

GENDER EQUALITY AS A GOAL

GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY 2008–2011

The Finnish Government has undertaken to make determined efforts to promote gender equality in all its decision-making.

Gender equality calls for concrete efforts. The Government has compiled its key equality measures into an action plan. The Government Action Plan for Gender Equality is for 2008–2011, and it has seven priority areas. The action plan can be complemented later on.

The Government Action Plan for Gender Equality has been compiled and will be implemented in cooperation with the ministries. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health coordinates the implementation. Organisations will be heard during the action plan, and a final report will be issued in autumn 2010.

1 Gender mainstreaming

Responsible bodies:

All the ministries

All Government decisions and measures will be evaluated so as to discover their impact on men and women. This is called gender mainstreaming.

- Gender perspectives will be included in the implementation of Government policy programmes.
- Each ministry will take the gender perspective into account when drafting legislation, drawing up the draft budget and implementing projects. An operational working group on gender equality will be established in the ministries to ensure gender mainstreaming.
- The ministries will provide training for their personnel on gender mainstreaming.
- An information service for gender equality will be launched in 2009. It will pull together equality information and support the gender mainstreaming efforts.

2 Reducing gender pay differentials

Responsible bodies:

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Ministry of Finance

The Government's goal is to clearly reduce the differences in pay between men and women during its term of office.

Women earn around 80 per cent less than men for regular hours of work. The difference has remained approximately unchanged since the early 1990s.

- The Government continues to implement the Equal Pay Programme together with the social partners.
- The impact the new state pay system has on women's and men's pay will be examined.

3 Promoting women's careers

Responsible bodies:

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Prime Minister's Office

Ministry of Finance

The Government aims at advancing women's careers and increasing the share of women in managerial positions both in the public and the private sectors.

- A working group set up by the Ministry of Finance will draw up measures to increase the share of women in the managerial positions in the central government.
- The Government aims at maintaining the share of women in the boards of fully state-owned enterprises at a minimum of 40 per cent and increasing the share of women in partly state-owned enterprises.
- The Government will continue its dialogue with the private sector for the advancement of women's careers.
- Statistics on women in managerial positions and on women's career development will be developed.

4 Increasing gender awareness in schools and reducing gender segregation

Responsible bodies:

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Employment and the Economy

In Finland, education fields and professions are strongly gender segregated.

- The objective is to ensure that school learning materials do not maintain stereotypical conceptions about girls and boys, men and women.
- Gender-sensitive training will be increased in the education and continuing education of teachers and kindergarten teachers.
- The segregation of the labour market into women's and men's professions and sectors will be reduced for example by promoting employment and entrepreneurship.

5 Reconciling work and family life

Responsible bodies:

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

In order to ensure that women enjoy genuine equality in the working life, parental leave periods must be more evenly distributed between mothers and fathers. If fathers took on more responsibility for taking care of their children, it would not only reinforce the labour market status of women but it would also strengthen men's sense of parenthood and equal position in the family.

The goals are to encourage fathers to use family leaves as well as to divide the costs for family leaves more evenly between female- and male-dominated branches.

- The Government will explore the possibilities to reform the parental leave system.
- Paternity leave will be extended by two weeks in 2010.

6 Reducing violence against women

Responsible bodies:

Ministry of Justice

Ministry of the Interior

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Violence against women has not diminished much in Finland during the past decade.

- A cross-sectoral programme to reduce violence against women will be drawn up and the continuity of the related expertise will be ensured in the ministries in question.
- The coordination of and the resources for reducing violence against women will be reinforced.

7 Reinforcing gender equality work and a report on gender equality

- The operational conditions and resources of equality authorities and women's organisations will be reviewed.
- During the electoral period, the Government will issue a report to Parliament on gender equality.

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Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

FI-00023 GOVERNMENT, FINLAND

Telephone: +358 9 160 01

Telefax: +358 9 160 74126

E-mail: given name.last name@stm.fi

www.stm.fi