
Equal Opportunities and Collective Bargaining in the European Union

A Case Study on Volkswagen from Germany
Phase III

WP/97/71/EN



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by
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SUMMARY

CASE STUDY: VOLKSWAGEN A FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON “PRINCIPLES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN”

The framework agreement “Principles for the advancement of women”, drawn up in 1989 between the management board and the company works council of Volkswagen AG is central to this case-study. The framework agreement is a company level agreement specifically intended to improve opportunities for women in the workplace. The agreement is designed to ensure that the proportion of women as a whole, in both skilled jobs and at all levels of management, is raised qualitatively, quantitatively and structurally. This aim is to be achieved by a personnel policy incorporating specific and verifiable measures for the advancement of women.

The innovative nature of the framework agreement, in comparison with other collective agreements intended to provide equality of opportunities in Germany, is expressed in two fundamental ways: firstly, the principle “advancement of women in the workplace” is set out as an essential part of personnel policy and career development, whilst, secondly, in order to achieve this objective, an office under the title “advancement of women”, exclusively concerned with matters relating to equal opportunities and responding to the management board has been established. At the same time, women’s officers have been nominated in the individual plants of Volkswagen AG.

In addition, other organisational structures have been created to consider specific measures for the advancement of women, such as the “Commission for the advancement of women”, with equal representation of men and women, and individual committees concerned with equal opportunities at company and plant level.

The study considers how and why this agreement came into being, how it was implemented and to what factors the success, or otherwise, of policies for the advancement of women in the workplace are attributable. Equal attention is paid the external conditions (the markets and employment situation, the part played by external actors - both men and women) and to the internal factors that made the agreement possible and influenced its implementation. Amongst those internal factors are included the company’s policy objectives, which are relevant to equal opportunities policy, the influence of internal actors (both men and women) in management and the works council, representation and participation of women in company policy and decision-making.

A final chapter indicates the conclusions that may be drawn, on the basis of experience with the framework agreement, regarding the factors that are relevant to future equal opportunities promotion through company level and collective agreements.

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Eva Brumlop

CONTENTS

- I. Structure of case study: questions to be explored, research design and methods**

- II. Structure and content of the Framework Agreement "Basic principles for the advancement of women" (17 July 1989)**

- III. The origins of the Framework Agreement (1987 ff): general external factors, internal factors and the motives and objectives of individual players**
 - 1. Structural nature of the company and its industrial relations
 - 2. The structure of the workforce at Volkswagen AG: "a male bastion"
 - 3. Economic and socio-political conditions
 - 4. Internal players, their motives and objectives

- IV. Structure of process to draft and negotiate the "Basic principles for the advancement of women" (cf Annex 5)**

- V. Implementation process (Phase 1 1990/1991)**
 - 1. Creation of a staff department for the "advancement of women", allocation of responsibilities and conflict surrounding the appointment of the first women's officer
 - 2. The rise and fall of the first women's officer

VI. Implementation process (Phase 2 1991 ff)

1. Appointment of an internal candidate to the position of women's officer
2. Development of organizational structures for the implementation of the Framework Agreement (commission for the advancement of women, women's committees and women's officers at individual plant level) (cf Annex 6)

VII. The (lack of) power of women's officers in an area of conflict ie the interests of the company

VIII. Implementation to date of the Framework Agreement taking as an example the advancement of women at the parent plant in Wolfsburg and prospects for the advancement of women at Volkswagen AG in the 1990s

1. Inventory of the situation for women at Volkswagen AG: compilation of a statistical basis for measures for the advancement of women in the company
2. Measures for specific target groups
 - 2.1 Career guidance for girls and women
 - 2.2 Developmental training/personnel development for female skilled workers at Volkswagen AG
 - 2.3 Women in clerical occupations
 - 2.4 Developmental training/personnel development for female engineers at Volkswagen AG
 - 2.5 Developmental training/personnel development for female management trainees
 - 2.6 Employment prospects for semi-skilled and unskilled women
 - 2.7 General training, guidance and information
 - 2.8 Development of internal and external networks
 - 2.9 Prospects for the advancement of women in the 1990s

- IX. Success/failure of measures to date to implement the Framework Agreement at corporate level**
- X. The "Basic principles for the advancement of women" - an appropriate way to improve career opportunities for women? Ideas on the development of concepts for company-level and collective agreements on equal opportunities**

Bibliography

Annexes:

- Annex 1** Framework Agreement "Basic principles for the advancement of women at Volkswagen" (17 July 1989)
- Annex 2** Summary of company agreements for the advancement of women in the German private sector, 1993
- Annex 3** Summary of representation of women and men in the works council at the Wolfsburg plant and in the bodies of the company works council, group works council and European works council of Volkswagen AG
- Annex 4** Summary of collective agreements for the advancement of women in the metal industry in Germany, 1993
- Annex 5** Time-table of the process to draft, implement and realize the framework agreement on the advancement of women at Volkswagen
- Annex 6** Organization

I. STRUCTURE OF CASE STUDY: QUESTIONS TO BE EXPLORED, RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The essence of the case study was an analysis of the origins, implementation and realization of the Framework Agreement entitled "Basic principles for the advancement of women", which was agreed in 1989 between the Management Board of Volkswagen AG and its Company Works Council. The Framework Agreement is a company-level agreement and its express aim is to improve career opportunities for women. The Agreement provides for a qualitative, quantitative and structural increase in the percentage of women in the workforce as a whole, in skilled jobs and at all levels of junior and senior management. This objective is to be realized by an active personnel policy including concrete and verifiable measures for the advancement of women (cf Annex 1).

The Framework Agreement was concluded at a time when many large companies, in sectors which were still thriving in the former West Germany, were negotiating company-level agreements designed to improve opportunities for women (about 100). The majority of agreements concluded at the end of the 1980s and start of the 1990s dealt with questions relating to compatibility between family and career (so-called "parental leave" and "part-time working"). Only a minority (about 20) were designed to improve professional opportunities for women (cf Brumlop 1994; Brumlop and Hornung 1994 and Annex 2).

Amongst the minority of agreements, which explicitly tackled the question of gender-specific segregation, the Framework Agreement "Basic principles for the advancement of women" was innovative on two counts: firstly the question of the "the advancement of women in the workplace" was defined as a systematic and integral part of personnel policy and personnel development plans; secondly the objectives of the Agreement were to be realized by the creation of a separate staff unit for the advancement of women with a direct reporting line to the management board. The remit of this staff function would be to deal with the question of equal opportunities throughout the company. In addition women's officers were to be appointed in the individual plants of Volkswagen AG. Admittedly several other large companies also institutionalized the position of women's officers at that time. However their responsibilities were not regulated by a company-level agreement nor were they provided with comparable resources or powers. In addition the Agreement provided for the establishment of further organizational structures which would draw up and implement specific measures for the advancement of women, eg a "Commission for the advancement of

women" with equal representation from management and workers. In addition there would also be equal opportunity committees for women at both corporate and plant level.

The aim of the following analysis is to show how and why the Agreement came to fruition and then how it was implemented and realized. The analysis gives equal consideration to both the general external framework (market and employment situation, the influence of external players) and the internal factors, which were instrumental in bringing about the Agreement and influenced the process of its implementation and realization. These include corporate objectives and motives which proved to be relevant to the process of equal opportunities, the influence of company players at both management and works council level and the extent to which women are represented and participate in the decision-making processes at both company and works council levels.

The primary concern of the research was firstly to establish who was crucial to the process of negotiating the Framework Agreement and to establish the individual motives of these individuals. Secondly the study sought to establish the experience that has so far been gained from the implementation of the "Basic principles for the advancement of women", the factors that had contributed to the success or failure of the company's policy on the advancement of women and the conclusions to be drawn from the implementation of the Framework Agreement so that any relevant experience might be considered when collective agreements were concluded in the future by other companies and sectors.

Because of the explorative nature of the case study qualitative research methods were used within the company to collect data: general framework data, information on the underlying conditions and objectives of the Framework Agreement and information on whether its implementation had been successful or obstructed was collected in the course of a series of interviews conducted by specialists. Interviews were with individuals who had been instrumental in the conceptual, negotiating and implementation stages of the Agreement or who were responsible for its realization. Some 25 semi-open interviews, each with a main connecting theme and lasting some 2-3 hours, were conducted with representatives from IG Metall [union for the metal industry], the Central Personnel Department at Volkswagen AG, the company works council and works councils at plant level, women's officers from both the parent plant and individual plants and representatives from the equal opportunity committees.

The study was designed as a continuous analysis, ie the main research was conducted in the spring and autumn 1993 and the concluding research in the summer of 1995. In this way it was possible to avoid the typical problems which arise with "snapshot sampling" and to make the social learning process associated with the implementation of the Framework Agreement an integral part of the study.

II. STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT "BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN" (17 JULY 1989)

The Agreement "Basic principles for the advancement of women" is a Framework Agreement concluded at corporate level. It defines general principles, targets and general conditions for the advancement of women at Volkswagen AG. It covers the six VW plants in the former West Germany (Kassel, Hanover, Brunswick, Salzgitter, Emden and Wolfsburg). At the time the final interviews were conducted (June 1995) the applicability of the Agreement had not yet been extended to the new plant at Mosel in the former East Germany. The Framework Agreement is targeted at both female blue-collar and white-collar workers. It is a legally binding company-level agreement concluded by the management board and the company works council.

Its express aim is to bring about a qualitative, quantitative and structural increase in the percentage of women

- in the workforce as a whole,
- in skilled jobs,
- at all levels of junior and senior management (Section 1).

This objective would be given concrete form by means of "appropriate personnel planning" - both generally and on a project basis - through annual planning parameters to be based on the structure of the workforce and changes in technology and the organization of work (Section 1).

To realize these objectives it was considered essential that there should be an "active personnel policy including concrete and verifiable measures for the advancement of women" (Section 1). It provided for the following specific measures:

- qualitative personnel development plans for women, which, on the basis of a comprehensive inventory of female employment at Volkswagen, would initiate or justify in particular initial/further and advanced training initiatives (Section 2);
- skills' training for women in the case of a technological or organizational rationalization/restructuring, redeployment and/or relocation (Section 2.1);
- measures to increase the percentage of women in specific target groups - female vocational trainees (in particular for industrial jobs), company-sponsored students and unpaid trainees - by means of targeted information on training opportunities, special

- information events for female school leavers and graduates and personnel marketing targeted at universities, colleges and business schools (Section 2.2);
- measures to increase the percentage of skilled female workers at Volkswagen working in the jobs for which they have been trained (Section 2.3);
 - preferential treatment to be given to women when vacancies arise (Section 2.4);
 - increased opportunities for women at management level as part of the personnel development function (Section 2.5).

The Agreement provided for the appointment of a women's officer whose remit would be to draw up a comprehensive concept for the "advancement of women" and its implementation (to draft a personnel development plan, draw up and coordinate measures for the advancement of women and evaluate their implementation, etc). The women's officer responsible for the advancement of women would be a part of the personnel management function reporting to the management board (Section 3).

The Agreement also provided for the creation of a "Commission for the advancement of women". The commission, which would include representation from the company works council and works councils at plant level would be consulted on all issues relating to the advancement of women (Section 4).

The "Basic principles for the advancement of women" is a Framework Agreement, which formulates general principles and targets for the advancement of women within the company. It is given tangible form and implemented on the basis of decisions at plant and corporate level. Because of the absence of binding targets on where, over what period and how many women would be trained, recruited and promoted, the manner in which the Agreement was implemented in practice depended primarily on

- how successfully the internal organizational structures for the design and realization of specific measures were implemented in practice (personnel development plans, women's officers, commission for the advancement of women, etc);
- the authority and room for manoeuvre afforded to the women's officers who had the primary responsibility for the design and implementation of measures for the advancement of women;
- the extent to which women's officers, company personnel managers and works councils were able to agree common targets, either generally or project-related, at corporate, plant or departmental level.

III. THE ORIGINS OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT (1987 ff): GENERAL EXTERNAL FACTORS, INTERNAL FACTORS AND THE MOTIVES AND OBJECTIVES OF INDIVIDUAL PLAYERS

1. *Structural nature of the company and its industrial relations*

The following comments are intended to provide a brief summary of the structural nature of Volkswagen AG and its industrial relations, the main reasons why innovative agreements have been concluded by Volkswagen AG both in general, but also with regard to the issue at the heart of the case study ie the origins of the Framework Agreement "Basic principles for the advancement of women" (cf Widuckel-Mathias 1989 on the following).

Both corporate policy and industrial relations at Volkswagen AG are the result of its special history. This is characterized by the fact that since 1945 Volkswagen has - to a certain extent - been able to pursue a path, which is not dependent upon the interests of private shareholders (the shareholder is the State). Because it has not been subject to demands by private shareholders for a return on their investment, management has been geared to a considerable extent to the company's structural, regional and employment obligations.

At the same time its particular history has meant that even in the 1950s and 1960s trade union influence was highly developed. This was reflected in a high degree of union membership compared with other companies in the metal industry and the unusually strong position of the works council and union workplace representatives. Compared with the average situation in other companies the works council and union workplace representatives have more extensive co-determination rights and more extensive rights to participate in basic corporate decisions, particularly on issues of personnel policy. This includes for example management appointments and the structure of vocational training (initial training, skills' training and advanced training). Consultation is also obligatory with regard to the selection and deployment of personnel - an area of personnel policy, which is central to the issue of the advancement of women in the workplace.

In terms of collective bargaining the agreements concluded by Volkswagen AG are an exception rather than the rule in the collective bargaining landscape in Germany: the majority of companies are covered by industry or area-wide collective agreements. However the most important collective bargaining mechanism at Volkswagen is the company-level collective agreement. This stems from the fact that Volkswagen AG has never been a member of an

employers' association. Collective agreements (as are company-level agreements) are concluded by the management board and the company works council acting as IG Metall (including regional/local representatives from IG Metall).

Because of this relative autonomy Volkswagen AG has been able in the past to conclude forward-looking and innovative agreements (eg agreements on protection against rationalization, pay policy and more recently hours of work), whereas such agreement would not have been feasible at the time under industry or area-wide collective agreements. However these agreements have stimulated discussion amongst social partners in a decisive way and have acted as a benchmark for other collective agreements.

These special circumstances, which until now have gone hand in hand with the company's position as the market leader in the home market, have resulted in an unusual form of industrial relations, which can be described as a consensus-oriented, collaborative style of cooperation with conflicts resolved by management and works council. This has found expression, in particular, in the development by the company of a progressive social policy.

It is only in recent years - against the background of a deteriorating market position, a drastic restructuring and a change in the corporate/management style - that this "basic collaborative consensus" has appeared increasingly under threat.

2. *The structure of the workforce at Volkswagen AG: "a male bastion"*

In terms of its structure the Volkswagen workforce presented itself as a classic "male bastion" at the time the agreement was concluded in 1989 (cf Advancement of women Wolfsburg 1995): at the end of 1989 Volkswagen AG employed a total of 128 305 at its six domestic plants of whom only 13.1% (= 16 832) were women. A closer examination of the structure from a gender standpoint reveals a marked horizontal segregation. Of the 16 832 women employed at the end of 1989 about 75% (= 12 509) were blue-collar workers of whom an above-average percentage were employed in production as unskilled or semi-skilled workers in sewing, wiring harness or assembly jobs. Compared with their male colleagues they were less likely to have completed a vocational training. If they had, their qualifications were frequently in an area without any relevance to the company or industry (eg tailoress, hairdresser, sales assistant). This horizontal segregation was also reflected in the pay structure: the majority of female blue-collar workers were in the five lowest wage groups below the wage group for skilled workers. The picture was similar amongst white-collar

workers. At that time 18.4% (= 4323) of white-collar workers were women. The majority of these were employed as secretarial or clerical staff and were in the lower and middle salary groups.

Although the percentage of female vocational trainees at the end of 1989 was 24.3% (= 1175 women out of 4828) about 50% of female trainees were concentrated in commercial occupations, which are seen as typical women's work (= 546 women out of a total of 709 vocational trainees); on the contrary the percentage of female industrial/technical trainees at the same date was only 14.9% (= 612 women out of a total of 4119 vocational trainees). There is a similarly serious under-representation of women amongst the technical professions: eg in 1989 the percentage of female engineers was only 0.7% (= 23 women out of a total of 3253).

This horizontal segregation is complemented by a marked vertical segregation, ie the percentage of women drops dramatically with increased status and in management positions; in 1989 at the lowest management level, a level since abolished - the so-called deputy foreman/forewoman - only 1% were women (= 26 out of a total of 2638). Out of a total of 1349 foremen/forewomen only 0.3% (= 4) were women in 1989. The percentage of women amongst unpaid trainees (potential management trainees) in 1989 was 3.0% (ie 1 in 33). Female representation at the lowest level of middle management (the so-called unit manager) was 0.7% in 1989 (= 12 out of 1591). In the higher ranks the atmosphere for women became even more rarified: 2 of the 716 departmental managers were women in 1989; at the most senior levels (central departmental manager, divisional manager, works manager, Brand directors and main board directors, etc) the men were on their own in 1989.

The under-representation of women in the important higher ranks is mirrored by a similar under-representation in internal decision-making processes and bodies such as works councils and company works council (cf Annex 3): for example in 1987 women accounted for 17.3% of the workforce in the Wolfsburg plant but their representation on the works council was only 9%. Numerically this means that there was only 1 female representative on each committee compared with a male majority of about 80-90%. In some cases (eg the pay committee) there was no female representation. Women only had 100% representation on the equal opportunity committee. Similar to the situation which prevails within management the more senior works council functions at company, group and European group level were occupied solely by men. In reality this means that the interests of women cannot be represented at group or European group level, at least not by women.

The clear male hegemony of the company, where female employees have more of a marginal role and lack any significant participation in internal positions of power or the decision-making process, prompts the question as to how a company with such a pronounced "male" structure was able to conclude a relatively innovative company-level agreement.

Apart from the structural nature of the company, its industrial relations, the highly developed social and employment commitment of the company what role was played by the general economic and socio-political conditions which existed at the time? What influence was exerted by certain external players and what were the links between the content of the Framework Agreement and its specific provisions and individual demands relating to women's issues emanating from either company or the union, IG Metall?

3. *Economic and socio-political conditions*

The initial discussions at Volkswagen AG on the development of a concept for a "plan for the advancement of women" took place at a time (1987 ff) when it seemed that the question of the "advancement of women" would be of increasing socio-political relevance not only to trade unions and political parties but to companies and employer's associations. Moreover certain large companies (eg IBM 1976, MBB 1976, Bosch 1988) had already concluded initial agreements on the advancement of women (cf Annex 4).

Crucial in terms of the willingness of many large companies in sectors, which at that time were still flourishing, eg the chemical and metal industries, commerce, banking and insurance, was the predicted shortage of skilled workers and managers in the 1990s. These predictions caused many companies to look at new employment policies designed to secure extra skilled workers for the company or to ensure that existing staff, in whose training the company had invested, remained with the company. Faced with this situation many companies became aware of "women as a human resource". Their resolve in this respect was strengthened by initiatives launched by Rita Süßmuth, the then Minister for Women's Affairs. Under the slogan "Women as valuable human resource" she approached certain companies on the specific issue of "equal opportunities in the workplace" and developed proposals for the format of company plans for the advancement of women (cf Krebsbach-Gnath and Schmid-Jörg 1985).

In tandem with this interest in the advancement of women, justified primarily on economic grounds, female trade unionists committed to women's issues had been trying since the early

1980s to put on the agenda, at both union and company level, issues relating to the "advancement of women", particularly in the sense of equal career opportunities for women.

In particular the IG Metall - although a classic industrial union - had taken a lead role in this respect: by the end of the 1970s the union had already drawn up a plan for the advancement of women. It had been drafted at the request of the 9th Women's Conference of IG Metall (1976) and its aim was to improve the professional skills of women. At the 12th Women's Conference in 1985 there had been a wide-ranging discussion with experts in industrial law (Prof. Heide Pfarr) on the plans and initiatives that could be introduced by companies for the advancement of women. This discussion was set against the backdrop of stubborn mass unemployment and the fear that it would be mainly women who would be the losers in future plans by offices and factories to rationalize their workforce. The aim of the discussions was primarily to persuade works councils and union workplace representatives - in collaboration with the local authorities and local women's committees - to initiate company plans for the advancement of women and in several large companies - in the form of both pilot projects and examples to others - to show that measures for the advancement of women could be introduced. In this respect it was intended to develop negotiating aids which would take the form of working aids and specimen company agreements to enable works councils to tackle the task systematically (cf IG Metall 1985). Their deliberations were presented in the form of three motions to the IG Metall conference the following year (1986) and these motions were duly passed (cf IG Metall 1986). A report by Prof. Heide Pfarr, an expert in industrial law, which had been commissioned by IG Metall, on the constitutional admissibility of company initiatives for the advancement of women, had shown not only that such initiatives were admissible but that they were a constitutional imperative. Efforts within the union to anchor the issue of the "advancement of women" at company level, led to what was known as the "IG Metall catalogue of key points for the advancement of women in the workplace". This document was approved by the executive board of IG Metall on 13 March 1989. The purpose of the resolution passed by the executive board was that "the key points for the advancement of women" should find their way into company-level agreements. Apart from a basic ban on discrimination against women in terms of work and working conditions the key points included specific provisions on training, employment on completion of vocational training, job advertisements and recruitment, company development training, promotion, structure and organization of work, pay, part-time work, childcare leave, reintegration after a career break and notice of termination (cf IG Metall 1989). As will be shown below these "key points" and the internal debate within IG Metall which preceded them had a significant influence on both the development and final format of Volkswagen's Framework Agreement

"Basic principles for the advancement of women".

In summary it can be said that the general economic and social-political framework plus the pressure exerted by internal union discussions on the advancement of women lay behind the willingness of the company works council and the management of Volkswagen AG to broach the subject and place it on the agenda for discussion within the company. The origins of the Framework Agreement "Basic principles for the advancement of women" represented a process, therefore, which was fostered by a variety of external and internal factors. However, of fundamental importance to this process was the significant role played by individual players at company level.

4. *Internal players, their motives and objectives*

On the works council side reference should be made to the exceptional contribution of Walter Hiller, at that time chairman of the works council and later Minister for Social Affairs in the Land of Lower Saxony. He initiated the development at Volkswagen of a company-wide plan for the advancement of women. Walter Hiller had an extraordinary commitment not only to social questions but also to women's issues. In the minds of several of those interviewed his attitude was partly attributable to the positive influence of his wife, who was one of the founders and an active participant of the Women's House in Wolfsburg.

However another crucial factor in the positive approach adopted by Walter Hiller on the "advancement of women in the workplace" were the discussions within IG Metall on the advancement of women. The former works council chairman experienced these discussions at first hand in his capacity as a member of the executive board of IG Metall. The pressure emanating from IG Metall's Department for women's affairs and exerted on senior figures within IG Metall, its conference and by association on works council chairmen (mostly male) from other (large) companies in the metal industry, was reinforced by internal pressure from the local women's committees of IG Metall. The membership of the latter included female members on VW's works council and female workplace union representatives in the company. Long before the main resolutions on the advancement of women were passed at the 1986 union conference and the "key points for the advancement of women" were adopted in 1989, these local women's committees - eg those at Wolfsburg, the site of VW's parent plant - which acts as the link between the Department for women's affairs at IG Metall and the female members and officials within the Volkswagen plants, had been a forum for discussions on the need for the advancement of women in the workplace.

Within the company these discussions began to bear fruit through the influence of individual female members of the works council at both Wolfsburg and individual plant level. When interviewed these female members indicated that they had been exerting "pressure from within" for some considerable time and were pressing for measures for the advancement of women, in particular to improve the situation for the large number of semi-skilled and unskilled women in production, a group particularly affected by the job cuts during previous crises (eg 1974/75).

In terms of the willingness of the management side to tackle the issue of the advancement of women, various reasons are cited. Here as well significant influence was exerted from outside ie from Rita Süßmuth, the then Minister for Women's Affairs. It is said that Rita Süßmuth, via contacts with Hahn, then a member of the management board, had urged Volkswagen AG, which at the time was still a semi-public employer, to take a trend-setting role and conclude an agreement on the advancement of women.

In addition to this "external pressure", from which Volkswagen as an important regional employer with a tradition of setting the pace in terms of agreements on progressive social policies, could hardly hope to escape, there were other significant factors which contributed to its willingness to tackle the advancement of women ie the demographic changes which were being forecast at that time (the "demographic time-bomb") and the anticipated shortage of skilled workers and managers in the 1990s.

In addition there is some evidence that the company hoped a declaration on the advancement of women would also improve its image: its thinking here related to effects both within the employment market (an employer sympathetic to women) and outside it ("female customers").

To sum up it can be said that both external conditions (general public discussion on the advancement of women, a major commitment by Rita Süßmuth, Minister for Women's Affairs at the time, the expected shortage of skilled workers and management staff in the future, union discussions and its resolutions on the advancement of women in the workplace) and internal conditions (a strong works council chairman committed to social policies and the interests and demands articulated by individual female members of the works council) helped to create the right climate and at the end of 1987, in response to an initiative by Hiller as chairman of the works council representatives from the company works council and the VW management board agreed to enter into a form of "joint venture" to draft and negotiate the concept of a plan for the advancement of women.

IV. STRUCTURE OF PROCESS TO DRAFT AND NEGOTIATE THE "BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN" (CF ANNEX 5)

The process to draft and negotiate the "Basic principles for the advancement of women" was a multi-stage event lasting from the end of 1987 until June 1989. It started with central draft proposals which had emanated from the company works council at the Wolfsburg parent plant following consultations with the "equal opportunity commission" of the works council, a commission which had been set up in 1987. As part of a multi-stage approach the draft proposals were discussed by a negotiating committee consisting of female works council members from individual Volkswagen plants, the general works committee of the works council and management representatives. Comments and suggested amendments were submitted and changes were then made to the draft. There were three rounds of negotiations with various other sessions in the intervening periods. At the end of this negotiating period the amended draft was passed back to the company works council and to works councils at individual plant level for approval.

Despite the participation of female members of the works council from both the parent plant and the individual plants the main players involved in drafting and negotiating the subsequent "Basic principles for the advancement of women" were those representatives from the company works council and management who had responsibility for personnel and collective bargaining issues - men as a rule: on the works council side the main players involved in the drafting and negotiating process were Hiller, then chairman of the works council, the spokesman for the company works council, female members of the works councils from the individual plants and representatives from the works committee of the company works council.

The local branch of IG Metall was represented by the secretary for women's affairs from the local office in Wolfsburg. In addition there were consultative discussions between the company works council and the executive board member of IG Metall with responsibility for women's issues. There was also direct contact with IG Metall via the chairman of IG Metall, who was an acting member of the Supervisory Board of Volkswagen AG.

On the management side the negotiations were led by the then Manager for Personnel Development, who was accompanied by a representative from Legal Affairs and from Collective Bargaining. The Director of Industrial Relations at the time also participated in the final negotiating round.

Traditionally negotiations at Volkswagen AG are conducted in a climate of "cooperation combined with an expectation of possible conflict" ie negotiating positions are not worked out by each side down to the last detail and then contrasted but efforts are made to find a consensus. This does not mean, however, that confrontation is totally absent from this type of negotiating process but individual positions on certain points - see below - may differ. The differences may be amongst individual negotiating partners or - and more likely - between the social partners. The course of the negotiating process was as follows:

The initial consultations on the preliminary drafts were held at the end of 1987/beginning of 1988 and by March 1988 a draft had been submitted for a company-level agreement, which already contained the main points of the subsequent "Basic principles for the advancement of women". In particular it contained provision for an "equal opportunity function" which would be part of the Personnel and Social Affairs division. In the course of subsequent discussions between, on the one hand, the company works council and management representatives and, on the other, the company works council and representatives from the Department for Women's Affairs within the executive board of IG Metall - the latter were involved in the drafting (and negotiating) process in an advisory capacity to the company works council - the following areas of conflict arose:

One point of conflict between representatives from the company works council and those from management related to the legal force of any agreement. The company works council argued that the plan for the advancement of women should be part of a legally binding company agreement which would be actionable. On the other hand management representatives, particularly the then Director for Industrial Relations, held out for non-binding status almost until the time final agreement was reached. Management argued for a "declaration of basic principles" which would not be binding in law.

Although in the end the "Basic principles for the advancement of women" was afforded the same legal status as a normal company-level agreement, the controversy surrounding its legal character and legal force reflected a conflict which is typical of the entire debate on the career advancement of women in the private sector: the management side of industry has argued that agreements for the advancement of women in the workplace should be voluntary and non-actionable whereas trade union representatives have demanded that equal opportunity policies in the private sector should be afforded greater legal status and should be legally binding.

Similarly the other objections raised by management related to issues of equal opportunity policies in the workplace, which even now remain controversial both in terms of public discussion and discussions between social partners. Apart from the question of the extent to which agreements on the advancement of women in the workplace should be legally binding the situation was similar with regard to the following questions: at which target groups should the company agreement be primarily directed, should the agreement contain precise, actionable targets, to what sectors of the company should it apply, over what period and how many women should be trained, recruited, undergo development training or gain promotion (quotas), should there be effective controls to determine whether the agreement was being implemented successfully and if necessary whether there should be sanctions if measures were not implemented or implemented inadequately and what powers should be given to the various institutions (women's officers/commissions with representational parity) who were responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the measures intended to further the careers of women (cf Brumlop 1994; Brumlop and Hornung 1994; v. Friesen 1994).

However the differences of opinion on the wording of individual provisions of the agreement touched not only on the negotiations between the company works council and the management representatives of Volkswagen AG but also on discussions between the company works council and the Department for Women's Affairs within the executive board of IG Metall. They disagreed on the following:

- the establishment of an "official" women's officer within the management structure;
- the formulation of binding targets or quotas;
- the establishment of specific target groups at which company policy on the advancement of women should be directed.

Particularly controversial was the proposal to institutionalize the position of a women's officer. It had been proposed that this function would be a part of management and its remit would be the development of specific measures and projects and the coordination of initiatives for the advancement of women. The member of the executive board of IG Metall with responsibility for women's affairs argued that the remit of the women's officer should not be a part of the personnel function, but should be transferred to an equal opportunity commission within the works council. In tandem appointments should also be made at personnel level and these individuals would have responsibility for the practical implementation of policies for the advancement of women. The representative from the executive board of IG Metall feared that the transfer of these responsibilities to a women's officer, who was a part of management, represented a sell-out of responsibilities and powers which were part of the remit of the works council. In addition she feared a conflict of interests

between the women's officer and elected members representing the interests of workers. This fear has been articulated time and time again during internal and external union discussions on the pros and cons of women's officers in the private sector.

By a majority decision the works council rejected any suggestion that it should be allocated these responsibilities despite an internal discussion on this question. It argued that the adoption of this solution would mean that the question of the advancement of women would rest primarily with the works council and with a workforce at that time of 130 000 this would have been an excessive burden. It also argued that if the advancement of women were to be regarded as an integral part of personnel development, it must be located within management in some form or other - in terms of both the allocation of responsibilities and the systematics - as it would require the use of certain instruments, systems and appropriate data processing. This could not be a task for the works council but must be a corporate function. By its own admission the works council felt that the institutionalization of a women's officer as a part of management would be the only guarantee that the implementation of the agreement would be imbued with life and that the advancement of women would represent a systematic and integral part of the company's personnel development and personnel management.

Differences of opinion also existed on whether the targets should be binding and if so to what extent. The majority of male and female members of the company works council, who were involved in the negotiations, rejected the idea of general binding targets (quotas). They considered them to be politically unacceptable. In addition it was felt that they would reduce, in inadmissible fashion, the flexibility of employment policies adopted by the company, particularly in times of crisis. Instead they argued for the identification of specific spheres of action and projects for which individual target parameters would then be defined. A contrary stance was adopted by the Department for Women's Affairs at IG Metall. In line with its "key points for the advancement of women" it argued for binding targets defined in each case by area of production and employment. It maintained that this approach would ensure that initiatives subsequently introduced would have actual relevance.

There was also disagreement on who should be responsible in the company for the implementation of measures for the advancement of women and who should be responsible for the evaluation of those measures. The Department for Women's Affairs argued that responsibility for the implementation of the agreement should rest with the "women's officer" but that its evaluation should come under the jurisdiction of the works council. In contrast the

works council proposed that the evaluation process should form part of the remit of the women's officers.

If a comparison is made - even from today's perspective - between the very comprehensive "key points for the advancement of women in the workplace" and the Framework Agreement "Basic principles for the advancement of women", then the outcome of the negotiations between the two sides - not only with regard to content but also with regard to target parameters, target groups and general framework - falls some way short of the union's "key points". Nevertheless the agreement negotiated by Volkswagen AG - even from the current perspective of the Department for Women's Affairs within the executive board of IG Metall - still represents the most comprehensive and innovative agreement which the metal industry has ever been able to secure on equal opportunities for women in the workplace (cf Annex 4). In the experience of the author it has only been surpassed in other sectors of industry by the plan for the advancement of women introduced by Weber GmbH (food industry). This plan was agreed in 1993 at the suggestion of the Ministry for Women's Affairs for the Land of Hesse and efforts by both management and company works council.

Although the negotiated agreement has the status of a company-level agreement it contains only general objectives and general conditions for the implementation of measures for the advancement of women. It contains no precise targets or quotas of a binding nature indicating the areas of applicability (departments/functions), over what period and how many women were to receive vocational training, developmental training and promotion. Nor did it regulate who would be responsible for such measures and who would intervene, if necessary, if they were not implemented. Similarly it contained no effective system to monitor implementation and success.

The task of drawing up, coordinating and evaluating the implementation of measures for the advancement of women was allocated primarily to what is known as the function for the "advancement of women" (instead of women's officer) within the Personnel and Social Affairs Division. The agreement did not say who would be responsible for the implementation of measures developed by the function for the "advancement of women". The company works council and the works councils at individual plant level were merely granted a right of participation and coordination in respect of any fundamental initiatives actually proposed for the advancement of women. However there was no obligation on them to participate.

The "Commission for the advancement of women" with equal representation from both management and workers, which was to be established at both company and plant level, had merely a "consultative function" (the membership of the commission, its tasks and obligations were not defined until the implementation process).

As the Framework Agreement imposed no express obligation on either the works council or the company to further the interests of women, its tangible form and its successful implementation depended upon the extent to which the "function for the advancement of women" was able to develop projects to further the interests of women and in particular the extent of the acceptance and support available for these projects from individuals, both male and female, who held the relevant power within the company or whether it was left alone to get on with its task or even blocked.

V. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS (PHASE 1 1990/1991)

The process of implementing the Framework Agreement was complex, multi-staged and in certain areas the subject of considerable conflict. The first stage started in 1990 with the establishment of a "function for the advancement of women" reporting to the personnel function at management board level. The first stage ended with the departure of the first women's officer whose period in office had been marked by conflict. The second stage started at the end of 1991 when the role of the women's officer was redefined and a new incumbent was appointed; at the same time the works councils established equal opportunity committees, Volkswagen AG appointed women's officers at individual plant level and a "commission for the advancement of women" was also set up. It has only been since the end of 1992 - against the backdrop of a dramatic deterioration in VW's potential market and a drastic restructuring programme by the company, coupled with an embargo on recruitment and a massive reduction in the workforce - that there has been a gradual implementation of individual projects and measures for the advancement of women.

The various negotiating rounds which preceded the Framework Agreement, the conflicts surrounding the appointment of a Departmental Manager to run the function for the "advancement of women" and the role of this department provide evidence of differing perceptions and interests. Differences existed not only between male and female members of the workforce but also between the various groups of women or decision-makers responsible for women's issues. The differences themselves related to what was actually understood in detail by "measures to improve career opportunities for women", where these measures should be implemented, at which target groups they should be directed and the institutional conditions which were required for their successful implementation. These differences also raised the question of how a policy for equal opportunities designed to improve the career opportunities for women in a (large) company can be formulated in practice so that it does not get bogged down in the initial stages or in symbolic acts and the role that is played or could be played in this respect by the institutionalized forms of policies for the advancement of women in the shape of women's committees and women's offices. Can they help to advance the cause of equal opportunities or is there a danger that the institutionalization of policies for women - in the form that was politically achievable at Volkswagen AG - might force gender-related structural problems into what is known as the "women's corner"?

1. Creation of a staff department for the "advancement of women", allocation of responsibilities and conflict surrounding the appointment of the first women's officer

The different perceptions of what was understood in detail by the "advancement of women" and how the company-level agreement should be implemented in practice became apparent early. Conflict arose with regard to the staffing of the "function for the advancement of women" at Volkswagen AG. Although it seemed there was still widespread consensus between the parties (personnel management, industrial relations' director, union and works council officials and female white-collar workers) that a "function for the advancement of women" should be established, that it should be a staff department within the management board of Volkswagen, that it should act as an independent unit with a conceptual and coordinating remit carried out by a staff of permanent female employees which would be an integral part of a network of women's officers at individual plant level, differences came to the surface during the process of selecting a candidate to run the staff department.

Although there were also several internal applicants for the job of running the staff department for the "advancement of women", works council representatives, both male and female, advocated an external applicant. This was all the more surprising because the front runner from within the company, who at the time was working as a departmental manager in systems development, was able to demonstrate an impeccable VW career: she had started off as a messenger and modest clerical worker and worked her way up to senior manager. There were several hypotheses as to why this candidate was rejected by female members of the company works council.

There is some evidence that the mere fact the applicant was not a member of established union circles prompted mistrust and rejection from the female members of the works council involved in the selection process, in particular from the subsequent chairwoman of the equal opportunity commission. The internal applicant was a member of a group of some 15 to 20 women (known as the "Fallersleber circle"), predominantly female white-collar employees, managers and management trainees who were attempting - in tandem with initiatives pursued by the works council and management - to develop their own agenda on the "advancement of women" in the workplace and to exert an influence on policies for women through the agency of the women's officer. The candidate from the "Fallersleber circle", who was also the candidate favoured by the then Director for Industrial Relations, justified her interest in the

position on the grounds that she and the "Fallersleber circle" considered it was essential that the future women's officer came from within the company.

On the other hand the female members of the works council who were part of the selection process justified their rejection of the committed applicant from systems development with the argument that both her application and her concept for the advancement of women within Volkswagen AG did not involve the works council and was being pursued without consulting them. It was impossible to elicit in the course of the interviews with the women in question whether this was the sole deciding factor or whether there were also reasons of content which had their origin in the different way the individual parties interpreted in detail the term "advancement of women". There is considerable evidence, however, that the front runner from the "Fallersleber circle" had very clear ideas on the meaning of a concept for the advancement of women. Moreover this interpretation was not necessarily shared by the works council and its female members. Female members of the works council - not least because of their strong affinity with production functions and so with semi-skilled and unskilled female workers - considered that policies for the advancement of women within the company should start with "preventive training" and measures relating to the way work was organized. In contrast the concept favoured by the candidate from the "Fallersleber circle" placed greater emphasis on encouraging immediate superiors to give reasonable consideration to existing female potential, in particular in terms of management trainees.

As in any large company in the private sector opportunities for internal promotion within Volkswagen AG depend upon support and encouragement from an immediate superior. Before an employee can be considered for attendance at an assessment centre he/she has to be recommended by his/her superior and only after this assessment has been completed - by a selection body consisting normally of men - is an applicant, whether male or female, admitted to the pool of so-called management trainees. And even after that there is still some way to go, again dependent upon the willingness of an influential superior to promote a candidacy, before a good management trainee can rise to a well-paid position in middle or senior management.

If credence is given to the wide range of published literature on this subject women have considerably more difficulty in asserting their skills and management potential during this selection and promotion process. The old boys' network plays its part as do the enduring stereotypical prejudices - unsustainable in empirical terms - regularly expressed by personnel managers about female applicants, and then there is the simple excuse that there were "no

qualified female applicants". It was precisely this point, ie the implausibility of the standard explanations and the lack of justification for the under-representation of women, which the candidate from the "Fallersleber circle" wanted to tackle. She would have sought to remind decision-making managers "of their obligations". The concept put forward by the candidate from the "Fallersleber circle", which was based on bringing about a change in traditional policies for recruitment and promotion which discriminated against women failed in the final analysis - according to the candidate in question - because of resistance from influential female members of the works council. It is assumed that hidden behind the unsympathetic response of the female members of the company works council to the candidate from the management side there were also conflicts of interest and rivalry between the group of female skilled workers and managers and, above all, female members of the company works council with responsibility for female production workers: this conflict was not defused by the choice of an external candidate but actually brought it to a head.

2. *The rise and fall of the first women's officer*

At the beginning of 1990 the management board and the company works council issued a joint press release presenting as their "ideal candidate" a political economist with feminist leanings from Tübingen. During her time as women's officer for the city of Stuttgart she had already earned a reputation as someone willing to enter into, and able to cope with, conflict. In contrast with the internal candidate, who had an impeccable career history with VW, she clearly lacked experience in industry and a knowledge of the formal and informal structures of the company. During the interviews conducted for the case study there was an unwillingness on the part of both male and female members of the works council and management representatives to discuss the "case" of the first women's officer. The political scientist, the "ideal candidate", who took up the position threw in the towel after little more than a year (June 1991) and left by mutual agreement.

Her aspirations both in terms of her programme and the main emphasis of its content were clearly quite different from the approach favoured by female members of the works council. In line with her background in political theory the first women's officer tackled the "advancement of women" not only as a women's issue but also as an issue which affected both sexes. It was her intention that elements of this approach relating to social policies and corporate culture should be introduced into the company. Instead of individual workplace-based measures and initiatives to accelerate the individual training of women, she intended - as she wrote in an article published in 1995 (cf Steckmeister 1995) - to anchor the

advancement of women through general corporate initiatives and to change the structure of personnel policy in the company.

In order that the advancement of women was not solely dependent upon the willingness and goodwill of management, 99% of whom were men, she suggested that management should be judged on the basis of their personal commitment to equal opportunities in the workplace. In other words: men should be rewarded for effective action on behalf of women and if necessary subject to sanctions if they failed to pursue the interests of women. Since then a similar suggestion has been put forward by the Deutscher Juristinnenbund [German association of women lawyers], in particular in connection with linking the award of public contracts and subsidies with the advancement of women (cf von Friesen 1994). Instead of vague targets the percentage of women in receipt of vocational training, recruited to the company and promoted should be increased systematically through specific targets. In addition the procedures used for the selection and promotion of staff should be examined and tested to see whether their effect was to discriminate against one gender. A further element, which the first women's officer considered was fundamental to her work, was the formation of internal networks of women, eg a regular meeting of employees independent of the union and cutting right across the so-called "status groups" (female blue-collar, administrative/secretarial, management, etc) and an annual meeting of all female employees.

In the article referred to above the former women's officer sought, with the benefit of hindsight, to find answers to questions such as why her ideas met primarily with rejection or disinterest from both sides within the company, why even the most minor of measures failed in most cases to get off the ground, how a process of change relevant to equal opportunities might actually be initiated within large organizations and what role women or institutionalized forms of women's affairs such as women's committees and women's officers play or might play.

At the centre of her argument was the theory of "female complicity": in other words women are considered in their capacity as "accomplices of male power" in the company. She raised the question of whether it is actually only the men who impede corporate policies of equal opportunity or whether in fact it is also the women in the company - contrary to their stated intentions - who not only help to consolidate the gender-specific hierarchy but also act as "accomplices of male power".

The specific criticisms against the female members of the works council were that they refused to accept binding targets for increasing the percentage of women in training and management and were reluctant to challenge the male decision-makers in the works council and as a result wasted a good opportunity to change gender-specific hierarchies in the company. In addition other ideas which she had put forward designed to highlight and change gender-specific problems met with either a lukewarm response from female officials or were rejected right from the outset.

For their part when interviewed during the case study both the female members of the works council and the male decision-makers on the works council involved in her initial selection maintained that the first women's officer had been guilty of poor teamwork and a poor management style. When questioned about the actual content of the conflict reference was made in particular to personal incompatibility. It was also argued that she had placed undue emphasis on cooperation with external groups and had been involved in too much media work. It was said that in the final analysis the problems of the women in the company, in particular those in production, were alien to her and the target groups which she favoured were primarily the male and female managers.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS (PHASE 2 1991 ff)

1. *Appointment of an internal candidate to the position of women's officer*

As a result of the failure of the cooperation with the first women's officer it was decided first of all to abolish the "function for the advancement of women" as a staff department. Instead it became a department within the personnel development function (previously Training). This de facto downgrading of the function for the "advancement of women" was justified on the works council side by its view that the function should be more fully integrated into the information and decision-making flow of the company. The future women's officer would be expected to undertake "more visible work at the local level", coordinate her work with the equal opportunity committee of the company works council and develop ideas to secure the employment and training of women, in particular those in production.

It was not surprising that after the experience with an external appointment, an experience evaluated predominantly as negative, there was universal agreement that the second attempt to select a women's officer should favour an internal candidate. Instead of a militant feminist from Stuttgart the successor nominated by both management and the company works council displayed all the traits of somebody who would be able to fit in. Whereas the first women's officer had defined herself theoretically and politically as a "feminist", her successor freely admitted that she had not had any particular links with women's issues or the women's movement prior to her appointment. She had been looking for another position, was approached about the job and had subsequently submitted an application. Because she had many years of experience in both research and the practical side of organizational development at Volkswagen AG the applicant, who was a qualified industrial psychologist, had a relevant understanding of not only the production and management structures but also the formal and informal power and collaborative structures which existed in the company. A skill which should prove to be extremely useful in her work as women's officer for the company.

Whereas the strategic approach adopted by the first women's officer had been directed more at attempts to change power structures and to effect a cultural change in gender relations, her successor considered that the most important starting point for equal opportunity policies in the company should be "preventive training" for women as part of qualitative personnel development planning so that they would be suitable for future organizational structures. By

adopting this approach she was significantly closer than the first women's officer had been to the ideas of decision-makers, both male and female, in the works council.

The second women's officer took up her appointment as Manager of the Department for the advancement of women within personnel more than two years after the signing of the company agreement on the "Basic principles for the advancement of women". The previous staff department had come directly under the Director for Industrial Relations, who was a member of the management board. She had participated regularly in divisional management meetings, she had direct access to the equal opportunity commission of the works council and - at least at the outset - she could publish in her own name. However after the failure of the cooperation with the first women's officer the new "function for the advancement of women" was "downgraded" to a department within Personnel Development (previously Training). Admittedly the new women's officer was able to negotiate attendance at the weekly management sessions led by the Personnel Manager. This meant that she was integrated into the information process in the company. However this participation did not give her any right of intervention, ie she had no right to set the broad rules of company policy and she had no voting rights or even a right of veto. As a department for the "advancement of women" within personnel development the role of the department was restricted, by virtue of its remit, to that of a "service function" (development of concepts), whereby the concepts would be implemented in cooperation with management and the works councils.

2. Development of organizational structures for the implementation of the Framework Agreement (commission for the advancement of women, women's committees and women's officers at individual plant level) (cf Annex 6)

When she took up her new position in November 1991 the organizational structures required for the implementation of the company agreement were still incomplete. The sole structure which existed was the "equal opportunity committee for women" at company works council level. Its membership consisted of one female member from each of the works councils in the six VW plants in the former West Germany plus the chairwoman of the committee from the Wolfsburg plant. The "equal opportunity committee for women" at company works council level had emerged from the committee which had negotiated the company-level agreement and had been formed when the company agreement was signed in June 1989. Its remit was to anchor the issue of the advancement of women at company works council level ie extending beyond individual plants.

In tandem it was planned to set up equal opportunity committees for women at plant level. Membership would consist of all female members of the plant-level works council and delegates nominated by senior union workplace representatives and the representative body for young workers. These women's committees would deal with plant-related aspects of the advancement of women at works council level. It was also intended that they would be consulted by and cooperate with the women's officers who were to be appointed in the individual plants. Depending upon the number of female employees and the number of female members of the plant-level works councils there were between 3 and 10 female members of the works councils on the plant-level women's committees.

The "commission for the advancement of women", which had been provided for in the Framework Agreement, was established in 1992. Its membership consisted of those employed in the department for the "advancement of women" at the parent plant, women's officers and personnel managers from the individual plants and members of the "equal opportunity committee for women" at company works council level. This commission was intended to support the work of the women's officers, provide advice, complete half-yearly comparisons between actuals and targets and develop guidelines for the advancement of women.

The appointment of women's officers at individual plant level extended over a lengthy period (1991/92). Apparently differences of opinion arose with regard to the remit for these positions, ie whether women's officers should only work on women's issues or whether a part of their time should be devoted to other personnel tasks. In the end it was decided that women's officers should spend their entire time on women's issues.

In terms of the specialist content of their work the women's officers at plant level came under the Department for the "advancement of women" at Wolfsburg, which had a coordinating role. The cooperation between the Department for the advancement of women in Wolfsburg and the women's officers at individual plant level took the form of joint monthly meetings (closed-door meetings).

It took until mid-1992 to develop the internal organizational structures for the implementation of the company agreement. This was when the first closed-door meeting was held with the women's officers from the individual plants. By the time this meeting took place the concept for the "advancement of women" had not only been curtailed in organizational terms but its existence also seemed threatened by changes in the corporate scenario (sales crisis, recruitment ban, company restructuring).

VII. THE (LACK OF) POWER OF WOMEN'S OFFICERS IN AN AREA OF CONFLICT IE THE INTERESTS OF THE COMPANY

At the end of 1992 despite the drastic restructuring both works council and management were in favour of continuing the project for the "advancement of women". In other words the development of specific measures and projects for the advancement of women started at a time when the company was involved in a modernization policy. One of the objectives of this policy of modernization was to "slim down" the company, a policy which would also have a serious impact on production areas with a high percentage of women (sewing, production of wiring harnesses).

However before considering the concrete action taken to implement the Framework Agreement - using the Wolfsburg plant as an example - it is necessary to reiterate the general structural framework for the work carried out by the women's officers and their specific position in an area of conflict ie the interests of the company.

A distinctive feature of the general framework for the work by the women's officers was that in marked contrast with the multiplicity of tasks and in some cases the relatively high number of female employees - albeit varying from plant to plant (the parent plant alone had a female workforce of some 10 000 at the time of the case study) they had relatively modest resources - when we conducted the initial study - in terms of staff and equipment.

At the time of the initial survey (1993) the Department for the advancement of women in Wolfsburg had a permanent staff of four plus one secretary. It also had a limited budget for events, seminars, etc. In contrast women's officers at individual plant level had to get by as a general rule without their own secretarial assistance, without staff and without their own budget. As a result they were largely self-reliant. Their remuneration was generally based on their previous salary and varied from plant to plant.

Whereas the Department for the advancement of women at Wolfsburg was an independent department within the personnel development function, the women's officers at individual plant level were tied to the relevant personnel manager, who in theory had to ensure that the ideas, suggestions and concepts proposed by women's officers were implemented by the management in the areas concerned.

The progress reports issued by the women's officer at Wolfsburg and her team and those issued by women's officers at individual plant level show that they were having to operate in a complex area of conflict with diverging and competing company interests; between the need to consult and reach a consensus with management, between competition and cooperation with female members of the works council and subject to the pressure exerted by the expectations of their various client groups in the company.

A more detailed analysis of the scope and organizational room for manoeuvre available to women's officers revealed that their ability to act was subject to numerous barriers and restrictions. Although most appointments were agreed by both management and works councils, women's officers had considerable problems with regard to their authority and acceptance. They had neither decision-making powers nor a right of veto. They were not protected against dismissal and lacked significant resources of their own. This meant that they were obliged to display loyalty to and seek acceptance from both the company (ie their immediate superior) and the powerful works council if they were not to jeopardize their own career.

Admittedly the women's officer in Wolfsburg is an integral part of the flow of information on important personnel matters throughout the company. She can attend meetings of the operational and planning committee and can even attend symposia convened to discuss job location and submit proposals on issues and problems specific to women. What is debatable, however, is the extent to which the framework in which she can act is defined and who is required to take up and implement the ideas which she puts forward. Even personnel managers interviewed during the study had to admit that the women's officers, although able to tackle issues specific to women and put forward suggestions for improvements, are not able in the final analysis to exert any meaningful influence on structural issues, eg aspects of the planning and restructuring process. These restrictions on freedom of manoeuvre are even greater for the women's officers appointed to develop measures for the career advancement of women at individual plant level.

A fundamental problem in the minds of several of those questioned - at least when the women's officers at plant level first took up their appointments - was the absence of a clear remit or clearly defined target groups. Also cited was the absence of projects with clear targets agreed jointly by works council and women's officers. As a result the women's officers had to seek out their own issues and target groups and yet they had to ensure that they did

not encroach on areas under the jurisdiction of the works council or act in breach of personnel agreements or resolutions agreed by management and works council.

Ultimately the interests of women can be tackled only if the issues and target groups are also considered "worthy" of advancement by the relevant parties within the company. This means that the range of advice and information is restricted primarily to issues where a consensus is possible eg "skills training", and development training and the target groups are similarly restricted to those where a consensus exists eg female engineers, female white-collar workers, management trainees or female skilled workers. In contrast it also means that issues brimming with conflict such as gender-based wage/salary discrimination or the situation of semi-skilled and unskilled women in the areas affected by reductions in the vertical range of manufacture are either not tackled at all or only around the edges.

In addition any measures to provide advice or information require a lengthy coordination procedure with management and works council taking into account existing hierarchies and ground rules. Staff working in the Department for the advancement of women in Wolfsburg maintained that this has tended to produce a paralysis and an increasing alienation from their actual client base rather than advancing their interests.

Apart from the ever-present requirement to coordinate their actions and gain acceptance for them several women's officers employed at plant level complained that their knowledge of and involvement in the decision-making aspects of personnel policy (job advertisements, staffing levels) were insufficient to enable them to work actively on behalf of women. For example jobs were frequently not advertised internally and staffing levels were the subject of negotiations between works council and personnel management to the exclusion of women's officers.

There were also difficulties because the absence of binding targets meant that the women's officers found few opportunities to remind personnel managers of their responsibility to pursue the objectives of the equal opportunity policy. The success or failure of their work was very much dependent upon the goodwill and willingness of their superiors to provide support. The result was that the issues or projects proposed by women's officers were geared more to an ability to achieve a consensus, the likelihood that an action might be successful or good for prestige, and were less geared to whether the proposed action would tackle a structural problem of relevance to gender policies within the company.

On the other hand the women's officer is similarly unable to tackle burning personnel issues without corresponding pressure from below or active lobbying by female members of the works council. Otherwise she would not only be in breach of her duty of loyalty to the company and put her own career at risk but would also be intervening in the province of the works council. On the one hand the Agreement states that "all basic questions and concrete measures for the advancement of women shall be coordinated with either the company works council or works councils at plant level in accordance with the Betriebsverfassungsgesetz [works constitution act]". On the other hand the works council members, both male and female, interviewed at Volkswagen AG expressed the view that the representation of the interests of women is part of their jurisdiction and is very much a matter of their concern. On the contrary the role of the women's officers is seen primarily as providing a point of contact with management and they have coordinating, advisory and conceptual functions.

In this connection several women's officers were critical of the lack of cooperation with female members of the works council, in particular the women's committees. This was particularly true at the parent plant: as a policy department within the personnel function without any authority to launch initiatives or take decisions the women's officers have been very much dependent upon the collaborative support of female (and also male) members of the works council. So far this willingness to cooperate has not been forthcoming. As a result it has so far been impossible to launch future-oriented projects, eg the requirement that a specific percentage of women should be employed on any new production process and that specific skills training should be provided for women so that they are suitable for future organizational structures.

An explanation - according to opinions expressed by the women's officers - not only for this lack of cooperation but also the readiness of female members of the works council to enter into conflict is the fact that the works council committees which are responsible for the important decisions on employment and personnel policies - including those affecting women - are generally male-dominated. Women's officers have to discuss and coordinate their initial conceptual ideas for the advancement of women with such bodies and it is said that they either ignore the role of the women's officers or block policies which might result in preferential treatment being given to women. This puts female members of the works council in a difficult situation: they are either under-represented or not represented at all on these important main committees. They are dependent upon the goodwill of the men which means that they are reluctant to shout too loudly. Moreover the reduction in the overall workforce has resulted in a decrease rather than an increase in the number of works council mandates.

The lack of political influence exerted by female members of the works councils is also reflected in the scant regard given to the committees for women's affairs by the company works council and plant-level works councils. These committees were set up originally in response to the lack of consideration given by the company to women's interests. However since then they have only managed a shadowy existence. In terms of value and acceptance they come far below the other works council committees at both company and plant level, although in these other committees women are either under-represented or not represented at all.

In addition the relationship between women's officers and the committees for women's affairs at both the parent plant and individual plants is characterized more by a sense of rivalry, each competing for prestigious projects, ideas and initiatives and less on cooperation and mutual solidarity. In addition the male-dominated works council - despite the fine-sounding Framework Agreement and attempts to raise awareness - has displayed very little interest in the subject of "equal opportunities". Whether or not the interests of women are reflected in everyday decisions on personnel policy and planning, etc, is still reliant upon the willingness of those who basically made the advancement of women necessary in the first place: the male-dominated management and works council. According to staff working in the Department for the advancement of women concepts, suggestions, submissions - particularly during the initial phase of the study (1993) - were either ignored ie not dealt with or were blocked.

The absence of clear ground rules for the activities of the women's offices made it particularly treacherous for those who were appointed from outside and were newcomers in the company - eg the first women's officer. She came in as a stranger, had no friends or support and first of all had to get to grips with formal and informal company structures. The fact that she then embarked on a collision course, was critical of the gender hierarchy within the company and in addition expressed this criticism in public meant that - in a company such as Volkswagen AG with a company philosophy tinged with corporatism - she was quickly manoeuvred into the role of an outsider.

Those who were recruited from within the company and were familiar with its procedures risked alienation from former colleagues, both male and female, if they pursued their role in a certain way. For example one member of the Department for the advancement of women, with many years of employment in the company, described her experience of working for the "advancement of women" as a "hard and painful process". It left her unsure of whether the

job of "women's officer" - in the form established by the company - was in fact the right instrument for asserting women's interests within the company. They were critical of the lack of acceptance, their limited power and room for manoeuvre when it came to implementing initiatives and projects. There was also the danger that they would be trodden into the ground by competing interests and the permanent requirement to find a consensus.

In her book "In the Way of Women. Men's Resistance to Sex Equality in Organizations" Cynthia Cockburn (1991) compares the role of women's officers with that of local authority community workers.

"As they were, equality officers are a relatively new kind of employee, inserted to be an interface between a particular constituency of interests and the management system. Where the community worker continually had to juggle her loyalties to the community in which she was situated and the authority that employed her, so the equality officer has to tread the thin line between being a resource for women and being a manager answerable to more senior managers. Both community workers and equality officers are subject to stresses that can threaten personal survival. If they do the job to the benefit of their constituency they incur the wrath of their employers. If they satisfy their managers they will certainly be blamed for treachery by those they hoped to assist. Both jobs attract progressive people and both jobs destroy them." (p 235)

Cockburn sees a further parallel with community work in as much as work on equal opportunity projects, if it is to be continuous, is dependent not only upon an identification with her clients but also on which side the women's officer stands and whether she is prepared to lose or resign the job, if the contradictions become too great.

"Equality work is unlikely, if done well, to lead to a further career in the organization. Unless, that is, the equality process is succeeding and the organization is changing fast." (p 235)

Furthermore, according to Cockburn, the women's officer is little different from any other token women manager in one respect:

"The common pattern is for competent women ... to be lifted into an exposed position, to be deprived of support, become demoralized and leave. Some feel they have been set up to fail." (p 234)

Her resumé:

"Generating a women's movement around the equality officer is necessary, if only for her own survival and that of the equality process." (ibid)
"Contradicting male power is hazardous work and should not be undertaken without a safety net." (p 235)

One way of escaping from the role of a single combatant would be to establish a network made up of women's officers at plant level and the Department for the advancement of women with the aim of developing joint positions and enjoying a full exchange of ideas. However even here the comments expressed by the women's officers included in the study sounded somewhat resigned. Apart from those who threw in the towel after a relatively short period, those who were still in office indicated that their aspirations for inter-plant cooperation had in most cases been dashed rather than fulfilled. This failure was blamed firstly on structural reasons, eg not all plants were at the same stage in the development process with regard to the advancement of women, and secondly on the major problems resulting from the rivalry between the coordinating office at the parent plant and the women's officers at individual plant level. In addition there was unanimous criticism that for a long time the "Commission for the advancement of women" had failed to respond adequately to requests for the development of guidelines and for advice and support on measures and projects for the advancement of women. This was attributable, it was said, to a lack of interest on the part of individual personnel managers.

Overall the experiences described by the women's officers indicate that there was clearly a marked contrast between the right to equal opportunities as expressed in the Framework Agreement and the reality in practice. This would appear to indicate that those in the company, both male and female, responsible for decisions on organizational policy had only minimal interest in the effective implementation of this right.

Taking as an example the situation at the parent plant in Wolfsburg the following section describes the steps that have been taken so far to implement the Framework Agreement for the advancement of women - despite the economic and organizational restrictions on the room for manoeuvre described above - and whether initiatives have succeeded or failed.

VIII. IMPLEMENTATION TO DATE OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT TAKING AS AN EXAMPLE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AT THE PARENT PLANT IN WOLFSBURG AND PROSPECTS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AT VOLKSWAGEN AG IN THE 1990s

The objectives and target groups specified in the Framework Agreement apply to all women in the company: ranging from semi-skilled workers in production, skilled workers, clerical workers, engineers, those returning after a career break and up to and including women in specialist and management jobs. However the reality - according to the comments by women's officers included in the survey - was mostly different. This was associated partly with differences in the structure of female employment at individual plant level and partly with differences in the conceptual approach adopted by the individual women's officers, the specific need for action, and also differences in the general framework which applied to the work of the women's officers (staff resources, budget, date of commencement, etc).

The following paragraphs describe the most important initiatives and projects adopted by Volkswagen AG for the advancement of female workers at Volkswagen. The parent plant at Wolfsburg has been chosen for this purpose because it is the most advanced in terms of an implementation of the Agreement. In addition it has the most favourable general framework with regard to the situation for women's officers and staff resources. Moreover documentary evidence of the action taken so far is also available (cf Advancement of Women Wolfsburg 1994).

1. Inventory of the situation for women at Volkswagen AG: compilation of a statistical basis for measures for the advancement of women in the company

According to the Framework Agreement a prerequisite for any qualitative personnel planning for women is a comprehensive gender-specific statistical inventory, regularly updated, which should highlight the need for specific measures for the advancement of women. As early as 1985 the Federal Ministry of Young People, Family and Health, following a two-year empirical study of measures for the advancement of women in prominent private sector companies, had published a "Handbook" (cf Krebsbach-Gnath and Schmid-Jörg 1985), in which it was suggested that an analysis of the current position of women in any given company was an essential first step in the development of measures for the advancement of women.

Volkswagen AG was one of the few large companies which took up the suggestion and incorporated it in its Framework Agreement. Admittedly the agreement did not state the data that was important or necessary for the desired personnel planning, which in turn was to be given concrete form - both generally and project-related - through annual planning parameters. Nor did it state who should collect and process this data or draw conclusions as to why it was so and what should be done. When staff were recruited for the "function for the advancement of women" it was decided that the collection of basic statistical data should come under the remit of women's officers at both Head Office and plant level. The data collected regularly since 1989 - or at least that made available to the writer - covers age, education and vocational training, the position of women and men in the company hierarchy, family status, the proportion of women and men in part-time work, childcare leave and the extent to which offers of re-employment after a career break are taken up, etc. In addition data is also available on the pay structure split by gender.

Women's officers are required to submit this data to the "Commission for the advancement of women", the equal opportunities committee of the company works council, the committees for women's affairs and the personnel managers of the individual plants and, on request, to the management board or the works council executive committee in the company. It is left open, however, who is responsible for drawing conclusions from this data, a task which requires an enormous commitment in terms of staff and time to collect. Although this data provides an insight primarily into the existing reservoir of skilled or skilable female workers it provides less data on future opportunities or barriers impeding a qualitative and structural improvement in job opportunities for women at Volkswagen AG.

2. *Measures for specific target groups*

2.1 Career guidance for girls and women

Career guidance for girls and women is an integral component of the programmes developed by all women's officers interviewed. The official justification for such action was that in recent years the percentage of women in receipt of vocational training in technical/industrial subjects has been declining steadily. Young women are still concentrating on a few typically female occupations which have few prospects. This measure is particularly explosive because, since the recruitment embargo introduced in 1993, the area of vocational training is the only one where there can be a percentage increase in the number of women in the company.

A package of measures has been developed by the Department for the advancement of women designed to motivate girls and women, eg open days, work experience, technical days for girls, additional training for teachers, etc. At the heart of these measures are:

- so-called "taster courses": for a period of three days girls are able to gain a practical insight into technical and industrial vocational training through a "mentor system";
- a "technical hands-on" project: in conjunction with the Technical University of Brunswick, grammar school pupils spend three weeks at technical institutes within the university and at Volkswagen on study/work experience. This enables them to see what it would be like to study and work in engineering.

According to documents provided by the Department for the advancement of women at the parent plant in Wolfsburg these initiatives are designed

- to eliminate the prejudices and fears surrounding "male professions",
- to reduce the feeling of detachment from technical subjects,
- to encourage girls to train for occupations which are relevant to the automobile industry and which have good prospects,
- to increase the percentage of female technical and industrial trainees at Volkswagen.

However there are no binding targets on the period required for the increase in the percentage of female trainees or the volume of any increase. More far-reaching measures - of the type highlighted by women's officers during our interviews - eg an examination of entry tests for elements which might result in discrimination on the basis of sex, education for vocational training managers on the concept of "women's advancement", preferential treatment for female vocational trainees after successful completion of training by offering them employment in a job commensurate with their skills, etc - have not so far appeared on the agenda. The emphasis has been rather one-sided, ie to motivate and provide advice to young women. As a result there is a danger that on completion of their training, skilled female workers will end up in production jobs. Admittedly this danger applies equally to men and women for despite high training quotas it has been standard practice in Volkswagen for many years to assign complete intakes of young male and female trainees to production jobs for several years after completion of their training.

On the other hand: if skilled female workers do manage to gain entry to a male domain, their training considerably increases their prospects of professional and personal development compared with the prospects open to semi-skilled and unskilled workers. This in turn helps to challenge and disturb the old notions of "women's" and "men's" work, notions which are still alive and kicking.

2.2 Developmental training/personnel development for female skilled workers at Volkswagen AG

A series of measures has been developed which is designed to extend the career opportunities for this group of women. They have been targeted primarily at developmental training for female skilled workers, in particular to help them to qualify as master craftswomen. In the past it had been possible to qualify as a master craftswoman through an internal training (deputy master craftswoman). However since 1993 this has not been possible and a three-year external course followed by an examination set by the IHK [chamber of industry and commerce] is required. The following measures have been introduced:

- workshops targeted at skilled female workers (content/results);
- specific development measures taken by relevant managers locally;
- support for women working towards the IHK qualification of master craftswoman;
- establishment of a network for skilled female workers.

These measures are intended to help increase the percentage of female skilled workers, to open up job opportunities for them in the team structures of production, in technical administration as forewomen or vocational training instructors and, in particular, to increase the percentage of forewomen and vocational training instructors in industrial and technical areas.

However similar problems have arisen with initiatives for female skilled workers, ie without binding targets and a commitment to preferential consideration for vacancies as forewomen after successful completion of their training the women run the risk of remaining as a female reserve for possible staff shortages or having to continue as skilled workers in production. All the women's officers interviewed at individual plant level maintained that the career opportunities of women were largely dependent, even after qualifying as master craftswomen, upon the goodwill and acceptance of company superiors.

2.3 Women in clerical occupations

Female clerical workers, a group under serious threat from the process of rationalization, are another target group for measures for the advancement of women at Volkswagen AG. In 1993 the Volkswagen AG group as a whole employed some 1300 in this group making it the largest target group in the female white-collar area. The delayering process in the company and the resultant reduction in managerial jobs plus the increasing use of technology combined with new forms of working practices have meant that employment prospects for this group are not only subject to significant changes but it is also threatened by an overall reduction.

In the past VW has operated a strict division between secretarial and administrative functions. Typists and secretaries were rated and graded in accordance with the position of their boss in the company hierarchy.

The following are cited as the objectives of measures on behalf of this group of women:

- to secure their employment and develop their career prospects;
- to develop new forms of working practices, "the office of the future".

The following opportunities have been offered:

- three-day workshop for secretaries and clerical staff;
- a relaxation of the strict demarcation between secretarial and administrative functions;
- a change to current job descriptions;
- the grading structure for their work to be decoupled from the position of their bosses in the company hierarchy;
- the establishment of a working group for "secretaries".

2.4 Developmental training/personnel development for female engineers at Volkswagen AG

As a company within the metal industry Volkswagen, since the 1980s, has been stressing its interest in female university and college graduates with an engineering background. However the percentage of female engineers in the company remains minute. To increase this percentage the company has agreed targets for new recruits. In addition career opportunities are to be opened up by means of job rotation, project management and management trainee schemes.

The following measures have so far been offered by the Department for the advancement of women:

- workshops for female engineers on career opportunities within Volkswagen;
- the introduction of networking;
- raising the awareness of management;
- a "technical hands-on" project has operated as a pilot scheme: in conjunction with the Technical University of Brunswick, grammar school pupils spend a three-week familiarization period finding out about engineering courses and the work of an engineer.

2.5 Developmental training/personnel development for female management trainees

As in most large companies in Germany the percentage of women in middle and senior management at Volkswagen AG - as has already been shown - is either very small or zero. However the stated aim of the policy for the advancement of women is to increase the percentage of women at all levels of middle and senior management. In addition the aim is to develop a corporate culture which makes it possible to take account of the specific lifestyles of women even in the top jobs. For this purpose it is intended to develop practical arrangements for working hours to facilitate an improvement in compatibility between family and career even at middle and senior management level.

With a view to implementing these objectives appropriate personnel development concepts and planning parameters are to be agreed. Workshops are run for female middle and senior managers and female management trainees, networks set up amongst those involved and "awareness" programmes have been run for male managers.

2.6 Employment prospects for semi-skilled and unskilled women

Without doubt the most difficult target group in terms of the advancement of women is the large group of semi-skilled and unskilled women employed by the company. This group has been the most seriously affected by the restructuring process initiated by the company: these women are employed primarily in the production of components, an area where there has been a series of measures to reduce the vertical range of manufacture (eg wiring harnesses, seat production, sewing). At the time the Framework Agreement was signed women accounted for up to 90% in these areas. Since 1992 the company has been involved in progressive cutbacks in these areas and outsourcing work to companies both in and outside Germany.

Both the women's officers and the works council members with responsibility for this area expressed the view that the fate of women affected by this reduction in the vertical range of manufacture represents the acid test for the Framework Agreement for the advancement of women. It is no secret that the company has no interest in the continued employment of this group of women in the future and is seeking through termination agreements, offers of part-time work, etc, to persuade them to leave the company "voluntarily" or at least to reduce their hours of work. For this reason this group of women figures very highly amongst those who have signed the so-called termination agreements.

The Department for the advancement of women at the parent plant in Wolfsburg cited the following aims for measures directed at semi-skilled and unskilled female workers:

- to secure their employment;
- to develop employment prospects for women affected by the restructuring process;
- to develop measures of relevance to the employment market.

The following measures have been taken:

- an interdepartmental working group has been set up to develop job prospects for women from component production;
- the inclusion of women in new forms of working patterns:
 - establishment of a working group;
 - preparation of a review on the participation of women in group and teamwork projects throughout the company;
- a pilot project "women as automotive specialists":
initially 50 women employed on component production at Wolfsburg will be able to complete a two-year training of relevance to the automobile industry at the end of which a certificate will be awarded.

2.7 General training, guidance and information

In addition to measures tailored to specific target groups a proportion of measures for the advancement of women has taken the form of "general training" for women in women-only groups. They have been designed to boost the effectiveness of the learning process, to strengthen feelings of self-esteem and to raise awareness of women's issues. In addition the Department for the advancement of women has offered information and advice to women in the form of

- regular monthly women-only meetings;
- individual consultations;
- information talks for new employees, work experience students, unpaid trainees, etc;

- regular reports on work for the advancement of women and circulars to specific target groups.

They have been designed primarily to develop joint problem-solving strategies and personal development plans.

2.8 Development of internal and external networks

The range of offers has been supplemented by means of support from established and new internal networks for female VW employees. It is intended that the impact of these networks should be wider than just departmental, plant or target group level, eg:

- network evenings;
- discussion groups;
- exchange of experience;
- working groups for specific target groups.

External networks have been developed in the form of working groups, research programmes and projects with other companies who have also agreed action on the advancement of women and appointed women's officers, cooperation with women's officers from local government and colleges in locations where Volkswagen has a plant, support for local women's initiatives and cooperation with training establishments. They are designed to show that the concept of equal opportunities for men and women is a process of innovation which involves society as a whole and which Volkswagen is seeking to influence and stimulate not only inside but outside the company as well.

2.9 Prospects for the advancement of women in the 1990s

The Department for the advancement of women from the parent plant in Wolfsburg cited *inter alia* the following objectives, some programmed and some now already initiated, for the advancement of women:

- To negotiate a company-level agreement on "sexual harassment in the workplace" ("partnership-based behaviour in the workplace") and accompanying systematic measures to increase awareness and provide clarification and advice on this issue.
- To strengthen the key issue "compatibility of career and childcare work": in addition to the arrangements for working hours already developed it is intended to offer a "parental relay" arrangement; this should enable employees with children to organize their shorter working hours, adapted to the age of their children, in such a way that career, childcare and housework responsibilities can be combined without excessive

stress. The company has also launched a project entitled "the Volkswagen child bureau" to develop and coordinate workplace-based childcare facilities.

- The issue of the advancement of women should be accepted to a greater extent in future as an integral element of local management and firmly established at the local level. Specific goals and planning parameters to be agreed.
- The restructuring measures proposed by the company should be the subject of a specific analysis at an early stage to determine what the gender-related effects will be on the workforce. This would allow sufficient time to develop job opportunities for the women affected by the restructuring process - in this case primarily female workers in component production, including opportunities outside the company with component suppliers.
- Finally it is proposed to improve the harmonization between company initiatives for the advancement of women and regional and structural development plans.

IX. SUCCESS/FAILURE OF MEASURES TO DATE TO IMPLEMENT THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT AT CORPORATE LEVEL

The following comments on the success/failure of measures to implement the Framework Agreement must be viewed against the backdrop of the modernization policy instigated by the company at the end of 1992. As a result of this policy, achieved by early retirement and termination agreements, the total workforce fell between the end of 1989 and the end of 1994 by some 23 000. The reduction in the percentage of female workers, at 27% (from 16 832 to 12 306 women), was higher than the comparable figure for male workers during the same period ie 16.5% (from 111 473 to 93 132 men) (cf Advancement of women 1995). Officially this marked drop in the percentage of women was attributed to the fact that the termination agreements offered by the company were accepted by a disproportionate number of women in response to the "traditional allocation of roles". In reality however the response, allegedly for reasons typically associated with gender roles, was the result of the restructuring process, which impacted primarily on production areas (the manufacture of wiring harnesses, sewing) where women accounted for up to 90%. Faced with an imminent transfer of their jobs elsewhere semi-skilled and unskilled women in these areas were confronted with a choice: they could remain in their existing job with its uncertain future, there was the vague possibility of a transfer to another department or they could accept the offer, only on the table for a limited period, of a termination agreement and the immediate loss of their job.

It is no wonder, therefore, that the reduction in the percentage of women has been greatest amongst blue-collar workers, where the percentage of women fell between the end of 1989 and the end of 1994 from 11.9% (= 12 509) to 10.0% (= 8393). Amongst white-collar workers the reduction has so far been less dramatic ie from 18.4% (= 4323) to 17.6% (= 3913) (cf Advancement of women 1995). However it should be borne in mind here that the rationalization process in administrative areas and production offices started later than it did in production areas and this fact is reflected in the statistics.

How then does the disproportionate reduction in the percentage of women in production and administrative areas compare with structural and qualitative improvements in the employment of women in individual areas and target groups?

If the percentage change in female vocational trainees (particularly in technical jobs) is taken as a mark of the success or otherwise of attempts so far to create the conditions required for a structural and qualitative improvement in the employment of women by VW, then the results

here are similarly negative: since the agreement the percentage of women in both commercial and industrial areas has continued to decline from 25.6% (= 1225 women) in December 1990 to 21.8% (= 941 women) in December 1994. Despite promotional campaigns the percentage of women in industrial jobs has declined from 16.6% (= 676 women) to 15.5% (= 587 women); this contrasts with a fall over the same period from 80% (= 549 women) to 67.7% (= 354 women) in administrative areas (cf Advancement of women 1995).

Whereas the female members of the works councils once again attributed the decline in female applicants, particularly in industrial and technical areas, mainly to the gender-specific career orientation of young women and rejected binding targets for vocational training, several of the women's officers interviewed blamed the decline in female applicants not only on a presumption that such a career choice would not offer adequate job opportunities but also on what they perceived was often only a half-hearted policy by training departments to encourage applicants.

In contrast there is initial evidence of a slight improvement in the numbers of female skilled workers achieving the status of a master craftswoman and in access for women to skilled technical jobs. For example the percentage of women employed as forewomen increased from 0.4% (= 5 women) in 1990 to 1.6% (= 40 out of a total of 2471) in 1994. However if we take a closer look at the areas where the majority are employed, ie in the manufacture of wiring harnesses and sewing, then the hypocritical and less promising "success" of this type of advancement for women is revealed. In the core production functions ie assembly and bodyshell production forewomen remain the exception.

Similarly the percentage of female engineers at Volkswagen has increased since 1989 from 0.7% (= 23 women) to 2.1% (= 96 women out of a total of 4552 engineers) in 1993. However this figure is still considerably lower than the number of women graduating in engineering subjects from universities (11%) and applied science colleges (12%) (cf Advancement of women 1994). However in this case as well there is a fear that the reduction in the vertical range of manufacture (research and development) and job shortages coupled with a drastic deterioration in the general job market for engineers will have the effect of making it increasingly difficult for women to gain a foothold in traditional male domains.

The percentage of women in middle and senior management provides further evidence to help us answer the question of whether the action taken so far has helped to improve the qualitative and structural nature of female employment and to break down the gender-related

job demarcations. Here the trend is clearly one of stagnation: the increasing number of highly qualified women in society as a whole is not reflected in the ranks of middle and senior managers at Volkswagen: in 1989 there were 2 female (0.3%) departmental managers out of a total of 716. In 1994 the number had increased to 9 out of a smaller total of 604 departmental managers (= 1.5%). At senior management level ie divisional manager level Volkswagen remains almost exclusively a male domain. So far only one woman has managed to "break into the men's club".

Management trainees and unpaid trainees provide the only positive trend: here - at least since 1993 - there has been a continuous increase and women now account for 4.9% of management trainees and 30% of unpaid trainees. However in view of the delayering process within the company and the resultant reduction in management jobs it is debatable whether this "female human resource" will manage to gain promotion to senior management level unless there are binding targets.

The specific inclusion and retention of women in the mixed working structures of the future - in both production and administration - (new team and group working concepts) has been discussed as a strategic way of advancing the interests of women and in individual cases already implemented; however the available research (Brenssel 1994) has tended to show that so far women have profited far less than men from such structures. This is partly because the women threatened by technological changes and relocation - in contrast to what is stated in the Framework Agreement - have so far not received targeted training for jobs in areas with a promising future and have not been equipped with the necessary skills. On the contrary the company has tried to persuade them to leave the company "voluntarily" by offering termination agreements or transferring them to other areas without further skills' training (eg assembly, bodyshell production). However it can also be partly explained by the fact that group and team working have so far been concentrated in core production areas, where the future is optimistic and in these areas the percentage of women has tended to be low.

X. THE "BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN" -
AN APPROPRIATE WAY TO IMPROVE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES
FOR WOMEN? IDEAS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTS
FOR COMPANY-LEVEL AND COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS
ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

What conclusions can be drawn from experience gained so far in the implementation of the Framework Agreement for the advancement of women at Volkswagen? What are the positive reference points for future company-level and collective agreements by other companies and other industrial sectors? What evidence is there of conceptual weaknesses in the agreement, which ought to be taken into account for future agreements? And how should the internal bodies (equal opportunity committees, women's officers, equal opportunity commission, etc) established to implement the company agreement be structured in future so that the right to equal opportunities is more than just a right on paper?

There is no doubt that the positive and innovative feature of the Framework Agreement lies in the fact that it tackles the question of gender-related segregation as a direct quantitative, qualitative and structural problem and develops conceptual ideas for an active integrated personnel policy with the aim of introducing concrete and verifiable measures for the advancement of women based on specific structures at company level (women's officers, commission for the advancement of women, equal opportunity committees). In this sense it contains positive reference points which could be used in future agreements concluded by other companies and other industrial sectors.

At the same time the process of implementation and realization does provide evidence of conceptual weaknesses, which should be taken into account when future policies on the advancement of women are developed at either company or industry level. The problem with the concept - and this was evident in particular from the comments of the women's officers included in the study - is that the measures designed to bring about quantitative, qualitative and structural improvements in the situation for women in terms of training, recruitment and promotion are targeted almost exclusively at the women in question. On the contrary the Agreement does not tackle the company structures for personnel policy and personnel development - in particular the traditional policies for the selection, deployment and promotion of staff, which - irrespective of the skills and motivation of the women in question - are a major barrier to a successful integration into the jobs and higher status positions from which they have been barred in the past.

With such a concept the structural problem of gender-related inequality - the hierarchy between the sexes experienced at all levels - is defined as a problem which has to do with women. It suggests that women are in fact what, according to gender stereotypes, they always were, ie deficient. Policies for the advancement of women based on the "deficit concept" pander to established views that women remain in low status jobs or in typically female employment because they lack skills - ie skill levels are defective - or because they have chosen a gender-typical occupation.

If collective agreements in the private sector are to make a real contribution to equal opportunities for women in the workplace, it should not just be a question of offsetting the alleged shortcomings of women. Rather what is necessary is to consider how collective and company-level instruments for the advancement of women might be structured to counteract the diverse processes of social exclusion, which impede the progress of women despite equal or even higher skill levels. What is required are agreements which can break down the traditional policies for staff selection, recruitment and promotion which discriminate on the basis of gender. Agreements which can guarantee women access to the training and job areas barred to them in the past.

The fact that this is unlikely to be achievable through general objectives, which leave the implementation of the agreement to a willingness and a change in attitudes on the part of those who made the policy of equal opportunities necessary in the first place - those in management and works councils who make decisions relating to personnel policy, normally men - is evident not only from the sobering statistics but in particular from the comments made by the women's officers at both plant and corporate level. If the policy of equal opportunities is to be more than just a "fine weather policy" to be pursued in times of economic growth, it is necessary to agree binding targets at corporate, plant and departmental level on numbers and timescales. These targets must specify the number, the timescale and the sectors where women are to be allocated training places, recruited, trained for jobs of varying seniority and women must actually be promoted to such jobs.

At a time when there is almost a de facto embargo on recruitment, internal paths for promotion are largely blocked (at least in industrial areas) and reductions in job numbers are on the agenda. For this reason binding targets of a protective nature (quotas in the case of job losses) should be agreed at corporate, plant and/or divisional level, so that the percentage of women sacrificed during a crisis is not disproportionate as was the case in this particular

instance. If redundancies are required for internal company reasons, selection should not be based on social reasons, which overtly or covertly discriminate against women.

In addition there should be a binding agreement indicating what personnel, organizational and training measures are required to implement a commitment to equal opportunities expressed in a company-level or collective agreement. Experience has shown that an agreement imposing, for example, a 50% quota for vocational training places is not in itself enough to persuade young women to consider atypical career choices or careers or fields of study to which they did not have access in the past. What is needed is the creation of a special framework (eg networks or supporting measures similar to those identified in the case study) and a binding commitment that women will be given priority for reasonable jobs for which they are suitable after successful completion of their training.

The value of policies for the advancement of women has been established precisely at that threshold between training and employment, between management trainee and actual manager as this is where traditional policies of staff selection and promotion, which discriminate on the basis of gender, actually have their effect. As long as suitable jobs are unavailable to skilled female workers on completion of their training - as was evident in the case study - and as long as they normally end up in semi-skilled or unskilled jobs in production or commercial areas, it will remain difficult to motivate young women to opt for an unconventional career choice.

A prerequisite for targeted career-development and training measures for women is qualitative personnel development planning, which identifies future personnel requirements and future working and employment structures. An essential component of such qualitative personnel development planning must be regular and comprehensive reporting on the situation for women in the company split by occupational groups, seniority and employment areas. As in this particular case study these statistics should identify both the need and the opportunities for action.

During the interviews at Volkswagen AG with both women's officers and female members of the works councils the absence of this type of qualitative personnel development planning was cited as one reason why it was impossible to effect or pursue training for women for future projects, company restructuring, etc, in a targeted manner. What has been identified is a need to incorporate equal opportunity policies into the planning stage of new projects when technical, organizational and personnel aspects are decided.

Another serious shortcoming in the view of the women's officers related to the regular reports which they had to submit on measures introduced for the advancement of women and the six-monthly budget/actual comparisons compiled by the "commission for equal opportunities" at corporate level. Without clear targets and with no clear sanctions if measures or projects were not implemented or were implemented unsatisfactorily and without the opportunity to pursue their case to ensure that the agreed measures or projects were actually implemented, there was the danger - as in this particular case study - that such "performance reviews" would tend to remain irrelevant.

If plans for the advancement of women are to have any meaning in reality, women's officers and/or equal opportunity committees must - to a much greater extent than was the case with the Framework Agreement - have clearly defined powers and the right to be involved in the conceptual stage of measures for the advancement of women, their subsequent development and implementation, in procedures to verify compliance with equal opportunity agreements and the right to receive and monitor suggestions and complaints from members of the workforce. If such channels are to be effective, it is essential that maximum possible transparency should exist in personnel matters, ie the workforce must be notified of vacancies in non-gender-specific terms. In addition women's officers in the private sector - similar to the right granted to those in the public sector in Germany - must have the right to examine, participate in and object to measures affecting all women.

However the case study also showed that any so ambitious agreement will remain irrelevant if the advancement of women is seen as an issue for specially constituted committees or women's officers and if decision-makers in the company responsible for personnel policy - whether male members of management or male members of works councils - perceive no disadvantage for themselves if they deny the equal opportunity policies of agreements or actively block them.

If plans for the advancement of women are to have any validity in reality there is a need - the results of the case study show this quite clearly - as with other management tasks for both a specific system of incentives and sanctions, which ensure that those responsible for personnel actually concern themselves with the advancement of women within the company. If the advancement of women is delegated solely to women's officers, who - as in this particular case study - may only have the right to advise or take the initiative, who are located in management acting as a long combatant but who owe allegiance to management, there will be

no guarantee that policies for equal opportunities will be successful. Any such delegation must be complemented by instruments, which impose a duty on those responsible for personnel, organizational and planning issues.

In addition it must be supported by a reasonable representation of women not only in the institutionalized representation of employee interests (committees, all levels of the hierarchy), but also in internal corporate bodies and committees to ensure that women have adequate participation and involvement in the decision-making process of the company and its personnel policies. This is particularly difficult - as the case study has shown - in areas where the percentage of women is low. Particularly in areas with a low percentage of women it might be possible to extend models - similar to the "Commission for the advancement of women", which Volkswagen AG has institutionalized at corporate level - to the individual plant level and even to smaller units. Such commissions should have equal male/female and employer/employee representation. They should be required to develop "guidelines" for equal opportunity policies and also the controls for monitoring compliance with them (control of equal opportunities). In this way it might be possible to perceive and handle the issue of equal opportunities in the workplace - which in the case of Volkswagen has been consigned very much to the "women's corner" - much more clearly in terms of corporate policy as a structural problem affecting both sexes.

In areas with a high percentage of women it would also be necessary to provide women with a reasonable representation in company decision-making processes by imposing quotas on internal bodies representing employee interests on the basis of extended co-determination rights for works councils on issues of relevance to equal opportunity policies, similar to demands which have recently been put forward by IG Metall. Only when women's officers in management no longer fear for their jobs and female members of the works council no longer fear for their mandate, if they raise controversial issues relating to equal opportunities, is there any likelihood of diffusing the relationship between female members of the works council and women's officers in management, which in many cases has tended to be characterized more by a sense of competing for prestigious and potentially successful projects and less by cooperation on controversial issues. It might also then be possible to persuade male decision-makers to provide the cooperation required on issues of equal opportunities.

Whether the problems and conceptual weaknesses of the equal opportunities policy at Volkswagen as well as the ideas on the development of revised concepts for company-level and collective agreements on equal opportunities have to be interpreted as "specific for

Volkswagen only" or whether they have to be seen as relevant for the majority of equal opportunity programmes in trade and industry in Germany - that's open to question. My representative survey on equal opportunity programmes at firm level (cf Brumlop 1994; Brumlop/Hornung 1994) primarily large-scale firms, points to the last. Moreover, the europewide controversy about the "quota" refers to the high-explosive topicality of the research findings presented in this paper.

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VOLKSWAGEN

VW

**BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN
AT VOLKSWAGEN**

1. Aims and objectives

The Company Works Council and the Management Board are in agreement that in accordance with the basic management principles of Volkswagen AG relating to the economic success of the company and job security it is essential to have cooperation based on trust and equality between all members of the workforce, both male and female. A necessary prerequisite is that members of the workforce act and are treated on the basis of the same principles.

As part of the principle of equal treatment an active personnel policy with concrete and verifiable measures for the advancement of women is required to improve equality in career opportunities.

The aim of the policy for the advancement of women is to bring about a qualitative, quantitative and structural increase in the percentage of women

- in the workforce as a whole,
- in skilled jobs,
- at all levels of junior and senior management.

This aim shall be given concrete form through appropriate personnel planning - general and project-related - by means of annual planning parameters. It shall be derived from the employment structure and technological and organizational conditions.

2. Measures

To increase the percentage of women as defined under "aims and objectives", female employees shall be the subject of qualitative personnel planning. This shall be based on a comprehensive inventory of the situation for women at Volkswagen and shall consist primarily of measures relating to vocational training, further and developmental training. The annual personnel planning required for this purpose shall be structured in such a way as to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Basic principles for the advancement of women are achieved.

- 2.1 If technological or organizational rationalization, restructuring or redeployment are required, women shall be included, at least up to their percentage representation in the target groups, in the special training measures provided for the affected areas. The aim is to improve the skill-related structure of the workforce. If redeployments are necessary, all women involved shall be trained for their new jobs.
- 2.2 The percentage of women in specific target groups - vocational trainees (in particular in industrial occupations), company-sponsored students, unpaid trainees shall be increased on a planned basis. Decisive in this respect are the agreed selection criteria. If women have qualifications of equal value they shall be given preferential consideration.

To further these aims the following measures shall be implemented *inter alia*:

- targeted information to be provided by Training on opportunities for training in industrial jobs both within and outside the company,
 - special information sessions for school and college leavers,
 - personnel marketing targeted at universities, colleges and business schools, etc.
- 2.3 The percentage of female vocational trainees employed by Volkswagen in jobs commensurate with their qualifications shall be increased. If women have qualifications of equal value they shall be given priority.
- 2.4 If women have qualifications of equal value for a particular vacancy they shall be given priority consideration. Decisive in terms of selection are the job requirements described in the notification of the vacancy.
- 2.5 As part of personnel development planning women shall have improved access to management positions. If women are equally qualified for a specific management position, they shall be given priority. Decisive in terms of selection are the requirements for the position in question.

3. Function for the "Advancement of women"

A function for the "Advancement of women" shall be set up in the Personnel Division within the Management Board.

The remit of the function for the "advancement of women" shall be as follows:

- to draw up a comprehensive concept for the "advancement of women" on the basis of this Agreement, in particular
 - o personnel development plans for the advancement of women,
 - o measures for the advancement of women;
- to coordinate measures for the advancement of women;
- to evaluate the implementation of measures for the advancement of women;
- to develop concepts for information and advice to be provided to women and company managers on issues relating to the advancement of women.

The Function for the "advancement of women" shall have overall control of the above issues.

4. Commission for the advancement of women

At corporate/plant level a commission shall be set up with representation from the company works council/works councils to promote and advise on all activities relating to the advancement of women.

5. Participation of the works council

All fundamental questions and specific measures on the advancement of women shall be regulated and coordinated with the company works council or works council at plant level in accordance with the provisions of the Betriebsverfassungsgesetz [German legislation on works councils].

Wolfsburg, 17 July 1989

COMPANY WORKS COUNCIL

W. Hiller
K.-P. Mander
G. Mogwitz
A. Barner
K.-H. Mihr
J.-P. Janssen
H. Buhmann

VOLKSWAGEN AG

M. Posth P. Haase

SUMMARY OF COMPANY AGREEMENTS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN
IN THE GERMAN PRIVATE SECTOR

Sector	Companies with programmes for the advancement of women	of which with works agreement/ general agreement/ company agreement	of which with parental leave/ part-time working	of which with comprehensive programmes for the advancement of women	of which with reporting requirements	of which with women's officers	of which with commissions/ working committees/ regular consultations
Chemicals	39	36	38	3	2	3	8
Metalworking	17	17	14	4	4	2	3
Banking	10	8	7	1	-	1	-
Food/drinks and tobacco	9	9	9	8	4	1	7
Trade	8	8	8	-	-	-	-
Mining/ utilities	6	6	6	3	1	-	-
Insurance	5	5	5	1	1	-	-
Total	94	89	87	20	12	7	18

Source:

Eva - German Research Council Project on "Conditions and opportunities for the advancement of women in industrial and service sectors", 1993

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN THE WORKS COUNCIL AT THE WOLFSBURG PLANT							
Year	1987				1994		
	Men		Women		Men		Women
	total	%	total	%	total	%	total
Works council and committees							
Members of the works council	63	(91%)	6	(9%)	53	(87%)	8
Works council executive committee	11	(92%)	1	(8%)	12	(86%)	2
Personnel committee, blue-collar	6	(86%)	1	(14%)	3	(50%)	3
Personnel committee, pay and AT	4	(80%)	1	(20%)	5	(83%)	1
Personnel committee, management	/		/		2	(100%)	/
Planning committee	9	(90%)	1	(10%)	6	(86%)	1
Training committee	9	(90%)	1	(10%)	6	(86%)	1
Health and safety committee	8	(100%)	/		8	(100%)	/
Systems committee	5	(100%)	/		4	(100%)	/
Pay commission/AL (1987) or work-organization committee	8	(100%)	/		7	(100%)	/
Salary commission	3	(100%)	/		/		/
Personnel/welfare committee	9	(90%)	1	(10%)	5	(71%)	2
Company suggestion scheme	7	(100%)	/		5	(71%)	2
Commission for equality	/		8	(100%)	/		5
Office accommodation committee	/		/		2	(100%)	/

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN BODIES AT WOLFSBURG PLANT/VW AG								
Year	1987				1994			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	total	%	total	%	total	%	total	%
Membership of Company works council	24	(100%)	/		24	(92.3%)	2	(7.7%)
Membership of Group works council	21	(100%)	/		22	(96%)	1	(4%)
Membership of European works council	/		/		23	(100%)	/	
Workforce at Wolfsburg plant	53 128	(82.7%)	11 114	(17.3%)	42 438	(84.8%)	7 619	(15.2%)
Workforce of VW AG	114 262	(7.1%)	16 914	(12.9%)	93 520	(88.3%)	12 306	(11.7%)

ANNEX 4

GENERAL SUMMARY OF MEASURES IN: METAL INDUSTRY

Automotive industry:

Framework agreement of 1990, date concluded varies regionally

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Hours of work (part-time); Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare

AUDI: Company agreement "Basic principles of part-time work" 14.5.86

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Hours of work (part-time)

AUDI: Company agreement "Programme on childcare and career" 18.6.90

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy

BMW: "10-point plan" for the advancement of women March 1990

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Training; Job advertisements; Career advancement; Hours of work (part-time); Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare; Implementation reviews

BMW: Company agreement "Career break after childcare leave" 5.2.90

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy

Daimler Benz AG: Company agreement "Family and career" 15.6.89

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy

Daimler Benz AG: Package of measures on female employment, declaration of intent July 1989

Beneficiaries: Female; Areas of activity: Training; Recruitment; Further and developmental training; Career advancement; Hours of work (part-time)

Opel AG Bochum plant: Company agreement "Plan for the advancement of women" 27.8.91

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Training; Job advertisements; Recruitment; Further and developmental training; Career advancement; Hours of work (part-time); Implementation reviews

VW: Group agreement "Promise of reintegration after leave to care for and raise children, to care for sick persons and developmental training" July 1992

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Further and developmental training; Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Other care; Implementation reviews: Women's officers

VW: Group agreement "Basic principles for the advancement of women" 17.7.89

Beneficiaries: Female; Areas of activity: Training; Job advertisements; Recruitment; Further and developmental training; Career advancement; Implementation reviews: Reporting requirement, Women's officers, Other

Electrical industry:

AEG: Company agreement "Family and career" 24.10.89

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break; Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy

AEG: Package of recommended measures for the advancement of women" from the Management Board 26.9.90

Beneficiaries: Female; Areas of activity: Training; Job advertisements; Recruitment; Further and developmental training; career advancement; Hours of work (part-time); Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Other care, Company image; Other areas of activity

AEG Cable: Company agreement "Family and career" 6.2.90

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy

Bosch: Group agreement on a plan for the advancement of women 1.7.88

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Training; Job advertisements; Recruitment; Further and developmental training; Hours of work (part-time); Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare; Company image; Implementation reviews: Reporting requirement; Other

Grundig: Company agreement on family career break 28.8.91

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break; Company welfare policy

IBM: Equal-opportunities programme 1976

Beneficiaries: Female; Areas of activity: Further and developmental training; Career advancement; Company image; Implementation reviews: Reporting requirement, Women's officers

IBM: Company agreement on improving the compatibility of family and career 28.3.90
Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Hours of work (part-time); Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break; Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy

Philips GmbH: Company agreement "Equal career opportunities for women and men" 27.2.91
Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Training; Recruitment; Further and developmental training; Career advancement; Hours of work (part-time); Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy, Implementation reviews

Siemens: Company agreement "Leave of absence to care for young children and relatives with major care needs" 27.11.89
Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Other care, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy

Siemens: "Career opportunities for women", Central Personnel Department, declaration of 1988
Beneficiaries: Female; Areas of activity: Training; Job advertisements; Recruitment; Further and developmental training; Career advancement; Hours of work (part-time); Company image

Technical engineering:

Dornier: Group agreement on "improving the compatibility of childcare and employment" 10.10.91
Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break; Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy

DEMAG Mannesmann: Group agreement on improving the compatibility of career and family 1.10.89
Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break

MBB: Plan for the advancement of women as resolution passed by company works council 8.10.85
Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Training; Job advertisements; Recruitment; Further and developmental training; Career advancement; Hours of work (part-time); Other areas of activity

MBB: Group agreement on parental leave 1.10.89

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break

MBB: Company agreement on leave and reintegration following leave to look after a close relative 1.7.90

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Other care, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy

Westfalia Separator AG: Company agreement on family career breaks 22.5.92

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Hours of work (part-time); Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break, Short spells fo work during career break, Company welfare policy

Steel industry:

Krupp Stahl AG: Company agreement on family career breaks 13.1.92

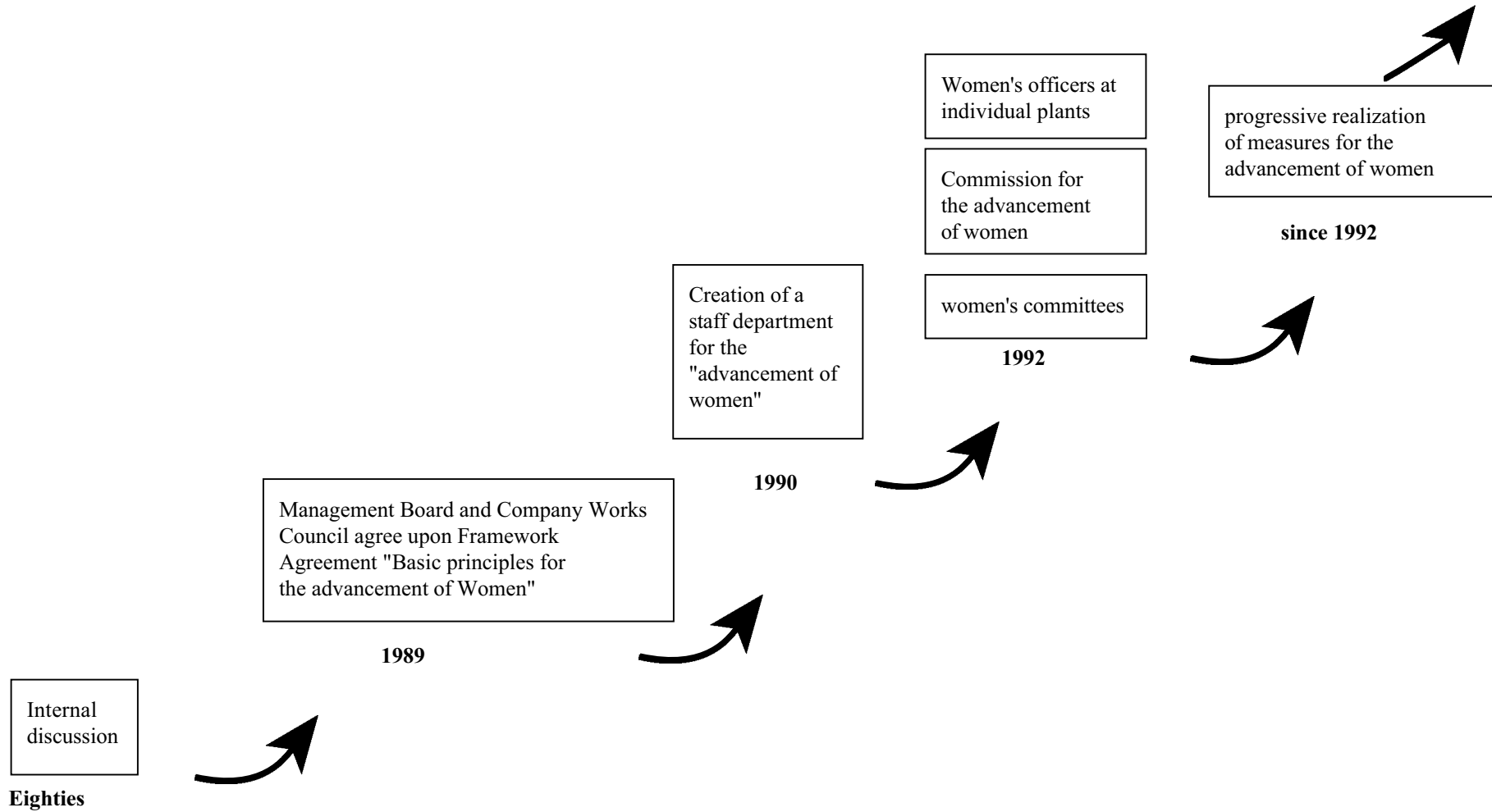
Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy

Thyssen: Company agreement on parental leave July 1990

Beneficiaries: Female/Male; Areas of activity: Compatibility of career and family: Provision for reintegration, Childcare, Update training during/after career break, Short spells of work during career break, Company welfare policy

Source: Brumlop, Eva - German Research Council Project on "Conditions and opportunities for the advancement of women in industrial and service sectors", 1993

TIME-TABLE OF THE PROCESS TO DRAFT, IMPLEMENT AND REALIZE THE
FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AT VOLKSWAGEN



Source: Frauenförderung Wolfsburg der Volkswagen AG (Hg.) 1994: Frauenförderung bei Volkswagen. Baustein der weiterentwickelten Personalpolitik, stand 1.4.94 [Advancement of women at Volkswagen. A building block in an evolving personnel policy, as at April 1994]

ORGANIZATION

