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Abstract for Stream 17: The Role of Employers in Pensions, Childcare and Active Labour Market Policy

Rethinking Workplace Childcare in the Context of Diversity Initiatives – The Case of Hungary

The present research explores the extent, the types and the drivers of childcare provisions introduced by the workplaces in Hungary.

Before the Transition approximately 10% of day-care centres were operated by workplaces in Hungary. But within five years from 1990 to 1995 the number of both municipal and workplace day-care institutions have dropped dramatically by half. In case of workplaces, it was the easiest way to cut costs in areas not belonging to the core profile of the company. In this period many companies were under privatisation and the general argument articulated referred to the outdated nature of continuing workplace welfare institutions inherited from the socialist era. As a result, by 2006 there were only 9 company-run day-care services in Hungary. In the past few years there have been a slow renewal of workplace childcare solutions and a search for new, more flexible practices.

The research, based on two online company surveys carried out in 2008 and 2010, investigates whether initiatives for workplace childcare, as providing day-care or kindergarten services, summer camps for children, a separate room for breast-feeding, and other family based benefits and programs, have increased in the last two years or not. Besides mapping the major trends, the research explores the extent to which company-based childcare solutions form part of an integrated and proactive approach towards other diversity management practices. In addition to the surveys, five company case studies were carried out to unfold the rationale and drivers of the new workplace childcare initiatives.