

Press Release

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The Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency reports on the positive interim results of the pilot project 'Depersonalised Application Procedures' - 111 vacancies filled already - Mrs. Lüders: "Fears of the associations of trade and industry turn out to be unfounded" - One participant plans long-term continuation

The head of the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (FADA), Mrs Christine Lüders, pointed up a positive interim result of the pilot project 'Depersonalised Application Procedures'. "During the past six months more than 4,000 applications have been processed anonymously at the participating enterprises and institutions", Mrs Lüders said in Berlin on Thursday. Altogether, 111 of these vacancies were filled via the depersonalised procedure. Five enterprises and three public employees are taking part in the nationwide first pilot project on depersonalised application procedures.

More specifically, these are the *Deutsche Post*, the *Deutsche Telekom*, the cosmetics producing group *L'Oréal*, the experience gift provider *Mydays*, the consumer goods company *Procter & Gamble*, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, the Federal Employment Agency in North Rhine-Westphalia and the municipal authorities of Celle. Half a year later, a report on interim results has recently been published for the first time. It is focusing on experiences gained by personnel managers and applicants with this new procedure.

As Mrs. Lüders explained, the feedback from the staff recruitment personnel concerning this project was positive: All methods applied in this pilot project can be used in practice. Consequently, the absence of some of the personal data in application documents was not considered to be a problem. On the whole, the new focus on qualifications was assessed positively. In this pilot project, the participants are working with four different methods of depersonalisation: using a standardized application form (to be downloaded or as an online input form), blocking out sensitive data by an online system, transferring the applicants' data into a table and blacking them out manually or in the PDF file.

"The feedback provided by the applicants is encouraging as well", the head of the Federal Antidiscrimination Agency added. In this survey, all participants who had filled in a depersonalised application form were questioned. On this occasion, a majority of 45 percent said that they would prefer depersonalised application procedures. About 19 percent stated that they did not have any preference, and merely 36 percent said that they preferred the conventional procedure. Also with regard to the estimated time involved, the respondents' comments were positive: 44 percent of them said that regardless whether their applications were anonymous or conventional, the time involved was the same. Approximately 32 percent stated that they needed more time for the

traditional procedure. Merely 24 percent pointed out that the depersonalised procedure was more time-consuming.

The head of the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency emphasized, "The results of this interim analysis confirmed our view that depersonalised application procedures can also be implemented in Germany, in spite of its very traditional application culture. And yet, according to the intent of the Federal Antidiscrimination Agency, depersonalised application procedures should remain a voluntary option. The fears expressed by parts of industry that the new procedure was extremely complex and not feasible in practice, have proved to be unfounded. On the contrary, the personnel managers and also the applicants tend to consider the new procedure as uncomplicated."

Mrs. Tamara Hilgers, Head of Human Resources/Legal Department at the company of Mydays GmbH said, "For us, the new method is far from being complicated, since we recruit via a depersonalised application form online. Fears in the run-up to the procedure that it would result in a considerable additional workload have not been confirmed. So far we have been able to easily fill all vacancies which had been advertised within the scope of this new depersonalised application procedure."

The Mayor of the city Celle in Lower Saxony, Mr. Dirk-Ulrich Mende (SPD), underlined, Due to the experiences gained so far, the city of Celle will also continue with this practice when the pilot project has been completed. We will keep the depersonalised application procedure as an option in our portfolio and certainly obtain positive results in the future."

During the first phase of depersonalised application procedures, neither pictures nor personal data such as name, age, gender, origin and civil status will be provided. Each of the eight companies and institutions taking part in this pilot scheme will test the new procedure for one year. The pilot project started on 25th November 2010. On the whole, about 225 vacant posts, apprenticeships and university places shall be allocated within the scope of this project. These posts range from apprenticeship training through university places up to positions in technical professions, jobs in the field of customer service or middle management.

During its entire duration the pilot scheme will be scientifically monitored and afterwards thoroughly evaluated. For this purpose, the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency won over the Institute for the Study of Labour (German abbreviation: *IZA*) of Bonn and the Unit for Cooperation between Science and the Working World (German abbreviation: *KOWA*) of the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt on the Oder. Statements concerning the impact of depersonalised application procedures on the employment of individual groups of applicants will not be possible before the end of the pilot scheme in spring 2012.

The Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency had been established as the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) entered into force in August 2006. This Act aims to prevent or eliminate any discrimination on grounds of racism or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

You will find more detailed information at www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de.