

Female Work 4.0 - Strategy for the use of free, female work capacity after maternity/parental leave in the automotive industry in Austria focused on women with minimum high school degree.

A Master's Thesis submitted for the degree of
“Master of Business Administration”

supervised by
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Affidavit

I, **ISABELLA KRKNJAK**, hereby declare

1. that I am the sole author of the present Master's Thesis, "FEMALE WORK 4.0 - STRATEGY FOR THE USE OF FREE, FEMALE WORK CAPACITY AFTER MATERNITY/PARENTAL LEAVE IN THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY IN AUSTRIA FOCUSED ON WOMEN WITH MINIMUM HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE.", 129 pages, bound, and that I have not used any source or tool other than those referenced or any other illicit aid or tool, and
2. that I have not prior to this date submitted the topic of this Master's Thesis or parts of it in any form for assessment as an examination paper, either in Austria or abroad.

Vienna, 12.10.2022

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Abstract

The digital work environment offers new possibilities of employment schemes. The research is focused on the staff retention of mothers after maternity/parental leave in the automotive industry. The free human resource of young mothers can be the key to having enough loyal and well-trained staff.

The aim is to develop a business strategy for retaining women after maternity leave that is equally applicable to men. It's based on the findings from the literature on diversity and leadership, the results of the implemented survey in which the requirements of women to perform in the professional environment were identified and the interview feedback of the managers on the topic of women's employment in their companies. The implementation of the strategy can be the essential factor for corporate success in the current labor market situation. This will not only make it possible to keep women in the company, but also to receive high-performance through their targeted further training and the possibility of taking advantage of individual working models and other offers tailored to their life situation. At the same time, the company benefits from all the advantages that diversity generally brings for all employees, the increased product quality and consequently a satisfied customer. Although there is plenty of unused female potential available on the market, it is not deployed for various reasons, even in the year 2022, despite the lack of skilled workers. This scientific work should shake up companies, especially in the very male-dominated automotive industry, and encourage them to rethink to be one step ahead of their competitors in the future.

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1. Are women the solution for the future success of the automotive industry?

37% of Austrian mothers are not back in the job at the 3rd birthday of their child. This means every 3rd woman stays at home for longer than 3 years. This implies that every 3rd position on the labor market is not refilled from the same woman because she decided to take care of her child/ren instead of coming back to the job. Nearly every 2nd employed woman is in a part time employment in Austria. (Statistik Austria, Erwerbstätigkeit, 2022)

For a better illustration of the situation in the automotive world in Austria, a short look to the 58 existing stock companies in the country. Seven of the existing 58 stock companies in Austria have one female member in the board of directors and the included companies from the automotive industries do not even have this single one female member (cf. Staudacher et al., 2019).

The industry 4.0 will provide an agile, digitalized work environment known as work 4.0. The new technologies out of this industrial revolution will result in a dramatic increase in the demand of experts and skilled workers in each branch. There will be different requirements to the leadership as today. According to published future studies, the employment relationship will move to project-related employment contracts or temporary hired experts.

The Austrian labor market supply is already below the requested demand and the situation will get worse during next few years due to the demographical developments. The new technologies cry out for well-trained employees. The demand on the labor market is growing steadily while the supply of labor is decreasing progressively. To stay competitive the human resource strategy should focus on the recruiting and the talent promotion of currently socially marginalized groups to gain and secure their previously unconceived work capacity.

The business world is standardized for the typical “white man” with adjusted strategies and processes implemented to meet its typical indicators like habits, potentials, behaviors, wishes, needs which must be fulfilled from both parties, employer and employee, to reach success. Especially the automotive industry is heavily male dominated. Therefore this work is focused on women whose work

capacity is getting lost with the motherhood in this company culture. The automotive branch is still very traditional workplace but is already improving on a more diverse culture. Actually, this should include also the female workers, especially the women after maternity leave.

1.1. Research problem

For doing business with connected cars with autonomous driving function produced in a smart factory, personalized services, controlled by big data it's essential to have qualified personnel in the team. Currently Austria's automotive industry is struggling with a lack of staff. One reason is the fact that companies are using only minimum proportion of female work capacity from the labor market.

1.2. The main research questions

How can the "woman" factor, especially after maternity or parental leave, counteract the predicted shortage of skilled workers, especially of technicians in Industry 4.0 in the automotive industry, and what investments and actions are necessary to win and keep women for a job in the long term?

1.3. The importance of women's workforce after maternity/parental leave

The aim of this master thesis is to point up the necessity of the automotive industry to be more flexible towards their employees, especially the female ones. Thus, to use every opportunity to convince young female talents to first stay after maternity leave in their company, second return fast and third provide their available expertise to the employer further on.

The fourth industrial (r)evolution provides new technologies in the IT sector, the 24/7 connected workplace will make it easier to balance between the company's expectations and the employee's requirements due to higher flexibility in regard to both parties' location and time zone. The upcoming requested soft and hard skills

will make it again more critical to find adequate stuff. An initiative to win in attractiveness as an employer is investigated in this thesis. The focus is on using unused available work potentials. With investments in female work to get and keep their capacities in the company, the requirements of business know-how and knowledge to develop and create successful products can be covered. This is the basis to achieve the most important goal, to be able to serve the customer requirements and be successful.

Moreover, the economic aspect for the company is going to be considered and evaluated to be able to completely present the basis for decision makers.

The feedback, ideas and experience out of the survey with 47 women from different industries, branches and departments will present the current and the required situation in the real business world. Further on it's a basic information to develop a guidance in how to lead and manage the work environment for young parents in the automotive industry in future to achieve a faster return of parents on parental leave. Furthermore, based on manager interviews the impressions from employer and leader perspective are considered. The feasible challenges, benefits and consequences of hiring and employing women are demonstrated to use a realistic base for creating the strategy.

1.4. Structure

The written work will start with pointing out the situation in Austria regarding the labor market, the available maternity/parental leave models and regulations for families as well as the general status of female employment, especially after maternity/parental leave. As the model state in terms of gender equality Sweden's approach is presented for comparison with Austria. Then the most important terms like the industry 4.0, the work 4.0 or diversity are presented.

Futurologists from the Fraunhofer or McKinsey institute have published literature about effects to the work environment, the company structures, the leadership styles, the employment models and finally the labor market driven by the implementation of Industry 4.0. Likewise, the generation diversity and how their mindset differs and

affects the professional world in the industry 4.0. It is shown which role diversity play in the work 4.0 and what the current challenges of women are as well as their future chances and challenges generated by the above-mentioned changes in industry 4.0. In addition, it is examined what will change in view of digitization in the tasks of the HR department and personnel management or must be adapted to be able to attract the talents to the company. For this research it's very important to analyze how the fourth industrial revolution will influence human's business and private life especially for women. Finally, the theoretical approach, which is needed for economic consideration, is shown to compare the profitability of the necessary investment. On the one hand for the implementation of the strategy to bring women back to the job as fast as possible after maternity leave and on the other hand for recruiting new talents.

In the respective areas the equality is reached by considering the men's situation too. The developed strategy should not only be dedicated to women but also men. The trend indicates that more and more men are going on parental leave or parental leave is shared between the parents (nevertheless, it's still a very low number of fathers in Austria; 3,6% of men have consumed childcare allowance on the 13.09.2021 published by Statistic Austria (cf. Statistik Austria, 2021). Since the proportion of men in parental leave is still very low anyway, the research will focus on women. Nevertheless, this phenomenon should already be considered by companies.

In the practical part of the research the mixed-method survey represents the voice of Austrian women with minimum high school degree and shows up their actual situation in business life in case of female diversity and the challenges women are fighting with. Aspects such as the return from maternity/parental leave in all sorts of ways as well as the high expectations of managers to reach the previous level of performance from times without a child/ren as quickly as possible to obtain further career opportunities and to be recognized as a competent worker even in part-time employment are to be investigated. The manager interviews, therefore was also applied the mixed-method, are giving some insights of the perspectives from leaders in different industries. They shared initiatives done for women in their companies and the challenges and benefits which are doing with employing women. Last but not

least a case study was done to present the return of investment for the implementation of Female Work 4.0.

1.5. Results

The results of the survey are going to present the current situation for women in business life, in the time before and after a child is born, from a various perspective in industry, department, current marital status and age.

The analysis is going to provide the basis for the research question and is acting as a roadmap to create and define a strategy with the target to get women back to job after maternity leave asap to counteract the shortage of skilled workers. Additionally including the economical aspect; the determination of necessary investment for staff retention against hiring a new employee.

This work will examine the different prognosed variants of the workplace 4.0 and its direct influence on the marginalized social groups, especially the women after maternity/parental leave. Depending on the offered arrangement of the socio-physical structure in the company are the perspectives which can be opened and used for promoting and for winning women back to the original job during and after the pregnancy. The organization, the HR and the management is asked to apply a strategy to use the free female working capacity.

2. Background information on the situation in Austria

Austrian companies in general and especially in the automotive segment are not adequately prepared to the increase in the lack of labor due to the demographic development and have still no solutions created what the presented analysis in section 2.1 shows.

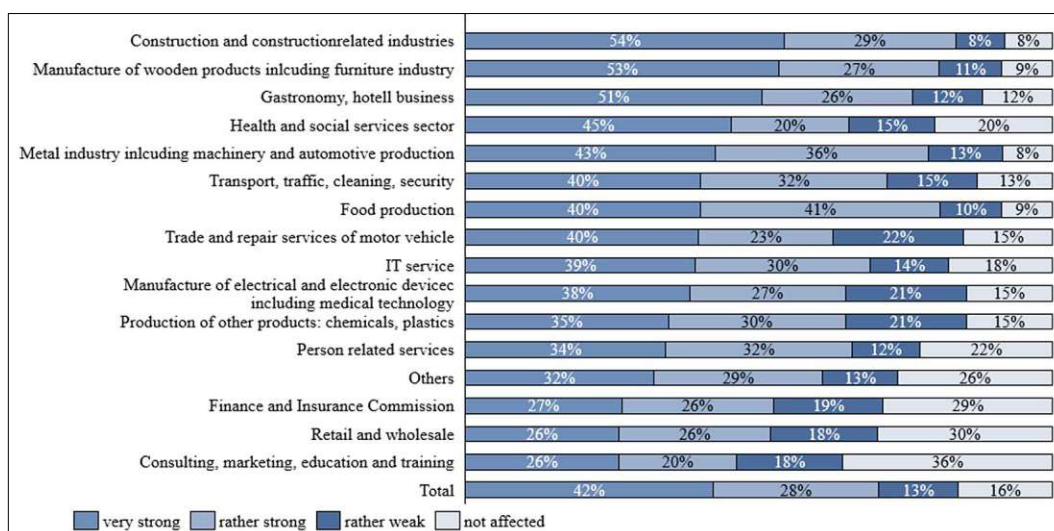
2.1. Staff shortages and forecasts in Austria

A survey published by the WKO in 2021 figure 1 displays that 42,7% of companies in the metal, machinery and vehicle production are very strong affected from the lack of labor plus additional 36,2% are strong affected.

Finding employees with an apprenticeship was often a difficulty in 58.3% of cases, with a technical high school degree in 17% often and rarely in 17,9% of cases.

The automotive industry is part of vehicle production and has already achieved a particularly critical shortage of personnel with a total share of 78.9% affected companies. This problem will continuously increase due to social aging in Austria.

Figure 1: *Assessment of the strength of the shortage of skilled workers in the companies surveyed*



Adopted from *Fachkräftebedarf/-mangel in Österreich 2021* by Helmut Dornmayr & Marlis Riepl, 2021: p. 2

With the implementation of Industry 4.0, the innovations in hardware and software as well as the new corporate structures, the need for technically well-trained employees will increase.

Another very important aspect of the topic under discussion in Austria is family and women's policy.

2.2. Models offered by the government for paid childcare in Austria

In Austria the government is providing different kinds of support regarding pregnancy and the childcare for children up to 36 months, that means for expectant mothers and parents in general.

2.2.1. Maternity leave and protection

In Austria every pregnant woman has to stop her work and is released from job 8 weeks before the expected birthday of the child as well as 8 weeks after the child is born. The period of round about 16 weeks is named “maternity leave” and protects mothers during and after pregnancy. The young mothers get a special protection from termination of employment and dismissal. The social health insurance pays a replacement amount of the monthly average net income over the last 3 months plus the prorated holiday pay and Christmas bonus. (cf. Arbeiterkammer, 2022)

2.2.2. Paid parental leave models

The Austrian government offers in principle 2 childcare allowance models for the time of parental leave. With a duration from 12+2 months up to 28+7 months the model can be chosen. The first number “12” from “12+2 months” describes the approved duration of parental leave with one consumer, mother or father. If both are consuming the parental leave in the “12+2 months” variant and the second one for minimum 2 months, the approved duration is the sum of both numbers which results in 14 months.

For the 12+2 variant exists an earnings-related variant with 80% of the paid amount during the maternity leave but max 66 EUR per day and the second payment option is out of the pot with an amount of 12.400 EUR if one person consumes the parental leave or 15.500 EUR for shared parental leave consummation. The daily payment results out of the pot of money divided by the days of chosen parental leave model.

The young mothers and fathers get a special protection from termination of employment and dismissal during the parental leave.

For the time after the parental leave model is an option of regulated part time employment selectable.

(cf. Arbeiterkammer, 2022)

2.2.3. Parental part time

It's an offer for parents to better combine the family and the job. Parents get a special protection from termination of employment and dismissal until no longer than 4 weeks after the child's fourth birthday. Companies with less than 20 employees have no obligation but can give the possibility to adjust the working times and decrease the weekly working hours. The conditions for entitlement to parental part time are a minimum three years employment of the applicant in the concerned company and a size of workforce in the firm of minimum 20 employees.

Despite, or precisely because of this statutory basis, the employment relationship of Austrian women with children presents itself as described in the next section.

(cf. Arbeiterkammer, 2022)

2.3. Women's employment situation after maternity/parental leave

In a report done by Statistik Austria in 2010 the following comment was highlighted:

“For 78% of men, but only for 31% of women, the partner takes over the childcare during working hours.”

This comment describes very well the family structure in Austria. The traditional gender role is still clearly being fulfilled. The man pursues his profession, the task of the woman is to take care of the child and household.

Furthermore, the employment rate of men with children younger than 15 years old was 93% in comparison to women with 64,7%. Drilled down to women (shown in table 1) with the youngest child with 1 year the employment was at 22,7% and with 2 years old child at 50,8%. At the end of the day the employment rate of mothers with the youngest child in an age between 3 and 5 years is almost 80% but the critical number here is the part time employment with 82% still. Only every 5th woman is working fulltime.

Table 1: *Women's employment situation with child/ren in Austria*

Age of the youngest child in years	Active employment rate in %	Part time employment rate in %
0-2	37,5	79,8
3-5	78,1	81,8

Note. The active employment rate has not considered the mothers in parental leave and the part time employment is given with nominal weekly work of minimum 1 hour.

Adapted from *Familie und Arbeitsmarkt* by Statistik Austria, 2022

Incidentally, it should also be mentioned that more than 80% of the childcare during the working time of the parents are done by the grandparents and only 16% of children are in a public institution like a kindergarten, internal day care for children or private childcare organizations (cf. Austria, 2011). In my opinion, the most serious reason for this relationship lies in the lack of care, which is still accompanied by the inflexibility of care times.

2.4. Sweden's women and the gender equality

The strategy of Sweden for a more family friendly environment to increase the female employment rate is a combination of three pillars. The first one comprises no tax incentives for men in the case that the woman is staying at home and doing the household. Second pillar covers the guaranteed family independent childcare with the first birthday of the child and available from 6.30AM to 6.30PM with all inclusive. The costs are 3% of the parental income capped at 134 EUR per child. The third part of the Swedish family friendly concept is the income-related payment with 80% of the salary over 13 of possible 16 months of parental leave. Mandatory to receive the payment is the consumption of both parents for a minimum of 60 days. A man in parental leave is state of the art through this regulation, while most of the time is still consumed by women. Nevertheless, the acceptance of men on parental leave has grown significantly in the society and the business. (cf. Anwar, 2016)

In the following chapter the most important concepts and terminologies used in this research are discussed.

3. Literature research for female work in industry 4.0

Based on the literature a basic understanding of the intended strategic realignment for employee retention is created. In order to be able to realistically map the interrelationships at the end of the research work, all influencing factors of Female Work 4.0 will be examined on the basis of the currently available research.

3.1. Industry 4.0

Roth is explaining the industry 4.0 as follows:

Industry 4.0 is the networking of all human and machine actors across the entire value chain as well as the digitization and real-time evaluation of all relevant information, with the aim of making the processes more transparent and value-adding in order to optimize customer benefits with intelligent products and services (cf. Roth, 2016: p. 6).

The industry 4.0, also known as the 4th industrial (r)evolution, is the combination of new and continuously updated concepts to generate various technologies as “internet of things (IoT)”, “digitalization”, “big data monetization”, “virtual reality”, “smart factory” or “autonomous driving” (cf. Roth, 2016: p. 6).

The internet of things is going to influence our private as well as our business life, especially the mobile form, and will affect the economy and the workplace tremendously.

The working group named “Arbeitsgruppe Industrie 4.0” has identified the “smart factory” as the main element with many cyber-physical systems combined with the human creativity to optimize the industrial processes (cf. Kagermann et al., 2013: as cited in Bothoff & Hartmann, 2015: p. 24).

The systems are communicating between the varied processes from the planning, purchasing, the logistic, the production to the sales and the after sales as well as the internet. Through sensors the information is registered and interpreted. By actuators the system acts on the environment, data are saved and exchanged by the digital services for the self-control and interaction with other systems. In virtue of cyber-

physical systems in combination with the human creativity various processes can be optimized and smart products can be delivered according to customer perception. One of the big milestones in the smart factory will be the applied assistance systems to support workers physically in the shopfloor. The labor market situation requires to relieve the stuff from physical stress. These assistance systems offer the opportunity to make the current physically strenuous work tasks more attractive again and to counteract the demographic situation due to a lower physical load for workers. (cf. Bothoff & Hartmann, 2015: p. 24)

Beside the physical assistance the digitalization enables new work models for employees to be temporally and locally more flexible. The 4th industrial revolution is creating an agile, fluid and breathing organizational structure with predicted flat hierarchy and consequential new requirements of leading styles. (cf. Preißing, 2019: p. 18)

The digitalization provides an infinite number of possibilities to support or take over work tasks. The Fraunhofer Institute conducted already some studies in cooperation with the industries to predict the impact of the upcoming technologies and tools in Industry 4.0 on the work environment, called the “Work 4.0 (cf. Fraunhofer-Institut für Entwurfstechnik, 2022).

3.2. Work 4.0

According to Preißing’s explanation the socio-physical system is a possibility to present the various combinations and the interdependencies of the three sectors in the environment of an industry: the human, the organization and the technology. This concept is used by the author as a tool to be able to reflect the Industry 4.0 and the accompanying influences on the entire company, the economy, as well as the labor market and consequently the working environment of the individual person. (cf. Preißing, 2019: pp. 147)

Based on this terminology several theses are available in the literature with the aim to predict the risk, the potential and the requirement for the expected various of different socio-physical combinations caused by the digital transformation.

In the digitalized world the emerging variants of the socio-physical elements enable new concepts of working environments. A change in the framework of the existing work will take place and a wide range of new potential in our business life will be manifested, in social, leadership and technical respects.

Werther and Bruckner pointed out that the term “Work 4.0” as a definition still not exists in the research. The term as well as its synonym “New Work” is presented as a mega trend of Industry 4.0. The main characteristics of “Work 4.0” which effect the organization are flexibilization at all hierarchies, the organization and the labor management relations. For companies these aspects bring new challenges with them. Employee expectations and requirements will change. Independent work, regardless of the location and time becomes the standard for the part of the professional groups in which it can be implemented. Away from the "presence culture" to the "results culture", as it is already common in companies like Google. As a result, the staff must be prepared and trained for mobile working, because the competence profile will also change in consideration of flexibilization. The disruptive change in the existing organizations contributes significantly to the future world of work and is extremely challenging for companies. The target to have an open organizational structure and benefit from the agility of the company is currently mainly realized in small and medium companies. The fear to lose control, stability and security is still more pronounced than the pressure to be more agile and flexible. A hybrid model could also be an alternative in future. Another discussed character is the labor management relation which covers labor networking inside and outside the company and is directly connected to the organizational structure. A talent pool could be an option in future which requires an open understanding for close industrial and work relations. (cf. Werther & Bruckner, 2018: pp. 50)

To accomplish the disruptive change, it is necessary to adopt for the transformation of the organizational structure, the digital technologies and not forgetting the human factor. This is how Werther & Bruckner are explaining the digital impact to the work environment. The employees must be ready and open for changes. Companies must allow human creativity, entrepreneurial spirit and flexibility as well as hand over decision-making competencies through the different organizational levels to be able to support the innovation process.

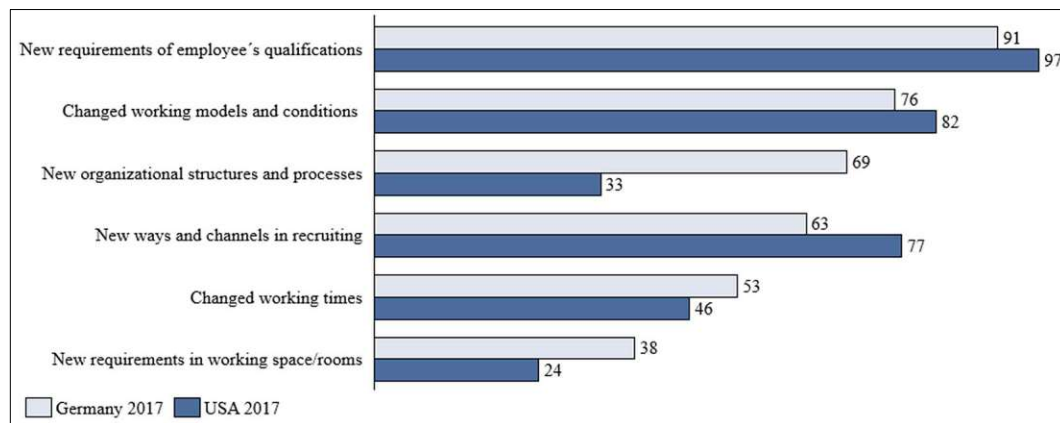
Werther & Bruckner have identified three central fields of action to shape the human resource world.

- The design of the work environment: to promote creative employment, to implement new forms of work such as agile work and Scrum to accelerate product development and to meet customer expectations.
- The promotion of flexibility and autonomy: the virtual tools give employees the opportunity for more self-determined work, contribute to better reconciliation of work, private and family life and to promoting gender equality on the labor market. Another aspect is the use of platforms for job sharing or combined job and continuing education platforms.
- The encouragement of trainings and learning on the job: the digitalization touches nearly every work task and this ends up in new required hard and soft skills of the employees

(cf. Werther & Bruckner, 2018: pp. 67)

The importance of the human factor is once again illustrated in the result of a survey conducted by Werther for USA and Germany shown in figure 2.

Figure 2: *Transformation to the new forms of work*



Adopted from *Arbeit 4.0 aktiv gestalten*, by Werther & Bruckner, 2018: p. 80

The biggest impact seen by the companies is the impact on the new required employee's competencies in USA with a portion of 97% and in Germany with 91%.

In second place are the changed forms of work and the associated requirements (USA 82%, Germany 76%). For Germany it's followed by the new organizational structure and the processes, in USA by the changed forms and channels for recruiting new staff.

Another survey done with Austrian companies shows a similar picture. According to the assessment firstly data security & IT and secondly the lack of qualified employees are the most critical factors related to Industry 4.0 that could pose an obstacle, risk or challenge. The Work 4.0 requests a demanding standard of digital competencies, interdisciplinary knowhow and a high level of self-management. An additional demand on the employee in the new form of mobile working are her/his social competencies. (cf. Lassnig, et al., 2016: pp.14)

In all studies, one thing was commonly emphasized. All kinds of educational institutions for all levels beginning latest with the elementary schools must adopt their content to the requirements of Industry 4.0 in the sector of hard skills as well as soft skills. Therefore, the government, politics and at least the companies are called upon to become active if not done already and develop their employees regardless of their age and educate as well as encourage young professionals. It's necessary to reach all generations regardless of gender, origin or skin color. The importance to

dissociate from stereotypical thinking is more important than ever to give everyone the ability to follow the digital trends and find her or his professional position. The highest priority in all industries must be minimizing the loss of employees who are not able to follow this disruptive transformation to the Industry 4.0. One of the most important drivers for retaining and attracting talent is the implementation of strong diversity management and inclusion throughout the organization.

3.3. Diversity Management 4.0

The fourth industrial revolution is the result of innovative, high complex and disruptive ideas and systems. It will depend on the willingness and unprejudiced acceptance of people, employers, employees, leaders, colleagues, of every one of us. It's up to each individual to accept and respect diversity and to set a good example. The added value of a diverse organization will be seen in several perspectives as getting the best experts of the overall labor pool, a better target group-oriented marketing, an increased grade of innovation and creativity in the teams, a higher potential to find solutions and reaching a high performance in change management. (cf. Kinne, 2016: pos. 371)

Franken highlights the advantage of an increased labor pool by the acceptance of higher diversity of potential employees. For an example companies start to consider the marginalized groups such as persons older than 55 years or immigrants in the recruiting process. In addition, the range of experience values will increase in the proportion too. The author describes a direct correlation with an increase in productivity, motivation, satisfaction and loyalty of employees. The impact of the internal applied, diverse company culture will be incredible. The external environment, the customers, the suppliers and the society as well as the potential applicants will notice the collaborative intelligence and all of it will result in a better company image. (cf. Franken, 2015: p. 22)

3.3.1.Diversity

The World Economic Forum explains the term diversity in the publication “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion 4.0” from June 2020 as follows.

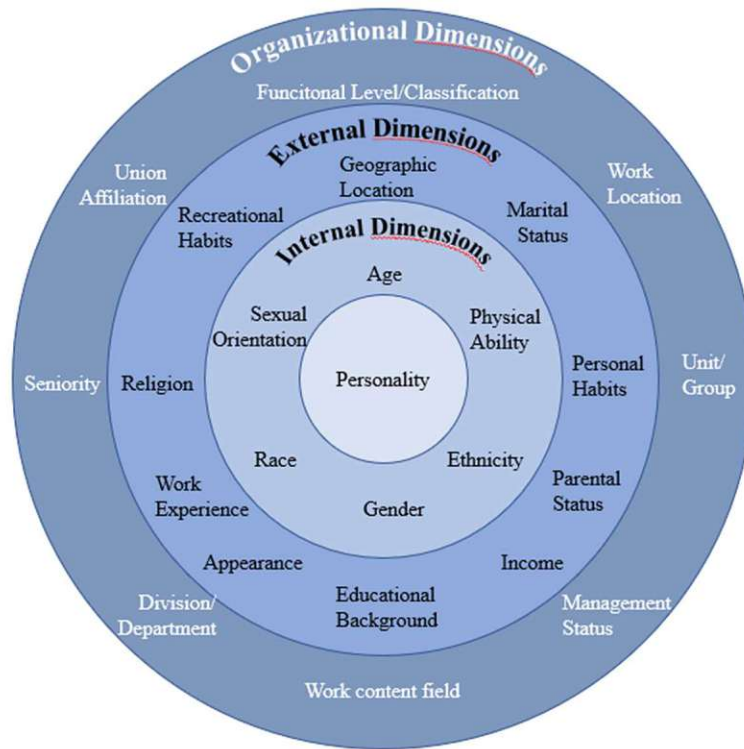
“Diversity describes the range of human differences and variations, whether they are inherent (by birth) or acquired (by experience)” (World Economic Forum, 2020: p. 4).

3.3.1.1. The four layers of diversity

Gardenswartz and Rowe illustrate diversity differently in figure 3 with the 4-dimension model which characteristics and possible compositions determine a person's personality.

1. Layer: the personality in the center is influenced by the outer layers.
2. Layer: everything innated and not changeable as the age or the race are part of the internal dimension or also named primary dimension.
3. Layer: the external dimensions cover mostly the social identity and the social environment and implement the religious attitude and the hobbies. Another definition is the secondary dimension.
4. Layer: the outermost layer displays the individual criteria in business life, named organizational or tertiary layer.

Figure 3: *Four layers of diversity*



Adopted from *Personal: Diversity Management*, by Gardenswartz & Rowe, 2003: as cited in Franken, 2015: p. 40

3.3.1.2. *The changing personal values*

Another variable in diversity mentioned by Franken is the changing personal values through the reconstruction from the traditional, stereotypical life. The modern lifestyle, the various kinds of household structures and the changed purpose of life (cf. Franken, 2015: pos 17) with the resulting influences on the individuals complement the model from Gardenswartz and Rowe to a pool of various characteristics.

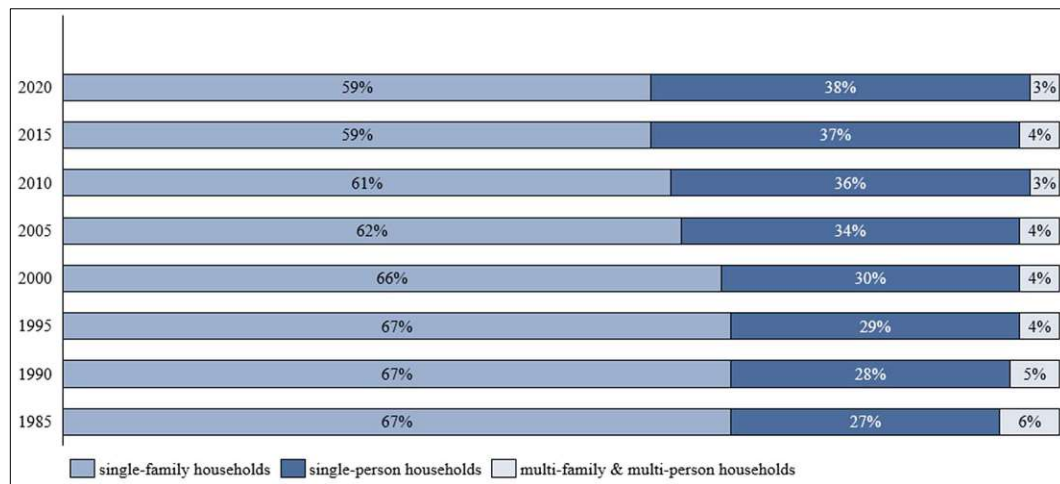
With a focus on women and gender equality in business, the changing personal values of the Austrian due to the changed lifestyle of society are examined and the resulting effects are shown.

3.3.1.3. The trend of Austrian's personal values and its effect to women

The impact to Austrian women and their professional life due to the changing personal values of the society in Austria should highlight how the circumstances for women are changing and have already changed.

The figure 4 shows the household structures in Austria over 20 years done by the Statistik Austria. In the year 2000 almost 3 of 10 households were a single household, in 2020 already 4 of 10.

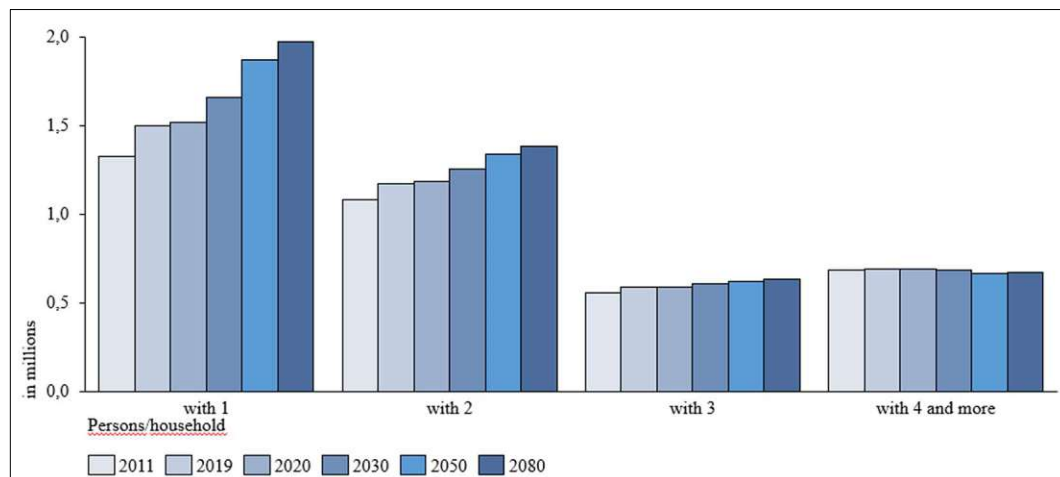
Figure 4: Household structures Austria



Adopted from *Haushalte, Familien, Lebensformen* by Statistik Austria, 2021

According to a forecast from statistics Austria done in 2020 shown in figure 5, the single households will increase by 13,1% (2035: 1.718.287 single households compared to 2020: 1.517.942) until 2035 with an increase of 5,1% from the total number of inhabitants over the observation period between 2020 and 2035.

Figure 5: Household forecast 2020

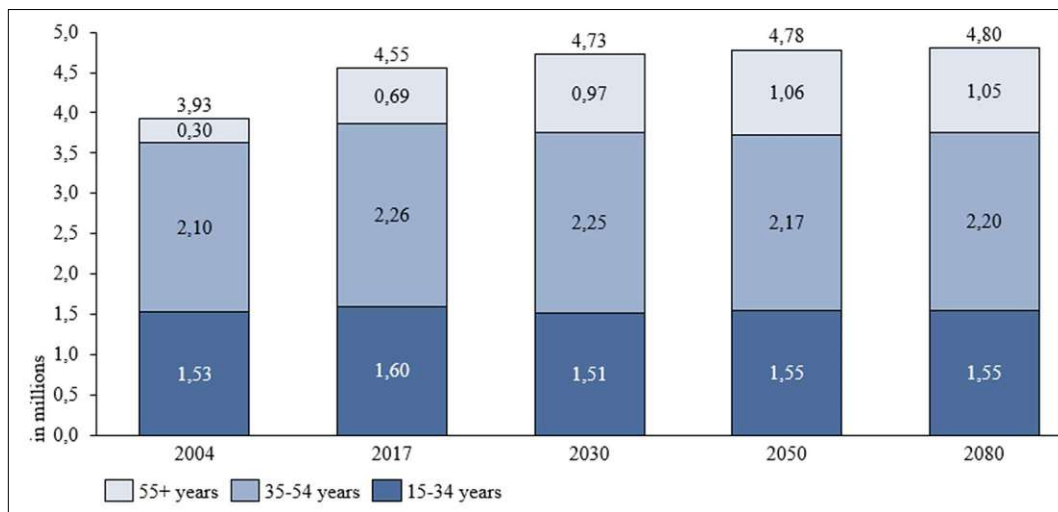


Adopted from *Haushaltsprognosen* by Statistik Austria, 2021

The trend presented is mainly explained by the ageing of the population and the associated alone living persons after divorce or the death of the partner. Another mentioned driver is the progressive individualization and the increasing separation frequencies of couples.

The prognose in figure 6 shows that employees older than 55 years will reach almost one million individuals more in 2050 than in 2030. Simultaneously an employment decrease of the 35-54 years old of 80.000 people is expected. With this outlook the society and the economic environment could realize this as a root cause for further investments into employee retention to benefit from engaged and very satisfied staff up until old age.

Figure 6: Demographical trend of labor force in Austria



Adopted from *demographische Entwicklung der Arbeitskräfte in Österreich* by Statistik Austria, 2021

The statistical analysis done by Statistics Austria reflects the changing structures of Austria's society regarding the change of household structures. Over 10 years, from 2010 to 2020, the households of pairs, married or not, without children were increasing compared to the total number of households from 25,7% to 26,7%. For pairs, married or not, with children happened a significant decrease from 30,24% in 2010 to 27,78% in the year 2020. The trend of alone living single mums (with minimum one child in the household) shows a decrease from 7,28% to 6,07%. (cf. Statistik Austria, 2021)

The numbers from Austria are reflecting the situation in Germany. The increase in childless partnerships and single households combined with the negative trend in the birth rate is pointing out the changing household structure as well as the progress in independent lifestyle. As a result there is more free capacity of women's workforce expected. This can have an impact on the own professional goals as well as the performance in the job and give a better chance to meet career ambitions. Moreover, it might lead to an increasing female employment and self-employment rate and conversely a declining rate of women's poverty.

3.3.2. Gender equality

It doesn't mean women and men are the same. According to the DUDEN, the terminology of equality means same rights (cf. Duden, 2021). A woman and a man should have the same opportunities, chances as well as milestones and risks. Gender equality is one of the challenges companies are facing with. Especially in business, it is important to follow up the trend of diversity and inclusion for successful diversity management in Industry 4.0. If companies want to achieve true gender equality, a new mindset is needed both in politics and in society. The target must be fair career conditions for women as well as for men, a balanced chance.

3.3.2.1. *The legal situation in the European Union*

Focused on equality there exists a fundamental given right for women and men in the EU contracts with the highest prior for equality for both sexes in leading positions. The European Commission, defined in Article 153 of "The Treaty on the Functioning", allows the EU to act in the wider area of equal opportunities and equal treatment in employment matters and within this framework Article 157 TFEU authorizes positive action to empower women. (cf. European Commission, 2017)

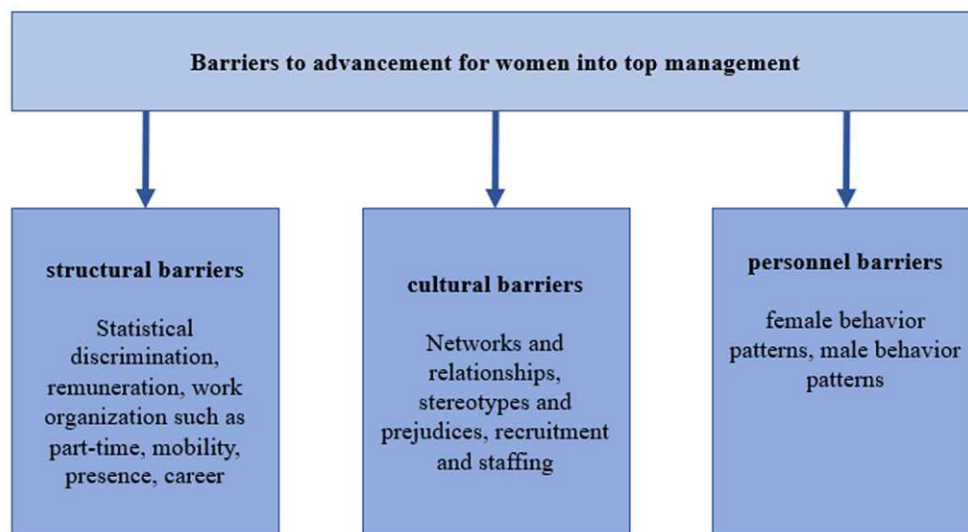
On the 5th of March 2020 the European Commission accepted the "European Gender Equality Strategy" for equality in sex started in 2020 and ending in 2025. The EU's vision includes the task for equal opportunities for women and men to develop themselves and get leadership positions. (cf. Europäisches Union, 2022: p. 4)

It's the obligation of the economy and the employers to act according to the EU law. It's time to start the activities to also gain from the advantages of gender equality in the business life. The implementation of diversity culture is only possible if society also distances itself from the stereotypical ideas.

3.3.2.2. Barriers to women's career

Preißing explains the three obstacles to a woman's top management career shown in figure 7. The impact of the structural, the cultural and the personnel barriers which avoid an equal precondition for all genders.

Figure 7: Classifying the glass ceiling into structural, cultural, and personnel barriers to advancement



Adopted from *Frauen in der Arbeitswelt 4.0*, by Preißing, 2019: pos. 1338

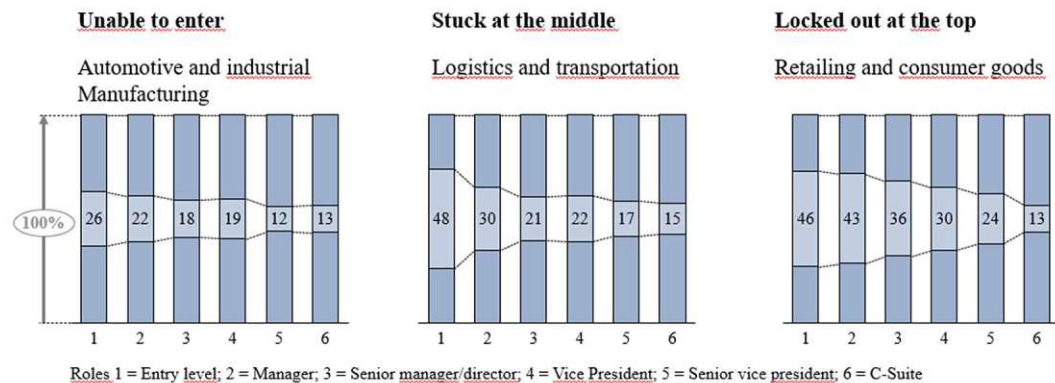
What does it mean for a woman to struggle with structural barriers? The statistical discrimination says the economy is rational evaluating a person's productivity based on her/his socio-demographical characteristics. In the recruiting process does that mean that the recruiter determines the expected performance of the applicant by the age, the gender, the marital status and by the level of education. The salary is adjusted to the result of the evaluation. The average image of a woman represents a lower factor of productivity than for a man. This means a lower remuneration for women.

This is also reflected by the published data from the Federal Chancellery of Austria in 2019. Austria's Gender Pay Gap (according to Eurostat 2019) was 19,9 %. The average value in the EU is 5,8% lower (cf. Bundeskanzleramt, 2022).

The employers don't want to invest in women and promote them. For many reasons as the higher risk of fluctuation, less flexibility and part time employment. Where these factors are mostly resulting from their family obligations if women have a child or someone else to take care of. Another widespread notion is that women are more risk-averse and therefore not applicable for top management positions.

In 2015, McKinsey conducted a study in North America with 118 companies to identify the female employment and the female barriers of career, named "Breaking down the gender challenge". The automotive industry had the lowest entry level of women overall industries, shown in figure 8. Several reasons are responsible as a non-diversified recruiting process, the well-known fact of the underrepresentation of women in the sector of STEM, the low proportion of female entries with 26% and just 13% of the C-suites managed by a woman. Every 7,6th position in the C-level is done by a woman. Automotive companies promote a lady for every 5,5th senior manager position and 2,6 jobs from 10 open jobs in general are given to women. An underrepresentation in the level of senior director position in the automotive industry with a portion of 18% female managers is reflecting the men dominated situation very clearly.

Figure 8: *The challenge of advancing women into leadership roles varies considerably across industries but three archetypes emerge*



Adopted from *Breaking down the gender challenge* by Krivkovich et al., 2016

The research done by Krivkovich determined another two phenomena, the stuck of the female quote in the middle management as seen in the logistic and transportation branch and the extreme decrease of women in the high level of management with initial high entry rates as the numbers in the segment of retailing and consumer goods are illustrating. This is another aspect of gender diversity. The gender initiatives in the recruiting process are good to have. But the diversity strategy should be focused on mid and long-term objectives to not getting a benefit from the attracted female talents in short-term only.

3.4. Leadership 4.0

The agile organization's highest priority are the customer needs and no longer the management's expectations. The traditional human resource tools in a management driven hierarchy have the intention to reward succeeded management goals. The preparation of the organization for the transformation to the customer orientated mode and for that purpose the adaption of human resource tools for encouraging employees is necessary. (cf. Werther & Bruckner, 2018: pp. 208)

Currently it's not visible how the company structure will look like in the future. Several scenarios are mentioned in the literature. The ones which are still using

traditional leadership or require alternative leadership as well as scenarios where leadership is not existing anymore.

Depending on the development of the future organizational structure effects on the HR and the employees will occur. The book “Frauen in der Arbeitswelt 4.0” assumes that the trend is going somewhere to the middle of the organization without any hierarchies and companies and the traditional organizational structure from today. People will always have new ideas and will try to realize these concepts. Thus, entrepreneurs and new companies will always exist. The approach of agility demands a flatter structure and a lower headcount of the core workforce. This results in a reduction of the middle management. The top management will take over the leadership, the strategic decision making as today. A new highly weighted task will be the requested digital knowhow of the. In general, the job characteristics will stay the same for top management with the request to presence, time investment above average and excellent networking in the top line. A new alternative form in the top management, named the “shared leadership” in the literature, will arise. This term covers time limited leadership, part-time leadership or as the term says the shared possibility. These models would be a solution to manage the expected expertise, flexibility, the volume of tasks and decisions through 2 or more responsible managers. Realistically, the model could be effective in the middle management, but for the top management it’s probably not applicable (cf. Preißing, 2019: pp. 1110).

Another impact for the requirement of a changed mindset in leadership will be the higher grade of diversity in the project teams as a result out of the mentioned new possibilities (in the section “Impact of digitalization on Humans”) for freelancer. Theoretically, everyone worldwide, regardless of gender, age or origin, can work for the same project. The intention of “New work” is to benefit out of the different mindset, expertise, experience, methods offered and created by a diverse team to get innovative and flexible products.

To satisfy the new requirements of the employees in Work 4.0 it’s necessary to rethink and adjust the traditional leadership to an individual leadership.

3.4.1. The possible generation challenge in Industry 4.0

The situation to work in a team with different generations usually almost everyone knows. The Industry 4.0 has the honor to employ 4 generations (baby boomers, X, Y, Z) in the development phase of the next industrial revolution. It is important to respond to the individual types of employees with the respective needs in the future work environment. The aim is to achieve maximum commitment through the individual workplace and not to waste resources unnecessarily that are fundamentally unimportant for the employee or even rejected. (cf. Sorko, 2020: pp. 15)

3.4.2. Individual leadership for the mix of generations in Industry 4.0 and its impact on women

A jump into the year 2030 shows the following generation picture. The “baby boomer” generation, born between 1955-1965 will have retired. They are also named the “workaholics” because their highest priority in business life is a stable job and a motivating leadership. They strive for leadership positions and define themselves by their achievements. An amazing volume of knowledge and experience will get lost during the next years with their exit from the business life. (cf. Sorko, 2020: p. 16)

Research done by the office supplier Viking and the opinion research institute OnePoll shows appreciation and respect from direct superiors has the highest priority for the baby boomer generation. Conversely, this results in the expectation of a manager to be respected and valued by his employees. It should also be highlighted that every 8th female participant of the survey commented to be stereotyped by the baby boomers. Their retirement could have another positive impact for more gender acceptance. The greatest potential for conflict was found in power struggles between the baby boomers and Generation X. They are known as an empathetic and very friendly generation, born between 1965 and 1980. In 2030 they will fill up the most manager positions. The generation X works to earn money and to have a good life. They are motivated to reach their targets and to balance the time between work and life. The highest demands on job of leaders and employees born between 1965 and 1980 are the salary and a good relationship with colleagues. The best offer for generation Y born between 1980 and 1995 is a flexible job to combine it as good as

possible with the private life, a work with a sense behind, enough support for self-development and trainings and a good feedback culture to get regularly updates about the service provided to the team. (cf. Koschik, 2019)

Generation Z born after 1995 is named “digital natives. Their high technical affinity and their innovative ideas and solutions for problems distinguish this generation and explains their high interest in entrepreneurship. (cf. Rupacher, 2021)

3.4.3. Individual Leadership for gender differences

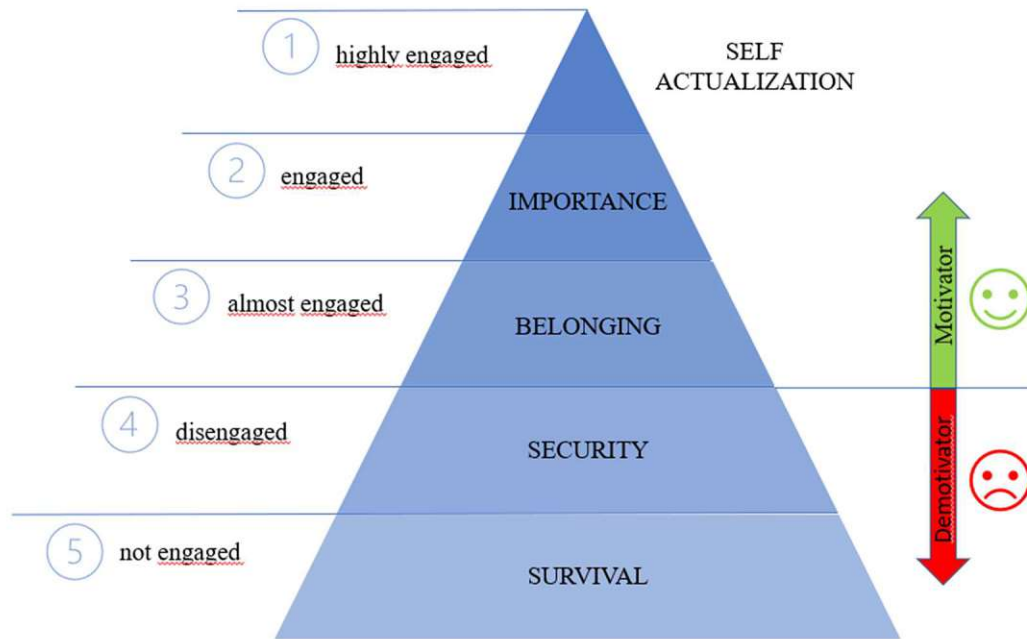
Women and men are not same and likewise one woman is not the same as another woman. It should be understood in society, politics, companies and families, women and men are not same. Not one gender is better or worse. Female requirements don't have to correspond to male ones. What does this mean for the leadership? The ability to meet the diverse demands of employed women and men to benefit from the care of their needs through their dedication and perseverance. The tools explained above like the changing personnel values from Franken and the model of Gardenswartz & Rowe (see figure 3) as well as the gender equality give a new approach to react on employee requirements especially female ones. The knowledge in recognizing the different kind of personalities plus the personnel values is given and the target to take the individual factors into account is clear.

Now the topic of individual motivation still must be examined.

3.4.4. Individual motivators

Maslow portrayed a model which shows what really motivates and satisfies humans in the job (acc. figure 9). A pyramid with 5 hierarchical structured levels divided into 2 areas, the levels 5 and 4 as de-motivators and the 3-1 as motivators. If the needs for the survival and security are not fulfilled, the immediate effect is demotivation. Both lower levels are the base for physical and mental health.

Figure 9: *How Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs influences employee engagement*



Adopted from *Maslow Hierarchy of Needs* by Maslow, 1943

In respect to gender sensitive consideration the basic needs to reach its individual equilibrium for physical and mental health can differ significantly. A young mum after maternity/parental leave is very often challenged in fulfilling her basic needs as getting enough sleep, facing fear to lose the job or dealing with financial concerns due to part time employment or time off for the purposes of childcare or nursing at home. For a young father as the breadwinner in a traditional family structure a lack in level 5 and 4 could also be sleep deficit or an insecure and instable workplace. These uncertainties have one thing in common, their demotivating effect. If these needs are not covered, an employee can't be motivated. The task of the employer is to act according to the current necessities of its employees to ensure a stable environment in respect of reaching the first stage of employee's engagement in the sense of belonging to the company. In the second stage employees really engage with their job. They feel recognized in the contribution for the company's success. The highest motivators are active when all other levels are covered and the employee has achieved self-realization. Her/His frustration level is much higher, wherefore this human has more capacity available for problem solving and inspiring others.

3.5. Impact of digitalization on humans

Many books and surveys which deal with the assessment of the new requirements for the “leadership of the future” come to the same conclusion. Due to more flat organizational company structures and their external network, the hierarchical leading style will be replaced by coaches who are dealing with their teams through empathy and cooperation to deliver results at the end of the day. The internal & external network must work as a team to be extraordinary creative, flexible and changeable to exceed customer expectations. Dynamic forms of employment as already seen in the IT sector are a good example of how the transformation of labor market could look like in future. The IT experts are more interested in time-limited (temporary) projects than in stable long-term employment. The models already available, like crowd- and click working, are good examples. Companies are breaking down their jobs to single tasks and share the mini-job on digital platforms for crowd workers who are acting as freelancers.

Success is more important than meeting expectations of a manager on the daily base. These new kind of work models offer high flexibility for the worker. That and the globalization will bring a positive boost to more diversity in the labor market. From the traditional way of “office work 9AM - 5PM, Monday to Friday, 40 hours per week” to the more independent, self-organized project and single task work. (cf. Werther & Bruckner, 2018: pp. 145).

Women and men can combine family and business more easily and prospective pensioners can adjust their workload to their personal needs. People with disabilities will also experience a fairer situation on the labor market could be utilized efficiently.

3.6. Impact and challenges of Human Resource in industry 4.0

The human resource department's actions won't have to process mainly administrative processes anymore. In future the ideas and demands of the staff in the new created digital environment will require creative, flexible and individual human resource strategies to find, hire and develop qualified professionals.

More flexibility in human resource is needed based on the targeted staff diversity. It's necessary to design detailed remuneration concepts with clear references to the target setting to provide a transparent offer for employees on one hand and for the recruiters to be as flexible as possible for the individual applicants on the other hand.

An integration of e-recruiting will provide more transparency of the internal processes in the recruiting- and selection process. Consequently, better chances for woman to get a promotion or to enter in a new job emerge. The software will grade and select, based on defined job requirements and criteria but without subjective or individual influences. This will minimize the homosocial recruitment patterns, the manager phenomena to prefer similar persons, as men instead of women (cf. Preißing, 2019: pp. 4862).

3.7. Reality of women's private and business life in Austria and the expectations for gender equality in the Industry 4.0

The study presents the necessity to adjust not only the technology with the new software and the hardware, but also the processes in the operation and the logistics. The staff will also undergo a massive change in the individual mindset. The reflection of the generational diversity is only one part of the possible mix of settings and should show how big the mindset can vary, only in case of different age. It should highlight once more how important it is and will be to know who the colleagues in a project team are. It is important for leaders to be aware of this variety and to adapt to individual needs to keep a higher level of employee retention. This rethinking in the leadership individuality is a chance to have a good base for the development of a realistic strategy for Female Work 4.0. In going deeper into the topic of diversity this research will focus on the women, especially on the women

after maternity leave, and how they can benefit from this changing work environment, the rethinking of leadership and today's uncommon forms of employment and flexible independent work forms. The literature about this subject is practically not available. The topics diversity and work in the Industry 4.0 are covered but not as deep as to also touch the section of female employees after maternity or parental leave. This research takes the opportunity to draw attention on the available free work capacity of mothers after maternity leave. The guideline how to use the tools and processes of the transformation path to Work 4.0 by generating a benefit for the company as well as for the mothers is shown. An opportunity for the companies to react on the determined fluctuation of women after their first child is born to keep the high educated and experienced female workforce and on the other hand the offer for mothers to get training & development opportunities to stay on top of the career during their absence and to manage family and work in a better way.

3.8. Profitability of diversity management

The economic investigation is necessary to argue the implementation of diversity management in management. Strategy decisions are generally made based on facts and numbers. For this reason the cost-benefit-calculation is explained and applied later to evaluate the diversity management strategy "Strategy for the use of free, female work capacity after maternity/parental leave in the automotive industry in Austria focused on women with minimum high school degree".

The costs incurring from the necessary actions compared with the benefits from the implementation of the strategy will allow an economic analysis. Based on economic evaluation the arguments for or against the Female Work 4.0 roadmap can be prepared for the management approval and make the outcome and the business impact more predictable for the company.

3.8.1. The cost-benefit-calculation for diversity implementation

The costs of diversity measures cannot be directly attributed to the company's results. This can be a matter of opinion. An example is the higher productivity that can be

seen as the result of improved loyalty and grade of employee's motivation by a restructured work structure or the utilization of new technologies. The cause of the higher productivity as the result cannot be specifically assigned to the improved loyalty or the use of the new technology. The EU commission did a definition of four groups of costs connected with diversity (cf. EK, 2003: pp. 27).

3.8.1.1. The costs of the cost-benefit-calculation for diversity implementation

- compliance related costs (costs incurred with a new regulation from government like costs for the implementation and service of the related detection systems or the necessary training of staff)
- direct operational costs (short and long-term costs incurred belonging directly to the diversity management actions)
 - manpower (long-term; over the entire implementation period)
 - education and training (diversity and inclusion initiatives for overall hierarchical levels)
 - provision of facilities and support
 - adjustment of the working conditions and remuneration
 - communication to ensure loyalty, increase engagement and awareness
 - expenses for staff-related measures (workforce for strategy definition, for reproduction and the distribution)
 - detection and reporting costs (beginning with the start of the implementation of diversity measures) for project tracking
- opportunity costs are the costs which occur due to lost utilization of limited resources (refocus of workforce in the C-suite, the manager and supervisor positions; decrease in productivity due to newcomers which should usually be compensated with the loyalty in long-term)
- increased business risks (failed or partly failed diversity actions compromise the investments)

(cf. EK, 2003: as cited in Franken, 2015: pp. 132).

3.8.1.2. Identification of benefits for the cost-benefit-calculation for diversity implementation

- The economic benefit from diversity can only be considered qualitatively and exists out of the following effects in the company:
- the heterogenous companies' committees whether in the board, middle management or the supervisor level produce better qualitative decisions and consequently more efficient strategies
- internationality and multicultural differences and the associated specific intercultural competencies result in an extended field of company vision to the international perception of the corporate environment, the customer potentials and the innovation readiness
- winning new markets through enhanced customer focused marketing
- growth in creativity and grade of innovation
- the importance and acceptance, fairness and respect of employees in a company reflected in high motivation, identification and job satisfaction will be reflected in higher performance and lower fluctuation
- a larger pool of applicants available through a better company image as an attractive employer

(cf. Franken, 2015: pp. 138)

3.8.2. Staff turnover expenses

The average cost per employee hired for the company are the cost per hire. It's the sum of external and internal costs. The internal costs include all in-house resources that are dedicated to the acquisition like the remuneration for the internal work in the recruiting process or the onboarding as well as a recruiting software. The external costs cover the expenditure for suppliers as headhunters or employer branding as well as job platforms. The cost of vacancy is not included in the cost per hire. That means the economic damage caused by an unfilled position is not considered. cf.

(Verhoeven, 2020, p. 176). In practice, about 40% of the annual salary of the lost employee is calculated as the cost per hire in the lower management. The staff turnover expenses include the cost per hire, the cost of vacancy, additional costs for reduced performance during the notice period, the training of the new employee, IT expenses, in fact all costs associated with the termination as the cost of vacancy.

4. Description of the research and the results

The automotive industry is a typical male-dominated sector. The OEMs and even more the suppliers in the world of the mobility compete for specialists and young professionals on the labor market. The situation in the technical industry is even more critical because of the high demand of STEM experts. With the implementation of the Industry 4.0 the expected labor demand will still increase. A broad expertise will be needed to stay competitive to meet the requirements for the realization of the new intelligent products. No matter what department a certain IT knowledge will be required which is mostly offered from young talents. The demand and supply for adequate professionals is becoming more and more divergent. Nevertheless, only a small number of companies has strategies to get and keep the optimum employees from the existing labor market supply through special focus on individual employee retention. Especially in the technical industries there is still a reluctance to hire female employees. Instead of shying away from employing women with/without children, an approach aimed at hiring women and employing them beyond the maternity/parental leave period is expedient. Thus, the human capital is secured and the company remains competitive. The prerequisite for this is an employee strategy tailored to mothers to be able to create an advantage over other employers from this potential.

4.1. The working definition for “Female Work 4.0”

Based on the systematic literature research the state of the art of several topics were explained in the previous chapters. An understanding for the basic terms as Industry 4.0 or the Work 4.0 were created. By means of statistics the historical numbers showed the development on the Austrian labor market and the female employment. Interpretations of research studies about the prediction of the future work environment in Industry 4.0 with the expected challenges and risks for women and companies were described. Finally, the economic comparison was presented. The costs for hiring a new employee or for the case the job position remains unfilled

versus the investment for the implementation of the strategy "Female Work 4.0" to achieve engaged employed women.

In order to find out to what extent the promotion of gender equality in corporate culture is perceived by Austrian companies, a survey was conducted and managers from a wide range of companies headquartered in Austria were interviewed on the topic of women in the private sector. According to the results, an understanding of the needs of mothers during or after maternity or parental leave to be able to return to work quickly was created as well as the perspective of the entrepreneur was shown. Consequently, the results were identified as potential drivers for the development of the "Female Work 4.0" strategy. Lastly, an economic analysis was done to provide a good information base for decision making.

4.2. The working methods and the research approach for “Female Work 4.0” data collection

A survey was conducted using the online provider SurveyMonkey and a manager interview with a questionnaire in pdf format to reflect both the women's perspective and the entrepreneurial approach of the topic under discussion.

4.2.1. Survey

The survey was conducted to identify the root cause of the decision of women to stay at home or to opt for part-time employment after maternity or parental leave. The mixed method approach was applied for the study with closed and open questions for a quantitative and qualitative evaluation.

The target group was determined by the following characteristics:

- only women
- with at least a high school degree
- who are or at least have been in an employment relationship with an Austrian company

The defined characteristics were chosen for the following reasons:

- gender specific: only in 3.6% (Statistik Austria, Kinderbetreuungsgeldbezieherinnen, 2022) of the cases of childcare received benefits (funds during parental leave) went to in 2020.; as a result women were defined as the group mainly effected
- educational level: it is more likely that employees with at least this education will be assigned to employment groups in which tasks are performed independently and on their own responsibility. It follows that from a medium to high yearly income and a good basis for ambitious employees who want to develop in their profession
- country specific: to minimize influences due to country-specific different political and social environment

The sequence of questions was adapted to the respective answers of the participants. For example, a woman with the indication "no children" was not asked a follow-up question about the number of children. This allows for an even more critical view regarding this research.

The survey is presenting the socio-demographic data of the participants and the country of the employer is checked. This also serves to verify target group characteristics and to ensure that the survey responses can be considered for the research.

Questions on preferred parental leave models as well as on job return intentions and the necessary and helpful professional framework conditions were used for the survey. The answers are creating the basis to be able to represent the needs and requirements of the target group "women".

The survey was shared on social medias like LinkedIn and Facebook, in female expert groups and with the researcher's network.

4.2.2. Manager interview

The qualitative interviews with the executives provide an insight into the company's perspective. First, questions were asked about the position and duties of the executive interviewed. The challenges and advantages of female employees for the company and the executives were questioned. In addition, questions about measures already planned and/or implemented for the continued employment of women after maternity leave were asked. The problem-centered interview method was used with the focus on covering the affected areas around the factor woman in the company.

The target group was determined by the following characteristics:

- with personnel responsibility
- who are or at least have been in an employment relationship with an Austrian company in a manager position

The defined characteristics were chosen for the following reasons:

- prerequisite of employee responsibility: to receive feedback from leaders in their daily business; to learn about the challenges they face regarding the employment of women and which solutions are realistic and feasible from their point of view
- country specific: to minimize influences due to country-specific different political and social environments

The interviews were conducted with leaders from the researcher's network.

4.3. Description and discussion of the data used/collected from the survey

The survey was open from beginning of August until end of December 2021. The target of 50 participants couldn't be fully achieved. It was difficult to get women to participate, although they agreed to answer the questions. The reason given several times was the pandemic and the additional time needed for childcare.

4.3.1. Statistical and interpretative data evaluation of the survey

The survey reached a successful response rate of 91%. With 43 usable out of total 47 participations including 35 fully completed and 8 partially answered (missing answers for page 12: socio-demographic data and questions on the opinion regarding improvement measures) questionnaires the survey was closed. Four questions were not answered sufficiently. The result is a 91% response rate for 31 questions in total.

4.3.1.1. *Socio-demographic results*

The basic requirements for the participation were 100% fulfilled in the terms of employment at an Austrian company. Mainly women (from the 35 fully completed surveys) in an age between 25-45 years participated at the survey. This fact means that the results are highly relevant to the current working environment. The shared experiences and values are therefore largely based on the statements of women at childbearing age or at an age when children still require parental care.

Most participants have a university or college degree. It can be assumed that the interest in one's own professional development increases with the level of education. This represents research for adult education in Austria, which has found higher participation in job-related continuing education as the level of education increases (Salfinger-Pilz & Peterbauer, 2018: p. 29). For the survey conducted, it means that the participants are a group of women whose intention to return to work more quickly is certainly higher than it is generally the case.

With a high level of education, a salary above the average income can also be assumed. This circumstance can be another aspect to a faster re-entry, as childcare benefits are capped in Austria, resulting in higher income losses.

The partaking women are working in very diverse industries like the chemical, pharmaceutical, metal, textile, food, automotive, electrical engineering & electronics industry to name but a few.

The respondents were splitted into two groups with question 2 “Do you have child/ren?” (see appendix A). First group for women with child/ren reached 64% and the second group without a child was one third. For the non-moms it was followed by question 7 (Have you planned to have children?). Six participants answered with

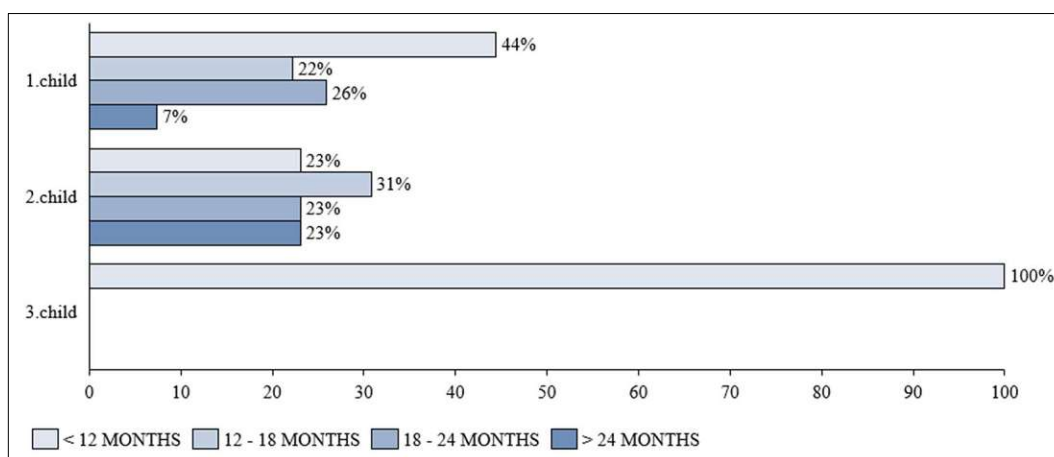
“no kids planned”. The survey was sending them directly to the socio-demographic questions but without further questions to the topic itself. The background is to have feedback from women who are directly affected or have planned to be confronted with the topic in future.

Question 2 was raised to first identify potential differences in the mindset, perceptions, ideas and experiences of the two groups. Second to get a picture of correlation of challenges in the professional life for mothers with one child compared with the ones with more children. Again the target group fulfills the prerequisite for a critical view. Almost two thirds of the participants are mothers. Their feedback is immensely important for evaluating the actual situation. The women without children also play a very important role in obtaining the perception of the actual situation from their perspective as well. During the data analysis the differences between the two groups will be discussed several times.

4.3.1.2. Choice of the parental leave model

Regarding the preferred parental leave model in question 4 & 8 (see appendix A), a difference can be seen between the women with and without children. Women's decisions with the first child were in 44% the model <12 months shown in figure 10. With the second child the preferred model was the 1,0-1,5 years with 31%.

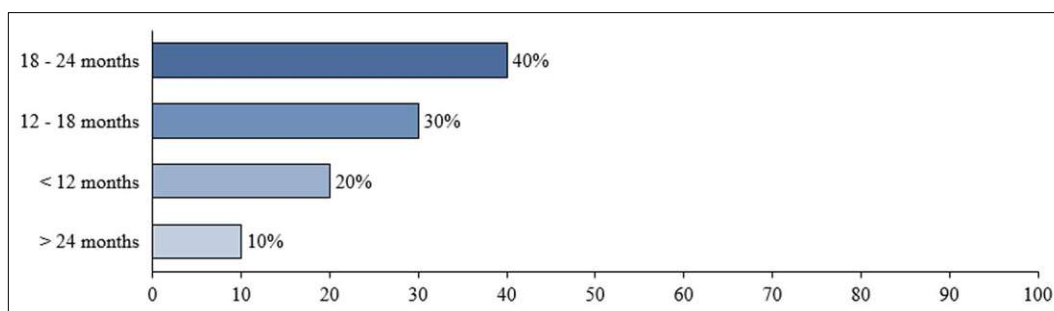
Figure 10: *Question 4 - What duration of parental leave did you choose for each child?*



Adopted from appendix A

For the women without children shown in figure 11 the 1,5-2,0 years model was in first place with 40% of the votes and the slightly shorter 1,0-1,5 years model was in second place reaching 30%.

Figure 11: *Question 8 – What duration of parental leave would you prefer?*



Adopted from appendix A

These differences could have several reasons, e.g. the ladies were not aware of the financial level of the childcare allowance or pressure is coming from the company to choose a shorter model as soon as the pregnancy is reality. There was one female with three children. She was choosing the parental leave model >12months three times. This is a very exceptional example but it shows that it's possible. With the follow up of her feedback she was in a full-time employment after her leaves because

part time was no option for her employer. In this context it is also worth mentioning that her satisfaction after her return to job was 97%.

The reasons were ranked as shown in table 2:

Table 2: Results for questions 5&9: What are/were the reasons for choosing the respective model?

Reason	Rating	Women with child/ren in %	Women without child in %
Difficulties in reconciling childcare, housekeeping and the job.	correct	50	40
	rather correct	31	50
	not correct at all	19	10
The financial aspect: the part-time salary compared to the cost of childcare is not lucrative enough.	correct	31	30
	rather correct	42	40
	not correct at all	27	30
The company doesn't want to offer me a part-time employment.	correct	12	10
	rather correct	19	20
	not correct at all	69	70
My preference is it to do the full-time childcare by myself.	correct	27	30
	rather correct	38	40
	not correct at all	35	30

Adopted from appendix A

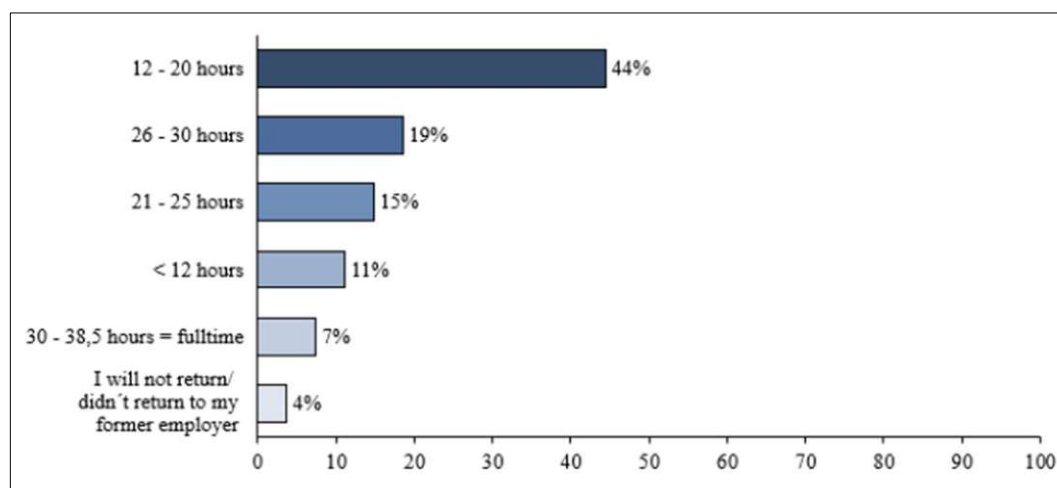
Regardless of whether they have children or not, they agree that managing work and family is very challenging and is a key decision maker in choosing a parental leave model. Childcare costs versus part-time income also play a big role with about 70% weight. In 70% of the cases the company allows the ladies to work part-time after maternity leave. However, it is not clear from the survey how many of the companies have more than 20 employees and are therefore generally obliged to grant parental part-time work. On the other hand, it is also questionable whether all women without children already know the legal basis of parental part-time work. What should be highlighted is the result of the last aspect. In society we very often get to hear that women want to stay at home with their children and do not want to leave the care in the hands of others. With 35% of the mothers and 30% of the women without children choosing "not correct at all" this general assumption is cancelled out. Their

preference is not for self-care. On the other hand, almost the same percentage of women (27% and 30%) do not want to hand over this task. The basic attitude of the participants can therefore not be generalized.

4.3.1.3. *Employment relationship after parental leave*

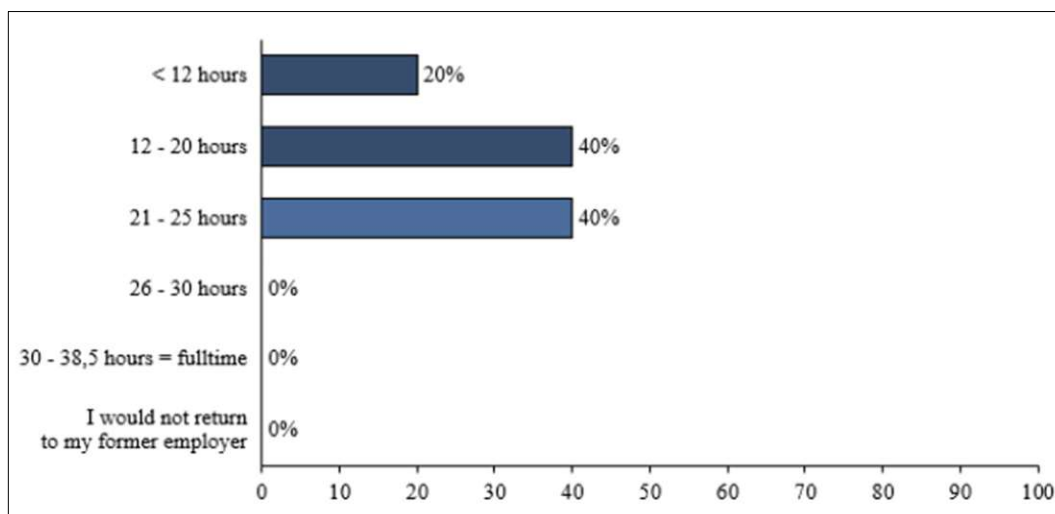
The most preferred employment was 12-20hours for both groups of ladies with 44% and 40%, as shown in figure 12 and 13. Second choice was 26-30 hours for mothers, closely followed by 21-25 hours employment and 2 of the 27 mothers selected 30-38,5 working hours weekly. For non-mothers the picture looks different. A weekly working time below 12 hours from 20% of them and the longest one with 21-25 hours were chosen from 40% of them.

Figure 12: *Question 6 – What are the planned or chosen weekly working hours after parental leave?*



Adopted from appendix A

Figure 13: Question 10 – What are the planned weekly working hours after parental leave?



Adopted from appendix A

It can be observed that, just as with the choice of the duration of parental leave, the group of women without children calculate more time for the family, i.e. longer parental leave and fewer working hours weekly.

4.3.1.4. Generation effect

In addition, it was investigated whether a trend is evident about the respective generation in the duration of the consumed or planned parental leave, as well as the subsequently selected weekly working hours. The two leading age groups of 25-35 years and 36-45 years were used for the analysis. It was examined whether there were any apparent differences in the two groups.

Group 1 for the women in aged between 25-35 years and group 2 aged between 36-45 years old. The result is very interesting because in group 1 50% decided to choose the parental model with 18-24 months, which is quite long. The return to job was started with weekly working hours of 12-20 hours in 57%.

Group 2 shows a very different picture. The preferred duration to stay at home with the kids was 12-18months for 41% of the ladies in an age of 36-45 years but 25% also decided for longer than 24 months. There was no trend recognizable for part time because 33% chose 12-20 hours version, 33% the 21-25 hours and another 25% the 26-30 hours engagement.

Considering the generational factor, it can be seen on the basis of the results that generation "Y" (1980-1995) is pursuing the desire for a good work-life balance. The trend is very obvious. After a rather long time at home the weekly working hours are, nevertheless, strongly reduced to a maximum of half days.

Group 2 is a mixture of generation "X" and "Y". This could be the reason for the non-existing trend of the chosen parental leave model and the weekly working hours. Nevertheless, a higher weekly working time can generally be seen in comparison to group 1. The characteristic of generation "X" with its striving for good pay and high value on relationships with colleagues could be a reason for the result.

4.3.1.5. The job situation for mothers after parental leave.

In question 14 the mothers were asked if they got a job with same or better remuneration after their comeback. The answer of 21 ladies from total 27 was "yes". Also 8 of them had personnel responsibility before the parental leave and still 7 had it afterwards.

The biggest challenges for women in returning to work are shown in figure 14. The highest weighted challenge was to find and organize compatible childcare. On second place with most demanding 16 votes was to handle the same job as before in part time employment.

Figure 14: Question 19 – What are/were your biggest challenges in returning to work (please choose at least 3 answers).



Adopted from appendix A

This gives reason to believe that the companies do not have adapted work models for the mothers, but they simply have transferred their tasks from full-time employment before the children to their part-time employment after they returned. Obviously most challenging for the majority was to find and organize compatible childcare.

The third place was given to the lack of getting further possibilities for development and promotion.

With question 17 asking for the satisfaction with job after the return, the mothers who have joined the survey reported 71% satisfaction.

4.3.1.6. *The willingness to continue education while on parental leave*

The evaluation in table 3 was done manually because there must have been an error in the path of the questionnaire. Some women without children were asked a second time for their willingness to educate during parental leave. They answered question 11 and also question 18, which was the question for the mothers.

The results presented in table 3 show women's motivation to continue their education in order to keep up in the company or prepare for a next change, e.g. a career change. From 36 responses, only six voices rejected the option of further training. Four of them justified this with the associated effort to organize support for childcare and housework. For one participant the costs for previously described childcare kept her from further training and another lady is not content to invest time.

Table 3: *Question 18 - If the company would have offered you free training during your maternity/parental leave for example in digitalization such as training on programming, Scrum Master training, training on agile coaching or other programs to optimize your skills and to make you more competitive – would you have participated in the trainings?*

Weekly training time	Votes
YES, with a weekly time expenditure of ≤ 5 hours	22
YES, with a weekly time expenditure of ≤ 10 hours	5
YES, with a weekly time expenditure of 10-20 hours	3
NO, it's not realistic. It would be too complicated to find support for childcare and household.	4
NO, it's not realistic. Support for childcare and household would be too cost intensive.	1
NO, I don't want to do some trainings during my absence.	1

Adopted from appendix A

Training opportunities during maternity leave would be taken up by 83% of the 36 women who answered, according to the survey. For 22 ladies up to 5 hours, for 5 of them up to 10 hours and for 3 of them even 10-20 hours per week are possible in order to develop professionally.

4.3.1.7. The awareness and experience on diversity strategies focused on women after maternity leave

The same issue as for question 11 & 18 popped up for 12 & 20. Therefore the evaluation was done again manually. The result of the questions delivers that 8 ladies have already heard about a special diversity strategy for women after maternity leave in their company and 34 of them not yet. If the question was answered with “yes”, it was followed by question 21 about more details. The known strategies were to have the possibility to define the own scope of work by yourself with subsequent manager reconciliation and a mentoring program for a good re-start. One lady mentioned a 12 weeks maternity leave company policy. The Austrian law says 8 weeks maternity leave before the calculated birthday of the baby and 8 weeks after the birthday. Therefore, this contribution should be neglected.

4.3.1.8. *Recommended measures from the women's perspective to accelerate the return of mothers to business life*

The participants were asked to give some ideas how they would support mothers from company perspective and from their individual situations. Which offers would have made it more attractive to shorten the choice of the parental leave? Questions 22 & 23 both were open questions for a qualitative analysis.

In summary, the most important factors for women are flexible working hours. It was also pointed out several times that this is not only related to the time of day, but also to the days of the week. This also includes a certain acceptance of short-term changes due to, for example, illness of the child. This already leads to the second strongest point remote work. Optional home offices were mentioned 18 times. The possibility of working 100% from home for a few months after returning to work was also addressed. Childcare was mentioned second most common, 19 times. Mostly in connection with a company kindergarten. Ideally with all-day flexible options for use and year-round care even during the usual vacation periods. At the same time, this also leads to financial relief for families. The participants also recommended additionally a higher payment, an attractive working environment, training to stay up to date and recognition of the performance independent of the weekly working hours. The possibility of personal development before and during pregnancy as well as early job definition adapted to the new life situation of a mother and information about the rights and obligations of a young mother for re-entry were each described once.

Question 24 was aimed at finding out which aspects need to be fulfilled for women to be able to focus more intensively on work again. The table 4 reflects the prioritization.

Table 4: *Question 24 – What aspects would make it easier for a woman to get the focus back on her career faster if that's her wish? (Please select min. 3)*

Selected aspects	Votes
More flexibility in the job.	29
Childcare facility in the company	24
Shared tasks in case of the childhood with the partner	21
More acceptance in the leadership for part-time employment.	18
The possibility of job sharing (1 full-time job is done by 2 part-time employees).	16
Smooth start: The weekly working time is increased from e.g. weekly 15 to 30h in the first 6 months after maternity leave.	9
Cost sharing of the company for childcare	8
A fixed proportion of minimum part-time positions in each department, which are preferably filled by mothers from maternity leave.	6
Supplements:	3
Organization of household help; virtual working/home office; care for sick children; flexibility to work from home; home office work should be possible	
Flexibility to work from home	
Home office work should be possible	

Adopted from appendix A

The top 3 are more or less same as the results from questions 22 & 23. The focus was on flexibility which can cover flexible working hours as well as remote work. Next, the company childcare and, in addition the strong desire for a shared childcare model with the partner. Less often the smooth start, the financial aspect for childcare and the request on fixed part-time jobs was elected. The supplements were describing again flexibility and a support for the household.

Assuming that the word flexibility will be used often, the survey explicitly addressed what flexibility means to participants. Presented in Table 5, the term covers the following framework.

Table 5: *Question 25 – What exactly does flexibility in the job mean to you?*

Descriptions	Votes
Time flexibility	29
Workplace	17
result orientated	4
teamwork	1

Adopted from appendix A

The meaning of flexibility is answered very clear by. The most important factor is time. Children demand time flexibility from parents. The possibility to work from home is also of great importance. Moving away from meeting weekly hours to result-oriented work. And one voice for the division of tasks in the team, depending on the free capacities of the team members.

4.4. Description and discussion of the data used/collected from the survey

The interviews were done in 2022. The target was to get 3 expert opinions. The contacted persons were very interested into the topic and very open-minded to answer the questions for the research work. The companies they work for are 3 stock corporations and one medium-sized limited liability company (GmbH).

4.4.1. Statistical and interpretative data evaluation of the interview

The interview was shared with 5 managers from Austrian companies or with minimum direct reports from an Austrian plant. One did not answer the questionnaire, so the response rate was 80%. Nevertheless, a positive result for the survey, since the planned number of three participants was still exceeded. The participants were asked to answer 8 questions attached in the appendix B.

4.4.1.1. Personal data on the professional environment

The companies employing the executives are active in the automotive, medical, paper, mobility, communications and industrial sectors. The managers responsibilities are in the sales, the process management and the operation management department. Their direct reports go from 5 to 24 headcounts.

4.4.1.2. The female direct reports

Participants reported a percentage of female direct reports ranging from 0-80%. Both extremes are found in companies that serve both the automotive and communications industries.

Question 5 was worded to specifically ask the leader what advantages and disadvantages they see in hiring and employing women.

In the feedbacks two times the challenge of the preferred part-time employment was listed. The necessity of an early coordination of requested part-time employment was mentioned and the reduced flexibility of working hours like overtime. From manager view the long-term perspective for childless women of childbearing age was also mentioned as a challenge. Another aspect was the low portion of female applicants.

The two managers with the highest women rate (80% and 37,5%) do not see any challenges. The female executive argues as follows. A position is filled exclusively according to the skills of the applicants and not according to their gender. This approach has allowed the company to successfully fill positions in the long term. The other one noted that the mood and the politeness and therefore the effectiveness in gender diverse teams are higher.

4.4.1.3. The effort and commitment made by the company around human resources strategies aimed at women

The target of question 6 was to get some insights what companies are doing strategically for women, for the advancement of women and for women after maternity/parental leave. The statement of the female manager of the mid-size company was that they are not following specific strategies but either men or women can go on parental leave. Women can start immediately after the maternity leave a

marginal employment, also from home, if desired. Part-time employment is variable chooseable as well as the work base at home or in the office.

The company from the automotive segment is offering talent programs at which promotion is linked to performance. The employee defines the development goals with the manager and depending on the achievements its career is promoted.

An offer from the third stock company is a woman day in the production area to win women as operators. For this study it is negligible because employments in the shop floor are not considered. The manager mentioned the possibility to come back in part-time. This is not a company offer, it's an Austrian regulation. The corporate childcare, home office and flextime are additional employee benefits. Another initiative is a defined female share. The regulation says 30% quota of women in the supervisory board of stock corporations or companies with more than 1.000 employees. The company, however, has implemented it for non-managers.

Many initiatives were presented from the leader of operations with the 37,5% female quota in his team. His company is offering a special company network, a mentoring program exclusively for women and as the newest initiative a job-sharing program. The last covers several options as the job splitting, the full-time position is done by 2 independent part-time positions, whereas the opposite form named job sharing or top sharing (for manager positions) is a cooperation of 2 part-time employees. In this way, the company aims to provide equal career opportunities for women and men, right up to management positions.

4.4.1.4. The female work potential

Questions 7 and 8 addressed the shortage of skilled workers and what role existing female labor capacity can and will play in this context in the future. It was also asked what the interviewees thought was the reason for the low proportion of women in the automotive world.

One optimistic voice declared that the labor market will regulate itself and women could play an important role in future if they will have the adequate education in STEM for the automotive segment.

The other interview partners confirmed the importance of the female work capacity for the future mobility world. Supplemented by the importance for all industries to distance themselves from role models. It was pointed out that nowadays lots of women are high educated, but don't use their knowhow after maternity/parental leave anymore. The companies should use the potential much better.

There is also the society aspect. People still think several times before filling a position with a woman. There should be no reason to distinguish whether the chair is filled by a woman or a man.

The interviewees named the following reasons for the low proportion of women in the automotive sector:

- It seems to be historical driven and don't differ so much to other comparable industry segments.
- The gender role image, which is given and lived by our society. This also includes the high expectations in today's mother image, in which the outside care of children is something reprehensible, mothers must run the household perfectly and they have to take care of their offspring 24/7. There is no more room for career opportunities.
- Lack of interest and the fear of a technical job despite technical talent.
- Companies in the recruiting process are often too focused on pure technical background. People with different education and the willingness to learn the needed technical skills are even better and the talent pool is bigger than the pool of engineers.

The four experts represented very different opinions, approaches and solutions. The same with corporate initiatives. The offers for employees and women differ greatly in some cases. Whether it is a coincidence that the female manager has by far the highest female quota in the team cannot be proven or disapproved to this extent. However, it is noticeable that her approach to the topic is different from that of the male participants. She focuses on absolute neutrality and equality.

The many factors influencing the topic of Female Work 4.0 are summarized again in the next chapter. Subsequently, the solutions and implementation options for

retaining women resource are presented with a focus on the time after maternity leave.

5. Result presentation, discussion and suggestions for solutions

The outcome of the research actions in the literature study in terms of diversity, leadership and statistics to understand the current employment behavior of women in Austria are the base to understand the real-life situation, how the human mind works and what it needs and which tools for employee retention are available and efficient. The gained answers from the survey and the interview provided information to answer the questions how the engagement of women after maternity/parental leave can be improved in long-term, what are the needs to reach diverse, stable teams in the company to be successful in future and how the digitalization can be utilized therefore. The economical aspect for the implementation of the strategy Female Work 4.0 was shown by a case study of a fictitious manufacturing company.

5.1. Summary of the results

In the literature part of this scientific work the situation of women in Austria was presented and the influencing factors of women in the labor market were identified and investigated. Eight out of ten women with the youngest child between three and five years old are in a part-time employment. Is the child younger than three years, only 50% are back in the job. The offers from Austrian government for parental leave are available for more than two years, even if less childcare allowance. Compared to Sweden the available childcare places and the offered care times are strongly limited in Austria. Furthermore, the childcare costs are very high. The amount is up to almost 5 EUR per hour outside the standard times (usually 7AM-1PM) or in an alternative childcare to the kindergarten depending on the income of the parents.

The results of the survey are exactly reflecting these identified shortcomings. As the biggest challenge for women to return to the job after maternity or parental leave the factor time was figured out. In most cases, the reason for reluctance to return to work is not unwillingness. It is the lack of alternatives to childcare. The demand for low weekly working hours, flexibility in terms of time and location, the desire of shared

tasks in childhood with the partner and the necessary acceptance of leaders for part-time employment are the consequences of the woman's limited resource time.

The interview with managers shows a partial change in thinking and a willingness to plan and implement initiatives to improve work-life balance in the automotive or mobility industry. What needs to be highlighted is the approach of the female participant. Her company has no specific strategies for women and manages a team with 80% share of women. Her offer is a flexible work model in terms of weekly hours, days of the week, time of day, and place of work. This can be a proof that offering real flexibility to female employees successfully retains women in the company.

5.2. Proposed solutions for the research question

How can the "woman" factor, especially after maternity or parental leave, counteract the predicted shortage of skilled workers, especially of technicians, in Industry 4.0 in the automotive industry, and what investments and actions are necessary to win and keep women for a job in the long term?

From the manager interviews, it can be concluded that the female factor can and will be a partial solution to the shortage of skilled workers. The fact that with the birth of a child many mothers no longer make their potential available to the labor market has to be counteracted. This talent resource should be specifically promoted and supported.

If the foundation for a good work-life balance is laid, a company will also benefit from new female recruits. Currently these companies are very rare, not only in the technical sector, as seen from the survey results with participants from all different industries. However, the focus of this paper is on employee retention after parental leave. Through a holistic view of the new working environment named Work 4.0, the identified approaches for employee retention of women after maternity leave are shown.

With the tools of the Industry 4.0, the available network of human and machine, the hardware to provide employees local flexibility, is given in all respects.

The first pillar technology from the socio-physical system in the new work environment is settled with the possibility to work from everywhere.

For the second pillar, organization with prognosed flat and open hierarchies in Work 4.0 it can influence women's situation as well. Some studies show that the middle management shrinks in Industry 4.0. Even if this means the elimination of management positions, which are rather still held by women, the development will make it easier for companies to set up flexibility for women. The argument that with increasing responsibility it is not justifiable for the manager not to be available around the clock would thus be invalidated.

Is the minimization of the middle management really a disadvantage for women? I would not confirm that minimizing middle management is a disadvantage for women. Professionals are still needed and their work performance is very valuable. Direct employee responsibility cannot be eliminated, the number of employees cannot be overtaken by top management. In my opinion, the responsibility of team members could also change with each newly formed project team. This could mean that there will be temporary employee responsibility in the future. The goal of removing a hierarchy should move the employees closer together rather than to distance the top management even further from the project team.

The flexibility of the labor management relations forms the third pillar of the socio-physical system for Work 4.0. The leadership starts with the understanding of how motivation can be achieved and what the basic needs are. Away from standard management to individual employee management. Companies can only reach diversity, if a flexible leadership is given in form of various employment forms and the acceptance of the management for it. This includes competence-related recruiting, a coordinated transparent remuneration concept and variable employment models adapted to the life situation. Female Work 4.0 is a part of diversity, this encompasses the conscious decision of a company in the automotive industry to employ and sustainably retain female employees.

5.2.1.Strategy

I already start with a competence-related job advertisement in the recruiting process. Human resource and the manager of the company should ask themselves, if it's necessary for the applicant to be a fan of cars, trucks or motorcycles to work for a producer or supplier in the mobility world. Or is it more important to have a related professional education, job experience or certain language skills. The requirement to like driving reduces the talent pool and potential candidates are lost before they applied. Almost every job posting involves full-time employment. With the focus on women of every age, it should be thought about part-time offers with a minimum requirement if necessary.

The company should have transparent career promotion programs for young women to give them a real chance. If a 2-year stay at the American operating location is a requirement, it will certainly be more difficult for women with children than for men to fulfill this. Shorter stays abroad or remote work with an American team could be alternatives. The definition of the goals should be fair and valuable for the company and the employee. It should be questioned whether it develops a certain necessary competence for the next career step, it fills a system or whether it has simply been taken over from history.

The employment models have a wide range of possibilities. This scientific research is focused on women after maternity leave. Therefore, the situation of women during pregnancy, the maternity and parental leave and with the return to job will be discussed deeply.

The coordination between the manager and the employee should begin before the start of maternity leave. The aim is to exchange possibilities for further cooperation. The employer presents its criteria and offers on the employee's career path during and after the maternity/parental leave. These include possible paid education or training during the maternity leave period. The professional possibilities with the woman's return, depending on the training completed, are shown and the corresponding work models are outlined. In the survey 83% of the interviewed women willing to accept an offer for paid trainings during the maternity and parental leave. A portion of 8% would invest 10-20 hours weekly and 60% up to 5 hours.

This would also be a good possibility for companies to use the time for employee development. The company should think about the creation of new positions needed in the future. This could be a well-being manager, a scrum master, a project manager for an internal female network or an additional sales manager. It could also be the necessity for successors in the event of retirements or employees on leave. If the position is in a different department or team, for example, mentoring can be used to prepare the person on leave for the change in her absence. The transfer of knowledge can prevent knowledge from being lost upon retirement, as an example, or facilitates re-entry into a new team or field of activity. The trainings can also be used to strengthen the employee's weaknesses or to supplement her skills with new job requirements. To complete the offer the possibilities of job sharing in a cooperation with a colleague, job splitting or other kinds of work models can be offered. The company could offer internal crowd work for its women on parental leave or also afterwards as an additional option to a job without potential for flexibility. On an internal platform employees provide solutions to problems or requested services or tasks and receive payment for it. In principle, result-oriented payment could take away the companies fear that employees in the home office are not working enough. The woman should be also prepared for the following questions:

Which maternity leave model has she planned to select? How much capacity the woman wants to make available for further training during maternity leave? Does she want to work a few hours during the parental leave? What are her career plans? What are her limitations and what are the requirements for the job after the maternity or parental leave?

A prepared questionnaire for the ladies is required from company side to get a full picture of the woman's resources and needs for the business environment in her new stage of life. The company can offer possible trainings, working models and career opportunities based on this.

The parties should stay in continuous exchange to find a solution for both. The jointly agreed job design should secure that the woman's needs for engagement in the section of survival and security are covered with enough flexibility and the company gets a good work performance.

With the return the woman should be welcomed and an on-ramp program is intended to accompany the young mother for a certain time to make the start easier.

Beside the leadership the company can support mothers very sufficiently with a company childcare, in the best case for free, opened from 06.30 AM to 06.30 PM and 365 days a year.

5.2.2. The economical examination

The strategy is presented and, in the case the company's CEO is interested, the economical argumentation is needed to get the approval to reach a successful implementation of the strategy Female Work 4.0.

As mentioned in chapter 3.8.2, the benefits of diversity strategies are not easy to evaluate. For the economic analysis in consideration of the Female Work 4.0 the investment for the strategy implementation against the cost per hire is used. Because, if the company is investing into the strategy, the probability for the woman's comeback will increase. As a result, the company will save the money for filling the position in the case the mother will not return. The prerequisite is that the changes and actions done by the company to bring mothers back to the job after maternity or parental leave achieve a 100% return rate of the mothers. The advantages, as shorter chosen leaves, encouraged, motivated and trained female employees after maternity or parental leave, diverse teams, a state-of-the-art employer image and, finally, occupied positions with qualified personnel, are not considered and can be seen as a bonus. It is not the reality that the total number of mothers don't return to the job as assumed in the case study with a return rate of 100%.

As an investment the costs of the cost-benefit-calculation for diversity implementation in chapter 3.8.1.1 are used for the Female Work 4.0.

For a better illustration of the return of investment for Female Work 4.0 a case study is done for the following company.

Assuming a company with 1.000 employees, 700 of them are in the production including 50 team leaders, 300 in the administration and 40 of them in a management position. The total female quota in the company is 30%.

Table 6: *List of total investment*

Cost positions	Amount in EUR
Direct operational costs	323.000 EUR/year
Opportunity costs	292.000 EUR
Total investment	615.000 EUR/year

Since the government has not implemented any regulations in terms of the strategy, the compliance related costs are negligible.

The direct costs include the costs for the used manpower for all strategic and operational tasks for reporting, trainings, education and communication to increase the commitment and awareness through the whole company. The average time invest of four hours per person per year for 40 managers considered with 200 EUR/hour, 260 employees in the administration calculated with 100 EUR/h and 50 team leaders in the shop floor appraised with 50 EUR/h average cost for the company is assumed (146.000EUR per year). Secondly, the investment to provide a company childcare is considered. The facility is open 54 hours a week, the capacity for 30 kindergarten places is offered. with an employee monthly. Three persons in charge have to be paid 25 EUR/h and rooms must be rented (240.000EUR per year). The deductible for employees is 50 EUR up to 20 hours of consumed childcare and 100EUR for more than 20 hours weekly (capacity for 70 children in total with 50% half- and 50% full-time childcare 63.000EUR per year).

Additionally, the opportunity costs must be considered because the people are in the trainings and meetings in case of the Female Work 4.0 strategy and don't create turnover for the company in their daily business. Therefore, the average opportunity costs are the remuneration costs multiplied with factor 2 for medium important employees for revenue generation.

The increased risk is negligible because prerequisite for the case study is that the women come back to 100%, therefore no risk.

The total investment is 615.000 EUR/year based on the assumed company above.

As a benefit the cost per hire is used. Assumption is a female account manager, remuneration 100.000 EUR per year, was pregnant and decided to change her

employer after parental leave. Her position was not replaced, the tasks were distributed to other colleagues as good as possible for an agreed parental leave of 12 months plus 2 months of maternity leave. The company has to recruit a new employee for the account manager position. The costs can be roughly calculated with 40% of the yearly remuneration. The expenses occurred are 40.000 EUR until the new employee is familiar with her/his job. The company has 300 employees in the administration with a female quota of 30%. Assuming 5% of the women should come back from maternity or parental leave yearly, the cost per hire for 15 women is 600.000EUR per year.

This results in the return of investment:

$$ROI = \frac{(Benefit - Total\ investment)}{Total\ investement} * 100$$

$$ROI = \frac{(600.000EUR - 615.000EUR)}{615.000EUR} * 100$$

$$ROI = -2,44\%$$

The return of investment is -2,44% for 15 of 300 employees. The calculation has not considered the 700 blue-collar employees. The women from the production as well as the women in high management positions were not considered. In total, it was assumed that 1,5% of all employees are not coming back from the parental leave without the implementation of Female Work 4.0. Under these conditions related to the possible quantitative analysis the investment is almost covered through the benefit from it.

As mentioned before the advantages for the company culture are not considered in the calculation. The diverse teams, the positive employer image, the attracted and retained competitive talent, the knowhow which stays in the company, the higher motivation of the staff which goes hand in hand with greater commitment, the applicability to all employees whether male or female, an emerging flexibility and innovation accelerator inside the company along with a contribution to society form the entirety of the corporate advantage of Female Work 4.0

6. Conclusion

“The purest form of madness is to leave everything as it is and still hope that something will change”, as Albert Einstein said.

The Industry 4.0 with the working environment full of potential for more flexibility correlates exactly with the needs of young mothers and fathers. The survey shows that the most critical factor for women is, first, the time- and location-bondage in the daily business and second the difficulty in childcare. According to the individual feedbacks from the manager interviews, the view on the topic of employing women in the company is very different. In the survey 80% of the women answered that they never heard about a diversity strategy in their company with the focus on the return of mothers after maternity/parental leave. For this reason it can be concluded that the topic is disregarded and accordingly, the communication with the women is little in the company. During the literature review it was found that no literature exists specifically on the topic of career strategies for mothers after maternity leave and little material could be found for women in general. If companies want to select employees from a broader talent market in the future, it is necessary to be focused on and invest in the topic of women in the workforce and family-friendly employment models. A product, no matter how great, can only be successful if it is developed, produced, delivered and sold, which is only possible for companies that value their employees and can operate the necessary human resources in the company.

The strategies can be overtaken for fathers as well. The acceptance for fathers on parental leave constantly increases. The trend is slow but steady. The time of leave can also be used for some trainings or mentoring. It will widen the men's horizon for the women's challenges. What it means to have the main responsibility for the children and might increase their understanding for their female team members as a leader or a colleague.

It would be interesting to act in cooperation with companies in the automotive industry to apply the Female Work 4.0 strategy and do some studies about the changes three years after starting the actions. From my personal point of view, after many discussions with people from different industries, jobs, in a wide variety of life situations, I can see a big potential for companies with above mentioned offers to

first stay competitive and second be a step ahead the competitors with highly motivated, well-trained, creative minds in their workforce.

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10. Appendixes

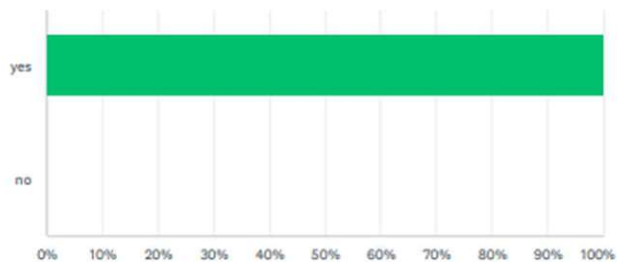
10.1. Appendix A

Female Work 4.0 - woman´s return to job after the maternity/parental leave

SurveyMonkey

F1 Is your company located in Austria

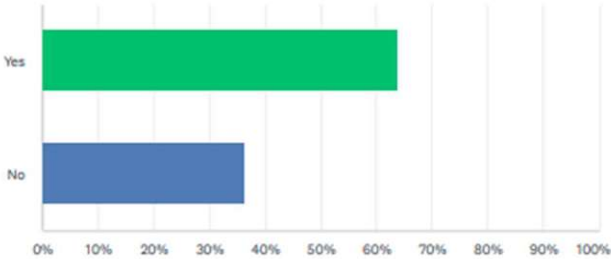
Beantwortet: 47 Übersprungen: 0



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
yes	100.00%	47
no	0.00%	0
GESAMT		47

F2 Do you have children?

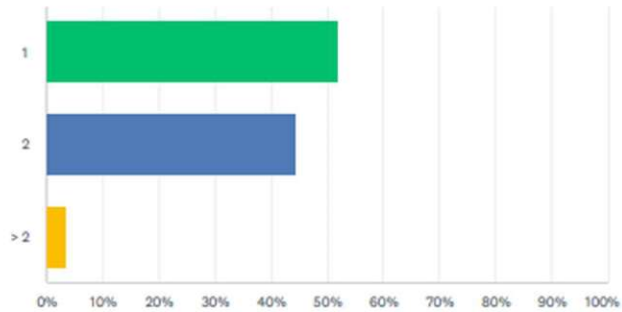
Beantwortet: 47 Übersprungen: 0



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
Yes	63.83%	30
No	36.17%	17
GESAMT		47

F3 How many children do you have?

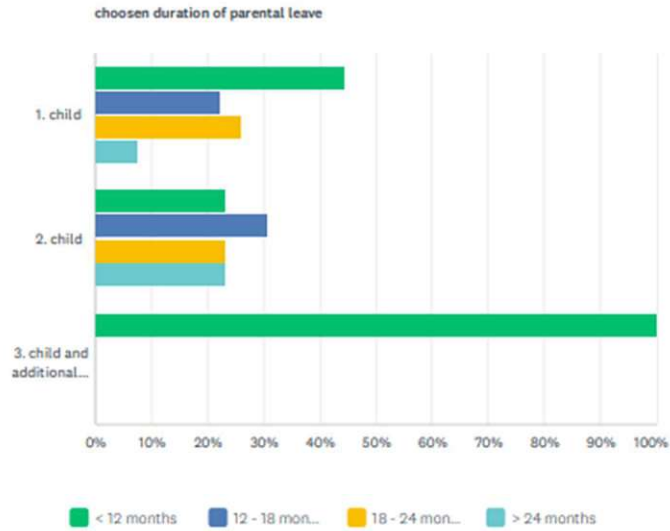
Beantwortet: 27 Übersprungen: 20



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
1	51.85%	14
2	44.44%	12
> 2	3.70%	1
GESAMT		27

F4 What duration of parental leave did you choose for each child?

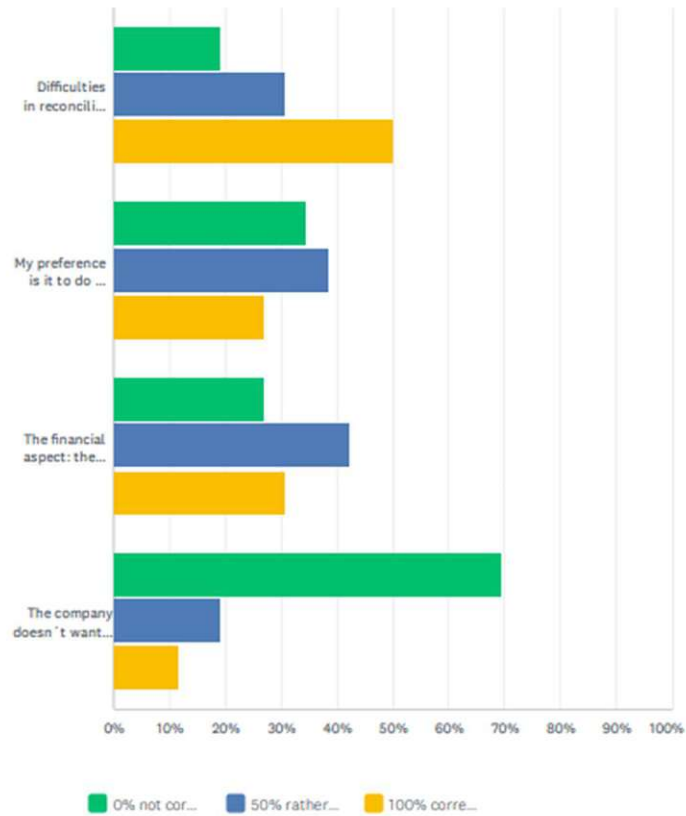
Beantwortet: 27 Übersprungen: 20



chosen duration of parental leave					
	< 12 MONTHS	12 - 18 MONTHS	18 - 24 MONTHS	> 24 MONTHS	INSGESAMT
1. child	44.44% 12	22.22% 6	25.93% 7	7.41% 2	27
2. child	23.08% 3	30.77% 4	23.08% 3	23.08% 3	13
3. child and additional children	100.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	1

F5 What are the reasons for choosing the respective model?

Beantwortet: 26 Übersprungen: 21



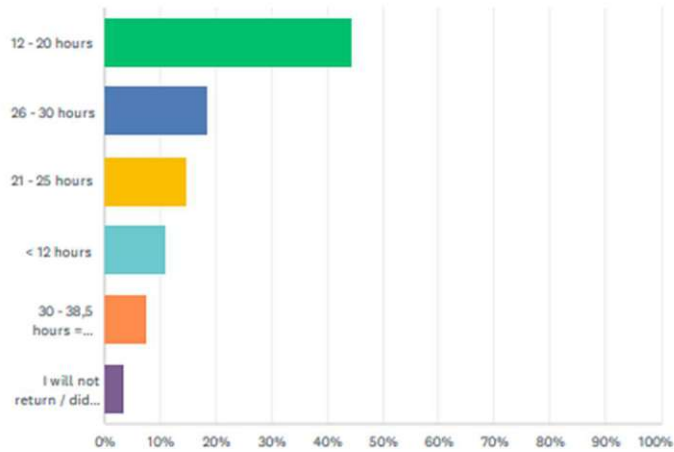
Female Work 4.0 - woman's return to job after the maternity/parental leave

SurveyMonkey

	0% NOT CORRECT AT ALL	50% RATHER CORRECT	100% CORRECT	INSGESAMT	GEWICHTETER MITTELWERT
Difficulties in reconciling childcare, housekeeping and the job.	19.23% 5	30.77% 8	50.00% 13	26	2.31
My preference is it to do the full-time childcare by myself.	34.62% 9	38.46% 10	26.92% 7	26	1.92
The financial aspect: the part-time salary compared to the cost of childcare is not lucrative enough.	26.92% 7	42.31% 11	30.77% 8	26	2.04
The company doesn't want to offer me a part-time employment.	69.23% 18	19.23% 5	11.54% 3	26	1.42

F6 What are the planned or chosen weekly working hours after parental leave?

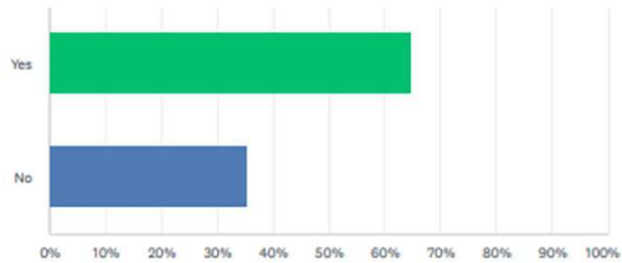
Beantwortet: 27 Übersprungen: 20



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
12 - 20 hours	44.44%	12
26 - 30 hours	18.52%	5
21 - 25 hours	14.81%	4
< 12 hours	11.11%	3
30 - 38,5 hours = fulltime	7.41%	2
I will not return / didn't return to my former employer.	3.70%	1
GESAMT		27

F7 Have you planned to have children?

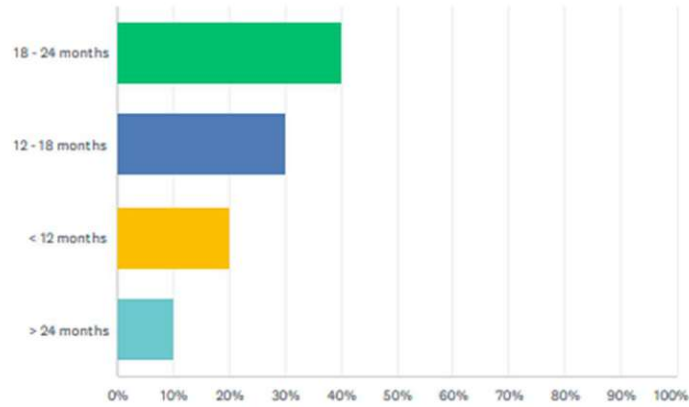
Beantwortet: 17 Übersprungen: 30



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
Yes	64.71%	11
No	35.29%	6
GESAMT		17

F8 What duration of parental leave would you prefer ?

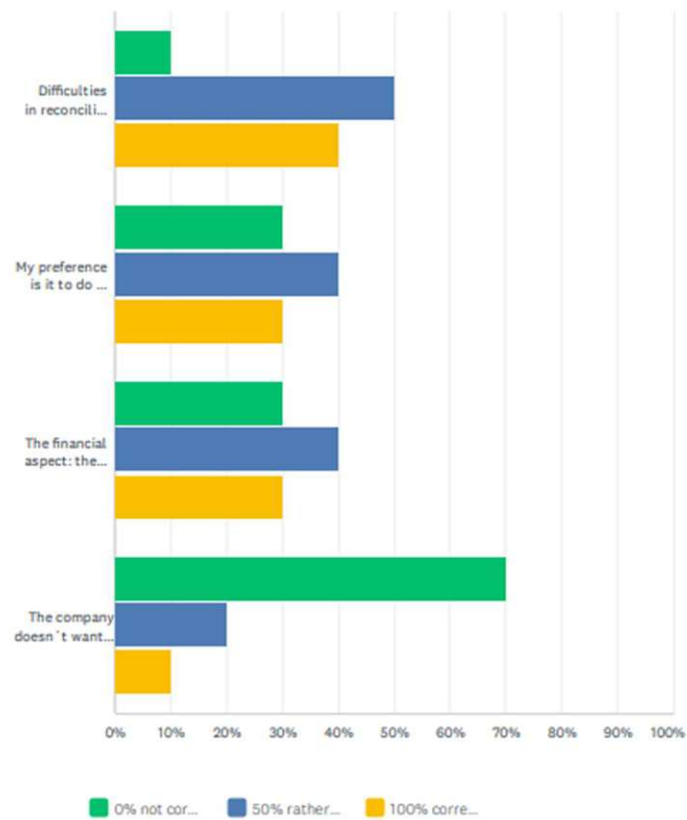
Beantwortet: 10 Übersprungen: 37



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN
18 - 24 months	40.00% 4
12 - 18 months	30.00% 3
< 12 months	20.00% 2
> 24 months	10.00% 1
GESAMT	10

F9 What are the reasons for choosing the respective model?

Beantwortet: 10 Übersprungen: 37



10 / 35

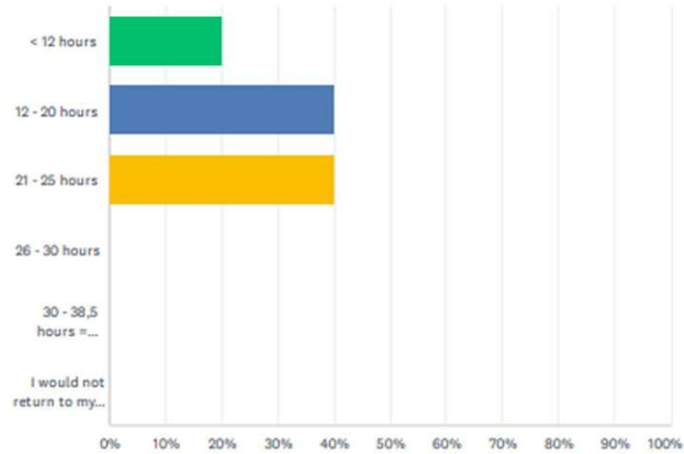
Female Work 4.0 - woman's return to job after the maternity/parental leave

SurveyMonkey

	0% NOT CORRECT AT ALL	50% RATHER CORRECT	100% CORRECT	INSGESAMT	GEWICHTETER MITTELWERT
Difficulties in reconciling childcare, housekeeping and the job.	10.00% 1	50.00% 5	40.00% 4	10	2.30
My preference is it to do the full-time childcare by myself.	30.00% 3	40.00% 4	30.00% 3	10	2.00
The financial aspect: the part-time salary compared to the cost of childcare is not lucrative enough.	30.00% 3	40.00% 4	30.00% 3	10	2.00
The company doesn't want to offer me a part-time employment.	70.00% 7	20.00% 2	10.00% 1	10	1.40

F10 What are the planned weekly working hours after parental leave?

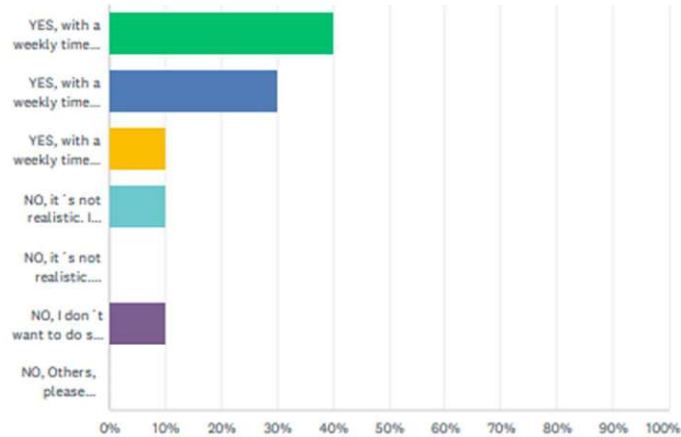
Beantwortet: 10 Übersprungen: 37



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN
< 12 hours	20.00% 2
12 - 20 hours	40.00% 4
21 - 25 hours	40.00% 4
26 - 30 hours	0.00% 0
30 - 38,5 hours = fulltime	0.00% 0
I would not return to my former employer.	0.00% 0
GESAMT	10

F11 If the company would offer you free training during your maternity/parental leave, for example in digitization such as training on programming, Scrum Master training, training on agile coaching or other programs to optimize your skills and to make you more competitive – would you participate in the trainings?

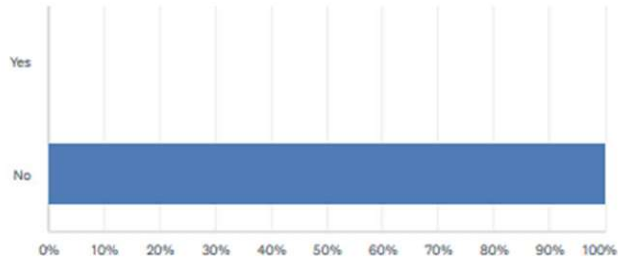
Beantwortet: 10 Übersprungen: 37



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
YES, with a weekly time expenditure of <= 5 hours	40.00%	4
YES, with a weekly time expenditure of <= 10 hours	30.00%	3
YES, with a weekly time expenditure of 10-20 hours	10.00%	1
NO, it's not realistic. It would be too complicated to find support for childcare and household.	10.00%	1
NO, it's not realistic. Support for childcare and household would be too cost intensive.	0.00%	0
NO, I don't want to do some trainings during my absence.	10.00%	1
NO, Others, please describe.	0.00%	0
GESAMT		10

F12 Have you ever heard about a diversity strategy in your company with the focus on the return of mothers after maternity/parental leave ?

Beantwortet: 10 Übersprungen: 37



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
Yes	0.00%	0
No	100.00%	10
GESAMT		10

F13 Do you know more details about this strategy?

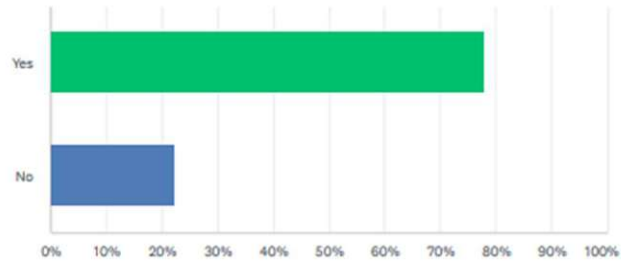
Beantwortet: 0 Übersprungen: 47

⚠ Keine passenden Beantwortungen.

ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
No	0.00%	0
Yes, please describe some points. What you like or what you dislike?	0.00%	0
GESAMT		0

F14 Did you get a job with same or better remuneration?

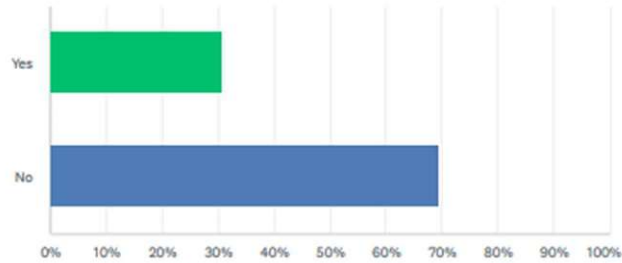
Beantwortet: 27 Übersprungen: 20



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
Yes	77.78%	21
No	22.22%	6
GESAMT		27

F15 Did you have personnel responsibility before the maternity/parental leave?

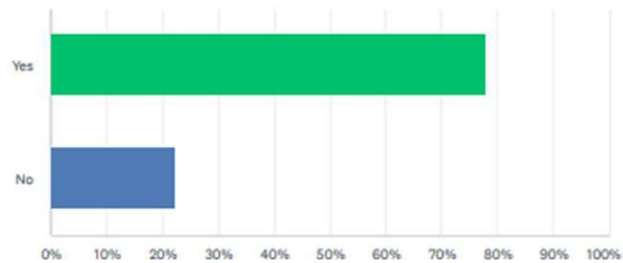
Beantwortet: 26 Übersprungen: 21



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
Yes	30.77%	8
No	69.23%	18
GESAMT		26

F16 Do/Did you still have personnel responsibility after parental leave?

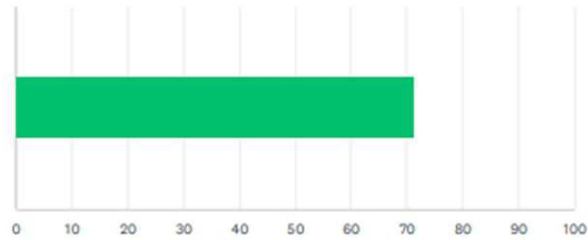
Beantwortet: 9 Übersprungen: 38



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
Yes	77.78%	7
No	22.22%	2
GESAMT		9

F17 Please rate your satisfaction with your job after your return (area of responsibility, compatibility job & family, responsibility,...)

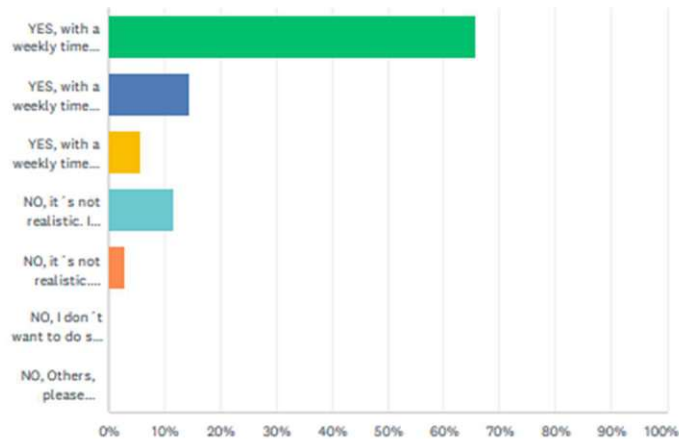
Beantwortet: 26 Übersprungen: 21



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	DURCHSCHNITTliche ANZAHL	GESAMTANZAHL	BEANTWORTUNGEN
	71	1,858	26
Befragte insgesamt: 26			

F18 If the company would have offered you free training during your maternity/parental leave, for example in digitalization such as training on programming, Scrum Master training, training on agile coaching or other programs to optimize your skills and to make you more competitive – would you have participated in the trainings?

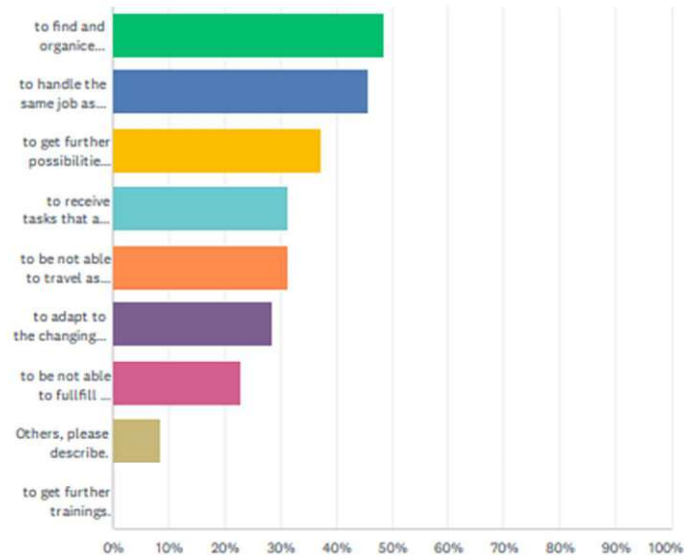
Beantwortet: 35 Übersprungen: 12



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
YES, with a weekly time expenditure of <= 5 hours	65.71%	23
YES, with a weekly time expenditure of <= 10 hours	14.29%	5
YES, with a weekly time expenditure of 10-20 hours	5.71%	2
NO, it's not realistic. It would be too complicated to find support for childcare and household.	11.43%	4
NO, it's not realistic. Support for childcare and household would be too cost intensive.	2.86%	1
NO, I don't want to do some trainings during my absence.	0.00%	0
NO, Others, please describe.	0.00%	0
GESAMT		35

F19 What are/were your biggest challenges in returning to work (please choose at least 3 answers).

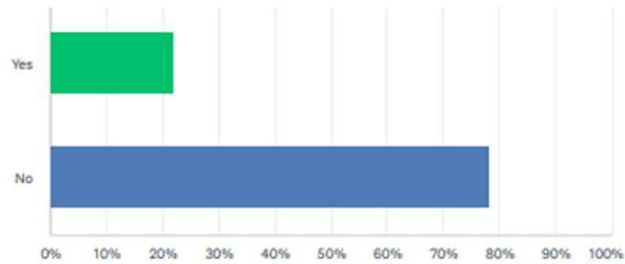
Beantwortet: 35 Übersprungen: 12



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
to find and organize compatible childcare.	48.57%	17
to handle the same job as before in part time employment.	45.71%	16
to get further possibilities for development and promotion.	37.14%	13
to receive tasks that are not appropriate to my competences.	31.43%	11
to be not able to travel as much as requested.	31.43%	11
to adapt to the changing work requirements in terms of knowledge and skills.	28.57%	10
to be not able to fulfill the expectations of my manager / team members.	22.86%	8
Others, please describe.	8.57%	3
to get further trainings.	0.00%	0
Befragte insgesamt: 35		

F20 Have you ever heard about a diversity strategy in your company with the focus on the return of mothers after maternity/parental leave ?

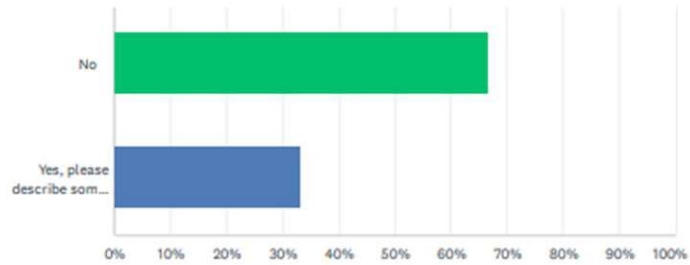
Beantwortet: 41 Übersprungen: 6



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
Yes	21.95%	9
No	78.05%	32
GESAMT		41

F21 Do you know more details about this strategy?

Beantwortet: 9 Übersprungen: 38



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
No	66.67%	6
Yes, please describe some points. What you like or what you dislike?	33.33%	3
GESAMT		9

F22 As a company, what would you offer pregnant employees and mothers to make a quick return to work more attractive to them?

Beantwortet: 29 Übersprungen: 18

#	BEANTWORTUNGEN	DATE
1	help with childcare, network of childcare, flexible working hours	11/24/2021 12:31 PM
2	interesting work, recognition of knowledge and experience from the time before children, supportive work atmosphere, childcare which you can count on (every day, suitable hours), understanding for filial leave	10/6/2021 11:24 AM
3	A childcare option (also during the holidays !!) would definitely be an enormous help. In addition, a home office that can be implemented quickly would be ideal (reduction of care days in the event of illness), etc., would be a good aid.	10/6/2021 11:22 AM
4	Maternity cover for their current position, pay support on child are, organizational support to organize household and/or childcare helpers	9/30/2021 8:03 PM
5	Kindergarden at the company	9/30/2021 6:44 PM
6	Home Office possibilities	9/29/2021 9:26 AM
7	Company organized childcare (=Krabbelstube)	9/28/2021 9:58 PM
8	I would offer paid Trainings in the Periode if parental Lesbe, I would discuss the subjective needs and fears early enough to adjust the job and the Environment to the new situation and I would clearly communicate that it's very important for the company success to get back the female work force Even in a different way (reduced working hours, ...)	9/27/2021 11:08 AM
9	the possibility of "home office"	9/24/2021 12:00 PM
10	children's day care centre in the company, appropriate homeoffice	9/21/2021 11:22 PM
11	sehr flexible Arbeitszeiten (Gleitzeit, Home Office, ...) Teilzeit auch bei Führungskräften Firmenkindergarten Elternkarenz ohne das Väter "schiefe" angeschaut werden	9/21/2021 11:05 AM
12	Flexible working hours, home office	9/20/2021 9:29 PM
13	The ability to an open evaluation of expectations and wished without judgment and consequences before maternity leave and after maternity leave. No woman knows the intensity of the impact of becoming a mother. Needs and expectations often change.	9/20/2021 5:55 PM
14	Payment, flexible schedule	9/19/2021 10:41 AM
15	Flexible working hours, combination of working on Site and via Home Office...	9/17/2021 9:12 AM
16	Possibility of childcare at the workplace	9/16/2021 10:44 PM
17	Offer the same job with the same responsibilities as before but with shorter working time	9/16/2021 3:17 PM
18	daily child care at the company directly to shorten the way, therefore also no time pressure on picking up the child in time	9/14/2021 11:33 AM
19	Company nursery school	9/13/2021 4:28 PM
20	Make it possible to work from home also during maternity leave if they want to. Also explain the advantageous Austrian laws regarding breast feeding and working (most women don't know how favorable those laws are and think they have to stop breast feeding when starting to work again) This helps women to start working earlier because they still can breast feed if they want to.	9/13/2021 8:53 AM
21	If the company is big enough a company-daycare would be great	9/9/2021 10:24 AM
22	- Kinderbetreuung durch den arbeitgeber angepasst an die arbeitszeiten (gemeinsame anreise,	9/9/2021 9:32 AM

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Female Work 4.0 - woman´s return to job after the maternity/parental leave

SurveyMonkey

gemeinsame mittagspause, kleinere gruppengröße, Auch für stillende mütter geeignet -> ermöglicht früheren wiedereinstieg) - Flexible arbeitszeiten auch im Zusammenhang mit home office (teamunabhängige arbeiten können auch abends erledigt werden, wenn kind im bett oder bei papa ist) - Job sharing auch in führungspositionen und dadurch Teilzeitbeschäftigung

23	Flexible working time Their own projects/responsibility	9/9/2021 12:12 AM
24	Flexible working hrs incl. more homeoffice based work.	9/8/2021 11:36 PM
25	Flexible work time, Part time, Job Sharing,	9/7/2021 11:11 AM
26	Home Office possibility, flexible working hours	9/6/2021 10:26 PM
27	Kindergarden	9/6/2021 6:24 PM
28	Homeoffice possibility for 1-2 days per week, child care possibility in the company (from 1 year on with flexible times), flexible working hours	9/6/2021 12:27 PM
29	Flexible working hours. Home office/remote work. Trainings/information to stay up-to-date.	9/6/2021 10:46 AM

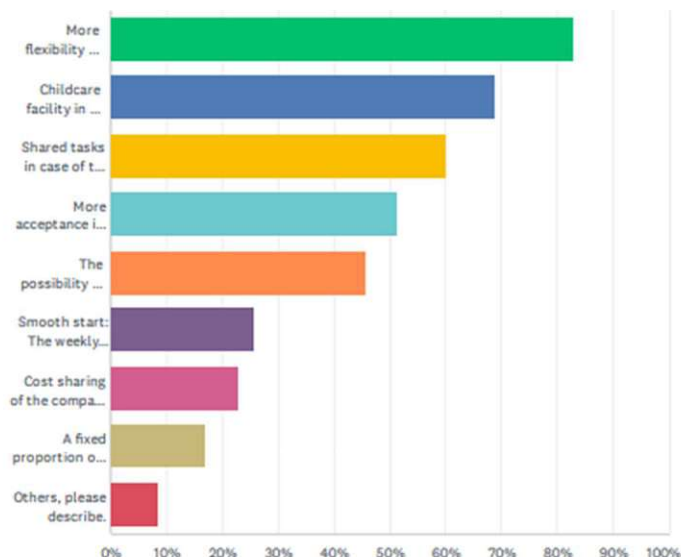
F23 Which company offers would/would have made it more attractive to shorten your choice of maternity/parental leave period?

Beantwortet: 25 Übersprungen: 22

#	BEANTWORTUNGEN	DATE
1	none, because I was a student, I think best time to have a baby	11/24/2021 12:31 PM
2	flexible working hours, teleworking	10/6/2021 11:24 AM
3	Same as written above.	10/6/2021 11:22 AM
4	See above, but mine was comparably short anyway	9/30/2021 8:03 PM
5	Kindergarden at the companies premises	9/30/2021 6:44 PM
6	Home Office	9/29/2021 9:26 AM
7	Company organized childcare (=Krabbelstube)	9/28/2021 9:58 PM
8	financial support for childcare, more flexibility in the working time and more support in personel development before and during the pregnancy	9/27/2021 11:08 AM
9	my parental leave actually was too short for me - I would choose another period next time	9/21/2021 11:22 PM
10	Firmenkindergarten sehr flexible Arbeitszeiten - die es ermöglichen auch mal einen Tag nicht (oder kaum) anwesend zu sein (und ich meine jetzt nicht Urlaub)	9/21/2021 11:05 AM
11	Responsibility, higher salary, flexible working hours	9/20/2021 9:29 PM
12	Flexibility of working hours and a job and job environment that was attractive before already and shows an positive impact in my life. Mothers are often tiered due the new sleeping rhythm etc. I don't want invest my energy in a company, which would soak out the little rest of my energy. Only works when you had a job, you've liked/loved before and more or less generates energies.	9/20/2021 5:55 PM
13	Flexible schedule, adequat payment for Part time	9/19/2021 10:41 AM
14	Flexible working Hours, combination of working in Site and via HomeOffice.	9/17/2021 9:12 AM
15	More flexibility in caring of my children	9/16/2021 10:44 PM
16	None	9/16/2021 3:17 PM
17	place for daily child care at work directly	9/14/2021 11:33 AM
18	The possibility to work from home entirely at least at the beginning.	9/13/2021 8:53 AM
19	None, I chose to stay with my child.	9/9/2021 10:24 AM
20	Geringfügige Beschäftigungsmöglichkeit mit kinderbetreuung oder im homeoffice mit (nahezu) freier Zeiteinteilung	9/9/2021 9:32 AM
21	Flexibility	9/7/2021 11:11 AM
22	Home office	9/6/2021 10:26 PM
23	flexibel worktimes	9/6/2021 6:24 PM
24	The things mentioned in the previous question, plus return in the former team. Other than that coming back earluer is not possible in Austria due to reglementation of maternity leave compensation.	9/6/2021 12:27 PM
25	Flexible working hours. Home office/remote work. Trainings/information to stay up-to-date.	9/6/2021 10:46 AM

F24 What aspects would make it easier for a woman to get the focus back on her career faster if that's her wish? (please select min. 3)

Beantwortet: 35 Übersprungen: 12



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
More flexibility in the job.	82.86%	29
Childcare facility in the company.	68.57%	24
Shared tasks in case of the childhood with the partner.	60.00%	21
More acceptance in the leadership for part-time employment.	51.43%	18
The possibility of job sharing (1 full-time job is done by 2 part-time employees).	45.71%	16
Smooth start: The weekly working time is increased from e.g. weekly 15 to 30h in the first 6 months after maternity leave.	25.71%	9
Cost sharing of the company for childcare.	22.86%	8
A fixed proportion of minimum part-time positions in each department, which are preferably filled by mothers from maternity leave.	17.14%	6
Others, please describe.	8.57%	3
Befragte insgesamt: 35		

F25 What exactly does flexibility in the job mean to you?

Beantwortet: 29 Übersprungen: 18

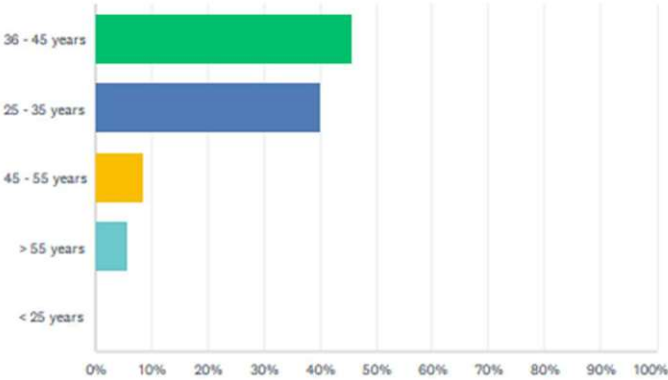
#	BEANTWORTUNGEN	DATE
1	flexible working hours and workplaces	11/24/2021 12:31 PM
2	flexible working hours	10/6/2021 11:24 AM
3	Flexible working hours and home office option	10/6/2021 11:22 AM
4	I decide when and where I work as long as I deliver on my goals	9/30/2021 8:03 PM
5	a smart mixture between on-site and homeoffice work - part-time and full-time employees on all levels	9/30/2021 6:44 PM
6	Flexible working hours and days	9/29/2021 9:26 AM
7	Flexible working hours	9/28/2021 9:58 PM
8	Best case would be given project with open choice of working time but this is not possible in every Job. Less control and requested commitment regarding working time	9/27/2021 11:08 AM
9	Flexible time in the morning. - No need to sit on your "chair" at exactly 8 a.m. Possibility of home office	9/25/2021 10:45 PM
10	flexible working hours & more team work in order to be able to split the work among each other	9/21/2021 11:22 PM
11	Die Arbeitszeit einteilen wie's grad passt: täglich selber entscheiden ob man/frau von zu Hause arbeiten möchte oder in die Firma geht. Selber entscheiden ob man/frau am Morgen oder mitten in der Nacht arbeitet, oder am Wochenende (und dies täglich neu entscheiden - keinen fixen Plan) - nicht die Anwesenheit ist wichtig sondern das Ergebnis soll passen.	9/21/2021 11:05 AM
12	To decide when and where to work (at home or in the office)	9/20/2021 9:29 PM
13	I choose when I work in terms of hours e.g. I have now time to work at 9-11 pm, I'll work because it fits this day, this week. Might be different the next week.	9/20/2021 5:55 PM
14	Get a day off If you need it, flexible Work time	9/19/2021 10:41 AM
15	Flexible working Hours, combination of working in Site and via HomeOffice.	9/17/2021 9:12 AM
16	To decide which days to stay at work	9/16/2021 10:44 PM
17	Freedom to work in the office or at home, flexible working hours	9/16/2021 3:17 PM
18	Flexibility! work whenever you have time; if the child is ill, that you can stay at home and don't need anyone else who is looking after the child, because you need to go to work	9/14/2021 11:33 AM
19	flexible working hours	9/13/2021 4:28 PM
20	Flexible working hours and the possibility to work from home when ever necessary	9/13/2021 8:53 AM
21	Work from home must be possible, Gleitzeit	9/9/2021 10:24 AM
22	Gleitzeit ohne kernzeit home office	9/9/2021 9:32 AM
23	That i am a reliable employee getting my work done when i am able to work efficient- even if thats in the evening	9/9/2021 12:12 AM
24	Flexible working hrs, flexible working days, selfdecision of homeoffice/office days	9/8/2021 11:36 PM
25	Freedom in planning worktime	9/7/2021 11:11 AM
26	To do the work when it suits best to the daily routine	9/6/2021 10:26 PM
27	time (not 9 till 17:00 Uhr), vacation	9/6/2021 6:24 PM

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	Female Work 4.0 - woman´s return to job after the maternity/parental leave	SurveyMonkey
28	Flexible working time (not 9 to 5, also evening should be an option when dad has time to care for child), homeoffice possibilities to save comuting time	9/6/2021 12:27 PM
29	Working where and when I would like to with the pre-requisite that the job is done properly and the customers are always happy!	9/6/2021 10:46 AM

F26 What's your age?

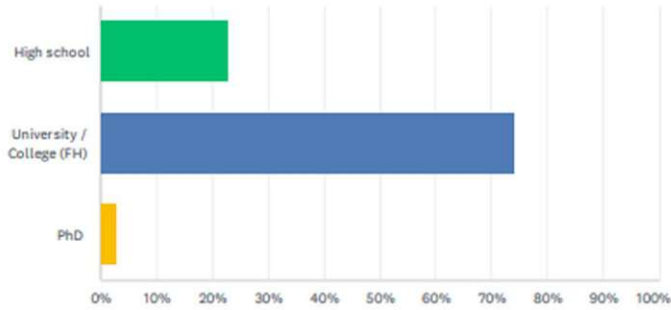
Beantwortet: 35 Übersprungen: 12



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
36 - 45 years	45.71%	16
25 - 35 years	40.00%	14
45 - 55 years	8.57%	3
> 55 years	5.71%	2
< 25 years	0.00%	0
GESAMT		35

F27 What's your highest education degree?

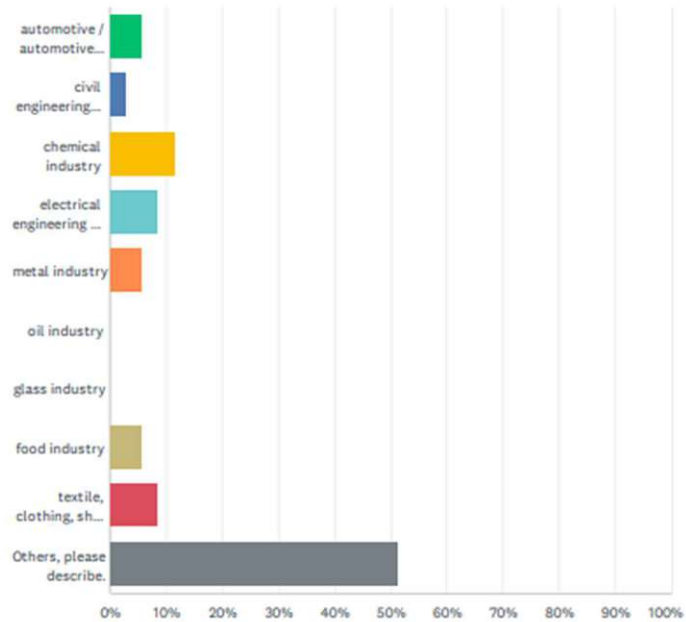
Beantwortet: 35 Übersprungen: 12



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
High school	22.86%	8
University / College (FH)	74.29%	26
PhD	2.86%	1
GESAMT		35

F28 In which industry does your company work?

Beantwortet: 35 Übersprungen: 12



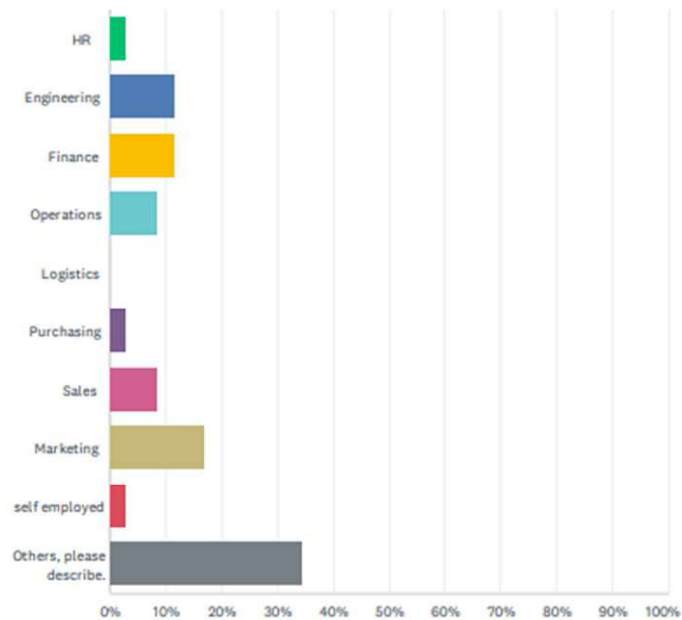
Female Work 4.0 - woman's return to job after the maternity/parental leave

SurveyMonkey

ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
automotive / automotive supply / mobility industry	5.71%	2
civil engineering (Bauwesen)	2.86%	1
chemical industry	11.43%	4
electrical engineering & electronics	8.57%	3
metal industry	5.71%	2
oil industry	0.00%	0
glass industry	0.00%	0
food industry	5.71%	2
textile, clothing, shoe and leather industries	8.57%	3
Others, please describe.	51.43%	18
GESAMT		35

F29 Which department do you work for?

Beantwortet: 35 Übersprungen: 12



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Female Work 4.0 - woman's return to job after the maternity/parental leave

SurveyMonkey

ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
HR	2.86%	1
Engineering	11.43%	4
Finance	11.43%	4
Operations	8.57%	3
Logistics	0.00%	0
Purchasing	2.86%	1
Sales	8.57%	3
Marketing	17.14%	6
self employed	2.86%	1
Others, please describe.	34.29%	12
GESAMT		35

F30 Feedback & comments

Beantwortet: 11 Übersprungen: 36

#	BEANTWORTUNGEN	DATE
1	Thank you for your interesting study!	11/24/2021 12:31 PM
2	I find the topic very interesting and would be very happy if there were better approaches in the future to make it easier for mothers to return to work. Unfortunately, it won't be of any use to me anymore, but for the coming generations it would be nice if it wasn't the classic approach of family or career anymore.	10/6/2021 11:22 AM
3	Nicht nur in den Firmen muss sich etwas tun, auch in der Gesellschaft. Eine Frau darf nicht als "Rabennutter" bezeichnet werden, wenn sie entscheidet sofort nach der Geburt wieder zu arbeiten und Väter sollen nicht belächelt werden wenn sie in Karenz gehen wollen....	9/21/2021 11:05 AM
4	The difference in the women's origin culture will influence this topic a lot! I see and experience this in my daily life. Very interesting and important survey.	9/20/2021 5:55 PM
5	Thanks for survey dear Isi :-)	9/19/2021 10:41 AM
6	Wish you all the Best :-)	9/17/2021 9:12 AM
7	I really like the topic of the master thesis as in my opinion there need to be a huge change on this topic in every company and in every managers thinking	9/14/2021 11:33 AM
8	I am interested in the results of the master thesis. My email is asp2607@gmail.com	9/13/2021 8:53 AM
9	Super Umfrage	9/7/2021 11:11 AM
10	Meiner Meinung nach hilft den Frauen auch ein gutes, wertschätzendes Berufs-Netzwerk, damit sie sich über alle Möglichkeiten informieren können.	9/6/2021 6:24 PM
11	Looking forward to the results :-)	9/6/2021 10:46 AM

F31 Please enter your contact details if you are interested in the results or you would like to share some further experiences or ideas.

Beantwortet: 17 Übersprungen: 30

ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
Name	100.00%	17
Firma	0.00%	0
Adresse	0.00%	0
Adresse 2	0.00%	0
Ort	0.00%	0
Upper Austria	0.00%	0
Postleitzahl	0.00%	0
Country	88.24%	15
E-Mail	94.12%	16
Phone	47.06%	8

10.2. Appendix B1: Interview partner Mr. MSc Franz Lankmayr; KTM AG

Female Work 4.0 - woman's return to job after the maternity/parental leave

Welcome to the Interview "Female Work 4.0"

Dear Mr. Lankmayr,

in your function as Head of Lean Manufacturing in an international corporation in the vehicle industry I would be glad to get your insights and thoughts about women and female work in the automotive industry.

A survey published by the WKÖ in 2021 shows that 42,7% of companies in the metal, machinery and vehicle production are very strong affected from the lack of labor plus additional 36,2% are strong affected. The total result with almost 80% (strong effected + very strong effected) reflects a very critical picture on the Austrian labor market.

My objective is about creating a new company strategy to bring women as fast as possible back to their job after maternity, mostly parental leave. From this strategy both parties can benefit. The employer can use the free work capacity of professional, well-educated and experienced female employees to counter the lack of skilled labor. The employed women will get a realistic chance to follow up their careers.

Therefore, I would like to ask you for your support, to share your experiences.

"Female Work 4.0" must be part of the new work environment in the next industrial revolution the industry 4.0. Digitalization, the Internet of Things, real-time communication along the entire supply chain will further increase the demand for well-trained employees and this is a great opportunity to adapt the leadership style to women's resources.

Questionnaire

1. Which industry is your company active in?
Motorcycle Industry
2. What departments are you responsible for?
Process optimization- lean management
3. How many direct reports do you have?
5
4. What's the percentage of women in your team of direct reports?
1/5
5. I would see your direct reports in the middle management. What are the challenges and benefits in hiring and employing ladies as your direct reports from your perspective as a leader and from your company perspective?

Benefits: generally, teams work better and more efficient with woman participation, better Team spirit, alternative solutions and thinking
Challenges: not very much applicants
part-time work or not so flexible work-time possible → overtime (just with kids)
Long time perspective for woman in "critical" age (actually no kids)
6. Is your company following HR strategies focused on women, women's promotion and women after maternity / parental leave? If yes, it would be great to get some further details.

More woman in technical jobs to relieve lack of skilled workers → "woman day" in production area, possibility to come back (same job) also in part-time, corporate child care, target for woman share (not for management positions), Homeoffice, Flextime,
7. Do you see the female work capacity in the vehicle/automotive/motorcycle sector as an important factor against the lack of labor in the coming 5-10 years?
Yes
8. What's the main reason for the low portion of women in the automotive industry, from your point of view?

Lack of interest → perhaps most of them are too afraid from technical jobs although they have a "talent" for them

Please be so kind and let me know if your answers can be published in your name and / or your company name it should be done anonymous.

Questionnaire

1. Which industry is your company active in?
Motorcycle Industry
2. What departments are you responsible for?
Process optimization- lean management
3. How many direct reports do you have?
5
4. What's the percentage of women in your team of direct reports?
1/5
5. I would see your direct reports in the middle management. What are the challenges and benefits in hiring and employing ladies as your direct reports from your perspective as a leader and from your company perspective?

Benefits: generally, teams work better and more efficient with woman participation, better Team spirit, alternative solutions and thinking
Challenges: not very much applicants
part-time work or not so flexible work-time possible → overtime (just with kids)
Long time perspective for woman in "critical" age (actually no kids)
6. Is your company following HR strategies focused on women, women's promotion and women after maternity / parental leave? If yes, it would be great to get some further details.

More woman in technical jobs to relieve lack of skilled workers → "woman day" in production area, possibility to come back (same job) also in part-time, corporate child care, target for woman share (not for management positions), Homeoffice, Flextime,
7. Do you see the female work capacity in the vehicle/automotive/motorcycle sector as an important factor against the lack of labor in the coming 5-10 years?
Yes
8. What's the main reason for the low portion of women in the automotive industry, from your point of view?
Lack of interest → perhaps most of them are too afraid from technical jobs although they have a "talent" for them

Please be so kind and let me know if your answers can be published in your name and / or your company name it should be done anonymous.

Thank you very much for your time, your views and your experiences.

Best regards
Isabella Krknjak

10.3. Appendix B2: Interview partner Mr. Dietrich Walk, TE Connectivity

Female Work 4.0 - woman's return to job after the maternity/parental leave

Welcome to the Interview "Female Work 4.0"

Dear Mr. Walk,

in your function as Vice President in an international corporation in the automotive industry I would be glad to get your insights and thoughts about women and female work in the automotive industry.

A survey published by the WKÖ in 2021 shows that 42,7% of companies in the metal, machinery and vehicle production are very strong affected from the lack of labor plus additional 36,2% are strong affected. As the automotive industry is part of vehicle production the total result with almost 80% (strong effected + very strong effected) reflects a very critical picture on the Austrian labor market.

My objective is about creating a new company strategy to bring women as fast as possible back to their job after maternity, mostly parental leave. From this strategy both parties can benefit. The employer can use the free work capacity of professional, well-educated and experienced female employees to counter the lack of skilled labor. The employed women will get a realistic chance to follow up their careers.

Therefore, I would like to ask you for your support, to share your experiences.

"Female Work 4.0" must be part of the new work environment in the next industrial revolution the industry 4.0. Digitalization, the Internet of Things, real-time communication along the entire supply chain will further increase the demand for well-trained employees and this is a great opportunity to adapt the leadership style to women's resources.

Questionnaire

1. Which industry is your company active in?

Automotive, Industrial and Communication Industry as main segments

2. What departments are you responsible for?

Automotive Division – Sales Austria and Eastern Europe

3. How many direct reports do you have?

Currently 4 direct reports, plus 2 more in the acquisition phase

4. What's the percentage of women in your team of direct reports?

Currently, 0%

5. I would see your direct reports in a lower management positions. What are the challenges and benefits in hiring and employing ladies in management position from your perspective as a leader and from your company perspective?

*In our company, diversity is one of the important demands and it's clear communicated from Management, HR and to all people leaders.
From my perspective, there is no special challenge in hiring and employing ladies in Management positions. The only difference is, that in some cases, the female employee prefers part time after maternity leave, which might become difficult, if it wasn't coordinated before.*

6. Is your company following HR strategies focused on women, women's promotion and women after maternity / parental leave? If yes, it would be great to get some further details.

There are several initiatives regarding the support of talents, programs which prepare possible next steps, and every employee has the possibility to define development goals, together with the manager. Means, performance matters and is acknowledged by the company. Promotions are linked to performance.

7. Do you see the female work capacity in the automotive sector as an important factor against the lack of labor in the coming 5-10 years?

I think the market regulates itself anyhow. If there are female people, with the needed education available, then it's for sure an important factor.

8. What's the main reason for the low portion of women in the automotive industry, from your point of view?

*The automotive Industry was in the past pretty male dominated. That changed in the last years, but the share is still not balanced.
Reason seems to be historical driven and do not differ so much to other comparable industry segment*

Please be so kind and let me know if your answers can be published in your name and / or your company name it should be done anonymous.

Thank you very much for your time, your views and your experiences.

Best regards
Isabella Krknjak

10.4. Appendix B3: Interview partner Mr. Dipl.Ing. Karl Pichler, Voith Group

Female Work 4.0 - woman's return to job after the maternity/parental leave

Welcome to the Interview "Female Work 4.0"

Dear Mr.Pichler,

in your function as General Manager in an international corporation active in the paper industry I would be glad to get your insights and thoughts about women and female work nowadays and how it could look like in the future industry 4.0.

A survey published by the WKÖ in 2021 shows that 42,7% of companies in the metal, machinery and vehicle production are very strong affected from the lack of labor plus additional 36,2% are strong affected. The automotive industry is part of vehicle production and 42,7% of companies assesses the situation with "very strong effected.

My objective is about creating a new company strategy to bring women as fast as possible back to their job after maternity, mostly parental leave. From this strategy both parties can benefit. The employer can use the free work capacity of professional, well-educated and experienced female employees to counter the lack of skilled labor. The employed women will get a realistic chance to follow up their careers.

Therefore, I would like to ask you for your support, to share your experiences.

"Female Work 4.0" must be part of the new work environment in the next industrial revolution the industry 4.0. Digitalization, the Internet of Things, real-time communication along the entire supply chain will further increase the demand for well-trained employees and this is a great opportunity to adapt the leadership style to women's resources.

Questionnaire

1. Which industry is your company active in?
*Engineering (Construction, Mechanical Engineering, Test Engineering)
 Mobility (Commercial Vehicles & Automotive, Marine Technology, Rail Vehicles=
 Paper (Full Line Supplier for Paper Industry)
 Hydropower*
2. What departments are you responsible for?
Voith Paper Fabric and Roll Systems – Global Operations (responsible for 2628 employees)
3. How many direct reports do you have?
24 direct reports
4. What's the percentage of women in your team of direct reports?
37,5 % (9 women, thereof 2 Student and 1 in maternal leave)
5. I would see your direct reports in the executive managerial positions. What are the challenges and benefits in hiring and employing ladies in management position from your perspective as a leader and from your company perspective?
The benefit of hiring ladies in management positions are different view of things. Also my experience is that the mood and politeness in teams with women and therefore the effectiveness is higher.
6. Is your company following HR strategies focused on women, women's promotion and women after maternity / parental leave?
At Voith we "Diversity and Inclusion" is a main part of our Strategy, which includes much more than Gender equality.
 - For Voith, **diversity** is the **variety of our employees with differences** in age, gender, nationality, ethnicity, educational and professional background as well as all other individual differences. We believe that these diversity dimensions including individual differences such as religion, culture, beliefs, sexual orientation, disabilities, personal and social background as well as different experiences, talents and strengths, induce **diversity of thought**.
 - By **inclusion**, we mean the way we work together at Voith. An inclusive work culture is a culture of **mutual respect, appreciation and equal opportunities**, which is open to different ideas and perspectives. We believe in the power of different backgrounds, ways of thinking and approaches as well as the opportunity to think out-of-the-box in order to create innovative products, services and processes.

*There are several initiatives out of it, which are focusing on women at work.
 Women&Voith Network
 Women@Voith Mentoring Program
 Our newest program is a job sharing initiative*

Job Sharing ist ein Arbeitszeitmodell, bei dem zwei Mitarbeitende gemeinsam eine Vollzeitstelle besetzen. Dabei kann die Aufteilung 50-50 erfolgen, oder aber ganz individuell (auch über 100% Kapazität hinausgehend). Generell spricht man entweder von **Job Splitting**, bei welchem eine Vollzeitstelle in zwei Teilzeitstellen aufgeteilt wird, die Arbeitnehmenden jedoch unabhängig voneinander arbeiten und **Job Sharing**, bei welchem die Arbeitnehmenden enger zusammenarbeiten und gemeinsame Aufgaben und Projekte übernehmen. In Führungspositionen spricht man bei Job Sharing auch häufig von **Top Sharing**.

Mit der Einführung von Job Sharing möchte Voith die Chancengleichheit für alle Mitarbeitenden erhöhen und die Übernahme anspruchsvoller Aufgaben, auch Führung, in Teilzeit ermöglichen. Laut einer Mitarbeiterbefragung am Standort Heidenheim in 2020 besteht bei mehr als 70% der befragten Voithianer und Voithianerinnen grundsätzliches Interesse, im Laufe ihres Berufslebens Teil eines Job Sharing "Tandems" zu werden.

7. Do you see the female work capacity in the automotive sector as an important factor against the lack of labor during the next 5-10 years?
I see female work in automotive, but also in other industry sectors as an important working factor. A lot of women nowadays have a high education level, but do not use it or do not come back in management positions after maternal leave. We should use that potential much better. One initiative to force that at Voith is Job Sharing especially for management positions.
8. What's the main reason for the low portion of women in the automotive industry, from your point of view?
First of all companies look too much on pure technical education. To me knowledge from other areas (organization, financials, ...) and the willingness of the individual person to learn the needed technical skill is even better than having only engineers where the pool simply is more man based.

Please be so kind and let me know if your answers can be published in your name and / or your company name or if it should be done anonymous.
You can publish the answers in my name and in the company name.

Thank you very much for your time, your views and your experiences.

Best regards
Isabella Krknjak

10.5. Appendix B4: Interview partner Ms. BSc Katharina Höller-Strasser, Network Quality Management GmbH

Female Work 4.0 - woman's return to job after the maternity/parental leave

Welcome to the Interview "Female Work 4.0"

Dear Ms. Höller-Strasser,

in your function as COO in an international corporation in the automotive industry I would be glad to get your insights and thoughts about women and female work in the automotive industry.

A survey published by the WKO in 2021 shows that 42,7% of companies in the metal, machinery and vehicle production are very strong affected from the lack of labor plus additional 36,2% are strong affected. As the automotive industry is part of vehicle production the total result with almost 80% (strong effected + very strong effected) reflects a very critical picture on the Austrian labor market.

My objective is about creating a new company strategy to bring women as fast as possible back to their job after maternity, mostly parental leave. From this strategy both parties can benefit. The employer can use the free work capacity of professional, well-educated and experienced female employees to counter the lack of skilled labor. The employed women will get a realistic chance to follow up their careers.

Therefore, I would like to ask you for your support, to share your experiences.

"Female Work 4.0" must be part of the new work environment in the next industrial revolution the industry 4.0. Digitalization, the Internet of Things, real-time communication along the entire supply chain will further increase the demand for well-trained employees and this is a great opportunity to adapt the leadership style to women's resources.

Questionnaire

1. Which industry is your company active in?
Ingenieurbüro
2. What departments are you responsible for?
COO
3. How many direct reports do you have?
16
4. What's the percentage of women in your team of direct reports?
80%
5. I would see your direct reports in the middle management positions. What are the challenges and benefits in hiring and employing ladies in management position from your perspective as a leader and from your perspective as the owner of the company?

Es gibt keine Vorteile und keine Herausforderungen meiner Meinung bei der Einstellung von Frauen, wenn jemand seinen Job gerne macht, macht er diesen auch perfekt, egal ob Frau oder Mann. Bei unseren Einstellungen wird nicht zwischen Frau und Mann unterschieden, es wird auf den Lebenslauf geachtet und auf die beruflichen Tätigkeiten. Und mit dieser Einstellung sind wir in den letzten Jahren super klargekommen und bereuen keine unserer Einstellungen. Ich finde jeder Job sollte aufgrund der Fähigkeiten besetzt werden und nicht nach einer Frauenquote. Ich möchte keinen Job in meinem Leben bekommen, den ich nur bekommen habe, weil der Arbeitgeber die Frauenquote noch nicht erfüllt hat.

6. Is your company following HR strategies focused on women, women's promotion and women after maternity / parental leave? If yes, it would be great to get some further details.

Wir verfolgen keine direkten Strategien, bei uns kann der Mann genauso in Karenz gehen wie die Frau und die Frau kann nach Ihrem Mutterschutz sofort wieder geringfügig zu arbeiten beginnen und dies auch von zuhause aus machen. Auch die neuen Arbeitszeiten nach der Karenz sind variable wählbar, zwischen Home- Office und Bürostunden.

7. Do you see the female work capacity in the automotive sector as an important factor against the lack of labor during the next 5-10 years?

Ja ich sehe diesen Faktor als sehr wichtig an, da es keinen Unterschied machen sollte, ob der Arbeitsplatz von einer Frau oder von einem Mann besetzt wird. Man muss von diesem Clusterdenken wegkommen, dieses passiert allerdings schon sehr viel in der Erziehung (Jungs bekommen Autos, Mädchen bekommen Puppen). Allerdings sehe ich dies als einen schwierigen Punkt in unserer Gesellschaft.

8. What's the main reason for the low portion of women in the automotive industry, from your point of view?

Wie oben schon beschrieben, glaube ich das der Grund sich schon in der Erziehung ansiedelt und Frauen/Mädchen die Vorteile oder auch die Berufe nicht "richtig" gezeigt werden. Ebenso finde ich die Frauenquote eine falsche heransgehensweise, es sollte Bewerbungen geben ohne Foto und ohne Name. Und die Karenzzeit der Väter gehört mehr in den Vordergrund gerückt. Für das Kind ist es meiner Meinung egal ob Mama und Papa aufpassen, die gehören beide dazu, solange einer von den Beiden da ist geht es der Familie und dem Kind gut. Und da es in unserer Gesellschaft nicht mehr so ist das "ein Dorf ein Kind" großzieht, sondern meist nur noch die Eltern alleine, muss auch das Umdecken passieren, das seine Frau alles machen kann/soll. (das Kind rund um die Uhr betreuen/Fremdbetreuung ist schlecht; der Haushalt muss perfekt sein; man muss perfekt sein im Aussehen; und die perfekte Ehefrau-> dies war/ist und soll auch NIE möglich sein)

Please be so kind and let me know if your answers can be published in your name and / or your company name it should be done anonymous.

Thank you very much for your time, your views and your experiences.

Best regards
Isabella Krknjak