WORK-FAMILY RECONCILIATION POLICIES IN SPANISH SME’s

Do SME’s have work-family reconciliation policies?

Even though the majority of Spanish companies are SME’s, business research tends to focus on large companies. This especially holds true when examining the issue of work-family reconciliation. Are Spanish SME’s family-responsible? What type of work-family reconciliation policies do they practice? To find out more, the ICWF has initiated research focusing on SME’s, and the preliminary results are in.

According to the National Statistical Institute, around 48% of companies in Spain have between one and 200 employees. About 51% of them are single-person companies, and only 0.18% have more than 200 employees. In light of this, it would be reasonable to expect business research to mainly focus on small and medium-sized companies (SME’s), but the reality is far from this, especially in the subject of work-family reconciliation.

The ICWF has initiated research that involves exporting the FREI analysis to small and medium-sized companies. The study currently underway (not yet available) has already yielded interesting conclusions that deserve further reflection:

- Of the SME’s surveyed, 71% are on level C of the FRE; that is, they already have some work-family reconciliation policies in place but they are not often practiced. This situation becomes even more acute for companies with fewer than 20 employees.
- Generally speaking, small companies allow more flexible schedules, while the larger ones stand out for their use of leaves of absence and telecommuting.
- Professional support / counselling / training and family services remain the exclusive realm of large companies.
- Even though FRE leadership – meaning executives’ awareness of the issue – shows slightly higher values in SME’s than in large companies, the budget is often not ample enough to implement work-family reconciliation programs.

Methodology:
The study sample is made up of 2,205 small and medium-sized companies, 99% of them located in the Community of Madrid. More than 65% of the companies in the sample have fewer than 20 employees, and the main sectors represented are retail and the hotel and restaurant industry.

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