

Diversity in the Swiss Labour Market of International Cooperation



Key Findings and Recommendations

Is the issue of diversity in the Swiss labour market of IC (International Cooperation) adequately addressed and promoted? 16 IC organisations* participated in a survey conducted by cinfo and BASS that focused on gender equality and the promotion of women's careers, possible wage discrimination, age and cultural diversity, and the inclusion of people with disabilities. The results show that concrete implementation measures are still lacking in various areas. Recommendations are provided that would allow organisations to improve in these areas.

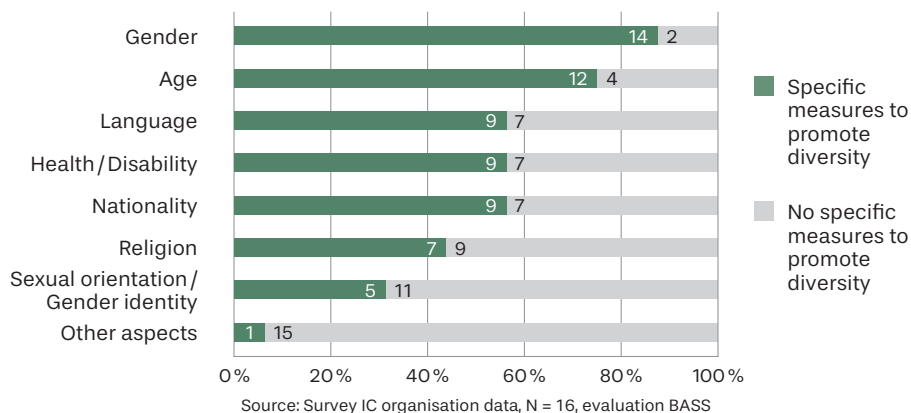
*2,380 employees – 1,465 women and 915 men – 4 large organisations +150 employees, 12 small ones -150 employees

Diversity measures: gender and age are issues, but ...

... what about disability, nationality, sexual orientation and religion?

Gender and diversity analysis examines how well employees are integrated and respected in an organisation in terms of gender, age, language, health / disability, nationality, religion and sexual orientation, among other things, and what concrete measures and tools are used to promote

these various aspects of diversity. As the diagram shows, the organisations surveyed have implemented concrete measures to support diversity, primarily in the areas of gender and age. Half of the organisations are active in the areas of language, disability and nationality, although concrete implementation measures are still lacking in some cases. The issues of religion and sexual orientation are actively addressed by only a minority of organisations.

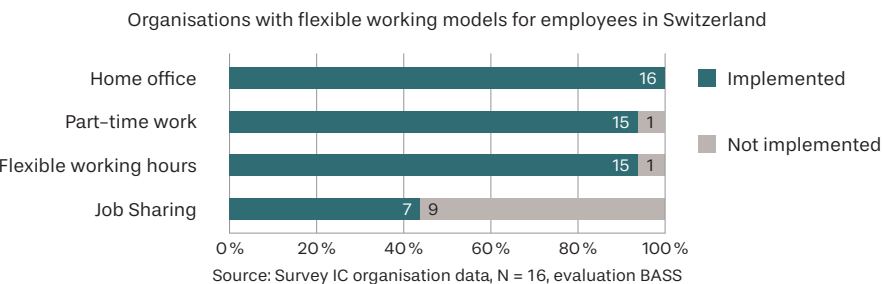


Balancing work and family:

Are flexible working models sufficiently widespread?

All surveyed organisations offer their employees in Switzerland the option of working from home (data recorded before the COVID-19 pandemic). Part-time work and flexible working hours are also common. The option of part-time work is more prevalent in management positions with a

minimum workload of 60-80% (in Switzerland). Job and top sharing exist in less than half of the organisations. More than half of the organisations offer 16 weeks of paid maternity leave. 13 organisations offer paternity leave, in some organisations of up to 15 days. However, only one organisation pays employees a contribution for the costs of private childcare.



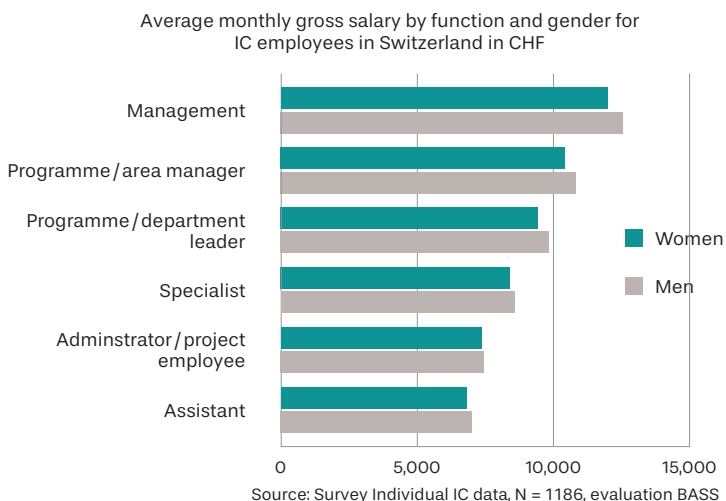
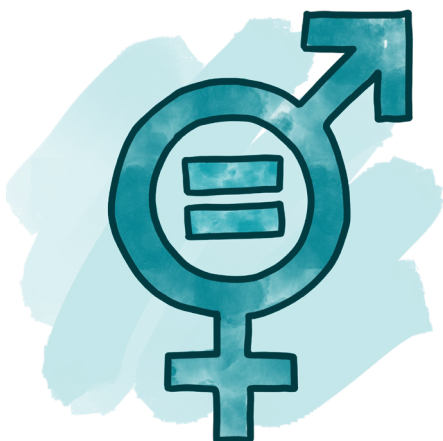
"MSF-SWITZERLAND DECIDED TO TRIAL A 'TANDEM SYSTEM / JOB SHARING' IN WHICH TWO COMPETENT EMPLOYEES SHARED THE SAME FUNCTION. THE IDENTIFIED EMPLOYEES WORKED FOR TWO YEARS IN THE IRAQ MISSION ON TWO-MONTHLY ROTATIONS BASED ON THEIR PERSONAL SITUATION."

ROYA MILANI, HR PROJECT MANAGER, MSF-SWITZERLAND

Gender equality: the IC sector is relatively progressive

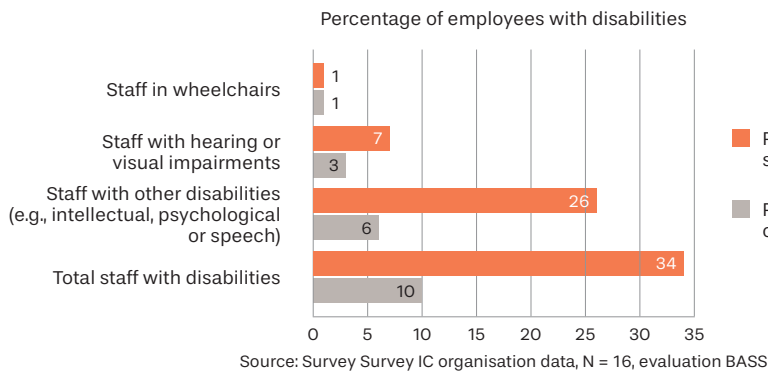
On average, women earn less than men in the surveyed organisations. This wage difference can generally be explained through variables such as training, function, and years of service or work, although a disparity of 1.4% cannot be explained (wage discrimination). Women are more frequently employed in positions with lower responsibilities than men, which also tends to be true for personnel abroad. While gender quotas are sometimes used to increase the proportion of women in management positions, only 7 of

the 16 organisations surveyed have established a women's quota for certain management functions, with a target of between 30% to 50% women in these positions. All of these 7 organisations state that the quotas have been reached. In about one-third of the organisations surveyed, an employee interview takes place shortly after a woman returns from maternity leave. Coaching measures and mentoring programmes for female managers are not common.

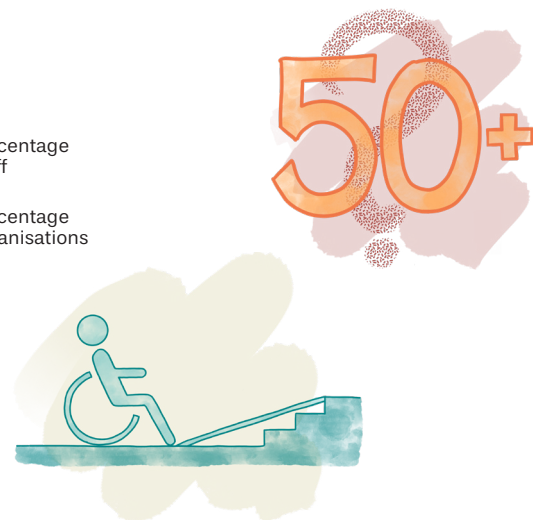


Barrier-free workplaces and age diversity

10 of the organisations employ people with disabilities, who make up less than 5% of the total workforce. About one-third of the organisations state that their structural facilities at least partly comply with the 'SIA 500' standard for autonomous access to personal workplaces and usability of common spaces. Other organisations did not respond



to this question or stated it is not possible to meet the standard. In terms of organisational measures to support age diversity, most consciously create age-diverse teams. In the majority of organisations, older employees (50+) usually have the option of reducing their working hours.



Big vs. small: more diverse measures in bigger organisations

Large organisations have implemented noticeably more diversity measures at the structural and individual level than smaller organisations. This is particularly striking in terms of addressing issues of diversity among employees abroad.

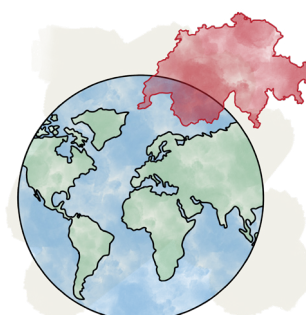


"OUR ORGANISATION CONSIDERS THE ISSUE OF DIVERSITY AS FUNDAMENTAL TO HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT. TDH IS STRIVING FOR GENDER PARITY ON THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES IN TWO YEARS AND WILL HAVE 50% MALE AND FEMALE DIRECTORS ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD FROM JUNE 2021. TO ACHIEVE THIS, TDH RELIES ON ITS DIVERSITY GOALS."

BARBARA HINTERMANN, DIRECTOR GENERAL, TERRE DES HOMMES (TDH)

Switzerland vs. abroad: Switzerland offers more flexible options

Working models that facilitate a better work – life balance are common for employees in Switzerland, but tend to be used less by Swiss IC organisations abroad. The option of part-time work is less available in the majority of management positions based abroad.



Towards more concrete measures

While guidelines, codes of conduct, mission statements and diversity manager positions exist, most organisations still lack concrete implementation strategies, review procedures and mentoring in certain aspects of the issue of diversity.



10 recommendations to facilitate diversity and inclusion

The following measures are recommended to increase diversity in the international cooperation labour market:

- Part-time work, flextime management, job and top sharing, and flexible annual working hours should be implemented wherever possible across hierarchical levels to improve work-life balance.
- These flexible measures should be systematically trialled in senior positions. HR management is encouraged to test the feasibility of these options abroad (also in fragile contexts), where they are currently much less common. Where possible, dual careers should be considered.
- Providing financial support for childcare would enable organisations to better facilitate work-life balance.
- Systematic monitoring of the wage gap between women and men in the IC sector should be continued, even though the unexplained gap is relatively small.
- Gender quotas have proved to be successful in increasing the proportion of women in management positions. Organisations that have implemented a quota for women have quickly reached a proportion of women of between 30% to 50%, depending on the organisation.
- Coaching and mentoring programmes should be used more frequently. A further increase in the percentage of women in management positions could be achieved through targeted internal training and the option of a contact position/person to support specific groups of female employees.
- Workspaces and common areas such as meeting rooms, toilets, canteens, etc. must be made independently accessible (without requiring assistance) for people with disabilities.
- Age-diverse teams and the option of reduced working hours for older employees (50+) are prerequisites for ensuring intergenerational balance.
- Organisations are encouraged to examine the exemplary measures of organisations that are more advanced in diversity issues (e.g., “Best Practices” and “Learning Journeys”) to effectively implement these various inclusion measures.
- The above-listed measures are less likely to be implemented in the fragile contexts of the humanitarian sector. Therefore, positive examples and models should be widely shared within this sector from which others can learn.

