



## Definition/Origin

The "Workandfamily"audit has its roots in the American family friendly index.

The German berufundfamilie gGmbH developed the audit into what is called "*European work & family audit*" to ensure its dissemination in Europe and issues licences for national use.

The Austrian Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth (BMWFJ) is the Austrian licence holder of the "*European work & family audit*". This ensures that enterprises with a national "*berufundfamilie*" ("*workandfamily*") certificate may also refer to the "*European work & family audit*"certificate. Generally speaking, the word "audit" (derived from the Latin "audire"= to hear -> hearing) is a procedure in which processes are analysed and reviewed systematically.

## What is the "workandfamily" audit?

The "Workandfamily"audit is a quality management instrument aiming to optimise sustainable and family-friendly human resource policies.

## Who can take part in the "workandfamily" audit?

The audit can be carried out in enterprises of all business lines and sizes (5 employees and above) as well as all legal and corporate forms as long as they have their seat in Austria. The entire enterprise or parts thereof can be audited.

## Who benefits from the audit?

The audit leads to a win-win-win situation:

↳ The enterprise will benefit:

Measures and solutions help the enterprise reach its corporate objectives



- ↪ All employees who have no care responsibilities will benefit:  
  
Measures and solutions are well balanced and not to the detriment of one group of employees
- ↪ All employees with care responsibilities will benefit:  
  
Measures and solutions support employees with care responsibilities to make it easier for them to balance various areas of life

### **How long does an audit take?**

The total process takes 3 years. After 6 months, the company receives the first national certificate, the so-called "Basic Certificate" proving that family-friendly measures have been enshrined in the enterprise in a binding manner.

The company is from then on allowed to use the "european work & family audit" quality label. It is awarded in a festive ceremony by the Federal Minister or Secretary of State in charge.

After an implementation stage of 3 years, the enterprise is awarded the first Certificate. After these 3 years, the enterprise may undergo a re-audit (duration: 3 years) and will then be awarded the second Certificate.

For example: ERSTE Bank has been on board as a pilot enterprise ever since the audit was introduced in 1998 and received its third Certificate last year.

### **Why undergo the audit?**

The audit marks the way from the status quo to the target state. The status quo of family-friendly human resource policy is identified (exact analysis of current corporate culture) and on the basis of the spheres of activity, the target state is defined and determined in cooperation with employees and management (overall commercial concept).

When the enterprise has obtained the basic certificate, annual interim reports will be provided to document progress in implementing the determined family-friendly measures. This way, it is ensured that the measures continue to exist in a sustainable way.



### **Which issues (fields of action) are “screened”?**

- working hours, workplace
- parenthood, parental leave, return to work
- work organisation
- information and communication policy
- leadership culture
- human resource development
- salary components/payment in kind
- services for families

### **Which measures did enterprises implement in the course of the audit process?**

(Excerpt from Good Practices)

#### **Working hours/Workplace**

- leave that goes beyond statutory parental leave
- working hours based on trust
- Individualised working hours (change of weekly working hours to enable employees who travel far to work to spend more time with their families)
- sabbaticals
- longer hours worked are recorded on long-term accounts
- telework
- social security for employees working from home
- options of doing part of one’s work from home

#### **Parenthood, parental leave, return to work**

- “gentle return” by offering short hours in part-time position
- options of working during parental leave
- parental leave for fathers (addressing the issue in the enterprise, sensitisation of executives)
- taking father’s wishes for part-time work into consideration
- occupational skills training during parental leave (active training offerings to employees on parental leave)

#### **Human resource development**

- human resource development interviews which consider personal needs
- introduction of employee assistance programmes
- measures to reduce stress/enhance meeting of deadlines
- the platform “Initiative 50+”



- monitoring living and working conditions for stress and load factors
- health-promoting measures

### **Salary components/payment in kind**

- meals for employees (also to be taken home at little cost)
- free snacks/beverages during breaks, fruits
- meal vouchers if there is no in-house cafeteria or canteen
- business mobile may be used for private purposes

### **Services for families**

- it is allowed to bring children to work in an emergency
- financial support from the employer on certain family –related occasions
- organisation of service easing the burden (household help, ironing service, child care, support in nursing or care for elderly, ill or disabled family members)
- company nursery school
- crèche
- play corners for children taken along to work

### **Who follows the audit process through?**

Enterprises are assisted by trained management consultants (licensed auditors) and experts who follow the process through. Experts review adherence to the audit process.

#### Familie & Beruf Management GmbH

- offers enterprises events for an exchange of experiences at least twice a year (exchange of good practices, special lectures, workshops)
- signs the participation agreement
- handles the subsidies
- is a contact point for any questions about the audit as may arise (including questions arising on site)
- ensures quality management

#### Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth

awards the certificate, is in charge of devising guidelines

### **What is the benefit of the audit certificate (quality label)?**

- The enterprise positions itself as an attractive employer in the long run.
- Employees with elder care or nursing responsibilities benefit, too.



- The enterprise improves its image as it communicates family-oriented corporate culture to the inside and outside.
- The enterprise gains a competitive edge.
- Employee satisfaction and motivation increase.
- Especially in times of economic crises, human resource developers in companies look for appropriate models of HR development.

### **How much is the audit?**

Depending on the size of the enterprise, the audit will cost between EUR 7,000 and 10,000 for 3 years (auditor and expert fees).

### **Which public subsidies are available?**

Subsidies are based on the number of employees (gross for net)

5-20 employees:	€ 5,000
21-100 employees:	€ 4,000
More than 101 employees:	€ 3,000

50% of the subsidy are paid after the basic certificate has been awarded (i.e. after 6 months). Another 50% are paid when the certificate is awarded (i.e. after 3 years).

This way, the enterprise obtains direct funding from the state for the implementation of a human resource development and management process.

A subsidy of EUR 2,000 for re-auditing was introduced in August 2009.

