:

- To offer a service of persons' care at home attended by qualified professionals.
- To facilitate the care of the minor children of women who remain in a refuge house.
- To raise the number of women incorporated to the labour market and to the social participation.
- To anticipate situations of discrimination and social exclusion for single-parent family with familiar charges not shared.
- To have a program of solidarity in a social advanced environment where the needs of citizens are attended and reverberate in a good way in the whole population.
- To contribute to the implantation in the public institutions of policies of equality.

In addition, the Department of Employment of the government of Castilla y La Mancha has another measures addressed to get work life balance. Among them are the following:

- Grants to companies and entities without spirit of profit that establish, in agreement with workers, flexible strategies of organization of work to favour work life balance in order to increase the competitiveness of companies, especially of SMEs of Castilla La Mancha. Particularly, there are three lines of grants:
 - o Elaboration of work life balance Plan.
 - o Development of work life balance Plan.
 - o Formalization of contracts of work for the substitution of workers substitution that use the work life balance rights.
- Grants for the expenses derived from the contracting of unemployed persons, especially women, who replace the self-employed worker during the period of permission of maternity or adoption. Of another hand, there is also subsidized the re-incorporation of the self-employed person in the period included between the six and sixteen week from the delivery or adoption.
- Aids to favour the reduction of the working day, enjoyment of extended leaves of absence or suspension of labour contracts to favour work life balance.
- Aids for employees, for the expenses derived from the services of care of their children.

III. SUPRAMUNICIPAL LEVEL:

Deputation of Barcelona- Ressor Project

The Deputation of Barcelona is carrying out a project on Social Responsibility of Enterprises (SRE) "Ressor project" in the framework of the community initiative Equal. This project involve to 14 different entities; among them, 6 municipalities of the territory.

The aim of the Ressor project is to promote social responsibility among small and medium enterprises of the territory. The Ressor project understands the RSE in a wide way. Particularly, it remarks 4 main areas: environment and labour safety, management of diversity and labour contracting, relation of the company with the territory and work life balance.

The project has developed several tools to help companies to implement this kind of performances. Among these tools, it is necessary to remark the **Guide of Equality and Work Life Balance (WLB)** where is introduced a theoretical framework of the subject as well as different kind of measures that the small companies can adopt to get WLB. All this is done making visible the benefices that this kind of practice can imply for the company.

In the framework of the project each entity has to carry out the following phases:

Diagnosis: analyse the estate of determinate number of companies of its territory with regard to social responsibility. It has been created an on-line questionnaire to do it.

Diagnosis in depth: through an interview with the manager director of the company and with the help of expertise as well as the methodological guides developed, etc., the technician of the entity have to orientate the company towards the best social responsibility strategy in function of the sector, dimension and particular characteristics of the company.

Implementation of some specific measures of social responsibility with the help of expertise. It has to be done an action plan for some of companies participating in the project, in terms of social responsibility.

Deputation of Bizkaia:

Xertatu is an initiative led by the Deputation of Bizkaia (Department of Innovation and Economic Promotion) that integrates to multitude of organizations of the territory (Chamber of Trade of Bilbao, Deusto's University, organizations without spirit of profit, etc.). It aims to promote the Social Responsibility (RSE) among the Smes of Bizcaia.

Xertatu's methodology helps companies to manage its social responsibility. It has the purpose of orientating and providing a battery of tools to SMEs in order they can advance in the processes of management with regard to the performances with economic, social and environmental impact.

Xertatu is based on systems of constant improvement and facilitates the strategic and systematic management of the social responsibility. It has as the core of the managerial strategy the expectations of interested parts and the principle of innovation.

Xertatu have an itinerary composed by different phases:

1. Phase I:

- To generate expectations among the companies of Bizkaia
- To sensitise and to inform to the companies of the territory about the social responsibility - Development of the web RSE of Bizkaia
- Formation of the group of work Xertatu.

2. Phase the II:

- To create a corporate group that becomes the promoter among the companies of Bizcaia.
- To extend RSE's knowledge among companies.
- To foment the exchange of good practices.
- Technical assistance SRE's implantation in companies.

3. Phase the III:

- To support the implantation of the socially responsible management among the companies.
- To spread and recognize the socially labour of the companies in RSE.

Andalusia federation of municipalities and provinces:

In the framework of the " Ítaca, Employment and Equality in local key" project, of the community initiative Equal, the Andalusia Federation of municipalities and provinces has carried out the **Forum of Cities for Work Life Balance**. The aim was to become an instrument of participation of the local agents in work life balance subjects.

It was conceived as a public space of participation to debate among citizenship and social agents on new forms of organisation of work, the share of the familiar responsibilities between women and men, etc. The intention was to become a space of debate, reflection and critique, as well as a space of validation of experiences and of commitments to advance in new proposals or projects that allow advancing into a most egalitarian society.

The aims of the Forum have been the following:

- Consolidate the debate on work life balance initiated by the feminist movement and adopted for the EU.
- Promote cities and citizenship awareness in the need and convenience of submitting to debate, for its transformation, the ways of organization of the society.
- Suggest and stimulate to organizations, social agents and public administrations, as well as the civil society, in order to start experiences in this area.
- Spread practical experiences of interest on work life balance, capable of being transferable to the characteristics and realities of the Andalusia society.

It has been published a document with the results of the Forum of Cities where have been exposed the main conclusions.

IV. LOCAL LEVEL:

Work life balance is a very fashionable subject at this moment in Spain. That's why the most part of city councils have developed some sensitise action in this field (seminaries, workshops, etc.) addressed to companies of the territory or to another kind of entities.

Having this fact into account we will remark some local experience with regard to work life balance that be more innovative or go further.

Madrid city council:

The city council of Madrid has promoted a **Network of Companies for work life balance** in the city of Madrid. The aim is to promote among enterprises of Madrid the working conditions that allow a better balance between familiar, personal and labour life of the citizenship through the promotion of those alternatives that suppose cultural and structural changes in favour of work life balance.

Particularly, the city council has signed an **agreement with 10 companies of the city**. According to this agreement, the signatory companies are committed to develop different measures orientated to provide to its staff the possibility of making compatible their professional and personal life.

The city council will give to the companies the incentives and the institutional support that they need; offering individualized advice to the companies with regard to work life balance; it will create the logo of the network of companies for work life balance that the signatories will be able to use, and will grant to the company that develops the best alternative of management of time of work with the prize "Cronos, companies for an equitable distribution of time".

The agreement will have effect until December 31, 2007, and will be extended of automatic way by complete annuities, until a maximum of four consecutive years from the beginning.

This initiative has been carried out in the framework of the project " Madrid, Companies and Work Life Balance", financed jointly by the Social European Fund by means of the initiative community Equal, in which numerous institutions participate to stimulate the equality in the labour work. The aim of this project is to promote work life balance in the municipality of Madrid. In this respect, emphasis is done in the identification and promotion of those good practices of the organizations, which suppose cultural and structural changes in the favour of a work life balance.

Another interesting experience carried out by the city council of Madrid is the **market research** of the territory in order **to know the opportunities of entrepreneurship of services to support work life balance**.

Barcelona city council:

The city council of Barcelona has started up a package of measures and performances searching the adequacy of schedules and urban uses, to adapt them to the citizenship style of life. The idea is to rethink the city in key of time, having into account the needs of population to conciliate private and working life and integrate them inside the urban space.

To start up this model the city council has created the **councillorship of new social uses of time** that stimulates and coordinates a program addressed to implement the policies of the time in the city. Among the measures adopted by this councillorship stands out the creation of the **Network of companies of New Use of Time (Nust)** whose aim is to promote the exchange of knowledge with regard to the new uses of the time among the

companies of the city of Barcelona. This is a way of making visibly the task of the innovative companies of the city in topics of use of time.

The **aims of the Network** of companies NUST are:

- To stimulate the beginning and development of a public recognition to reward the innovative effort of companies of the city with regard to the time of people.
- To share synergies with the social agents of the city who work to improve the time of the persons.
- To collaborate in experiences and good practices in use of the time that are starting up in the city to get that Barcelona become a pioneering city in work life balance.

The **main principles for the NUST** initiative are the following:

- Knowledge and analysis of the reality
- To experiment and to stimulate good practices
- Dialogue and collaboration with all the involved agents
- To generate debate and to sensitise the society

With the support of the Deputation of Barcelona it has been created a web to experiment and to make visible these policies: www.bcn.es/nust

Burgos city council:

The city council of Burgos, in collaboration with other entities (Chamber of Trade of the city, Castilla y León government, etc.) and in the framework of an Equal initiative, has edited a **Guide addressed to industrial companies on “How to implant a work life balance plan”**. This guide tries to orientate the first steps of the company for implanting a plan like this. Usually it demands a deep change in the company.

We have also identified **other interesting experiences in the territory of Catalonia:**

Mataró city council:

The department of Economic Promotion of the city council of Mataró has carried out a **study of identification of good practices on social responsibility among the companies of the city**. The methodology used to make the study has been the following:

- Phase of communication and sensitise to companies of the city.
- Questionnaire, Surveys
- Interview in depth

Among the good practices detected we have to remark two of them related to work life balance:

1. A company dedicated to the attention of old people has inside its staff a high number of women with family responsibilities, fact that generates a high demand of flexibility schedules. This fact has taken to the company to define schedules adapted to each worker and to adapt these schedules to the needs of the costumers.
2. A company dedicated to the implantation of technologies of the information and the communication and their main aim is offering a global solution to its costumers. The good practice of this company consists in the implantation of a auto-management system. It seeks to escape of systems of control that could be unproductive. It is based in the confidence in the persons as well as in their responsibility for getting the aims raised by the organization. This system would not be successful without the disposition of a human team with the necessary aptitudes and attitudes to carry out it.

Sabadell city council:

The Department of Economic Promotion of the city council of Sabadell has a **free service of childcare** in order **to attend the needs of users and staff**. The department had detected that many potential users of the service could not be present at their training courses for having to take care of the children. This fact provoked the creation of a free service of child-care that at the same time has served to attend the needs of the workers of the department. This service is given by unemployed people in training period. It let them get an experience of work at the same time that gets some money.

V. OTHER KIND OF ORGANIZATIONS:

The **Foundation + Family** certifies best companies in terms of work life balance (certificates social responsible enterprises). This certificate has been created by the Foundation + Family with the support of the national Department of Employment and Social Matters. There are 33 organizations (12 in 2006 and 21 in 2007) that have obtained the Certificate.

The aim of the Foundation + Family is to obtain a social change in the way of understanding work and certain social aspects. It tries to stimulate the incorporation of work life balance into the managerial policies. This certificate recognizes those organizations that have incorporated an integral system of management on Social Internal Responsibility, especially in the area of work life balance and equality of opportunities.

The Foundation + Family have the collaboration of professional entities specialized in consultancy, formation and certification that participate in an active way in the design, implantation and evaluation of the Model SRE. This is a model of management that must incorporate in its human resources policies those companies that want to obtain this certificate.

The **Royal Academy of Economic Sciences and Finances** has elaborated together with a group of businessmen and social agents a document on social responsibility of companies that could be **the base for a new university subject on this topic**. It also contains a series of recommendations for public policies and a guide addressed to the companies.

The **Foundation Viladecans city** has elaborated a “**Guide of co-responsibility: for men who want to get work life balance**”. This is the last action carried out by the Foundation in the framework of the European project "The role of men and parents in work life balance ". In this guide it is possible to find practical information related to the care of children and dependent persons as well as distribution of the domestic tasks. According to the vital cycle, the guide is divided in 4 big blocks: care of the childbirth from 0 to three years, care of children from 3 to 12 years, care of dependent persons and distribution of the domestic tasks.

At the same time, each of these big blocks is subdivided in: useful information, legislative innovations, legal rights of men and services and available resources in Viladecans, in the neighbouring administrations and in other administrations. On the other hand, in the paragraph dedicated to the distribution of the domestic tasks is treated the subject of the use of the time with the statement in first person of men who have taken part in the workshops of the project.

This guide has been sent by CD Rom to educational centres, associations of mothers and parents and to entities of the municipality; to the city council and to different public points. The guide is available through Internet in the following website: www.viladecans.net.

VI. PRIVATE COMPANIES:

Among the **good practices of work life balance in private companies** have been detected a lot of different actions. We have summarized in the following ones:

- Extension or improvement of the maternal and paternal permissions.
- Hourly flexibility of entry and exit.
- Modification or rotation of turns for personal or familiar reasons.
- Reorganization of the time of work: in function of the needs of the worker in order to proportionate him more autonomy.
- Telework: possibility of making a percentage of the hours of work at home.
- Optimisation of the time of movement to the working place (ex. To have a schedule that avoids the rush hours, especially for people working at industrial polygons; have programmes for sharing cars, etc.).
- Weekly /monthly calculation of hours. It let workers to have flexibility to make more hours one day and less another, always making the agreed hours per week/month, etc.
- Services to the persons of the company. It is a question of offering to the worker a series of services that needs and that take him time or have an added-cost so it make difficult his permanency at the company. Ex: Dining room, medical service, professional advice, transport, etc.

- Retributions or compensations for personal responsibilities. It is a question of trying to improve the economic situation of the workers with familiar responsibilities (ex. child-care ticket, assurances of health, etc.).

In general, it's not difficult to find examples of good practices on work life balance among big companies. Moreover, it is a very fashionable topic at present and mass media speak very often about that. The challenge will be, nevertheless, to get that small and micro-companies, usually with many fewer resources, start to implement this kind of performances inside its internal structures.

The role of the public administration in this field should be to accompany companies of this dimension in the search of the best work life balance strategy adapted to them.

Finally, it is important to emphasize the fact that the most of the work life balance policies are being implemented in the framework of the community initiative Equal that allows to develop this type of actions with European Union funding. However, it is necessary to see the political commitment of the administrations to give continuity to this kind of performances without having European funding.