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Philippines

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Balancing family & work

It is a sad fact that in many cases, family and business don't seem to mix too well, the need to care for the well-being of relatives while meeting targets and improving results, tends to be one of the biggest challenges faced by working people today.

Yet there are ways in which employers can alleviate some of the pressure experienced by those with families. Ascertaining where such measures have been put in place and how a business can support them is the aim of **IESE's** Family Responsible Employer Index (IFREI).

Launched in 1999 by IESE Business School in Barcelona, Spain the IFREI was originally designed to find out the extent to which work-life practices have been implemented in Spain and monitor their development over time, since then it has been adapted for use in other countries.

Following Spain, Portugal, Mexico, Guatemala, Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Nigeria, the latest country to be surveyed is the Philippines.

This month a large array of companies across the country will be questioned on the family-responsible policies they have in place, if any.

The survey takes a wide view of the "family-responsible enterprise," as a company that is aware of its responsibility toward society and toward its employees.

To fulfill these duties, a family-responsible company commits to developing programs, policies and practices that support the reconciliation of family and professional life (such as flexible work hours, extended leave, childcare services, dependent care services, job adaptation, professional/personal counselling and advice and social benefits).

Not all the companies use all the measures available; some simply implement the law and others go beyond what is legally required.

Many measures do not cost the business owner anything, being merely a question of adapting corporate culture.

Following the initial survey the developments in these areas will then be tracked on a year by year basis with the double aim of comparing the results with the different nations surveyed and helping companies develop family responsible policies.

IESE Business School is committed to conducting research into family- work balance.