

Do companies in Spain value Diversity and work/life practices?

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Globalisation is challenging the sustainable development of institutions and its peoples all over the world. As Diversities become the true nature of the global and local scenarios, companies turn to their Human Capital as their critical resource to increase innovation and creativity; to reduce structural and operational costs; to improve corporate profits. Today and in the future, Managing Diversity is a corporate commitment and strategy that organisations must develop to achieve results through the integration and satisfaction at work of their Human Capital to leverage their contribution to corporate objectives. Work/Life programs are therefore a cornerstone of the new way of managing companies and its peoples. Integrating diverse employees to successfully approach and service diverse clients, diverse suppliers, diverse shareholder, diverse stakeholders in the different parts of the world / markets / sectors; become a business imperative.

The European Institute for Managing Diversity in collaboration with Dr Carmen Dominguez, head of the Department of Sociology and Organisational Analysis of the University of Barcelona, have conducted the present research in the field of Diversity and Work/Life policies. During the years 2000 and 2001, the European Institute for Managing Diversity was commissioned by the European Union initiative ; Leonardo Da Vinci to carry out a research at European level. The result of that project was a Case Based report that evaluated the attitude towards Diversity awareness and Work/Life practices of companies in Europe.

Research objectives

The present research aims at monitoring the information in that report.

- That is, the awareness and level of implementation of Diversity policies and Work/Life practices of companies operating in Spain ; while comparing to companies operating in other European countries and the United States.

And at the same time analyse :

- The Work/Life policies implemented by companies based in and outside of Spain.
- The availability of Work/ Life vendors that operate in Spain to give support to companies when they implement Work / Life schemes .
- The degree to which companies in Spain tend to outsource their Work /Life programs.
- Whether corporations in Spain tend to optimise Work/ Life programs in their company.

Methodology:

The research considers two main segments of organizations. On one hand a sample of 400 companies, either operating in Spain or abroad (United States and Europe), that covers all sectors of activities: such as financial services, automobiles, consulting, telecommunication. Companies recognised for their strategic management of Human Resources. And on the other hand, a sample of 100 Work /Life service vendors, in Spain or abroad, that offer Work /Life support schemes to companies for their employees.

Questionnaires were sent and collected by e-mail, post, telephone or in personal interviews

Results from Companies

Level of Awareness

Level of awareness and active implementation of Diversity and Work/Life policies found in the research shows that

- 100% of the companies abroad replied positively

- while only 73% of the companies in Spain have a degree of awareness related to Diversity and Work/Life policies as a corporate strategy

Therefore there has been a significant shift in the past 2 years regarding the behaviour of companies in Spain; as the level of awareness detected by the "Case Based Report on Diversity in Europe" in 2001 was as low as 1% in the companies research at the time.

Work/Life balance programs

There are two outstanding features to be taken into consideration when addressing the availability of Work/Life services in Spain

- A first aspect to consider what are that the critical differences or similarities in the range of Work/ Life schemes offered. There are specific work life schemes that are implemented more by firms abroad, while companies in Spain tend to offer other types of Work/ Life balance support to their employees.
- In the second place, the fact that for companies abroad the extend of services provided tends to be standard and high, while in Spain this behaviour is more dispersed. Some companies in Spain provide an outstanding range of Work/Life schemes, showing a high commitment towards work/life balance and diversity practices; while other express no intention in implementing such policies.

Description of Services

71% of the companies abroad are oriented towards providing employees with information services, approximately three times more in comparison to the companies in Spain. Some services such as management training on work/family balance, and general information about domestic and family needs are provided only by 9% of the companies

within Spain, while information on elderly care centres is actually not provided by any of the companies operating in Spain which participated in this phase of the research.

The fact that companies in Spain have low awareness regarding the need of elderly care goes against demographic evidence ;

- according to the UN 21,8% of the Spanish population is currently over 60 years of age and 44% will be in this age group by 2050, (source: April 9th, 2003 from <http://www.madrid2002.envejecimiento.org/solotexto/espaf101/texprensa27-2-2001.htm> .)

It should be highlighted that while in Spain Maternity/Paternity support is a service established by many companies (82% in Spain in comparison to 71% abroad) the reality is that the birth rate in Spain is as low as 1.242 children per women which makes it the lowest birth-rate in the world , (Source www.ine.es retrieved on December 4th 2002.)

In the care services domain the differences between companies in and outside of Spain are more diverse.

- It is notable that 73% of the companies in Spain are providing some kind of Scholarship and educational projects to their employees,
- While only 29% of the companies abroad are giving education support.

Several factors can influence this increase in life-long learning by companies in Spain to their employees.

- There is a culture in Spain for "life-time" employment: both by the labour system as well as by the society itself. This evidently forces companies to constantly re-train their employees into new technologies and knowledge.
- Another reason is the "gap" between the competence requirement from the labour market and the competence of the students when they finish their formal education.

- Then according to 2001 report of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, (ODCE) only 35.1% of Spanish adults hold upper level degrees against 62% average of the 29 countries analysed in the research (Source : <http://www1.oecd.org/publications/e-book/0102071E.PDF> on December 4th 2002).

Juan José Dolado , Dean of the Carlos III University states:

“the state has forgotten the need of professional education”

(sources: La Vanguardia newspaper of December 1st, 2002

and Dinero (magazine)

As for the other care services:

Companies abroad offer approximately 30% more Work/Life programs to their Human Capital, particularly in:

- Support for the disables
- Elderly care

Home Services: In this area, a low level of activity shown by companies operating within and outside of Spain. Some relevant aspects:.

- Concierge services in general are more popular abroad; 29% in comparison to 18% within Spain.
- On the other hand shopping services (18%) are more frequently included in the Work/Life package in Spain. A major reason is the structure of the retail sector, which is highly legislated in Spain. Small retailers have the same opening and closing time than the business sector which makes it very difficult for the working population to do their shopping in convenience stores in their neighborhood .
- Then it is mainly large supermarkets that open on weekends and open in extended hours during the week.
- Transportation service schemes is still a high priority, offered by 27% of the companies in Spain, where on the other hand it is well known that distance working is still not a generally practiced policy.

- While Catering services were only offered in Spain (one company), Gift services were only offered abroad.

Consulting services are part of Work/Life support offered to employees both by companies in Spain and abroad.

Again it is interesting to see that only 64% of the companies in Spain, participating in the project, have retirement plans - which seems a contradiction given the high rate of the ageing, this in comparison to the 86% of the companies abroad.

In both groups the most popular schemes were Career Planning, Retirement Plans and Fiscal/Taxation/Legal services. The implementation degree is higher abroad as it was found to be 86% across all the three schemes while in Spain 64% of the companies offer Career Planning and Retirement Plans and 45.5% offer Fiscal/taxation services.

An analysis of the Insurance services show quite different behaviours between organisations based in and outside of Spain:

- Travel accident insurance coverage is offered at the same level across the two groups.
- Home insurance is provided more in Spain
- Life insurance more by companies abroad

The reason for the lower health care schemes offered by companies operating in Spain might be the broad social medical system that provides free health care to all residents and immigrants that live in Spain.

As for Entertainment services companies have different priorities

- while some services such as Travel services, and Internet sales are provided more by companies abroad.
- other services such as Home Delivery and Holiday Exchange are provided by companies in Spain only.

- Tickets for Entertainment events are implemented at the same degree in Spain and abroad.

Unspecified services:

As for other unspecified Work/Life schemes the range is quite diverse to respond to the diverse needs of the company employees as well as to the corporate Work/Life policy

Social oriented programs offered abroad by companies to give support to the family:

- Adoption assistance (financial aid)
- Relocation program- designed to address the major concerns of transferring families (financial, assistance to relocate working spouses, choosing facilities, assistance in buying and selling homes etc.).
- Financial aids to support variety of work and family related events.
- Environmental programs. Some qualitative highlights:

Environmental Programs:

As explained by Catherine Ruyer, Patagonia Europe's HR Director,

Environmental initiatives is a corporate objective that

gives a meaning to the professional life of the employees. This is done through a program that offers the employees the possibility to participate in the environmental committee, that manages 1% of the company's turnover to environmental organisations, and the environmental internship programs which allows the employees to take part in an environmental association for two months - while retaining the job and the salary.

Flexible working practices:

Mr. Surinda Sharma Diversity director of Ford of Europe reports on the high level of flex time and care services schemes offered by the company.

Work Life policies are being highly scored by Ford employees and are having an important impact of cost reduction due to employee retention and continuity .

Family and Extended Family Support

As portrayed by Choquette, Kara from Xerox Corporation public relations, the company extends its services to reach the employee's household. The Xerox Merit Scholarship Program provides financial aid to qualified employee's children that can win scholarships on the basis of test scores, academic records and leadership. And the Extended Household Health Care helps with the cost of purchasing health care coverage for household members such as parents, grandparents, siblings, grandchildren, foster children, in-laws, etc

Social oriented examples of schemes offered by companies in Spain:

- Relocation assistance: help in finding housing , schools, etc.
- Social responsibility: (some examples):
 - organising a group of volunteers to go to Galicia to participate in the cleaning activities of the beaches following the environmental disaster of the “Prestige” oil spill (Universities and companies from all over Spain participated)
 - Transportes Metropolitanos organised an outstanding volunteer program to give social support in Bosnia
- Distance Working:

Joan Romagosa Puy of Management System Solutions, explains that the company offers employees the opportunity to work from their home providing the work station

Service Range

Out of 31 Work / Life schemes suggested in the questionnaire:

- For companies operating abroad the range of services is relatively high - 71% of the companies offer between 13-18 of the services mentioned in the questionnaire, and only 29% offer slightly less than 10.
- Companies in Spain have the reverse behaviour. While 18% of the companies offer between 15-25 different services, a very high range, 73% offer only up to 10 schemes with 27% offering 5 or less.

It is also evident that a high proportion of companies in Spain are not fully aware of the impact that Work/ Life balance strategy has on corporate results. 67% of the companies in Spain that mentioned Work / Life balance is not a priority for them are actually initiating a relatively high number of such schemes. Only they do not consider it as a strategic tool. In contrast, the companies that implement the lowest number of such programs, state that Work /Life balance is a corporate policy priority.

Who provides Work / Life balance services

Companies in Spain tend not to rely exclusively on external vendors and tend to take over the logistic when providing the services to their employees.

Chart 1: Service provider

	% Companies abroad	% companies in Spain
Own company	33	60
External Institution (Vendros)	17	0
Both	50	40

Benefits of Work/Life policies

Creation of a inclusive and supportive climate for employees , to leverage diversities as a positive contribution to company objectives.

Over all both companies in and outside of Spain see the contribution of the programs to their company – employee relationship and to the employee performance as very valuable (mostly reporting benefits as either “very much” or “quite much”). Companies reported that very profitable results of these programmes have been a considerable reduction of recruitment and turnover costs and a high retention rate of their present employees. Other remarkable benefits noted by the two groups were; the quality of the working environment, loyalty and trust, team work, motivation, stress management, reduction of absenteeism and interpersonal relationships.

Chart 2: Support to Company-Employee Relationship

	Very much		Quite much		Little		Very little	
	Int.	Spanish	Int.	Spanish	Int.	Spanish	Int.	Spanish
Attract and retain talents	57	36	29	45			14	18
Commitment of employees	57	27	14	45	29	9		18
Quality of working environment	57	45.5	43	45.5		9		
Loyalty and trust	57	64	14	18	29	9		9
Problem solving	29	9	29	73	29		15	18

The measurable employee performance indicators that are closely monitored are:

- higher evaluated contribution to Team Work and Motivation reported by companies in Spain.
- and the higher contribution to Interpersonal relations, Reduction of Absenteeism and Stress management reported by companies abroad.

Research and Measurement

How do companies research before establishing Work/Life policies

Abroad, companies have a higher tendency to research the specific needs of their Human Capital in order to design and implement efficiently their Work/ Life policies. They also tend to use multiple methodologies in this research phase; preferably focus groups.

Companies in Spain, when they carry out barrier analysis before designing Work/life schemes, they use employee research through questionnaires and data base analysis carried out by Human Resource Department as an preferred methodology

Researching needs of the employees:

- 86% of the companies abroad conduct some kind of research before establishing Work/Life programs,
 - 83% of them are using focus groups
 - 67% are using employee survey.
 - and 50% are using data base analysis by HR department.
- only 36% of companies in Spain carry out any type of research before designing their Work/Life schemes.
 - 75% of these companies are using data base analysis and/or employee survey

Of the companies operating abroad that conduct research, 67% are using more than one methodology, and 33% more than two research systems; including Benchmarking and Best Practice standards of the industry.

75% of the companies operating in Spain that conduct a research are using more than one methodology while 50% are using more than two.

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Measuring ROI of Work/Life programs

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Abroad, companies are more focussed on measuring results of their Diversity and Work/Life policies and schemes. Similar to the founding regarding Researching, 86% of the companies abroad and 36% of the companies in Spain measure the benefits and ROI that the Work/Life and Diversity policy programs provide to their company.

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Chart 3: Measurement tools

	% abroad	% Spain		%Abroad	% Spain
Company reports	50	25	Increase /decrease of service volume	17	25
Employee survey	100	50	Profitability analysis	17	25
HR department survey	83	50	Customer satisfaction	33	75
Market research	0	25	Employee turnover	67	50
ROI	33	25	other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 83% of the companies abroad that measure the programs' benefits are using at least 2 ROI measuring indicators, while 67% are using four or more. As for Spain, 50% of the companies are using 3 or more methodologies while 33% are using four or more.
- While more than 83% of the companies abroad are using employee or HR surveys, only 50% of the firms in Spain use such measurement techniques to evaluate the benefits of their policies. Employee turn over and ROI are also more implemented as measurement tools outside of Spain.
- On the other hand Market research information, Service time and Customer satisfaction indicators are more frequently used in Spain.
- For companies abroad, ROI reports are a constant strategic tools. While Spanish companies depend more of client satisfaction evaluation.

Highlights

Of the companies that participated in the project:

- 27% of the leading companies in Spain replied that Work / Life balance is actually not a priority
- 71% of the companies operating abroad offer a Work / Life set to their employees of 13 /18 different Work/Life schemes
- 18% of the companies in Spain that participated in the research offer between 15/25 Work/Life Work/ Life schemes to their employees, while 73% offer less than 10.
- the priorities in the design and implementation of Work /Life schemes vary; while outside of Spain companies offer more social oriented and family care support,

companies in Spain implement more educational and some home maintenance and leisure services to their Human Capital

- companies outside of Spain are more keen to contract an external vendors to provide to their Work Life services.
- companies abroad measure Work / Life schemes by their contribution to corporate profits; while in Spain companies evaluate more employee relationship and the attitude of employees towards the company

Results of the research addressed to Work /Life Vendors

Market Orientation:

All of the Spanish vendors provide their services exclusivity to the Spanish market and with no stated interest to expand abroad . On the other hand 50% of the foreign vendors provide their services to three or more countries and 33% to over 10 countries. 67% of the vendors abroad are interested in expanding their services in the European market (whether they are American or European based).

The main barriers for their expansion to new markets are:

- too little knowledge of the local market (67%)
- budget restriction (50%)
- lack of local demand from companies for Work /Life balance services (33%)

All of the vendors based abroad are providing their services to private and public companies and institutions, while only 17% of them to private homes as a client.

Spanish service suppliers operate with a very different strategy. Only 2 of the service suppliers that participated in the research have companies as clients to give support to their employees in Work/Life balance programs.

All this information can reflect the situation where in Spain Work /Life schemes are not considered as a "business toll" to offer to companies to improve their corporate behaviour and results. Instead of companies, they consider private homes as direct clients to give them family and concierge services. This is a major diverse business focus in comparison with the situation in many other countries where there is a well established company market for such Vendor services.

Work /Life Programs:

While both foreign and local work-life services vendors offer a similar range of services to their clients they differ significantly in the kind of schemes provided.

Description of Services

Information Services

Both foreign and Spanish vendors are oriented towards providing information services.

While schemes such as general information regarding domestic and family needs as well as wellness and health information are provided on an equal basis by vendors based in and outside of Spain (67% and 83%). Other schemes such as information about childcare and elderly are provided by 100% of the foreign vendors and only by 33% of the Spanish ones. As mentioned, while in Spain the birth rate is extremely low the percentage of the elderly population is very high and therefore it is surprising to find the low number of schemes that are designed and offer for this growing segment of the population.

As for Care Services the situation is more diverse. Programs for expectant parents are provided more by the vendors abroad (33% in comparison to 0% in Spain) . Elderly care schemes are provided equally by foreign as well and Spanish vendors (33%). All of the other schemes i.e. scholarships and support for disables are actually provided twice as much by Spanish vendors than by service suppliers based abroad.

Home services is another package of services found to be offered more in Spain than abroad. Concierge services are provided by 67% of the Spanish vendors and by only 17% of the foreign vendors. Other schemes such as. repair, decoration, shopping, catering, pet care etc. are following the same tendency.

As mentioned earlier in Spain Work /Life Services are meant to address private families, and this is could definitely be the main reason for the high number of family and home service suppliers operating in Spain.

Consulting service on the other hand are provided more by vendors abroad than in Spain. Services such as career planning, psychological support, and fiscal are offered by 83% of the foreign vendors and only by 33% of the Spanish, while retirement plans is actually a service not offered by any of the participating Spanish vendors.

Travel and Life services are provided equally the same by both groups (33%), while concierge services are offered only by vendors operating outside of Spain(33%).

As for entertainment services, the Spanish vendors seem to be more keen to provide such schemes and offer up to four times more services such as travel, entertainment tickets, internet sales and home delivery services in comparison to vendors operating abroad.

Some unspecified schemes

Work Life Services' Data Base

As highlighted by Ms. Elisabeth A. Bryenton, president and CEO of Child and Elder Care Insights Inc, an American firm specializes in the provision of dependent care and work life information , the firm provides its clients, private or companies, with a immense data base (the largest in the country) where they can find a pool of needed care services and providers . The firm describes it self as a consumer-centred, technology-driven company

which committed to developing products and services that deliver fast, accurate information customized to the clients needs.

Implementation Support

Personal Performance Consultant UK Ltd, a British EAP firm provides companies with a comprehensive support when implementing Work Life schemes.

As portrayed by Ms Kay Husselbee, Marketing Assistant, and Mr Conal Hatton Sales and Marketing Technical Support such services can come in the way of

- Providing managers with the 'tools' to cope with work/life balance initiatives, whether it is coping with their own ability to deal with workforce effectively or their own self development e.g. interpersonal relationships*
- Additional resource for training and inductions, as well as having the ability to provide coaching, personal counselling can help with issues such as time management*
- Providing ongoing promotion of the EAP to make sure that the work/life balance is continually reinforced*
- Review of work/life balance initiatives through implementation and an inbuilt, ongoing solution through the EAP service provision*

Child Care Centres

As explained by Mr. Javier Pont, the Director of Simphonie, a Spanish company which operates mainly in the Barcelona area, his firm is establishing, in collaboration with its client companies, child care centres in business/working zones. Complying with Spanish regulations each child care centre for children in the 0-3 age range is required to have one care provider for every 8 children, the centres are designed to host a minimum of 70-80 children.

Range of services:

There are no significant differences between the range of services offered by vendors in Spain and abroad.

Out of the 31 selected schemes featured in the research; approximately 60% of the vendors offer a large range of services that consists of over 10 different services/products. As well a relatively low number of the vendors in both groups offer less than five schemes. It is interesting to highlight that one US based company participating in the research offers all of the 31 schemes suggested in the research questionnaire.

Benefits of Work Life Schemes:

Both foreign and Spanish based vendors highly appreciate the contribution of the Work/Life programs to the employees performance and her/his relation with the company.

Contribution to the employee-company relationship:

- attract and retain talents is appreciated quite the same by both (67% across see it as Very High).
- Improving Employees' inclusion and the quality of the working environment are appreciated more by vendors abroad.
- creating an environment of Loyalty and trust and Solving problems for the client are valued more by Spanish vendors as the major client is the household tenants who need this support in order to be able to balance themselves their professional and family duties. In comparison to the 100% in Spain only 50% of the vendors abroad give a very high rating to the benefits for Problem solving.

Chart 4. Benefits to employee performance in the workplace

	Very high		High		Low		Very Low	
	abroad	Spain	abroad	Spain	abroad	Spain	abroad	Spain
Innovation and creativity	17		67	67	17	33		
Team Work	33		50	67	17	33		
Motivation	67	67	33	33				
Stress Management	67	67	17	33	17			
Absenteeism	50	67	50	33				
Interpersonal relations	50	67	33	33	17			

- The benefits to employees' motivation and stress management are valued roughly the same
- The contribution to innovation and creativity are valued more abroad
- The benefits of reducing absenteeism and the interpersonal relations are appreciated more by the Spanish vendors.

Research ad Measurement

Researching client needs prior to implementation

All of the vendors, whether foreign or Spanish conduct a research before launching their services to a company.

- Data base analysis is the methodology most used by vendors abroad (83%) followed by Focus Groups (67%), and Research employee survey (50%)
- Spain vendors use both :data base analysis and employee survey , followed by focus groups- implemented by 33% of the vendors participating in the research.

Measuring . ROI of Work/Life programs

While all of the foreign vendors measure their programs' contribution to clients corporate results, only two thirds of the Spanish service suppliers are involved in measuring and evaluating the results that their service represents to their clients.

Chart 5: Measurement tools

	% abroad	% Spain		% abroad	% Spain
Company reports	50	50	Increase /decrease of service volume	50	50
Employee survey	33	0	Profitability analysis	17	50
HR department survey	50	0	Customer satisfaction	50	100

Market research	17	50	Employee turnover	33	0
ROI	17	0	other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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- The most popular measurement methodology in Spain is Customer satisfaction- implemented by all of the local vendors who measure their programs' benefits. 50% of the vendors abroad use customer satisfaction as part of their measurement tools. Market research and Profitability analysis are also more popular in Spain.
- Service indicators as a measurement tool are used by both groups alike
- Employee and HR department surveys, ROI and Employee turnover indicators are methodologies implemented only by vendors operating outside of Spain.
- 50% percent of the vendors in Spain and abroad are using more than one methodology. to evaluate the contribution that their services represents to their clients

Highlights

Out of the Work /Life Support Vendors that participated in the project:

- All of the vendors based outside of Spain are interested in expanding their services to other countries, mostly to European ones. None of the Spanish vending companies mentioned such goals.
- Abroad, vendors are more oriented towards providing consulting services (i.e. psychological, career planning, legal), and information regarding elderly and child care.
- Spanish vendors are investing more in education, support for the disabled ; and home and entertainment services.
- Vendors abroad valued more the contributions of Work/Life programs to their clients ; Employee integration and participation in corporate objectives; the quality of the working environment ; and the impact on innovation and creativity. The contributions to loyalty and trust, reduction of absenteeism, problem solving and improvement of interpersonal relations is valued more by vendors in Spain.

- In both groups all vendors carry out a preliminary research and use similar methodologies when giving service to companies
- More foreign rather than Spanish vendors measure their programs' results. In general customer satisfaction, service variables, and company reports are the most used techniques.

Conclusions and final words

From the information obtained by this qualitative research, the following observation can be highlighted ..

Work/ Life Services as a Business

It is clear at this point that Work /Life services still have a low market demand in Spain, which is far from the business potential it represents for Vendors in other countries.

Still only 73% of leading companies in Spain replied positively that Work /Life is an interesting policy and tool for their company. It is also important to note that the awareness has varied from a 1% showing in the Diversity in Europe research carried out by the EIMD in 2000-2001; which indicates a major evolution in the awareness of Diversity and Work/Life balance policies in Spain.

Other indicators for such observation are the fact that while most companies in Spain provide such services without external support to their employees; in other western countries the situation is the opposite, as companies are outsourcing to external vendors to expand their range of schemes. The market behaviour shows, that in contract to the situation abroad, most Spanish vendors are directing their services to private homes and not to companies and their employees. Vendors based outside of Spain on the other hand, focus their business strategy on corporations as clients, to give Work/Life balance support to their employees.

Services

It is outstanding that the range of services offered to employees by their companies in and outside of Spain differ.

Some schemes such as Information services (i.e. management training on work/family balance, elderly and childcare centres and services, etc.) and Consulting services are offered more by companies and vendors abroad than in Spain.

Other schemes however such as care services, especially in regards to education, and Home concierge services are more frequent in Spain. Several considerations have been mentioned to help analyse the reasons and meaning of such differences. However non really clarify the reason why in Spain, a country with a alarming ageing population and low birth rate, both vendors and enterprises are not addressing this issue as a priority.

The corporations from the need of developing tools to improve employee satisfaction and inclusion as a strategy to increase corporate results and achieve sustainable growth in the global scenario. And vendors as a business strategy; as developing a company client base increases exponentially their business volume.

Most of the companies abroad provide a similar high range of Work/ Life schemes to their employees. A minority of the Spanish companies provide an outstanding range of services to their employees, while many other only a limited range Work/Life programs.

Benefits

In general all highly appreciate the benefits that Work/ Life balance programs have on company-employee relationship and on employee performance and integration in the work place.

Research and Measurement

While the research and measurement of the impact that Work Life programs have on companies, employees and homes with working parents, is a common practice among companies operating outside of Spain, measuring and evaluating results is less frequent in Spain. Measuring and evaluating methodologies are implemented by a minority of the companies located in Spain which participated in the research. However, the Spanish vendors do commit to such practices, and tend to start carrying research and measurement activities when implementing Work /Life schemes for their clients.

On April 4th 2003, the Spanish Administration established a "certificate for companies that offer Work /Life schemes that help employees balance personal and profession life".

Yet major findings related to the behaviour of companies in Spain related to Work / Life policies is that Spanish organisations are far from contributing to the inclusive environment that the Spanish Administration and the European Union directives are promoting in order to develop more dynamic entrepreneurial activities; to create more new jobs; and to develop a better quality / equality labour environment

Companies in Spain are only recently implementing Work / Life balance policies as a corporate strategy rather than as a problems solving tool to address the new profile of the labour market.