

## Continuous optimisation of a family-friendly personnel policy

The low birth rate which has prevailed for a number of years raises the prospect of greater shortages on the labour market and in the company with respect to specialised staff and management personnel. Demographic developments do not indicate any reason to hope for a change in the long term. Being able to reconcile family and career is high on the list of job applicants' priorities. There is also a social need to unlock the great potential of female specialist and management personnel. This need can only be met if the conditions in a company are such that having a family and pursuing a career can be reconciled. This is one of the aims of our human resources philosophy "People in Focus". It concentrates on what is most important – the people in the company. The aim of the philosophy is to ensure the continuous and sustained improvement of our corporate culture based on partnership in order to increase our attractiveness as an employer both inside and outside the Group and to raise the motivation of our employees further.

The company concentrates its efforts to improve employee conditions under three headings – Action, Skills and Life.

*Action* – covers the conditions and benefits we offer, making it easier for our employees to concentrate on their work by helping them to manage other demands on their attention.

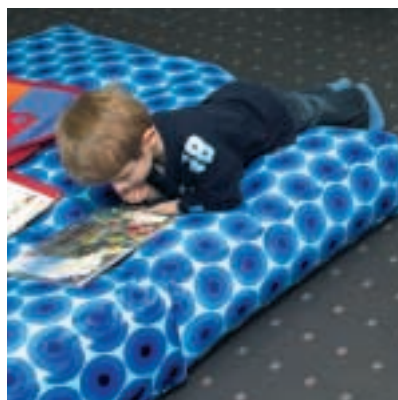
*Skills* – reflects confidence in the abilities and motivation of our employees. E.ON Ruhrgas is committed to promoting employees and developing their skills.

*Life* – has increasingly gained significance in recent years. Among other things, it represents the reconcilability of work and family and the aim is to help our staff achieve their personal and professional goals.

For family and work to be reconcilable, family-friendly working hours must be introduced along with childcare facilities. We have introduced flexible working time models, including trust-based working time and many part-time arrangements, to enable our employees to enjoy a reasonable work-life balance. Thanks to our co-operation with the charity

Sozialdienst katholischer Frauen (SKF) in Essen, we can organise child-minders or emergency care as well as day places during the school holidays for our employees' children. We also have an agreement with a church day care centre "Friede" to guarantee places for our employees' children of nursery school age regardless of religious denomination or where they live. This year, this agreement has been extended to include crèche places. We are also setting up a group near company headquarters for the care of children from the age of four months to the start of school. In addition, since the beginning of the year, a parent/child room has been made available to our employees if they have nobody to look after their child.

For its commitment in this field E.ON Ruhrgas was recognised in a national competition "Success Factor Family 2000" run by the Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth as one of the top 10 employers in Germany in the large company category.





From its beginnings as a regional gas distributor 75 years ago, E.ON Ruhrgas has grown into a major gas company with international operations. The E.ON Ruhrgas supply system comprises 11,000 km of gas pipelines, 12 underground gas storage facilities and 26 compressor stations. The company employs 13,500 worldwide, 3,600 in Germany. Together with its affiliates E.ON Ruhrgas AG offers a comprehensive range of services and products for the production, transmission, storage, marketing and sale of natural gas. Since March 2003 it has been a wholly owned subsidiary of E.ON and is responsible for the pan-European gas business in the E.ON Group.

## Family

The family is a pivot of our society and an important focus of each individual's life. Nowadays, young people in particular do not want to be forced to decide between either a career or a family. Through its long-running, expanding and successful "Work and Family" initiative, E.ON Ruhrgas offers employees support and the right conditions to enable them to have children and a career. We do not regard work-life balance as a luxury but as an absolute necessity, especially if we want to recruit the most talented people and further raise our employees' motivation in times of global competition.

Christoph Dänzer-Vanotti  
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