

VACANCY

Full-time researcher (m/f) for a research project on managing diversity in a professional environment

Institute for European Studies Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Task:

To conduct research on the practices of reasonable adjustments that have been put in place in both the private and public labour market to promote cultural diversity.

Background:

The main objective of this research is to map the broad array of informal practices of *reasonable adjustments* that are used in a professional environment, to analyze them in-depth and to place them within the context of broader juridical and philosophical debates.

The concept of *reasonable adjustment* departs from the observation that *some people, due to an inherent characteristic that concerns an unlawful ground for discrimination, e.g. a handicap, the country of origin, a religious belief, ideology, age or gender are not capable of fulfilling a certain task, of entering a place or of complying with a general rule in a conventional fashion.* As the environment in which these people function is not characterised by this specificity, the application of general rules to them might lead to discrimination and might thus violate the principle of equality. In some circumstances, the adjustment of the social, normative and physical environment can ensure that people with this specificity are no longer discriminated.

An explicit obligation for a reasonable adjustment is not to be found in Community law or in Belgian law. However, many informal practices of reasonable adjustments are used by employers (allowing no exceptions to clothing prescriptions, adjusting the food in canteens, adjustment of holiday arrangements, set up a room for praying, ...). This research wants to map and subsequently, analyze such practices.

What we have to offer

- A stimulating work environment full of young researchers from different nationalities
- Participation in IES organised educational activities such as research colloquiums and lecture series.

- A chance to obtain junior research experience as a jumping board to an established PhD programme, on the condition of obtaining an appropriate scholarship
- A full time contract for a duration of 8 months

We are looking for candidates with

- A keen interest in research on migration and cultural diversity in general and cultural diversity in a professional environment in particular
- Good knowledge about the Belgian governmental institutions
- A broad scientific interest in the workings of society
- The ability to work on an independent and autonomous basis
- Good writing skills
- Excellent command of Dutch and a good working knowledge of French and English
- A licentiate or masters degree in social sciences, political science, law or a related discipline
- Knowledge about qualitative research methods, good study results and/or previous research experience (will be considered as an important plus)

Interested?

Please send us your curriculum vitae **before 15 September 2009** (including your list of publications, if applicable), a letter of motivation and a representative piece of writing which you have authored (article, essay, master dissertation...) and address it to:

Ms Ilke Adam
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1050 Brussel

For additional information

Please contact Ms Laila Macharis, IES Management Assistant, at 02 629 1807 or laila.macharis@vub.ac.be