

Gender Mainstreaming in the EU Member States

Progress, Obstacles and Experiences
at Governmental level

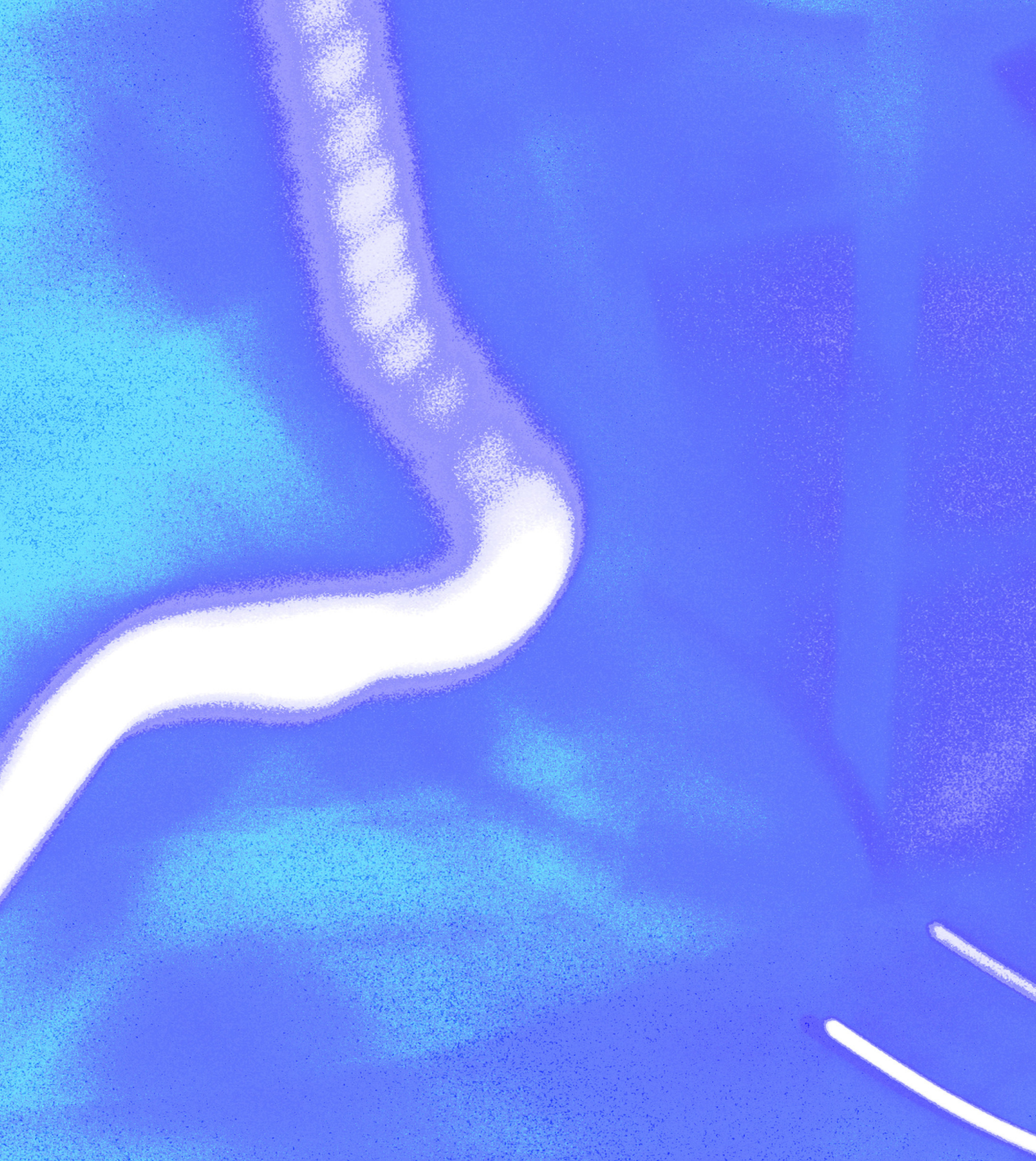
Gunilla Sterner
Helene Biller



A project co-funded by
the Equality Programme



REGERINGSKANSLIET



MINISTRY OF
SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND HEALTH



COMISSÃO PARA A IGUALDADE
E PARA OS DIREITOS DAS MULHERES
PRESIDÊNCIA DO CONSELHO DE MINISTROS



REGERINGSKANSLIET

Ministry of Integration and
Gender Equality, Sweden

Gender Mainstreaming in the EU Member States

Progress, Obstacles and Experiences
at Governmental level

Gunilla Sterner
Helene Biller

Contents

Contents	1
1 Introduction	2
1.1 The project	2
1.2 Structure of the report.....	3
2 Theoretical framework	4
2.1 What is gender mainstreaming?	4
2.2 What is gender equality policy?	5
2.3 Gender mainstreaming or gender equality policy?	5
2.4 Keywords.....	6
3 Questionnaire to the EU Member States.....	8
3.1 The aim of the questionnaire.....	8
3.2 Methodology.....	8
3.2.1 Operationalisation of the prerequisites of gender mainstreaming	9
3.2.2 Advantages and limitations of the questionnaire.....	10
3.3 Results.....	10
3.3.1 Political will	11
3.3.2 Training.....	15
3.3.3 Methods and tools	15
3.3.4 The organisation for gender mainstreaming	17
3.3.5 Experiences of working with gender mainstreaming	19
4 In-depth studies on the implementation of gender mainstreaming	26
4.1 Gender mainstreaming in Finland's governmental administration	26
4.2 Gender mainstreaming in Lithuania's governmental administration	28
4.3 Gender mainstreaming in Portugal's governmental administration.....	30
4.4 Gender mainstreaming in Sweden's governmental administration	32
5 Conclusions.....	35
5.1.1 Preconditions	35
5.1.2 Expanding the group of people working with gender mainstreaming ...	38
5.1.3 Methods and tools	38
5.1.4 EU commitments.....	39
5.1.5 Other conclusions.....	40
6 Recommendations	42
6.1.1 Preconditions for gender mainstreaming.....	42
6.1.2 How to expand the group of people promoting gender equality	43
6.1.3 Methods and tools for everyday work.....	44
6.1.4 EU commitments to gender mainstreaming.....	45
References.....	47
Appendix 1: In-depth study of Finland	
Appendix 2: In-depth study of Lithuania.....	
Appendix 3: In-depth study of Portugal.....	
Appendix 4: In-depth study of Sweden.....	
Appendix 5: The Questionnaire.....	
Appendix 6: Formal Political Support.....	
Appendix 7: National Goals for Gender Equality	
Appendix 7: National Goals for Gender Equality	
Appendix 8: National Plans for Gender mainstreaming.....	
Appendix 9: Development of Gender Equality Policy in the EU	

1 Introduction

Gender equality and gender mainstreaming are important topics on the European political agenda. The EU has a long tradition of developing strong legal frameworks to support gender equality.¹ The EU has also clarified that besides the equal treatment legislation, the gender equality strategy requires both specific gender equality actions and the mainstreaming of gender equality as a perspective in all areas. The Treaty of Amsterdam 1997 required all Member States to promote equality between women and men in all EU activities. Many Member States have used strategies for gender mainstreaming as part of their efforts to promote gender equality since the middle of the 1990's and have by now some experiences from this work. However, there is still a lack of knowledge on the experiences at governmental level from this process.

In the light of these facts the project "Implementing Gender Mainstreaming at Governmental level in the EU Member States" was set up in December 2005 by Sweden as the coordinator and the participating states Finland, Lithuania and Portugal. The project was co-funded by the EU Gender Equality Programme.

1.1 The project

The overall aim of the project is to contribute to the further development of strategies and tools to implement gender mainstreaming at governmental level in the EU Member States by collecting, analysing and disseminating best practices of gender mainstreaming.

The main objectives are to:

1. enhance the understanding of the concept gender mainstreaming,
2. identify essential elements (methods and tools) that contribute to, or prevent, effective implementation of gender mainstreaming at governmental level,
3. disseminate examples and lessons learned.

This report presents the results of the studies carried out in the project and the conclusions that have been drawn concerning contemporary gender mainstreaming activities in the EU Member States. All data presented in this report is based on a survey to the EU Member States on their initiatives to implement gender mainstreaming in different policy fields at governmental level, and on four national in-depth studies on gender mainstreaming activities at governmental level. The in-depth studies have been conducted in the project's partner countries, Finland, Lithuania, Portugal and Sweden.

In December, 2005, Ms Gunilla Sterner, advisor at the Division for Gender Equality, Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, Sweden, was employed as the project manager of the project. During the spring, 2006, senior administrative officer, Ms Helene Biller, was employed to assist the project manager in her work.

¹ See Appendix 9.

As an expert and responsible for the Finnish in-depth study, Ms Reetta Siukola, project coordinator at the Gender Equality Unit, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, was employed. In Lithuania, Ms Dalia Marcinkeviciene, associated professor, head of Gender Studies Centre, Vilnius University, was employed as an expert with the task to conduct the Lithuanian in-depth study; in Portugal with responsibility for the Portuguese study, Ms Magda Silva Ferreira Vieira; and in Sweden, Ms Maria Stenman, advisor at the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, and Ms Gertrud Åström, senior expert for gender equality, were employed.

Coordinators in the partner countries have been: Ms Hanna Onwen-Huma, project manager at the Gender Equality Unit, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland; Ms Vanda Jurseniene, chief specialist, Labour Market and Equal Opportunities Division, Ministry of Social Security and Labour in Lithuania; and Ms Isabel Romão, head of the Division of Studies and Training – Commission for Equality and Women's Rights, in Portugal. Ms Marianne Laxén, deputy director, head of the Division for Gender Equality, Ministry of Industry Employment and Communication in Sweden has also participated in the project meetings.

Evaluator of the project was Dr. Anne-Marie Morhed, director of the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research at Göteborg University.

In each partner country, Finland, Lithuania, Portugal and Sweden, there has been a reference group to support the experts in their work with the in-depth studies. The Swedish reference group has also had an important role in supporting the writers of this report, the design of the questionnaire and the preparations of the final conference of the project on 1-2 February 2007.

This report has been written and compiled by project manager Gunilla Sterner and senior administrative officer, Helene Biller. The respective experts have written the in-depth studies. The project is responsible for the content and conclusions of the report.

1.2 Structure of the report

The structure of the report is as follows. In chapter 1 there is an introduction to the study. In chapter 2, the theoretical framework of the study is discussed. Chapter 3 deals with the questionnaire that was sent out to the Member States on their initiatives on gender mainstreaming at governmental level. The following part, chapter 4, is devoted to the four national in-depth studies on the implementation of gender mainstreaming at governmental level in Finland, Lithuania, Portugal and Sweden. Then, the main conclusions of the report are presented in chapter 5. And, finally, chapter 6 is devoted to the recommendations made by the project for future work.

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 What is gender mainstreaming?

There is little consensus regarding the concept of gender mainstreaming. The term is still controversial and is ascribed a range of meanings in the political field as well as in the academic sphere. In this report gender mainstreaming has been interpreted according to the definition presented by the Council of Europe:

“Gender mainstreaming is the (re) organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.”²

In accordance with this definition the Council identifies some characteristics of and necessary prerequisites (facilitating conditions) for effective implementation of gender mainstreaming: a political will, specific gender equality policy, sex-disaggregated statistics, knowledge of gender relations, knowledge of the administration, necessary funds and human resources, participating of women in decision-making bodies.³

To start with the political will, the Council emphasise the importance of visible commitments of the state to implement gender mainstreaming. The state must define gender equality as one of its main objectives. Furthermore, gender mainstreaming needs to be a political issue, the results of which the political management is to demand. It is also crucial that the government issue a ‘mission statement’ declaring its intention of mainstreaming the gender equality perspective.

The second prerequisite deals with how gender mainstreaming relates to specific gender equality policy. Gender mainstreaming cannot replace traditional gender equality policy. On the contrary, gender equality policy (see below) and gender mainstreaming are complementary and must therefore go hand in hand.

Thirdly, comprehensive data on the situation of women and men and on current gender relations is an indispensable precondition for gender mainstreaming.

The fourth precondition for effective implementation of gender mainstreaming concerns the availability of necessary knowledge on gender relations. As gender mainstreaming is a strategy to achieve the goal of gender equality, it is absolutely necessary that comprehensive knowledge of gender relations is available for policy-makers.

Furthermore, knowledge of the administration is needed for effective gender mainstreaming. As gender mainstreaming involves the reorganisation, development,

² Council of Europe (1998), p. 15. Gender Mainstreaming – Conceptual framework, methodology and presentation of good practices.

³ Ibid. p.23 ff.

implementation and evaluation of policy processes knowledge is needed about the qualities of the administrative system. This includes good knowledge of the policy process.

Moreover, financial means are an absolute prerequisite for gender mainstreaming. Mainstreaming implies a reallocation of existing funds. Without sufficient levels of resources, such as time, financial means and human resources, it is not possible to adapt existing policy techniques and tools, set up new channels of co-operation and provide the necessary training for policy makers.

Lastly, The Council of Europe underlines the importance of women participating in the political and public life. The Council therefore underlines of the importance of enhancing the number of women entering decision-making processes in order to ensure that women's interests are taken into account. This aspect will not be clarified in this study, however.

2.2 What is gender equality policy?

As mentioned above, "traditional" gender equality policy needs to go hand in hand with gender mainstreaming. But what is traditional gender equality policy? The principal characteristics of such policy are presented below:

- Equal opportunities legislation and anti-discriminatory laws.
- Equality ombudsmen/commissions/councils for protection against discrimination.
- Strong national equality machinery (administrative organisation).
- Specific equality policies and actions.
- Equality divisions or focal points within each ministry.
- Research and training on gender equality issues.
- Awareness-raising regarding gender equality.⁴

2.3 Gender mainstreaming or gender equality policy?

It was stated at the beginning of this chapter that there is a lack of correspondence concerning the understanding of the term gender mainstreaming. The definition of gender mainstreaming and its preconditions have been dealt with above, as has the meaning of gender equality policy. But what is the difference? In order to better understand gender mainstreaming and its distinction from other kinds of gender equality work, this part of the study will be devoted to sorting out the differences between gender equality policy and gender mainstreaming.

Firstly, the most important difference between mainstreaming and specific gender equality policies concerns the actors involved and the policies that are chosen to be addressed. The starting point for traditional gender equality policy is an identified gender inequality problem. This problem is then dealt with by specific gender equality policies that are designed and elaborated by gender equality machinery. Gender mainstreaming, on the other hand, has its starting point in an already existing policy,

⁴ Council of Europe (1998), p. 24.

within any policy field. That policy is then reorganised so that the actors normally involved in the policy process integrate the gender equality perspective into it. In other words, “gender mainstreaming means introducing a gender perspective in a given policy field in order to make sure that the effects of policies are more gender neutral, but it does not take the actual gender imbalances as the starting point for developing policies [as does specific gender equality policy]: it takes into account the specific needs of women and men and elaborates policies on issues that are not covered by other policy areas”⁵

Secondly, because gender mainstreaming has its starting point in a policy that already exists, not only is it a strategy for obtaining the objectives of gender equality policy, but it also becomes a way of *developing* the gender equality policy. That is a result of the fact that new objectives can be detected when a gender perspective is integrated into new policy areas. The possibility of locating new gender equality objectives by traditional gender equality policy is far more limited.

2.4 Keywords

In the previous parts of this chapter, the meanings of gender equality policy and gender mainstreaming have been discussed. These concepts and other relevant keywords are more thoroughly presented below.

Gender equality

“The concept imply that everyone is free to develop his/her personal abilities and to make decisions without being restricted by strict gender roles, and that the different acting, ambitions and needs of women and men should be taken into consideration, valued and promoted in the same extension“. 6

“Gender equality means an equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. Gender equality is the opposite of gender inequality, not of gender difference, and aims to promote the full participation of women and men in society”⁷

Gender equality policy

Policies to obtain the goal gender equality. The policy for gender equality may contain both classical equal opportunities policy for equal rights and equal treatment, as well as specific positive actions in favour of the disadvantaged sex. The gender equality policy of EU has since the Treaty of Amsterdam had a *twin-track* approach which combines gender mainstreaming with specific actions.

In the EU Road Map for 2006-2010 there are six areas of high priority for gender equality policy. The Road Map identifies priority objectives and actions for each area. Most of the states have their own national gender equality policy, with objectives and actions and criteria for monitoring progress.

⁵ Council of Europe (1998), p. 17.

⁶ EU’s publication “100 words of Gender Equality, a dictionary of Equality terms” 1998.

⁷ Council of Europe, Gender mainstreaming EG-S-MS (98) 2

Equal opportunities policy

Policy according to the directives on equal treatment of women and men, that aims to counteract or stop all discrimination on the ground of sex.

The principle of equal treatment of men and women has been enshrined in the EC Treaties since the establishment of the European Economic Community in 1957. It has been implemented in a number of fields by EU legislation over the past 30 years, and developed in extensive case law by the European Court of Justice. The Commission monitors the application of this legislation and, where appropriate, proposes new legislation.

Gender mainstreaming

The Council of Europe developed a definition in 1998 which is used in this project:

”Gender mainstreaming is the (re) organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making”.

The definition points out gender mainstreaming as the strategy to reach gender equality, and also states that the actors that normally make the decisions must implement it in all policies and all decision-making. It is no longer the department or Minister for gender equality that is responsible for the results but instead the responsibility is spread on all actors. Gender mainstreaming concerns both men and women.

3 Questionnaire to the EU Member States

As previously mentioned, the EU has clarified in formal documents that besides the equal treatment legislation, the gender equality strategy requires both specific gender equality actions and the mainstreaming of gender equality as a perspective in all areas.⁸ To find out more about how the Member States have organised the implementation of gender mainstreaming at governmental level, what progress has been made, which methods and tools that have been used, and last but not least, what the Member States own experiences are of working with gender mainstreaming as a strategy, the project addressed a questionnaire to the 25 EU Member States. This chapter is devoted to that questionnaire, its results and the conclusions drawn.

The structure of this part will be as follows. Part 3.1 presents the aim of the questionnaire. Part 3.2. deals with methodological selections and procedures. Part 3.3 presents the conclusions based on the answers to the questionnaire. In part 3.4 the data and the results of the questionnaire are presented.

3.1 The aim of the questionnaire

The aim of this questionnaire is to describe how the Member States have implemented gender mainstreaming in the government's administration and which experiences, good and bad, the Member States have from this work so far. Questions asked dealt with, if there was political support, if the work was organised in a systematic way, if training was provided, which methods that were used, and if enough resources for the work had been allocated. Another question concerned if there were any good practices on gender mainstreaming and what experiences and needs for further development the Member States had.

3.2 Methodology

The questionnaire was addressed to the 25 Member States of the European Union. The respondents were the representatives of the EU High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming. All members of the High Level Group are senior government officials, deputy directors or the equivalent, at the divisions for gender equality affairs in the Member States. The respondents of the questionnaire are either the senior government official herself/himself or another person working for her/him.

In order to make sure that the questionnaire would be delivered to its recipients it was sent both by post and by email. Both versions were addressed to the members of the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming. Then the respondents had approximately two months to fill in the questionnaire. Exemptions were generously granted though, as the intention of the project was to map the initiatives on gender mainstreaming in all the EU Member States. For that reason the number of responses came to be complete, i.e. 25.⁹

⁸ Appendix 9 Development of gender equality in EU.

⁹ Cyprus answered a few questions, but did not complete the questionnaire as a whole.

The questionnaire is based on the prerequisites for gender mainstreaming presented by the Council of Europe: Political will, specific gender equality policy, statistics, and knowledge of the administration, necessary funds and human resources.¹⁰

These prerequisites form the foundation of the questionnaire and constitute the basis of the questions asked.

The provision of methods and tools for the implementation of gender mainstreaming are also to be considered as preconditions for gender mainstreaming as mainstreaming is to be practised by any and every actor involved in the policy process. The main problem with gender issues in everyday policies is that in most cases the problem itself is not recognised as such. There is therefore a need for analytical techniques and tools. Such techniques would help the ordinary policy-maker to detect a given gender issue and would enable her/him to approach the issue.¹¹ The Council of Europe does not incorporate methods and tools into the list of prerequisites, however. Nevertheless, as the availability of mainstreaming techniques is so crucial for effective implementation, the project chose to treat methods and tools as a prerequisite and thus something that indicates how far the Member States have progressed as regards the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

With the aim of providing a full description of current gender mainstreaming activities in the EU Member States and of evaluating the quality of such activities the prerequisites of the Council were operationalised, or transformed into measurable units, in the form of questions in the questionnaire.

3.2.1 Operationalisation of the prerequisites of gender mainstreaming

In order to address prerequisite number 1, political will, we asked the Member States about their national goals for gender equality, if there are specific plans for gender mainstreaming, and if resources are allocated to gender mainstreaming.

To learn more about the Member States' national machineries and their gender equality policies, questions were asked regarding the organisation of gender equality policy and gender mainstreaming respectively, and also about the actors involved.

Concerning statistics, and to what extent that prerequisite has been fulfilled, questions were asked about what measures are provided to get statistics disaggregated by sex.

The prerequisite concerning the knowledge of the administration was interpreted as how, to what extent and to whom training is offered and provided. Are there training programmes for gender mainstreaming at governmental level? Have they been evaluated? If so, have they been successful? What are the objectives of the training and is tailor-made training for different policy areas offered?

¹⁰ The council also present two other prerequisites: the participation of women in political and public life and in decision-making processes and comprehensive knowledge of gender relations, prerequisites that are not perceived as relevant in this study and will not be dealt with thereof.

¹¹ Council of Europe (1998), p. 29.

As the project wanted to learn about the methods and tools used, questions were also asked about mainstreaming techniques: What sort of analyses are performed? Is the method of gender impact assessment used? Have gender-sensitive indicators been developed? And are gender analyses performed on the budget (gender budgeting)?

In addition, the questionnaire contains two questions about the Member States' experiences of working with gender mainstreaming. The Member States were asked to identify elements they perceive have either supported or obstructed effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. They were also to give examples of good practice, and describe any lessons learned. Lastly, the Member States were asked to give examples of measures they believe would further improve the implementation at national and EU level respectively. By introducing this part, the project hopes to learn about what has proved to be effective and what has not.

3.2.2 Advantages and limitations of the questionnaire

The principal advantage of questionnaires is that a great amount of information can be collected in a relatively short period of time. In this questionnaire we chose to use open-ended questions, a method that opens up for the Member States to describe their initiatives on gender mainstreaming in their own words. Open-ended questions also allow the respondents to give a more detailed and thorough illustration of their gender mainstreaming activities than closed alternatives do. However, an investigatory design of this kind entails some troublesome limits, or weaknesses. Firstly, when the respondent is free to write as much or little as s/he wants, the responses are not completely comparable. The amount of information will then differ from answer to answer, and depending on how much time the respondents have had to fill in the questionnaire, the wealth of details will vary. Secondly, with open-ended questions the terminology can be used differently in different countries, and the meanings of the words accordingly become a matter of interpretation for the writers of this report. In other words, the analyses of the answers are to some extent based on subjective judgements. However, these problems are not unique to this study, but are attached to any qualitative text analysis.

Another problem relating to the reading of the answers arises from the fact that the administrations of the governments in the Member States differ radically from each other: in size, organisation, and culture. These dissimilarities naturally affect the comparability between the Member States. We have taken that into consideration, however, when processing the answers and weighing them against each other.

3.3 Results

In this part of the study the results, the answers of the questionnaire, are presented and commented.

3.3.1 Political will

In the questionnaire, (item 2b), it was asked if there was any formal political support (written declarations and other documents) for the work with implementing gender mainstreaming.

The answers show that almost all Member States have some written documents as formal political support for the implementation of gender mainstreaming. (Poland and Slovakia did not mention any documents.) The obligation to conduct gender mainstreaming as a strategy to reach gender equality can be adopted either legally, (in the constitution, in the gender equality act, as a separate law) or as a governmental instruction. In some Member States the adoption of gender mainstreaming is formulated as a plan or a program.

3.3.1.1 *How structured, specified and mandatory are the instructions on gender mainstreaming?*

Most states have incorporated the international obligations relating to gender equality and gender mainstreaming into national laws. These laws stipulate that governments shall promote gender equality, stop all discrimination and use gender mainstreaming as a strategy to reach gender equality. Some laws are very unspecific about how gender mainstreaming shall be implemented while others are very clear and detailed. Some countries have the instructions in forms of plans. (Appendix 6)

The answers to the questionnaire show that there are twelve states with a more detailed and systematic description, (Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom), where they express the mandatory obligation for the state to make a gender impact analysis before introducing legislation, bills or legal acts.

In *Austria* the Austrian Constitutional Act since 1998 states in Art 7 the responsibility to *consider and implement* the principle of actual gender equality *at all levels* of policies and legal enactments. This is followed by three statements from the Ministerial Council on how to create an inter-ministerial working group, a specific programme for the implementation and targeted implementation of gender mainstreaming at all federal ministries.

In *Belgium* a new mainstreaming bill was prepared in 2006 oriented towards *institutionalisation of the gender mainstreaming process in all policy* lines and government actions through the introduction of various effective mechanisms and instruments. It establishes guidelines concerning institutionalisation of gender statistics, gender criteria, gender budgeting and integrating gender in policy plans and policy assessment.

In *the Czech Republic* the Governments legislative Rules and Rules of Procedure were changed by the Government Resolution no 1072 November 2004. There should be evaluation of expected impacts or expected development of the proposed solution in relation to equality for women and men in every document on the governments' agenda for discussion.

Denmark adopted gender mainstreaming as a strategy for its work for gender equality in 1995 by signing the Beijing document. In 2000, a new Act on Gender Equality entered into force, which stated that “ All public authorities must endeavour to promote gender equality and *must incorporate gender equality in all their planning and administration.*”

In *Estonia*, according to the Gender Equality Act gender equality must be integrated into all policies by all State and local government agencies. The Gender Equality Act stipulates that Agencies of state and local agencies shall undertake to promote equality between women and men *systematically and purposefully*. Their duty is to change conditions and circumstances which prevent the achievement of equality between women and men. When planning, implementing and assessing national, regional or institutional strategies, policies or action plans, the agencies should take into account the different needs and social status of women and men and should consider how measures already employed or to be employed, are going to influence the situation of women and men in the society.

In *Finland* the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality states that the promotion of gender equality is the task of all ministries and that the integration of gender mainstreaming into the whole of the state administration will be done. Methods of gender impact assessment will be developed and the assessment will be integrated into legislation and preparation of the state budget. Knowledge of gender equality issues will also be increased in the state administration. A special handbook with mandatory guidelines for gender impact assessment in drafting legislation has been produced for government’s personnel.

In *Ireland* all policy proposals, including legislation, submitted to Government for consideration are now required to include information on the likely impact of the proposed policy on both women and men and, if necessary, identify any actions necessary to ensure that the policy promotes gender equality.

In *Latvia* all ministries are asked to include gender equality as a horizontal aspect in their policies. Since 2002, the Cabinet of Ministers accepted amendments to the Directive, which provides for the preparation of the documentation that needs to be prepared for almost all legal acts an *ex-ante impact assessment on gender equality situation should be made*.

In *Slovenia* the Act on Equal Opportunities, adopted in 2002, establishes the obligation for gender mainstreaming in the Government and ministries (Article 11). The ministries shall take into consideration the gender equality perspective in the course of the preparation of regulations and other measures that apply in the areas, relevant for the establishment of equal opportunities. For this purpose, the ministries shall work together with the Office for Equal Opportunities and take into account its suggestions and opinions, especially prior to the submission of the proposals of laws and other documents to the government for decision.

In *Spain* the current Gender Equality Plan seeks to strengthen gender mainstreaming, maintaining specific equal-opportunity policies, i.e., positive actions, in any necessary

areas. Particular mention should be made of the act approved in 2003 that compels the Government to include in all their legal proposals a gender impact report on the measures established therein or in 2004.

In *Sweden* all committees of inquiry are required to analyse their proposals from a gender perspective (Committees Ordinance.) According to a government decision in 2004, all ministries are asked to carry out gender equality analyses in their political areas.

In *United Kingdom* there will be a Gender Equality Duty in force in April 2007 which will provide a statutory duty for Public Authorities to promote gender equality in all their functions and ensure that gender impact assessments are carried out for all new legislation, policies, employment and service delivery changes and that these are published.

3.3.1.2 *National goals for gender equality*

Another aspect of the political will that was dealt with in the questionnaire (Item 3) concerned national goals for gender equality. (3a) Do you have a national goal for equality between women and men, approved by the government or the parliament? b) What are the goals? c) When were they last updated?)

Almost all Member States answer that they have national goals for equality between women and men.¹² There are overarching goals and goals for different policy areas. The goals and objectives can be separate documents or parts of action plans for gender equality. Goals in different policy areas are, for example, promoting gender equality in working life, facilitating the reconciliation of work and family life, increasing the number of women in economic and political decision-making, alleviating segregation, reducing stereotyped gender images in the media, combating violence against women, men and gender equality, and enhancing gender equality in regional development and in international and EU co-operation. Other areas are gender mainstreaming in public health policy, combating harmful traditional practices and their consequences for women's health and closing the gender pay gap. There are goals concerning combating trafficking in human beings, gender based poverty, regional development, science and research.

The chosen policy areas differ from state to state but many policy fields are picked out from the Beijing plan of action or from issues taken up in the EU gender equality programmes (The Road Map). It really seems that the requirement to report to international organisations can be a force to promote the work for gender equality. In most states regular reports on the actions undertaken are also made to the national parliament.

¹² Appendix 7.

3.3.1.3 *National plans for gender mainstreaming*

The questionnaire also included a question (4 a) on whether the state had a plan or guiding documents for implementing gender mainstreaming at the governmental level, approved by government or parliament. There was also a question about the objectives for the plan and how the plan was evaluated.

Many of the answers in the study refer to national action plans for gender equality with positive measures to increase gender equality in different policy areas. But the question concerned a plan for gender mainstreaming which is a different thing, and that is what the report considers here.

A plan for implementing gender mainstreaming should specifically describe the systematic work to make all normal decision-makers aware of their responsibility to create gender equality in their everyday-work. It should contain clear descriptions of how to reach the gender equality or the gender mainstreaming objectives. It should also include monitoring and evaluation.

The answering states could roughly be divided in four groups according to their answers:¹³

1. States with plans for gender mainstreaming
2. States with mixed plans for gender equality policy and gender mainstreaming
3. States with gender equality plans
4. States without plans

To start with the first group, the states with specific plans for gender mainstreaming, the project located six Member States with such plans: Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany and Sweden.

Regarding the states belonging to group 2, i.e. the states with mixed plans for gender equality policy and gender mainstreaming; seven Member States (France, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal) were identified.

Five states have plans for gender equality policy, equal opportunities, social inclusion, national women's strategy or similar. (The Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Slovenia, Spain). Those Member States do not have a special plan for the implementation of gender mainstreaming however.

Finally, no less than seven Member States (Belgium, Cyprus, Italy, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, United Kingdom) reported that they neither have plans for gender equality policy nor for gender mainstreaming.

Belgium is preparing a National Action plan on Gender Mainstreaming. Cyprus is also preparing a national plan for gender mainstreaming. Italy does not have a plan for gender equality nor gender mainstreaming. Malta does not have a plan. Poland used to have a national action plan for women but now has a National Road Map for the

¹³ Appendix 8.

Family. Slovakia has no plan for gender mainstreaming. United Kingdom has no national plan approved by government or parliament, but has high-level strategic targets in specific areas, for example, the Gender Equality Public Service Agreement and Women and Work Commission Action Plan.

Many of the states also follow up the plans every year by reports to the Parliament (for example France, Sweden, Latvia) or by more comprehensive evaluations (e.g. The Netherlands, Ireland, Portugal). Some of the states allocate a lot of economic resources to the plans, for example in Ireland with nearly € 6 million for positive actions and gender mainstreaming initiatives and in France € 27.4 million for 2006 (+ ESF).

In response to question (5), “In which policy areas has gender mainstreaming been implemented?” the answer was most often in all policy areas and all ministries, i.e. following the action plan of Beijing. (For some examples Germany: health, environmental affairs, traffic, and human resources. Greece: regional policy, structural funds, public and local administration, education. Italy: Communication, reconciliation, employment, local development. Latvia: education, reconciliation, administration, violence.)

3.3.2 Training

All states except for three (Netherlands, Poland, Portugal) answer that they organise some kind of training in gender mainstreaming to raise awareness and knowledge in the administration. The training usually lasts for 1-3 days. The training programmes often include methods and guidelines for how to use sex-disaggregated statistics and gender analyses. Sweden has a training system with basic training in gender equality policy and goals, techniques how to make gender equality analysis and training for trainers.¹⁴ Estonia has an advanced four-week training for trainers. The training is targeted on state employees, new employees (Czech Republic), government officials, sometimes managers (UK) and state secretaries (Latvia), politicians (Luxembourg, Sweden). Manuals (Belgium) and a tool kit (Malta) are used in the training checklists.

It is positive that training is provided in all states, as training is the most crucial measure to raise the level of knowledge on gender equality in the governmental administration. It is also welcome that in some states the training is offered to both public servants and managers and politicians. Estonia and Sweden, with more comprehensive training programmes could be seen as good examples of practice and serve as models for other states. It is also desirable that training is provided to all new employees in all states, which would be a sign that training is integrated in the normal structures.

3.3.3 Methods and tools

There are different methods or techniques that can be used in implementing gender mainstreaming. Sex-disaggregated statistics are a necessary prerequisite to be able to

¹⁴ www.jamstod.se

use some of the other techniques. Questionnaire item 6 d) asked about the measures provided to obtain statistics disaggregated by sex.

3.3.3.1 *Sex-disaggregated statistics*

The answers reveal that every Member State has realised the commitment to present sex-disaggregated statistics, at least to some extent. Many states have instructions to the ministries to use sex-disaggregated statistics (for example Austria, Denmark, Belgium). Other states make publications on the status of women and men in society (e.g. the Czech Republic, France, and others) or arrange training in this subject (Estonia). In UK the forthcoming Gender Equality Duty has an underlying obligation for Public Authorities to collect sex-disaggregated statistics. In Italy, the National Council for Economics and labour has proposed a law to introduce the elaboration of statistics broken down by sex, which obliges public and private institutions to provide data disaggregated by sex.

3.3.3.2 *Gender Impact Assessment*

Gender Impact Assessment, Gender Analyses and Gender Equality Analyses all refer to techniques for analysing bill proposals, programmes, and other decision-making materials from a gender perspective

“Scrutinising proposed political actions to decide whether they affect women and men in different ways, and if this case, a consequent adjustment of the proposals in order to neutralise the discriminatory consequences and promote gender equality.”¹⁵

Fifteen states are using Gender Impact Assessment, (Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain). In UK all public authorities will be required to conduct and publish gender impact assessments from April 2007 when the Statutory Gender Duty comes into force.

3.3.3.3 *Gender Analysis*

“Studies of differences between women and men in their allocated gender roles, for example concerning conditions, needs, participation, assessment to resources and development, control over assets and decision-making.”¹⁶

Three states use gender analyses in their work on implementing gender mainstreaming. (Denmark, Estonia, Italy).

Sweden uses a special method called Gender Equality Analysis in which, besides the above-mentioned studies of differences in gender patterns, the question is also asked of how the decision will help to realise the national objectives for gender equality.

Altogether there are 17 states using gender impact assessment or gender analyses.

¹⁵ EU publication “100 words of Gender Equality, a Dictionary of Equality terms” 1998.

¹⁶ EU’s publication “100 words of Gender Equality, a dictionary of Equality terms” 1998.

3.3.3.4 Gender budgeting

”Gender budgeting is a special application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality.”¹⁷

Only ten states have tried gender budgeting (Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Malta, Netherlands, Sweden and UK).

3.3.4 The organisation for gender mainstreaming

In the questionnaire (item 2 a) the Member States were asked to explain the organisation for implementing gender mainstreaming at governmental level.

Gender mainstreaming means to broaden the group of decision makers to take responsibility for promoting gender equality. The answers to the questionnaire shows that most states have engaged all the different ministries in the work to achieve the goals for gender equality. One way to make the shared responsibility more visible and make clear that not only the gender unit should coordinate and follow up the work is to create inter-ministerial groups for coordinating and supporting the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

Ten states have set up an *interministerial group* for coordinating and supporting the work with gender mainstreaming at governmental level. (Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden). Most of those countries also have groups or committees in all ministries. The members of these groups sometimes consist of heads of directorates-general from all ministries (Germany), senior heads (Denmark), middle management (Austria) and are nominated by the highest political level. In other states the members are middle-ranking government officials.

Other states have only contact persons or committees at all ministries.

Five Member States mentioned focal points at the ministries (The Czech Republic - focal points, Portugal - councillors, Spain - gender experts, Malta - committees, Latvia - contact persons). According to the in-depth study of Portugal there is an inter-ministerial group although it has not been used for a while because of changes of governments.

Some Member States use their gender unit as a coordinator instead of an inter-ministerial group. Malta answered that the national Commission for the Promotion of Equality is the coordinating body for the ministries’ gender equality committees. Poland has had a temporary inter-ministerial working group on mainstreaming in a EU project. In the Czech Republic the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has been the national coordinator for focal points since 2002.¹⁸ France uses their Service des droits des femmes et de légalité to coordinate the comprehensive gender equality programme

¹⁷ EC web site gender equality 2006.

¹⁸ From the report by the Finnish Presidency 2006, Document number14376/06 ADD1, SOC 486.

adopted with ministries and other actors. In the UK the Ministers for Women supported by the Equality Unit sit on high-level Ministerial Committees to ensure that gender mainstreaming occurs across government. Ministerial bi-laterals are also used in UK.

Seven states did not mention any special structure at all for implementing gender mainstreaming (Belgium, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia). This means that a third of all Member States lack a special structure for implementing gender mainstreaming in the governmental processes.

3.3.4.1 Gender equality units with adequate resources

Questionnaire (item 2a) concerned the organisation for implementing gender mainstreaming in the governmental administration and 2c) which actors are involved in the process. Item 4 c) concerned if specific resources were allocated for the implementation of gender mainstreaming, and d) the distribution of resources between implementation of gender mainstreaming and other positive actions.

Thirteen states (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden and UK) answered there were specific resources in form of money or personnel for implementing gender mainstreaming. Most often one or two employees were working with gender mainstreaming. In Sweden five people were working solely with gender mainstreaming. In Belgium there were ten persons. Denmark had around twenty people working with promoting gender equality and coordination of government actions, but did not state how many of those were solely working with gender mainstreaming. In the United Kingdom the distribution between gender mainstreaming and positive actions is approximately 50-50 percentages, and the number of employees is 35 permanent and 25 assistants for projects, which should be around 30 people for gender mainstreaming.

Seven states replied that there were no specific resources for gender mainstreaming (Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia) and five states did not answer the question.

The estimated distribution of work between gender mainstreaming and other positive actions was 10 percentages gender mainstreaming in Finland, 20 percentages in Sweden, 25 percentages in Malta, 26 percentages in Hungary, 50 percentages in the United Kingdom and 60 percentages in Poland.

3.3.5 Experiences of working with gender mainstreaming

This part deals with the Member States' own experiences of working with gender mainstreaming, what elements they perceive to be necessary for effective implementation on governmental level, what improvements they believe are needed, and their experiences of good practice of working with gender mainstreaming in the governmental administration.

The first part of the chapter seeks to identify and compile the factors that are the most crucial for achieving effective and successful implementation of gender mainstreaming. The second part introduces and describes some concrete examples of good practice. There follows a presentation dealing with lessons learned from the mainstreaming process as well as evaluations carried out in the countries concerning the organisation for gender mainstreaming. The fourth part is devoted to the Member States' own opinions about the measures that are required for the future in order to improve the implementation of gender mainstreaming at national level and EU level respectively. Finally, a short summary that presents the most relevant conclusions will bring this chapter to an end.

3.3.5.1 *Elements supporting gender mainstreaming*

Since one of the main objectives of this project is to enhance the understanding of gender mainstreaming and its way of working, the Member States were asked to identify and give examples of essential elements that have either supported or prevented an effective implementation of gender mainstreaming at Governmental level.

The question was answered by 18 of the Member States that have responded to the questionnaire. As the questions were open-ended the answers from the different countries offer a level of variation. Some general trends can be identified, however. The following components are the most frequently reported as supportive factors for gender mainstreaming at governmental level:

- The provision of sex-disaggregated statistics
- High levels of awareness and elaborate training programmes
- Clearly defined political management and control

Further information about these three components is presented below.

As the list of factors suggests the availability of statistics disaggregated by sex is considered to be one of the most decisive factors for an effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. Five of the responding Member States have stressed the importance of statistics (Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ireland and Spain). Sex-disaggregated data is perceived to be an indispensable precondition for being able to perform any kind of gender analyses. It is essential, writes Denmark, to acknowledge that collecting and systemising statistics disaggregated by sex is the basis in working with gender mainstreaming.

The second component that the countries consider as a necessity for gender mainstreaming is the provision of elaborate training programmes, and, related to that, great knowledge about gender equality issues. Four Member States (Austria, Hungary, Denmark and Sweden) have underlined the importance of training, and three (Latvia, Lithuania and Sweden) the significance of high levels of awareness. In this context, it is also stressed that training is needed not only for the administration, but also for the general public as well as for the political level. In line with this countries report that a lack of knowledge about gender equality issues or low levels of gender equality awareness seriously obstruct effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. Gender equality knowledge and training programmes have this significant importance, it is stated, because gender mainstreaming involves a reorganisation of the policy processes, and because it is the actors normally involved in policy making that are to integrate the gender equality perspective. Every one working with policy making need gender equality skills, in other words.

Thirdly, it is considered that instruments for managing and controlling the activity are crucial. This view is expressed in a number of ways by the Member States. The most frequent opinion is that a clearly defined political will is a key factor for effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. The message conveyed by, for example Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Germany and Sweden is that implementation will not be successful if there is little or no political commitment and/or political demand that gender mainstreaming is to be applied.

Another way the need for management and control is expressed is by underlining the importance of regular monitoring and evaluation (Ireland, Lithuania) of progress. The possibility of issuing sanctions for failure to implement is also brought up (Austria) as a possible control mechanism that would give civil servants the incentive to work harder with gender mainstreaming and therefore enhance the quality of the implementation.

As regards the political will, it is also stressed that the decision-makers have to allocate sufficient levels of resources to the work with gender mainstreaming. It is emphasised that gender mainstreaming must be given the necessary resources, such as time, human resources, and financial resources in order to perform satisfactorily.

Correspondingly, a lack of political commitment, an insufficient provision of resources, and low levels of gender equality awareness are elements perceived as obstacles to effective gender mainstreaming.

Other elements mentioned in regard to prerequisites for gender mainstreaming are: the use of gender impact assessment (the Czech Republic, Denmark); the provision of coordinators at every ministry (Slovenia); the creation of a network of gender equality experts (Austria, Denmark); the availability of handbooks and checklists (Hungary) and, lastly, well functioning institutional mechanisms (Lithuania).

3.3.5.2 *Good practices*

The questionnaire also dealt with examples of good practise regarding the implementation of gender mainstreaming. Sixteen Member States have replied to the question, of which fifteen have described examples of good practice.

Three countries (Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden) have given concrete examples of specific policy areas that have integrated a gender equality perspective.

Finland, to start with, highlights the study on the mainstreaming of the alcohol policy (see the in-depth study of Finland). The Finnish study looks at how gender, i.e. women and men, is manifested in various documents, statistics and research dealing with alcohol policy, how the obligations of the Act on Equality between Women and Men are taken into account in the actions of authorities implementing alcohol policy, and whether the gender perspective or the objective of equality promotion is taken into account when steering the related financing. Finally, the study discusses how the national alcohol policy and the Alcohol Programme could better take into account gender considerations and the objective of promoting gender equality. When the Finnish alcohol legislation was being reformed the gender equality perspective was integrated and a short gender impact assessment was carried out. This assessment resulted in the warning labels for alcohol packages containing not only a warning about the dangers of alcohol to foetal development but also warnings about other detrimental effects caused by alcohol. It showed that focusing only on the dangers of alcohol to foetal development would address only women's alcohol consumption, which is not the biggest problem related to alcohol in Finland.

Sweden gave a similar example and points out the transportation bill (submitted to Parliament in March 2006) as a model of successful gender mainstreaming. The transportation bill is considered as an example of good practice since the starting point for the analysis was the general policy field of transportation. Then the normal actors involved in policy-making performed a gender analysis in order to make sure that the effects of policies are more gender neutral.

Another example of good practice is demonstrated by the Netherlands, where gender impact assessment was practised on the policy of matrimonial property. The GIA was part of a revision of the law on matrimonial property, with successful results. However, the experience that gender impact assessment is a concrete example of successful gender mainstreaming is not only stressed by the Netherlands, but is also shared by other Member States. Five states have answered that the use of handbooks and checklists for gender impact assessment has been a successful way of working with gender mainstreaming. However, the answers do not reveal in what way and why it has been successful. It is doubtful whether the gender impact assessment per se could be regarded as an example of good practices, but rather as a method or tool for implementing mainstreaming. Without more information about what the use of these handbooks and checklists has resulted in, it is difficult to value their importance and also to distinguish in what way they are to be regarded as examples of good practice.

There are also examples mentioned concerning regional projects on gender mainstreaming, gender analyses carried out in private companies, campaigns on

domestic violence, the adoption of a gender perspective in regards to paternity leave and preventive measures against discrimination against women in certain areas. Although many of these examples are indeed interesting from a gender equality point of view, they are beyond the scope of this study, as this project focuses on the implementation of gender mainstreaming at governmental level. Projects and campaigns at regional level or examples of positive action or anti-discrimination policies are not, in other words, the target areas of this report.

3.3.5.3 Evaluation and lessons learned

Another question that was asked in the questionnaire was directed at the Member States' own experiences of working with gender mainstreaming. The Member States were, on the one hand, requested to describe any lesson learned from the mainstreaming process, and, on the other, to report whether an evaluation had been carried out regarding the organisation for gender mainstreaming, and, if so, what it resulted in.

Two of the responding Member States (Belgium, Malta) reported that their organisations have been evaluated, and three (Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands), that their organisations are soon to be evaluated or are being evaluated at present. However, a large number of respondents (11) did not answer the question at all. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that those who have not replied to the question have nothing to report. Therefore, the project has chosen to interpret the blank answers as no-answers, i.e. that their organisations have not been evaluated.

The picture that emerges is, in other words, that only five of the Member States have evaluated, or are about to evaluate, their organisations for adopting gender mainstreaming, whereas the majority of them (17) have not. Why is this so? A possible explanation is that the implementation of gender mainstreaming is still in its initial phase, and many of the Member States are accordingly not yet ready to conduct an evaluation. That point of view is, in fact, also indicated in two of the answers. Since only two Member States have completed their evaluations so far, it is too early to draw any general conclusions on this matter.

As previously mentioned, the Member States were also asked to describe their own experiences and/or any lessons learned from working with gender mainstreaming. In accordance with the answers regarding evaluation of the organisation for gender mainstreaming, some Member States (6) have difficulty dealing with the question, as the implementation of gender mainstreaming is still at an early stage, and, it is therefore considered to be too soon to identify or describe any particular lessons learned from it.

However, fifteen of the Member States have answered the question, nine of which do identify and describe lessons learned from working with gender mainstreaming.

Firstly, it is established that gender mainstreaming must derive from the top-level decision-makers (Austria, Germany, Sweden). Secondly, training and knowledge are pointed out as indispensable parts of the mainstreaming machinery (Slovenia, Sweden,

Spain, Hungary, Greece). Another experience, in the field of training, is that training on gender mainstreaming ought to be tailor-made for different departments and different policy areas (Austria, Sweden) and also that training on gender mainstreaming should be compulsory for the political management.

Secondly, it is important to realise that implementing gender mainstreaming is a long-term project and that change is slow (Finland, Austria).

Lastly, Slovakia has experienced that the existing administrative structure was not constructed to cope with gender mainstreaming, which is why it will be necessary to install a completely new arrangement.

The reason why few have replied to the question and why even fewer have described their experiences and lessons learned, is most likely a result of the fact that few Member States have evaluated their organisations for implementing gender mainstreaming at present. Anyway, those experiences, and lessons learned, as well as those prerequisites identified should be taken into consideration as this material shows how far we have reached at the moment and, also, the collected knowledge that has been achieved so far.

3.3.5.4 Measures that would improve gender mainstreaming at national level

Since the overall aim of this project is to contribute to further development of strategies and tools to implement gender mainstreaming in the EU Member States, a central question to the Member States concerned their view on what measures they believe would further improve the implementation process. The Member States were asked to identify measures improving gender mainstreaming at national level and EU level respectively.

17 Member States have identified measures that they believe would enhance the quality of gender mainstreaming at national level, and 13 have provided suggestions about how to achieve improvements at EU level.

Broadly, the answers cluster around three major themes:

- Elaborate training programmes in order to ensure a minimum level of knowledge on gender equality
- Higher levels of resources
- A strengthened political commitment

Firstly, and in conformity with the Member States' view on what elements support gender mainstreaming, the significance of raising awareness showed to be an important factor for further improvements as well. Seven Member States (the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovenia) believe that higher levels of knowledge of gender equality would facilitate the implementation at national level, and four (the Czech republic, Denmark, Estonia, Portugal) at EU level. Taking these facts into consideration it is evident that the present levels of awareness about gender equality are insufficient in several areas. But what is the solution to this problem?

The predominant answer to that question is that more training on gender studies and gender relations is required within the governmental administration. Luxembourg, for instance, maintains that training for civil servants ought to be compulsory in order to ensure a high degree of gender awareness in the public administration; because the very idea behind gender mainstreaming is that it is the actors normally involved in policy-making that are to integrate the gender perspective, every one engaged in the policy process needs knowledge, and therefore training, on gender equality issues. The importance of training is also underlined by Estonia, referring to it as an antidote to gender-blind policies. The conclusion that can be drawn from these experiences is, in other words that elaborate and compulsory training programmes are desired, because such training programmes would ensure a minimum level of knowledge on gender equality within the governmental administration, which would considerably facilitate the mainstreaming process.

Secondly, it is argued (by five Member States) that higher levels of financial resources are needed in order to perform better. Slovakia, for example, advertises for more financial resources in the framework of projects and programmes, with the objective of supporting development in this area. And Malta demands EU financial support for the proper implementation and evaluation of gender mainstreaming. Also Finland and Ireland brings up the question of resources. Not only financial resources are scarce however; there is also a demand for higher levels of human resources and time. This includes the provision of a supportive information/consultation unit offering information as well as guidance for performing a gender analysis (Estonia). It also includes more time for people working with gender mainstreaming (Finland, Austria). All these aspects are interdependent prerequisites for effective gender mainstreaming, and it is clear that they are not yet sufficiently provided for. An increase in resources (financial and human resources as well as time) is necessary therefore.

Thirdly, the Member States emphasise that gender mainstreaming has to be made a political issue. It is crucial that the Government issues a declaration, stating its intentions to integrate a gender equality perspective into all policies and programmes. Equally important is that the Government ask for the results that gender mainstreaming is to bring.

Seven Member States (Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Sweden) suggest that a strengthened political will including clear commitments and goals as well as demands for results, would further improve the mainstreaming process. Slovakia expresses the importance of a reinforced political will in the following way: “The existing administrative structure was not constructed to cope with implementation of gender mainstreaming. A new structure is needed ...” With the will and commitment of the Slovak Republic, however, changes would be promoted “in the field of practical implementation of gender equality and by the establishment of an administrative structure at all levels of state administration”. The Slovak case clearly demonstrates in what way a political commitment can make a difference. If the Government clearly expresses an intention to mainstream the gender equality perspective, resources will be allocated and the preconditions for adopting the strategy will be fulfilled. The present situation in many Member States, witness about a lack of

such a commitment, however, why the implementation becomes unwieldy. Therefore, one of the greatest challenges for promoting gender mainstreaming seems to be how to attract the decision makers' interest and attention and how to make gender mainstreaming a top priority.

3.3.5.5 Measures that would improve gender mainstreaming at EU level

In order to find out what could be done at international level to improve gender mainstreaming, the Member States were asked to come up with ideas and/or suggestions about how to do that.

As previously mentioned, the Member States see higher levels of awareness (of gender equality issues) as the foremost important factor for further improvements: at national level and EU level. Since the reasons for this have already been discussed (under the topic "Measures that would further improve gender mainstreaming at national level") they will not be taken up again.

Contrary to the question about improvements at national level, the answers to this question are widely scattered and cannot as easily be placed into categories. However, it is believed that the introduction of gender budgeting into the budget of the European Union and the integration of gender budgeting in the Lisbon Agenda (Austria, Hungary) would facilitate gender mainstreaming at EU level.

What regards the budget it is also stated that the control mechanisms of the European Union ought to be developed and that a possibility of issuing sanctions should be introduced into the system. Austria suggests that effective control mechanisms should be built up for the implementation of gender mainstreaming directives, in particular concerning the involvement of subsidies or grants. A demand for stricter supervision and control is also demonstrated in Malta's answer, in which the suggestion that a stricter monitoring role by the European Commission after a clear financial commitment is sought from every Member State. The question of political commitment is also brought up in this context. Clear demands for results both from the political level and the administrative level in all policy areas would improve gender mainstreaming at EU level, according to Austria and Sweden.

It is also stated that specific comparable sex-disaggregated statistics would contribute to further improvements in the EU (Austria, Denmark), and also that a joint forum for exchanging experiences, examples of best practise, as well as instruments and tools (Denmark, Slovenia) should be established in order to facilitate communication between the Member States and to inspire to further development.

Finally, the establishment of the planned European Institute for Gender Equality is considered to be a factor that would facilitate the implementation of gender mainstreaming at EU level. The importance of the institute is underlined by Lithuania, which is a candidate for hosting the Institute, and Austria.

4 In-depth studies on the implementation of gender mainstreaming

This project is proposed with an aim to stimulate the further development within the EU of comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategies for effective work to promote gender equality. The most effective methods for achieving this are to create opportunities to exchange experiences at a concrete level. For that reason, the project has conducted four national in-depth studies on the gender mainstreaming activities at governmental level in the EU Member States, Finland, Lithuania, Portugal and Sweden. These countries represent different administration cultures, both in relation to the organisation of government administration and to the organisation of work to promote gender equality. Thus, the results of the in-depth studies give a good overview of different strategies to implement gender mainstreaming in the EU.

The in-depth studies have been written and conducted by Reetta Siukola (Finland), Dalia Marcinkeviciene (Lithuania), Magda Silva Ferreira Vieira (Portugal), and Maria Stenman, assisted by Gertrud Åström (Sweden).

In this chapter the in-depth studies are introduced and presented in the form of abstracts. The complete in-depth studies are found in Appendix 1.2.3.4.

4.1 Gender mainstreaming in Finland's governmental administration

The present Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1986) makes planned and systematic promotion of gender equality one of the official duties of every authority. Thus there is a legal obligation for gender mainstreaming. The mainstreaming requirement is also inscribed in the current Government Programme (24 June, 2003), which states that promoting equality is a task for the whole Government. The implementation of mainstreaming is dealt with in more detail in the third Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2004–2007, formulated to fulfil the targets of the Government Programme. This states that mainstreaming means that all officials should adopt a gender equality perspective as one of their viewpoints in preparatory work. The aim here is to increase civil servants' awareness of the effects on gender equality of decisions in their own area of policy and to eliminate the old gender-neutral or at worst gender-blind approaches and operating cultures.

There is currently a structure of actors mainstreaming the gender equality perspective at all of Finland's ministries. The ministries all have their own gender equality-working group and an interministerial group to monitor the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality has also been set up. In addition, each ministry has its own gender equality contact person. Specifically the interministerial monitoring group can be considered an important tool in spreading mainstreaming throughout central government. It has been particularly active in setting up mainstreaming structures and monitoring the implementation of agreed measures. As yet, there has been little time for issues of method and content, however.

On the other hand, only some of the internal equality working groups at the ministries has attained an established standing in the promotion of mainstreaming. They have

often concentrated only on producing the equality plan called for in the Equality Act and have not yet started on systematic implementation of mainstreaming. Consequently, at many ministries this implementation still depends on the input and level of activity of individual civil servants. Yet a well-functioning equality group can act as an effective channel for ideas on and monitoring of mainstreaming. The equality group at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, for instance, can be said to be playing an extremely important role in mainstreaming in the internal functioning of the Ministry.

Mainstreaming has been greatly furthered by the coordination and development work carried out by the Gender Equality Unit at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Although the ministries sometimes view the reporting duties involved in monitoring equality work as burdensome, active monitoring and sometimes reminding civil servants has been useful. However, though further resource input is certainly needed, particularly at this initial phase; too few resources are still available for the systematic promotion of mainstreaming and for development of tools, practices and training. Another problem is that the coordination of mainstreaming is in the hands of fixed-term employees, and therefore lacks continuity.

Incorporation of the gender perspective and promotion of gender equality are being extended to Government processes and decision-making. The gender impact assessment of legislation has already been initiated. The gender perspective has also been taken into account in some individual projects and programmes that are considered to be vital to gender equality. On the other hand, gender budgeting and promotion of gender equality in performance guidance are only in their initial stages. Statistics and data production have been developed to some extent, but in making progress in other sub-areas of mainstreaming we are often still faced with the problem of availability of gender-specific information. Further attention should be paid to this prerequisite for mainstreaming.

In promoting gender mainstreaming training has also played a major role. The training organized so far has been praised, among other things, for approaching the theme from an everyday rather than an academic point of view. It has provided concrete examples of the impact of taking a gender perspective into account and clarified difficult mainstreaming concepts. It is important to underline that civil servants do not need to know how to 'mainstream' but rather to promote gender equality; mainstreaming is only about the tools for realising this. So far, only a low proportion of Government civil servants have taken part in the related training, so there is still a strong demand for it. There is, in addition, a need for more concrete training suitable for each ministry's own policy areas, in which civil servants could ponder mainstreaming of the gender perspective through thematic areas familiar to themselves.

As regards tools for mainstreaming, the most efficient tool in furthering gender equality has been the guidelines prepared by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health on gender impact assessment, in which this theme is approached in a concrete and practical way by means of questions that may disclose gender equality problems. These guidelines have served as background information in the preparation of both legislation and programmes. The development of guidelines for all the ministries in taking the gender perspective into account can be considered particularly significant. In this respect the instructions for formulating the Budget and drafting legislation have been

improved. There are great expectations for the guidelines being prepared by the Ministry of Justice for the impact assessment of legislation, which include gender impact assessment as a sub-area. Clear guidelines are, however, still needed for project and programme work regarding how and at what stage of project implementation gender aspects should be taken into account.

The biggest challenges for the promotion of mainstreaming are often related to the fact that this is a difficult issue to understand. Gender and gender equality issues are still often felt to be issues that are separate from one's own work and the expertise needed for it. Although ridicule and mitigation rarely occur today, the significance of one's own action from the point of view of gender equality is not necessarily understood sufficiently. This is illustrated, for example, by the fact that the gender perspective is often taken up only in policy areas that are naturally linked to gender equality – for example through public debate or objectives laid down in the Action Plan for Gender Equality. Instead, gender impacts of measures taken in other policy areas are rarely suspected. Training and guidelines can alleviate this problem. It is, however, important for the ministries' top management – both their political and civil service management – to give a clear message: this issue is important and it must be addressed with adequate seriousness. Sufficient resources should also be allocated to the development of mainstreaming and thorough gender analyses.

4.2 Gender mainstreaming in Lithuania's governmental administration

In 1996, the Government, establishing strategic goals, approved the first programme on gender equality issues – The Lithuanian Women's Advancement Programme. In 1998, the Lithuanian Parliament passed the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act. In 2000, the Inter-ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men was set up. In 2002, the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act was amended. In 2003, the Government adopted the National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. In 2005 the Government adopted National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2005-2009.

Recent governmental documents explicitly refer to gender mainstreaming either as an objective or as a principle governing gender policy. In practice, there is more of a preference for the integrationist approach to gender mainstreaming in Lithuania. By and large, it functions as policy practices such as positive action measures, national plans involving different government agencies and equal treatment legislation. It should be stressed that gender mainstreaming in Lithuania has not yet fully replaced previous approaches to gender equality – notably legislation and positive action.

Every Ministry in Lithuania is in charge of implementation of gender equality in the area of competence of the respective. In every ministry one or two part-time (50%) employees are in charge of gender equality. The Ministry of Social Security and Labour is responsible for coordinating implementation of the policy on equal opportunities for women and men in all areas. The Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men is responsible for coordinating adherence to the equality principle by government institutions (the commission is comprised of representatives of all ministries and the Statistics Department).

The gender equality institutional mechanism, based on gender mainstreaming provisions, today covers several interrelated levels: the parliamentary level, the governmental level, the municipal level, the academic level, the public sector, and the social partners.

The training programme entitled “Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Public Administration” has been prepared by the Lithuanian Institute of Public Administration at the Ministry of Interior in close co-operation with the Ministry of Social Security and Labour and the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman in 2003. The programme is aimed to provide civil servants with the basic knowledge on equality between women and men, the necessary skills to deal with gender issues and integration of the gender perspective.

Long-term strategic objectives for gender equality are established in the Women’s Advancement Programme, adopted in 1996 by the Government and operational until now. National Programmes on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men have been implemented since 2003. The first programme of this kind applied to the years 2003-2004 and the second is continuing in the period 2005-2009.

Gender impact assessment can be implemented in any selected policy area. Nevertheless, gender mainstreaming in social inclusion can be attributed to those social policy areas that are crucial in regard to gender. Gender mainstreaming in the policy of social inclusion was analysed on the basis of two strategic programmes of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania: 1) “*The National Action Plan of the Republic of Lithuania for Struggle against Poverty and Social Exclusion for 2004-2005*” and 2) “*The Consolidated List of Activities for 2005-2006 for the Action Plan of the Republic of Lithuania for Struggle against Poverty and Social Exclusion*”.

One of the first projects aimed to promote gender mainstreaming - “Gender Mainstreaming in Lithuanian Policies” has been held in 2002 – 2004. The project was carried out by the Women’s Issues Information Centre in partnership with the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. The aim of the project was to support the mainstreaming of gender perspective into legislation, policies and programmes of the Government of Lithuania. Main activities of the project were: to provide gender training for civil servants of the Ministries and municipalities, and to organise discussions with lawyers of the Ministries on the sufficiency of the legal environment for integration of the gender perspective and application in practice.

Policy against trafficking in human beings is one of the state policies, in which gender mainstreaming is implemented particularly efficiently. On implementation of gender mainstreaming in measures against trafficking in human beings, the most significant initiatives of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania were accomplished within the framework of the Programme for Control and Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings and Prostitution for 2002-2004.

The Inter-Ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men was established in 2000 as a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the Programme for the Advancement of Women as well as being primarily a structure for

gender mainstreaming. Although the performance of the Commission is successful and efficient, there are some poorly developed aspects of its activity. For example, gender mainstreaming, constitutes only a minor part of its work. We, therefore, think that the Commission should enhance the emergence of more powerful ministry departments, which would be specifically responsible for coordination of gender mainstreaming in the relevant fields. Due to a lack of human resources, the Ministries are unable to regularly provide the Commission with high quality gender equality analyses, as well as to identify goals for gender equality in the relevant fields.

4.3 Gender mainstreaming in Portugal's governmental administration

The aim of this study is to analyse how the Portuguese policy-making process is heading towards achieving greater substantive gender equality, throughout the adoption of this strategy. The in-depth study in full length is to be found in Appendix 3.

The first chapter of the study identifies, from 1999 onwards and with a special focus on the years 2004 to 2006, the political and institutional framework that calls for the commitment of policy-makers to accommodate gender equality-based concerns. This chapter also identifies the context in which gender mainstreaming is implemented and examines the practical conditions created to support this process in the national context. It includes a detailed description of the *II National Plan for Equality (2003-2006)*, namely its objectives, training, methods and tools, coordination and support.

The second chapter examines how the process of mainstreaming gender equality in the area of education is being implemented.

The third chapter describes constraints/obstacles met when trying to mainstream gender equality in Central Public Administration and the lessons learned so far. It also provides information on some good practices identified at national level. The basis for this chapter is the experience acquired within the development and implementation of the *II National Plan for Equality (2003-2006)* - the first government action plan truly designed with a gender equality mainstreaming approach.

The fourth chapter presents the main conclusions of this study and some recommendations based upon the study's most relevant findings.

The primary sources of information were the 23 semi-directive interviews with the members of a Reference Group. The secondary source of information was mainly official documentation on the attempts made to mainstream gender equality in the Portuguese Central Public Administration. Many reports and other written information provided by CIDM allowed for the structure and information found in chapter II of this study.

Background "official" documents were the government programme; the Major Planning Options; the Government's National Plans, in particular the *II National Plan*

for Equality (II PNI), official statements containing specific provisions on gender equality mainstreaming, national legislation and support instruments produced by the Commission for Equality and Women's Rights on ways of mainstreaming gender equality into overall and specific policy areas, national and international literature and researches on different forms of implementing and/or understanding the gender equality mainstreaming concept and international reports of projects on the same subject.

Each Minister appoints a Counsellor for Equality and a substitute Counsellor. The responsibilities of the equality advisors revolve around their core activities: to draft proposals of measures, to stimulate, inform, raise awareness, promote training; to mediate, negotiate, to create a cooperation network; to coordinate, follow-up and assess.

Besides appointing the Counsellors for Equality each Minister also appoints the representatives of the various organic units of the Ministry at the central and regional level, representatives who integrate the Interdepartmental Teams and who, in close articulation with the Counsellor for Equality, mainstream the gender equality perspective in policies and programmes of the departments and services they belong to.

The Commission for Equality and Women's Rights raises awareness and provides training on a regular basis to target groups with multiplying effects in the field of gender equality (central and local civil servants, namely, City Hall personnel, healthcare and social care workers, teachers, security forces, media workers, etc).

In Portugal, a low degree of gender awareness continues to prevail within the Public Central Administration structures and among decision-makers. Few issues are considered by these main actors to require a gender analysis.

Because legal measures have been designed to deal with discrimination, decision-makers still tend to deny the need for a gender assessment, which would expose the causes and factors tending to perpetuate gender-based inequalities.

Beyond having reached the phase of mainstreaming gender equality in all policy areas, it can be said that Portugal has striven for setting up some of the main prerequisites for gender equality mainstreaming and is now undergoing the process of evaluating the implementation of this strategy.

The study shows that gender equality mainstreaming is not yet part of the decision-making process of the majority of institutions in the Central Public Administration in order to guarantee that what happens in the political arena and in the social life takes into account and is determined by the goal of attaining a *de facto* equality between women and men.

In spite of the formal commitments assumed under the II PNI, there is no evidence so far that the political institutions committed to its implementation show a special

sensitivity to the importance of mainstreaming a gender equality perspective in their specific policy areas.

Aside from the area of education there is not, in general, one single policy area where we could find an effective and ongoing:

Planning taking into account gender equality, which should be understood as an approach that seeks explicitly to integrate in all the phases of the decision-making process, at all levels, in a continuous and systematic way, a gender equality dimension in its policies and actions;

Monitoring of the gender equality mainstreaming, i.e. the creation of procedures that ensure the promotion of gender equality and the absence of potentially negative effects in terms of gender that might derive from the policies adopted.

Two National Plans, National Plan for Employment and National Action Plan for Inclusion have nevertheless produced an analysis and evaluation of the policies and programmes with respect to the application of gender-related criteria.

4.4 Gender mainstreaming in Sweden's governmental administration

The main document for managing the process of gender mainstreaming in Sweden is the Government Plan for gender mainstreaming. The plan covers the period from 2004 to 2009. The overall goal of the plan is that the Government Offices should be in the best possible position to make gender equality permeate the whole of Government policy. The policy documents on gender mainstreaming contain all the necessary conditions for succeeding in gender mainstreaming work. There is a long-term plan, annual action plans, and ministry-specific action plans as well. There is formal weight in the long-term plan and the annual action plans since they are Government decisions. However, the demand, in practice, for gender mainstreaming from the political leadership is less pronounced.

One of the performance objectives in the Government's plan states that there must be an organisational structure within and between the ministries for disseminating support and information to all ministerial areas. This organisational structure was built up in 2004, at the same time as work on gender equality analysis in each policy area started. The coordination function is partly between ministries and partly inside ministries. Every ministry has to appoint one or two coordinators at civil servant level. The organisations in the different ministries are very similar. There are the coordinators and a group of contact persons from all divisions in the ministry. Thanks to this group the contact persons can spread information in every division. The coordinator and the contact persons meet regularly in many of the ministries. Around 150 of the 4 600 employees in the Government Offices are directly involved in work on gender mainstreaming. The coordination also includes contact persons from the Gender Equality Division. The coordinators from the ministries regularly meet the contact persons from the Gender Equality Division in an interministerial group.

Comprehensive action to achieve change must function at all levels. The responsibility for coordination of gender mainstreaming is first and foremost put at the civil-service level. The ways that the political leadership is engaged include the state secretary meetings on gender mainstreaming. Few actions have been targeted towards senior managers. Heads of division are a key level. A few ministries have chosen a head of division as gender equality coordinator, which has given access to this level as well. One of the gaps in gender mainstreaming work is however that it hasn't engaged group managers in divisions and heads of division to a satisfactory extent. This means that the gender equality perspective does not reach all levels within the organisation in a natural way; there is a vacuum between the lower and the higher levels where the gender equality perspective is not clearly rooted or has not been given space.

Every ministry has a contact person at the Gender Equality Division for gender mainstreaming work. Gender mainstreaming is highly prioritised at the Gender Equality Division, and a project group of slightly more than five full-time posts works on gender mainstreaming. One problem with this organisation is that the contact persons are mainly employed on a temporary project basis, because of that gender mainstreaming work can easily be viewed as a temporary project. The Gender Equality Division has offered ministries support through checklists and templates. Another form of support that the Gender Equality Division offers is discussion, mainly with the coordinators.

The part that the division plays in this gender mainstreaming process has two sides and is contradictory. On one hand, it has to offer consultative support to ministry coordinators. On the other, it also checks on the quality of the work done by ministries. This can easily turn into a dilemma. The dividing line between support from the division and control is blurred. Support can easily result in management and control when recipients ask for guidelines but lack their own ideas or time to amend the guidelines. The process documents clearly lay down the rule that the ministries are responsible for their own processes.

In January 2005 the Government appointed a committee of inquiry, Jämstöd (Gender Mainstreaming Support), to support work on gender mainstreaming in the government administration. Jämstöd's remit in relation to the Government Offices is to provide information about gender mainstreaming, to provide training in and develop methods for gender mainstreaming, and to create a forum for exchanges of experience of gender mainstreaming between public agencies.

The Government Offices has put major resources into training because it is one of the most important prerequisites for work on gender mainstreaming. Awareness of this led to a major training effort in the Government Offices. About 400 employees in the Government Offices (which has approximately 4 600 civil servants) have received training in gender issues. Several training programmes in gender equality and gender mainstreaming methods are offered by the Government Offices.

In an Action Plan for Gender Equality presented to the Riksdag in May 2003, the Government undertook to conduct gender equality analyses in all policy areas, and where possible, to identify gender equality objectives and outcome indicators. The result of the gender equality analysis is described in the most recent Government Bill on gender equality policy, which was adopted by the Riksdag in spring 2006. Thanks to training, well-structured methods and support, the ordinary actors have accomplished a lot of work. All policy areas have done at least one gender equality analysis. Just over 120 gender equality analyses were carried out in the 48 policy areas. The gender equality analyses resulted in some cases in completely new objectives that mirror a gender equality perspective within the policy area, and in some cases in the reformulating of already existing objectives to better include a gender perspective. Today almost half the government agencies have various gender equality requirements, including gender equality objectives. However not every analysis achieved result. In some divisions there were expectations that the analyses would produce more.

Like all development work, gender mainstreaming demands a lot of time, and it has started up an extensive process in the Government Offices. A lot of the work is of a kind never tried out before, but there have been great flexibility and willingness to adapt from those carrying out the work. The Government Offices have good conditions for gender mainstreaming work; however some main factors are still not in place. With time, commitment and resources at all levels in the organisation the process that has started up has a possibility of continuing and developing into real gender mainstreaming.

5 Conclusions

The main conclusions of the project and the studies are presented in this part of the report.

The aim of this project was to contribute to further development of strategies and tools by collecting the best practices for gender mainstreaming at governmental level. We wanted to identify elements that contribute to or prevent gender mainstreaming. A questionnaire was therefore sent to all Member States to obtain information on how they had implemented gender mainstreaming in their government offices and their experiences from this work. In-depth studies in the four participating countries were made to deepen knowledge. The conclusions drawn are structured under four different headings, leading to the recommendations given by this project.

5.1.1 Preconditions

The basis of the studies is the definition of gender mainstreaming, presented in the report “Gender mainstreaming, conceptual framework, methodology and presentation of good practices” (1998) by the Council of Europe “Gender mainstreaming is the (re) organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.” The definition can be divided into two parts, firstly gender mainstreaming means the implementation of a gender equality perspective in all government policies and secondly it shall be done by the actors normally involved. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy and should be implemented not only by the gender units in the governments but also by actors in all the other ministries.

The Council of Europe presents some preconditions that are to be fulfilled in order to achieve effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. As gender mainstreaming is a strategy to reach the goals of gender equality, one precondition is the existence of a specific gender equality policy with national goals. Another important precondition is the political will of the government to implement gender mainstreaming. Availability of sex- disaggregated statistics is a precondition for the use of tools for everyday work such as gender analyses or gender impact assessment. Knowledge of gender relations and knowledge of the administration in which gender mainstreaming is to be implemented are other necessary prerequisites. Finally financial means are absolute prerequisites for gender mainstreaming, and underlines that mainstreaming implies a reallocation of existing resources.

Our studies confirm the conclusions from the Council of Europe that all those preconditions are important. Based on the answers from the questionnaire, three prerequisites for gender mainstreaming are pointed out as particularly important: The provision of sex-disaggregated statistics; gender equality knowledge and training programmes; and clear political management and control.

Political will is an important pre-condition for gender mainstreaming as the mission of government offices is to prepare grounds for decisions for the governments and carry out the political wishes. There seems to be a firm belief in all states to use gender mainstreaming as the strategy to reach gender equality. The answers to the questionnaire show that almost all Member States have described the political will of implementing gender mainstreaming in written documents as acts, declarations, plans or other forms of instructions. But only half of them have concretised the will in plans and guiding documents for the implementation process, in allocation of resources for the process and in mandatory guidelines to make gender analysis before drafting laws. The present situation in many Member States provides evidence of a lack of accountability by the governments. The written declarations are not followed by a demand for gender-mainstreamed decisions. This discrepancy is also highlighted in the in-depth studies even from the more successful states. In the Member States' experiences of implementing gender mainstreaming political will is the most crucial prerequisite. The most frequent opinion is that a clearly defined political will is a key factor for effective implementation of gender mainstreaming.

Another conclusion to draw from the questionnaire is that a specific gender equality policy is established in almost all Member States, with anti-discrimination laws, national machineries and positive actions for gender equality carried out.

Almost all Member States have set up national goals and objectives in different policy areas. More than two-thirds (18 states) have action plans to achieve the goals. The chosen policy areas differ from state to state but many policy fields come from the Beijing plan of action or from issues in the EU gender equality programmes (Road map). It truly seems that the claim of reporting to international organisations can be a force to promote the work for gender equality. In most states, regular reports on the measures undertaken are also made to the national parliament.

The answers from the questionnaire reveal that every Member State has realised the commitment to present sex-disaggregated statistics, at least to some extent. Some states have instructions to the ministries or obligation for public authorities to produce data with sex-disaggregated statistics. Other states produce publications on the status of women and men in society. Still there seems to be a lack of such statistics in many areas and also a low demand for this kind of data from the ordinary actors. The availability of statistics disaggregated by sex is considered to be one of the most decisive factors for effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. Sex-disaggregated data is perceived to be an indispensable precondition for being able to perform any kind of gender analyses. It is essential, writes Denmark for example, to acknowledge that collecting and systemising statistics disaggregated by sex is fundamental for work with gender mainstreaming.

Knowledge of gender relations is also necessary. We have found that there is a need for strong gender equality machineries that can monitor, coordinate and follow up the work by the other ministries. The gender units have the knowledge needed and often act as expert advisers in relation to the other departments and ministries in the fields of gender policy and mainstreaming.

From the answers to the questionnaire we found that the estimated distribution of work between gender mainstreaming and other work for gender equality such as positive actions might differ from zero to 60 per cent in the gender units. This means that there are big differences between the states in the work actually carried out concerning gender mainstreaming. This estimate was difficult to make for most countries because there were problems in distinguishing between gender mainstreaming and other work for gender equality, as there is not a clear-cut division of organisation and tasks. The gender units often have a lot of other tasks and inequalities to deal with as well as gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

The answers to the questionnaire also reveal that only half of the states have special resources allocated for gender mainstreaming. This means that in half of the states in general one or two people have this task among other tasks. In the rest of the states, no one is working with gender mainstreaming at all. There are big differences between the states in this respect. From the in-depth studies we have also found that the people working with gender mainstreaming in the gender units as well as the contact persons at the ministries are often appointed to temporary positions. This gives a vulnerable structure where invested knowledge suddenly can disappear and it also signals to the other ministries that the issue is not politically important.

Another component that the countries consider as a necessity for gender mainstreaming is the provision of elaborate training programmes, and related to that, great knowledge about gender equality issues. Some Member States have underlined the importance of training, and the significance of high levels of awareness. In this context, it is also stressed that training is needed not only for the administration, but also for the general public as well as for the political level. In line with this, two countries report that a lack of knowledge about gender equality issues or low levels of gender equality awareness seriously obstruct effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. Gender equality knowledge and training programmes are important, it is stated, because gender mainstreaming involves a reorganisation of the policy processes, and because it is the actors normally involved in policy making that are to integrate the gender equality perspective. Every-one working with policy-making needs gender equality skills, in other words.

We have found from the questionnaire and the in-depth studies that training is the most crucial measure to raise the level of knowledge on gender equality in the governmental administration. The training programmes often include methods and guidelines for the use of gender-disaggregated statistics and gender analyses. Even if nearly all states answer that they organise some kind of training in gender mainstreaming there is still a lack of awareness in the administration and in society. The training is often short, one to three days, few officials are trained and important groups such as politicians and managers are often not included in the training. Estonia and Sweden, with more comprehensive training programmes could be seen as good examples of practice.

5.1.2 Expanding the group of people working with gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is intended to broaden the group of policy makers to take responsibility for promoting gender equality. In the implementation of gender mainstreaming the knowledge of the administration in the gender units is made operational in designing the structure for the process.

The answers to the questionnaire shows that the Member States have organised their work in different ways. Most states have engaged all the different ministries in the work to achieve the goals for gender equality. To create an inter-ministerial group for coordination and support of the implementation of gender mainstreaming is one way of making the shared responsibility more visible. Less than half of the states have set up such an inter- ministerial group for coordinating and supporting the work with gender mainstreaming at governmental level. Those countries also have committees for gender mainstreaming in all the ministries. Other states have only contact persons (focal points, gender experts) at the ministries.

Some Member States use their gender unit as the coordinator instead of an interministerial group, which indicates that the main responsibility is still placed on the gender equality units.

Seven states did not mention any special structure at all for implementing gender mainstreaming. This is most serious as it means that a third of all Member States lack a special structure for implementing gender mainstreaming in the governmental processes.

The answers to the questionnaire also show that very few Member States have, so far, conducted an evaluation of their organisation for gender mainstreaming. It became apparent that the implementation of gender mainstreaming is still in its initial phase, and many of the Member States were accordingly reluctant to draw any conclusions on this matter. It proved therefore difficult to find out any general lessons learned.

From the in-depth studies we have found that the mandates for the contact persons at the ministries are not always sufficiently clear and they are not always given the time to fulfil the mission. They also need support from their manager to carry out the task and availability to the highest political level in the ministry. If this is missing the task of encouraging all colleagues is, if not impossible, at least very difficult.

Another problem is that the contact persons often change and then a new person has to be trained in gender knowledge.

5.1.3 Methods and tools

The most frequent method for implementation of gender mainstreaming is gender impact assessment or gender analyses. Gender impact assessment means “ Scrutinising proposed political actions to decide whether they affect women and men in different ways, and if so a consequent adjustment of the proposals to neutralise the discriminatory consequences and promote gender equality ”¹⁹ Two-thirds (17) of the

¹⁹ EU´s publication “100 words of Gender Equality, a dictionary of Equality terms” 1998.

states are using gender impact assessment and ten states have tried gender budgeting.” Gender budgeting is a special application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality.”²⁰

As many as half of all Member States have mandatory instructions to make gender impact analyses before introducing legislation, bills or legal acts. Some progress has been made, as there were no mandatory instructions three years ago. There are also other methods used as 3 R, the 4-step method, manuals and checklists.

5.1.4 EU commitments

The EU has clarified that besides the equal treatment legislation the gender equality strategy requires both specific gender equality actions and the mainstreaming of gender equality as a perspective in all areas. There are commitments for gender mainstreaming as the strategy to achieve gender equality in many documents like the Treaty of Amsterdam, the different Community Action Programmes on gender equality, the Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010, the European Pact for Gender Equality, the European Employment Strategy, and in the Structural Funds. In the European Commission there is also a special gender equality unit (situated in DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities) for coordination, monitoring and following up, there is a High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming and very soon there will be a new European Institute for gender equality.

From these project studies we have found that there are demands from the Member States for further reinforcement measures from the EU. In order to find out what could be done at the international level to improve gender mainstreaming, the Member States were asked to come up with ideas and/or suggestions about how to do that.

As previously mentioned, the Member States find higher levels of awareness (of gender equality issues) as the foremost important factor for further improvements: at national level and EU level. It is believed that the introduction of gender budgeting into the budget of the European Union and the integration of gender equality in the Lisbon Agenda would facilitate gender mainstreaming at EU level. As regards the budget it is also stated that the control mechanisms of the European Union ought to be developed and that a possibility of issuing sanctions should be introduced into the system. It is suggested that effective control mechanisms should be built up for the implementation of gender mainstreaming directives, in particular concerning the involvement of subsidies or grants. A demand for stricter supervision and control is also demonstrated in some answers, in which the suggestion that a stricter monitoring role by the European Commission after a clear financial commitment is sought from every member state. The question of political commitment is also brought up in this context. Clear demands for results both from the political level and the administrative level in all policy areas would improve gender mainstreaming at EU level, according to some states.

²⁰ EC web site gender equality 2006.

It is also stated that specific comparable sex-disaggregated statistics would contribute to further improvements in the EU, and also that a joint forum for exchanging experiences, examples of best practice, as well as instruments and tools should be established in order to facilitate communication between the Member States and to inspire to further development. Finally, the establishment of the planned European Institute for Gender Equality is considered to be a factor that would facilitate the implementation of gender mainstreaming at EU level.

5.1.5 Other conclusions

One conclusion to be drawn is that there has been a greater focus on training and methods and less on creating supportive structures for gender mainstreaming. There are few people in the gender units with this task, there are a little more than half of the states with an explicit structure in form of inter-ministerial groups and there have only been a few evaluations of the structures for gender mainstreaming to date.

Another conclusion is that implementing gender mainstreaming at governmental level is a long-term project, which does not produce immediate political effects. As seen in the examples from the in-depth studies the good practices chosen are often smaller changes in routines (Sweden) or changes of focus group in alcohol policy (Finland). From the in-depth study of Sweden we find that there has been a lot of training in gender analyses and many analyses have been conducted but not all of them have led to sustainable changes in the policy goals or in routines. The in-depth study of Portugal also shows the length of time it took in the field of education policy to make the ordinary actors active and responsible for gender mainstreaming. It takes time to raise awareness and knowledge levels among the ordinary actors.

The terminology and understanding of what gender equality policy is and what gender mainstreaming is, is not really clear even in this project, although we had a very clear definition as a starting point. The limits sometimes seem overlapping between the two concepts. That was also mirrored in the questionnaire and the in-depth studies as many of the good examples that were reported have more the character of gender equality policy than of gender mainstreaming. That could be an explanation why we did not find as many good examples of gender mainstreaming as was expected.

And finally, which elements contribute to effective gender mainstreaming?

As we have shown all the pre-requisites mentioned above contribute to effective implementation of gender mainstreaming as well as the allocation of resources.

What prevent the implementation process? Lack of political will, unclear instructions, difficulties with the concepts, lack of gender equality knowledge, resources, training, systematic structures and lack of gender equality goals. There is a discrepancy between the written commitments from the highest political level to gender mainstreaming and the activities actually carried out in the governmental organisations. The in-depth studies indicate that there can be some passive resistance from managers or senior officials, caused by a lack of gender knowledge and a feeling that this is not politically important. The political will is most crucial and if the commitments are meant to be

taken seriously there must be a follow-up from highest level and a request for gender mainstreamed documents.

6 Recommendations

How to implement gender mainstreaming at the national and international levels? Strategies for gender mainstreaming have to be tailored to suit a specific organisation and be adapted to the needs and possibilities of a given political context. Gender mainstreaming is not only a strategy to obtain the objectives of the gender equality policy but also a way of developing the gender equality policy by detecting new objectives while implementing a gender perspective in new policy areas and broadening the field of actors. Based on the conclusions from the answers to the questionnaire to all Member States and the in-depth studies carried out in the participating states the project recommend the governments of the Member States and the EU Community respectively to carry out the following measures:

6.1.1 Preconditions for gender mainstreaming

Effective implementation of gender mainstreaming requires the fulfilment of certain preconditions. The most important preconditions identified by the project that we strongly recommend every government to take into consideration are the following:

1. Strengthen the political commitment
2. Adopt visible and measurable goals
3. Elaborate training programmes for all government officials
4. Strengthen the gender equality units.

Strengthen the political commitment

Gender mainstreaming has to be made a constant recurrent political issue. It is crucial that all governments issue a declaration, stating its intentions to integrate a gender equality perspective into all policies and programmes. Equally important is that every minister asks for gender-mainstreamed materials as ground for decisions. Sanctions should be undertaken if the gender analysis is missing or not included in the goals of every political area. Regularly evaluations should be made.

Adopt visible and measurable goals

Effective mainstreaming requires visible and measurable goals of gender equality policy and also action plans to reach the goals. It is also important to set up a plan for the implementation of gender mainstreaming, how to broaden the group of actors, how to reach a higher level of gender knowledge in the organisation, how to monitor and evaluate the implementation.

Elaborate training programmes for all government officials

In order to ensure a minimum level of gender equality knowledge in the governmental administrations training must be provided for all government officials, including managers and politicians. It is desirable that this training is integrated in the normal in-service structures and offered to all new employees. Mandatory training for all officials should be provided. The training should explain why it is important to implement a gender perspective in all the Government's decision-making actions and provide methods for every-day work. Main gender equality concepts should be introduced in training in order to produce a common understanding and a gender equality culture in

each Ministry. The training should be of a high-certified quality. The training should be adapted to different policy areas and guarantee that all civil servants receive basic initial training defined on the basis of the skills associated to their function.

Senior managers in public administration are an important group for training since they can facilitate or promote the implementation of gender mainstreaming. As demonstrated in the in-depth studies they could also show passive resistance to gender mainstreaming. It is therefore important that they get training and are rewarded for good performance or given sanctions if they do not deliver as required. The strengthened political will in form of clearly defined demands for gender mainstreamed materials is of special importance for this group.

Strengthen the gender equality units

Another important prerequisite for gender mainstreaming is strong gender equality machinery that can act as a think-tank to detect new issues, to develop new strategies, to gather knowledge and expertise and to act as a catalyst for the work of gender mainstreaming. The mandates of equality units and of contact persons for gender equality at different ministries should therefore be very clearly stated. As described in the in-depth studies this is not the case everywhere today. The mandates for people working with gender mainstreaming are often unclear and their positions temporary. To strengthen the organisation and prevent a loss of knowledge those appointments should be of more permanent character. Where the gender units are integrated equality units that also deals with other inequalities, there is a need to maintain organisational visibility for gender equality within those units, and to monitor the distribution of resources and policy attention for gender equality in the output of the unit. Not only financial resources are needed but also more human resources and time.

6.1.2 How to expand the group of people promoting gender equality

As the idea of gender mainstreaming is that it is the actors normally involved in the policy process that are to integrate the gender perspective into the policy, it is crucial to find methods for engaging more people in promoting gender equality. The project's recommendations for how to accomplish that are as follows:

1. Create a system for coordination and support in the government offices
2. Develop a plan for implementing gender mainstreaming in all policy areas

Create a system for coordination and support in the government office

A gender mainstreaming plan involving all ministries should be conducted by the Government Offices and a system for coordination and support created. To create an inter-ministerial group for coordination and support in the implementation process could be a good stimulation of gender mainstreaming and expand the group of actors outside the gender unit. But inter-ministerial groups can both perform excellently or not live up to the expectations at all. They should therefore not be seen as an isolated measure but instead as a part of a system for implementing gender mainstreaming.

The national mechanism for gender equality must create a structure aimed at coordinating and supporting each Ministry in the process of mainstreaming gender equality. In order to render its work more effective, the members of this structure

should have a good knowledge of the policy areas they are responsible for and have the necessary time to carry out this task. The supportive structure should make available instruments and materials to support stakeholders' work in the field of gender mainstreaming.

Each Ministry should create structures in charge of mainstreaming gender equality in the Ministry and guarantee a stable nomination of contact persons/ teams for gender equality assuming those functions. These structures would work directly under the Ministers. Each Ministry should also establish clear and direct channels of communication between contact persons for equality and top decision-makers in the Ministry.

Ministerial contact persons/teams for gender equality should have their own status and mandate, legally established in a clear way and with an explicit content allowing them to intervene in their Ministries. They should be given political support and resources in order to be able to fully accomplish their functions. Each ministry should integrate gender equality and the mainstreaming of gender equality in the goals of the Ministry and in the action plans of their departments and services in order to give the contact persons/teams a clear legitimacy to propose changes in processes and to require their colleagues' work.

Each Ministry should make the mandate and functions of the contact persons/teams for gender equality known and recognised at all levels inside the Ministry, especially by managers, in order to give legitimacy to their role.

Implement gender mainstreaming in all policy areas

Ministries of each policy area should be responsible for the implementation of a gender equality analysis in their area. Commitment and accountability at the highest level must be ensured by fully involving the ministers of each policy area in the process of mainstreaming gender equality and by making them accountable for progress achieved or lack of progress. Therefore regularly evaluations must be conducted.

The national mechanisms for gender equality have an important role in supporting the ministries with expertise whenever laws and/or policies are being prepared, followed-up or monitored in order to verify if they duly take into account the gender equality dimension (gender impact assessment of legislation). Therefore the gender units must be dimensioned to scrutinise all governmental decisions.

Ensure that public financing of public, private or associative institutions is only attributed to those who integrate gender equality in their goals, activities and in the evaluation of the initiatives presented for financing.

6.1.3 Methods and tools for everyday work

Everyday methods and tools for implementing gender mainstreaming are indisputably the cornerstones for effective mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming concerns statistics, language, budgets, legislation and programmes. The project's recommendations within this field are presented below:

1. Ensure that all statistics referred to individuals are disaggregated by sex
2. Ensure that all materials that are the basis for decisions, legislation and programmes are gender analysed
3. Integrate the gender perspective in other perspectives
4. Train all involved in gender mainstreaming to use the key words in a similar way

Ensure that all the statistics referred to individuals are disaggregated by sex

The production and use of sex-disaggregated statistics must be enforced and be obligatory in the materials collected for decision making of all governments in the EU Member States. There is a need for development of gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated statistics in all policy areas. All the indicators adopted by the EPSCO Council for the follow-up and monitoring of the critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action should be integrated in national systems of statistics.

Ensure that all materials that are the basis for decisions, legislation and programmes are gender analysed

Various methods are available such as gender impact assessment, gender analyses or other similar methods. The methods used should be explained in manuals and instructions and training should be provided for using them.

Gender budgeting is the way to implement gender mainstreaming into the budget process, both to see what women and men respectively get from the budget but also a way of structuring the budget.

Integrate the gender perspective in other perspectives

When there are many cross-cultural perspectives to take into consideration, the gender perspective should be taken into account when focusing on specific groups like children, the youth, the elderly, those of a different ethnic background, the disabled, socio-economic groups, etc. They all consist of females and males. There should be no gender-neutral or gender-blind policies.

Train all involved in gender mainstreaming to use the key words in a similar way

It is important to have a common understanding of the terminology concerning gender equality policy and gender mainstreaming. All people working for gender equality should understand the content of the different words in the same way.

6.1.4 EU commitments to gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is not only a commitment for the Member States. The EU also has a major role to play as regards gender mainstreaming. The recommendations concerning gender mainstreaming at the EU level are:

1. Implement gender mainstreaming at Community level
2. Conduct evaluations of the implementation of gender mainstreaming
3. Establish a forum for exchanging experiences of gender mainstreaming

These three recommendations are further described and developed below:

Implement gender mainstreaming at Community level

The European Union should take the lead in implementing gender mainstreaming in all its activities and policy areas by using gender impact assessment before decisions are made. Correspondingly, the introduction of gender budgeting into the budgets of the European Union and the integration of gender equality in the Lisbon Agenda would facilitate gender mainstreaming at EU level. A system for monitoring, including coordination and support of the process, should be created. Evaluations and follow-ups are also important.

Conduct evaluations of the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Member States

As there is a lack of evaluations, an important task for the new European Institute for Gender Equality should be to carry out evaluations on the progress of gender mainstreaming in the Member States and report the experiences back to the Member States. Also the Member States should be encouraged to carry out evaluations and follow-ups of their own work.

Establish a forum for exchanging experiences of gender mainstreaming

There is a need of an international forum to exchange experiences and good practices on gender mainstreaming. The new Institute for Gender Equality could fill that mission. The Institute could organise seminars on good practices and collect useful information on a web-site with links to the Member States web-sites on gender equality with different examples of good practices in the Member States. It could also provide support for developing tools and instruments for the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

References

Beijing + 10 Progress made within the European Union, Report from the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2004,

Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions, A road map for equality between women and men 2006-2010, 2006

Equality between women and men in the European Union, European Commission, Employment and social affairs, 2005

Europa Database- Women and men in decision-making 2005

Förslag till Europaparlamentets och rådets beslut om inrättande av ett gemenskapsprogram för sysselsättning och social solidaritet-PROGRESS, 2004

Gender mainstreaming in Finland, In-depth study, Reetta Siukola 2006

Gender mainstreaming in Lithuania, In-depth study, Dalia Marcinkeviciene 2006

Gender mainstreaming in Portugal, In-depth study, Magda Ferreira, Isabel Romão 2006

Gender mainstreaming in Sweden, In-depth study, Maria Stenman, 2006

Gender mainstreaming, a strategy for quality improvement June 2001 Ministry of Social Affairs, The Netherlands

Gender Mainstreaming, Conceptual framework, methodology and presentation of good practices, Council of Europe 1998

Guide, Good advice on how to gender-mainstream Council formations, EU 2002.Denmark

Human rights and economic challenges in Europe-Gender Equality, 6th European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men - Proceedings, 2006

Jämställdhet i den Europeiska Unionen, en policyanalys av jämställdhetspolitikens utveckling, Emma Hägre, Uppsats för CD seminar at the Department of Political Science at Umeå University, spring term 2004

National machinery and best practices in Five EU Member States, Twinning project in the Czech republic, Cecilia Asklöf

One hundred words for equality, a glossary of terms on equality between women and men, European Commission, Employment and social affairs, 1998

Progress of gender equality in public policy in the study countries- a comparative analysis of gender mainstreaming, Professor Mary Daly, Queens University, Belfast

Report from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, on equality between women and men, 2005

Review of the implementation by the Member states and the EU institutions of the Beijing Platform for Action, Institutional Mechanisms, report by the Finnish Presidency 2006, Document number 14376/06 ADD1, SOC 486

Step by step, strategic work with gender mainstreaming, Nordic Council of Ministers
2003:716

Toolkit for Mainstreaming Equal Opportunities into Structural Fund Programmes in
Scotland, Rona Fitzgerald University of Strathclyde Glasgow 2001

Work programme for 2005 for the implementation of the Framework Strategy on
Gender Equality, Commission of the European Communities, 2005

APPENDIX 1: IN-DEPTH STUDY OF FINLAND

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN FINLAND'S
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION



*Implementation of Gender
Mainstreaming at
Governmental Level in the
EU Member States*

Finland

Reetta Siukola

2006

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
1 GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN FINLAND – BACKGROUND AND AIMS.....	2
1.1 ACTORS AND OBJECTIVES IN NATIONAL GENDER EQUALITY POLICY	2
1.2 THE BACKGROUND TO MAINSTREAMING AND ITS PRESENT SITUATION	3
1.3 THE REPORT’S FRAME OF REFERENCE AND APPROACH.....	5
1.3.1 What is Finland mainstreaming?.....	5
1.3.2 Questions and method.....	6
2 GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE ALCOHOL PROGRAMME 2004–2007.....	9
2.1 ALCOHOL POLICY AND THE ALCOHOL SITUATION IN FINLAND.....	9
2.2 THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE ON ALCOHOL POLICY	10
2.2.1 Gender equality in alcohol work – report on mainstreaming in alcohol policy 2005.....	10
2.2.2 The effects of mainstreaming the gender equality perspective	11
3 GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE WORK OF MINISTRIES	14
3.1 MAINSTREAMING RESOURCES AND ACTORS.....	14
3.1.1 Steering and coordination of mainstreaming at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health	14
3.1.2 Working Group on the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality	14
3.1.3 Gender equality actors at different ministries	15
3.1.4 Structural development needs in mainstreaming.....	16
3.2 MAINSTREAMING TRAINING OF CIVIL SERVANTS	17
3.2.1 Training functions for the Government system as a whole.....	17
3.2.2 Mainstreaming training at the various ministries	18
3.2.3 Developing mainstreaming training	18
3.3 RECOGNIZING THE GENDER RELEVANCE	19
3.3.1 Gender perspective in data and statistics generation.....	19
3.3.2 Gender equality perspective in projects, programmes and areas of policy	20
3.3.3 Obstacles to recognizing gender relevance	26
3.4 ASSESSING GENDER IMPACT	26
3.4.1 Gender impact assessment in legislation.....	26
3.4.2 Gender budgeting.....	29
3.5 WAYS OF STEERING MAINSTREAMING	32
3.5.1 Performance guidance.....	32
3.5.2 Personnel policy.....	34
3.5.3 Tools of political steering.....	35
4 CONCLUSIONS.....	37
REFERENCES	40
APPENDIX: GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT	44

INTRODUCTION

This report forms part of a project called *Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming at Governmental Level in the EU Member States* financed by the European Union's Programme on Gender Equality, which is compiling information and best practices on mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective at central government level in all Member States. The aim of the project is to increase understanding related to mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective, identify the main factors promoting or preventing mainstreaming, and spread information about examples and instructive experiences. The starting premise used in studying the subject is the Council of Europe's 1998 definition of mainstreaming:

Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.¹

In the project, information has been collected through questionnaires sent to all EU Member States. In addition, more detailed analyses of the advance of gender mainstreaming have been made in the case of four countries taking part in the project: Sweden, Finland, Lithuania and Portugal. The aim of the final report to be published at an EU conference in February 2007 is to provide tools for developing and implementing mainstreaming in EU Member States.

The present report aims to answer questions about the progress and impact of mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective in Finnish Government administration and decision-making. It examines the actor structure and various activities such as training, projects, data generation, gender impact assessment and the steering and coordination of mainstreaming. The objective is to specify the factors that have been of most significance for the advance of mainstreaming and provide concrete examples of action to implement mainstreaming. The chronological focus of the report is on the 2004–2006 period.

The report comprises three main sections. The first (Section 1) deals briefly with the background to mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective and its organizational and political preconditions in Finland. The second (Section 2) presents one concrete example of mainstreaming: *Alcohol Programme 2004–2007*, the most important tool of national alcohol policy, which assessed the significance of alcohol policy measures from the viewpoint of equality between women and men. The third (Section 3) surveys more systematically the targets and measures of mainstreaming in central government. It examines, for instance, the mainstreaming dimension in various ministries and policy areas, and the resources and tools available for mainstreaming. Section 3 also provides some concrete examples of action related to mainstreaming. The final section (Section 4) collates the overall findings.

¹ Council of Europe (1998)

1 GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN FINLAND – BACKGROUND AND AIMS

1.1 ACTORS AND OBJECTIVES IN NATIONAL GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

Finnish Government gender equality policy can be considered to originate officially from 1966, when the Government appointed a fixed-term *Committee on the Status of Women*². Following this committee's recommendation, the first permanent body on gender equality issues, the *Council for Gender Equality (TANE)*, was set up in 1972 to do preparatory work on necessary reforms affecting equality between women and men³. TANE is a permanent parliamentary consultative committee, which includes members from all the political parties represented in Parliament and experts from the most important NGOs in women's affairs, from the Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations (NYTKIS) and from the National Council of Women of Finland. The committee has advisory status within the government administration.

The first Government Action Plan for Gender Equality, formulated on the initiative of TANE, covered the period 1980–1985. Behind it lay the action plan approved at the UN's 1st World Conference on Women in Mexico in 1975, which required member countries to produce national action plans to improve the status of women. Finland's national plan was negotiated between the ministries, and included objectives designed to improve women's job and income security. The plan also provided the preconditions for the drafting of legislation to prohibit discrimination, based on the UN Convention on the elimination of discrimination against women.⁴ Thanks to international obligations and the determined work of TANE, legislation on gender equality (Act on Equality between Women and Men, 609/1986) was finally passed in 1986. An *Ombudsman for Equality (TAS)* and *Equality Board* were set up as independent law enforcement authorities, and started to operate in 1987.

In 2001, Finland's institutionalized gender equality policy was placed on a tripartite footing when a coordinative and preparatory body, the *Gender Equality Unit (TASY)*, was set up side by side with the parliamentary and legal bodies.⁵ This Unit, which operates under the Finance and Planning Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, is for instance responsible for drafting national legislation and duties related to EU law and policy on gender equality and to international affairs. The Gender Equality Unit also coordinates interministerial cooperation on equality issues and mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective in government administration. The Unit currently employs 13 officials. In addition to these permanent bodies, Finland's institutional gender equality structures include a *Minister for Gender Equality*, the *Ministry of Social Affairs and Health*, which coordinates equality matters, and a parliamentary *Employment and Equality Committee*, all of which include gender equality functions in their work.

² Up to the early 1970s Finland generally spoke specifically of 'policy to promote the status of women' (see Räsänen 2002).

³ Holli 2002a; Räsänen 2002.

⁴ Räsänen 2002.

⁵ Holli 2002b.

Finland's present gender equality policy is guided by the Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1986, referred to below as the Equality Act), which aims to prevent direct and indirect gender-based discrimination, to promote equality between women and men, and to improve the status of women, especially in working life. Finland's Equality Act took effect on January 1, 1987, since then it has been amended several times. In 1992, for instance, the prohibitions on indirect discrimination and on discrimination because of pregnancy or parenthood were clarified. In 1995, a provision on a gender quota affecting central and local government bodies was added, together with a requirement concerning equality planning. The most recent changes to the Equality Act, in 2005, concerned implementation of EU directives, greater effectiveness in equality planning, and the promotion of equal pay. At the same time, the requirement concerning mainstreaming which had made promotion of gender equality the responsibility of government authorities since 1986 was further clarified. The present Equality Act makes planned and systematic promotion of gender equality one of the official duties of every authority. In addition, the administration must be developed so as to create and fully establish the procedures and practices needed for gender equality to be taken into account. Mainstreaming aims to ensure that the circumstances and interests of both women and men are considered in a fair and just way.⁶

At the political level, national equality policy is also laid down in the present Government Programme, which makes promotion of gender equality an important function of the whole Government. The programme also commits the Government to drawing up a national action plan for implementing gender equality.⁷ The Government Action Plan for Gender Equality for 2004–2007 was formulated jointly by the ministries to achieve the objectives of the Beijing World Conference on Women's Platform for Action and contains several measures that call for interministerial and other collaboration. The most important are steps to boost equality in working life, the prevention of intimate partner violence and violence against women, and, as the most extensive single concept, *mainstreaming of equality between the genders*.⁸

1.2 THE BACKGROUND TO MAINSTREAMING AND ITS PRESENT SITUATION

Mainstreaming in Finland's central government can be considered to have begun back in 1980–1985, with the first Government Action Plan for Gender Equality. This was formulated jointly by the ministries and contained individual equality targets for each of them. It also established the basic idea behind mainstreaming when it pointed out that promoting gender equality was a task for every administrative unit whose competence included the plan's targets.⁹ This can be viewed as the first steps in launching mainstreaming. The actual starting signal for mainstreaming was given in the mid 1990s, when Finland subscribed to the Beijing Platform for Action and became a member of the European Union. The objectives of mainstreaming inscribed in the Beijing Platform, and since the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997)

⁶ Act on Equality between Women and Men 2005. Brochures on equality 2005:2.

⁷ Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Government Programme, 24 June, 2003.

⁸ Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2004–2007.

⁹ Finnish Government Action Plan for Gender Equality in the latter half of the UN Decade for Women 1980–1985; see also Räsänen 2002.

entered in the EU's Founding Treaties, can in practice be considered to have initiated the implementation and development of mainstreaming in Finland's government administration.¹⁰

The Government's second Action Plan for Gender Equality (1997–1999) was formulated to implement the aims of the Beijing Platform for Action. It took a much more proactive approach to mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective than the earlier action plan. The precondition for achieving mainstreaming was considered to be commitment by decision-makers and drafters to promotion of the gender equality principle and sufficient basic information on the gender equality situation in every sector of social policy. Concrete measures mentioned included training for top managers in central government, better statistics and the promotion of women's studies. The most important project in the programme was one to develop mainstreaming methods and administrative practices (1998–2000), coordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, as a result of which new equality networks and mainstreaming models were established in the ministries, a pilot gender impact assessment of a law bill was carried out, a gender equality glossary was compiled, and new gender equality scorecards were introduced as part of annual personnel accounting in ministries. The significance of the gender equality perspective was particularly stressed at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry of the Environment, all of which contributed to the promotion of mainstreaming through their own pilot projects.¹¹

According to the report of the Working Group on the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 1997–1999, launching and implementing the first mainstreaming projects were found problematic at some ministries, partly because they lacked the resources for the necessary additional work. Those ministries that already had some kind of internal gender equality body found the job the easiest. According to the report, equality was often felt to exist already, finding gender blindness in administrative processes even when problems with achieving gender equality were clearly visible. The report also commented on the dichotomy between the general open support for equality policy and the covert opposition to it. This found clearest expression in opposition to changes in the administration because of mainstreaming, and a lack of demand for training.¹²

Since the first pilot projects, mainstreaming has advanced particularly fast at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, which has had a mainstreaming project since 2002. This has, for instance, resulted in the compilation of Mainstreaming Guidelines for the ministry's operations (18 June, 2002) and guidelines for gender impact assessment (16 April, 2003).¹³ The aim has been to formulate models and methods for mainstreaming that the whole government administration could apply in its operations.

At the level of Government Programmes, the first mention of mainstreaming can be found in the Programme of Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen's 2nd Government (15 April 1999), which for the first time included a whole section on gender equality. The Programme set the goal of implementing the principle of mainstreaming throughout government administration. In

¹⁰ See also Onwen 2004.

¹¹ From Beijing to Finland. Finnish Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 1997; see also Horelli & Saari 2002: *Tasa-arvoa valtavirtaan* (Mainstreaming equality), Internet report.

¹² Mainstreaming Equality 1999, p.10.

¹³ Naisten ja miesten tasa-arvon edistäminen sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden hallinnonalalla (Promoting equality between women and men in the administrative branch of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health) (Mainstreaming Guidelines) 18 June, 2002; Ministry of Social Affairs and Health guidelines for gender impact assessment in law projects 2003.

particular, the equality impact of new legislation had to be clarified and the organization, resources and skills required for equality work augmented. The mainstreaming requirement is also inscribed in Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Government Programme (24 June 2003), which states that promoting equality is a job for the whole Government. This should achieve gender mainstreaming throughout government administration, develop methods for assessing gender impact, and extend this to the drafting of legislation and the Budget. In addition, the resources and skills needed for equality work should be augmented.¹⁴

The implementation of mainstreaming is dealt with in more detail in the third Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2004–2007, formulated to fulfil the targets of the Government Programme. This states that mainstreaming means that all officials should adopt a gender equality perspective as one of their viewpoints in preparatory work. The aim here is to increase civil servants' awareness of the effects on gender equality of decisions in their own area of policy and to eliminate the old gender-neutral or at worst gender-blind approaches and operating cultures. The programme divides the mainstreaming implementation plan into four component areas: mainstreaming training and data generation, assessing the gender impact of legislation, assessing the gender impact of the Budget, and mainstreaming ministry activities. In addition, equality issue resources and organization are to be reinforced, and a personnel policy promoting equality to be developed for the government as an employer.¹⁵

1.3 THE REPORT'S FRAME OF REFERENCE AND APPROACH

1.3.1 What is Finland mainstreaming?

The basis commonly used for mainstreaming the gender equality perspective is the Council of Europe definition referred to earlier, which states, "Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making." This definition sees mainstreaming primarily as the development of administrative processes and methods.¹⁶

The Council of Europe definition can be considered problematic specifically because it does not offer a more detailed analysis of what is meant by gender or inter-gender equality and what mainstreaming aims at.¹⁷ It also fails to define exactly what should stand at the heart of political and administrative processes – equality, gender, or perhaps a gender perspective aiming to promote equality.¹⁸ European comparative research indicates that in most countries

¹⁴ Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen's 2nd Government Programme, 15 April 1999; Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Government Programme 24 June 2003.

¹⁵ Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2004–2007.

¹⁶ Council of Europe 1998.

¹⁷ Lombardo & Maier 2006, 10.

¹⁸ Squires 2005, 371.

gender mainstreaming lacks any theoretical background pondering the problems of equality, or the relative structure of power, between women and men.¹⁹

On the other hand, concentrating solely on processes and methods can also be viewed as an effective strategy for promoting gender equality and mainstreaming. According to Mieke Verloo (2001), this may mean gently persuading or ‘seducing’ civil servants to mainstream by starting from their own points of departure²⁰. However, debate on the theoretical principles of mainstreaming could increase understanding of why the gender perspective and paying attention to gender equality are such important matters.

The main guideline for mainstreaming in the Finnish government administration is the Council of Europe definition, clarified somewhat in the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2004–2007. This plan states that the aim of mainstreaming is to develop administrative and operational practices that support the promotion of gender equality as an element in the operations of ministries and authorities. The objective is to eliminate gender-neutral or even gender-blind approaches and operating cultures. Another aim is for experts in every administrative branch to be able to identify and consider the equality issues of most importance for their own area of concern.²¹

Many political and administrative documents on mainstreaming in government administration speak explicitly about mainstreaming *equality between the genders*. This starting point is problematic because it strives to incorporate equality itself, almost as a finished product, into the work of civil servants. The aim of mainstreaming should, however, be to achieve critical appraisal of the implementation of equality together with its active promotion. From the point of view of implementing equality, it is particularly vital to incorporate the gender equality perspective into one’s own operations in order to avoid the undesirable effects of gender-blind approaches. In the present work I often use the term *mainstreaming the gender equality perspective*, which better reflects the starting premise and objectives of gender mainstreaming.

1.3.2 Questions and method

The report aims to answer questions about the advance and impact of mainstreaming the gender equality perspective in Finnish central government and decision-making. How has mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective changed or developed decision-making and administrative processes? What new methods or tools have been introduced? The report examines both the actor structure of mainstreaming and various kinds of activity – training, projects, data generation, gender impact assessment, and steering and coordination of mainstreaming. The aim is to identify the factors that have been significant for the advance of mainstreaming and to provide some concrete examples of action to implement it. The chronological focus is on the period 2004–2006 and the report deals with the implementation of mainstreaming solely at the central government level.

The material used was compiled mainly from questionnaire replies by equality contact persons at ministries and from interviews with key actors. The questionnaires sent to equality

¹⁹ Daly 2005, 440.

²⁰ Verloo 2001, 9.

²¹ Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2004–2007.

contact personnel asked for information about the implementation and structure of equality matters at the ministries concerned. Answers were received from all the ministries except the Ministry of Trade and Industry (12/13, 92%). Interviews were carried out at seven ministries and a total of ten interviews were held in various component areas. Those interviewed included the Minister for Gender Equality and the person responsible for coordinating mainstreaming. In addition, a focus group interview was arranged at a meeting of an unofficial support group, at which participants were asked for their assessment of the progress made in mainstreaming and the factors working for and against it. Five staff members from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health attended this meeting.²² The sources used also included the monitoring report on the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality, equality reports on various projects and programmes, ministries' operational and financial plans, equality plans, the Government project register and Internet material of various kinds. The material used is explained in more detail in the relevant context.

It should be noted that it is difficult to draw a distinct line between the various ministries' activities related to mainstreaming involved in implementing gender equality policy and the gender equality perspective. As well as mainstreaming the gender equality perspective, every ministry has to fulfil other objectives laid down in the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2004–2007 in issues related to its field. The equality policy issues mentioned in the plan that affect the sphere of operation of several ministries include the following:

- gender equality in working life
- increasing the number of women in economic and political decision-making
- reducing violence against women
- preventing prostitution and trafficking in women
- developing early upbringing and education
- equality in regional development
- promoting equality in cultural, sports and youth policy
- the media and equality
- equality in health policy
- promoting equality in international cooperation.

Many of these themes had been comprehensively promoted in cooperation between the ministries even before methodological development of mainstreaming began in Finland. Gender equality in working life, for instance, was one of the most important issues dealt with by the first governmental equality body, the Committee on the Status of Women. Promoting equality in working life is also one goal of all the gender equality programmes drawn up jointly by the ministries. In a very broad sense, mainstreaming of the gender perspective is in fact reflected in numerous themes in Finnish equality policy. Here, though, mainstreaming means activity in which the gender perspective is put quite literally into the *mainstream* of activities in various fields, i.e. from the margins into the middle. In other words, the only kind of activity classified as mainstreaming is one in which spheres for application of the gender perspective, or the group of actors promoting equality, are extended through steering, training or developing methods.

Section 2 of this report deals in more detail with one whole area of Government policy in which the gender equality perspective is taken into account. The chosen example is the

²² At this point I should like to warmly thank all the people whom I interviewed for this report. I also thank the staff of the Gender Equality Unit and my own support group for their expert help at the various stages of planning and carrying out this work.

Alcohol Programme 2004–2007, designed to prevent and reduce the harmful effects of alcohol consumption. Section 3 surveys more systematically mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective in the work of the ministries. The themes chosen for treatment are resources and actors devoted to mainstreaming (3.1), training civil servants in mainstreaming (3.2), recognition of the importance of gender (3.3), gender impact assessment (3.4) and ways of steering mainstreaming (3.5). Section 4 is devoted to conclusions.

2 GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE ALCOHOL PROGRAMME 2004–2007

2.1 ALCOHOL POLICY AND THE ALCOHOL SITUATION IN FINLAND

Ultimately, Finland's national alcohol policy derives from the Constitution, which requires central government to promote the population's health and ensure adequate social welfare and health care for all. Policy is also laid down in the Alcohol Act and other legislation on temperance work and treatment of substance abuse.²³ The aim of the overall alcohol legislation is to prevent social and health problems arising from the consumption of alcoholic beverages. The short-term targets are in turn laid down in Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Government Programme of 24 June, 2003 and the Government Resolution of 9 October 2003, which primarily stress the aim of preventing and reducing the harmful effects of alcohol. This objective is divided into three parts:

1. To substantially reduce the harmful effects of alcohol on the welfare of children and families.
2. To substantially reduce risk-level drinking and its ill-effects.
3. To achieve a down-turn in the overall consumption of alcoholic beverages.

The most important tool of alcohol policy is currently the Alcohol Programme 2004–2007. So far, well over seventy local authorities, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Orthodox Church, the Council of Free Christianity in Finland and over sixty NGOs, professional social welfare and health organizations, organizations of the alcohol business and its employees, and central labour market organizations are working together on a broad basis along the main lines of the programme. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is responsible for preparation of the programme and steering of its implementation.

At the beginning of 2006, the Government approved a package of measures designed to restrain the continuing rise in alcohol consumption and its harmful effects. Alcohol advertising aimed at children and young people is to be restricted on TV and in cinemas, and at sporting events. Alcohol packaging and bottles will carry warning messages at least about damage to the foetus, quantity discounts on large packs of beer will be abolished, and sales promotion through discount advertising will be restricted. In addition, it is proposed that sales of alcohol by all kinds of retailers should not begin before 9 am. The rate of alcohol taxation will not be changed during the term of the present Government.

The lines of action laid down in the Alcohol Programme are based on the principle of effectiveness and on methods shown to be efficient. The main approaches demonstrated by research to be effective are measures affecting the whole population, such as the state monopoly on retailing, alcohol taxation, limits on the number of sales outlets and hours, a cut in the limit of blood alcohol content for drivers, and random breath checks on road users. Only a few measures targeting risk-level drinkers are considered to be useful. One example is

²³ The Alcohol Act (1143/1994) provides the foundation for the governmental control system, e.g. for alcohol taxation and the retail sales monopoly. The Temperance Work Act (828/1982) contains provisions on broad-based preventive work on substance abuse, and the Act on Welfare for Substance Abusers (41/1986) on arrangements for care.

a mini-intervention in basic health care aimed at early identification of rising alcohol consumption.²⁴ Though alcohol policy and the Alcohol Programme may underline these methods, national policy does not focus solely on action affecting the whole population, but also deals with various special groups such as risk-level and problem consumers and various age groups (children and young people).²⁵ Consequently, it is justified to consider alcohol policy from the gender perspective as well.

2.2 THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE ON ALCOHOL POLICY

2.2.1 Gender equality in alcohol work – report on mainstreaming in alcohol policy 2005

In order to implement the mainstreaming targets of the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality and develop national alcohol policy, a report was commissioned in the second year of the Alcohol Programme on incorporating the gender equality perspective into alcohol policy. This examines how gender – men and women – feature in alcohol policy documents and in statistics and research, how the requirements of the Equality Act are taken into account in official action on alcohol policy, and whether the gender equality perspective or the aim of promoting equality are reflected in the steering of financing. Finally, the report considers how the gender equality perspective and the aim of promoting equality could be taken better into account in work to reduce the harmful effects of alcohol. The report shows that alcohol policy has an effect on the standing and circumstances of both women and men in society. The aim is to provide civil servants and others involved in preventive work with some ideas on how their activities can promote gender equality and remove present barriers to its realization.²⁶

According to the report, promotion of gender equality is not one of the express aims of alcohol policy. However, the field of operation covered by the policy does take in several problems differentiated by sex that need to be taken into account when ways of achieving the aims are sought. Men continue to drink far more alcohol than women, and suffer most from alcohol abuse problems. Risk-taking involved in drinking by young men is reflected in the statistics on accidents and violent deaths and injuries. With women, on the other hand, the health hazards of drinking emerge at a lower level of consumption than with men. Drinking by women is rising all the time, resulting in a growing need for substance abuse services. In the early 1970s, women represented only one in ten of those seeking help for such problems; today the figure is one in four. Because the reasons for drinking, and the manner, consequences and treatment needs may be different for women and for men, statistical and research data differentiated by sex with sufficient accuracy is needed to identify them.

The mainstreaming report commissioned by the Alcohol Programme indicated, however, that statistics and research on the alcohol situation vary greatly in this respect, and that the lack of data on women and men is not felt to be a problem calling for clarification. Research also fails to utilize the opportunities provided by the material for studying drinking patterns in the light

²⁴ Alcohol policy consumer guide 2004.

²⁵ See e.g. Alcohol Programme 2004–2007. Starting points for co-operation 2004.

²⁶ Siukola 2005.

of a greater number of background variables, such as sex, age and socio-economic status. The fact that most time-sequence studies charting the alcohol situation use a question which sets the limit for both men and women at six units of alcohol as their gauge of drinking to intoxication also causes problems. Because of their physiological differences, however, the effects of this quantity are different in men and women. When people are advised to reduce their risk consumption, the rule of thumb is that women should not drink more than five units at one time and men seven units. If six units is used in research for both men and women, the result is only a rough estimate that gauges women too loosely and men too strictly. The same problem exists in the AUDIT questionnaire used for self-assessment of alcohol consumption²⁷.

The report also examines from the gender perspective the steering and development of substance abuse services and the preventive work done by various NGOs. It seems that both preventive work and substance abuse services have not kept up with the changes taking place in the alcohol situation. Models for treatment were originally devised for men and care practices still operate mainly on men's terms. The threshold for seeking help may also be higher for women than for men. While the separate needs of women in substance abuse services have been given too little attention, men have remained remote from the core of preventive work. Men and boys are very rarely the primary target group of projects to prevent alcohol abuse. Activities focus mainly on children and adolescents and adults close to them. Projects are also aimed at women to some extent, but primarily only as mothers.

The report concludes that it would be possible to study the targeting of preventive substance abuse work by gender in publicly funded projects, for instance. At the moment, however, the gender perspective is not taken into account in the grounds for granting funding, application practices or the monitoring of funding effectiveness. For instance, the application forms for health promotion appropriations administered by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health do not ask for information on the gender targeting of projects, which would be the first requirement for assessing the targeting of funding and activity.

2.2.2 The effects of mainstreaming the gender equality perspective

One important problem area in the targeting of alcohol policy is the small volume of preventive measures aimed at the group that consumes most alcohol and substance abuse services – men. Although quite a lot is known about alcohol-related differences between men and women with respect to their state of health, social participation and life expectancy, there are hardly any tools for intervening in heavy drinking by men. To some extent this is because alcohol policy measures aimed specifically at the whole population are favoured rather than action aimed at risk-level drinkers. On the other hand, it seems that for some reason intervention in the drinking practices of adult men is felt to be a special area into which it is not proper to venture.

However, attention was paid to heavy drinking by men in implementation of the Alcohol Programme coordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health even before the equality report was carried out. For instance, there are great expectations for the preventive substance abuse work project Huugo being carried out jointly by Finland's biggest employee federation SAK and the Finnish Association for Healthy Lifestyles, which engages in preventive

²⁷ 10 personal questions about alcohol consumption.

substance abuse work. This project has access to several male-dominated trade unions.²⁸ In addition, the development of mini-intervention practices in primary health care is viewed as important, since this will inevitably provide access to men who consume more or less alcohol. Also, the importance of information provision on risk drinking limits and the harmful effects of alcohol consumption for both women and men in the material produced to support programme cooperation has been underlined right from the start of the Alcohol Programme period.

Life management material for young men

One special target considered for action in implementing the Alcohol Programme is how to influence drinking by young men and thereby their accidental and violent deaths.²⁹ The interest that arose in the Defence Forces as a result of the Alcohol Programme because of their need to deal with substance abuse matters as an employer and trainer of young conscripts provided a good starting point here. Such interest was also something of an obligation, in that the Ministry of Defence had promised, in committing itself to the Alcohol Programme, to intensify information about alcohol risks and problem drinking targeted at conscripts. Nearly every young man in Finland could be reached at one time through the system of national and civilian service.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Defence and the Defence Forces, the Alcohol Programme secretariat decided to produce life management material aimed at young men that could be used as an information tool at garrisons. The material was formulated into a general knowledge competition covering ten sets of questions and answers on various subjects of interest to young men. The leaflet provides information on, for instance, alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, sexual health, food and exercise, and strives to be appealing to young men.

There has already been positive feedback on the leaflet, and orders have come in from places other than garrisons. The A-clinics, for instance, have found it a useful opener to discussion with clients required to attend for monitoring because of a drunk-driving offence. It has also been used in activities designed to promote working capacity. However, no systematic study has been made of the leaflet's impact or the experiences of its users.

In practice, the strength of the alcohol policy mainstreaming report was that it legitimized the shift from identification of the problem to practical action. It demonstrated that the different problems of women and men demand different responses. In addition, it showed that, contrary to general belief, special measures do not place people in unequal positions because of their sex, but on the contrary promote gender equality, in this case in respect of their state of health, social participation and life expectancy, for instance. The report also provided those in the field with concrete information about gender mainstreaming methods in their own particular area. A new and eye-opening viewpoint explored by the Alcohol Programme actors was the significance of statistics and data generation in identifying problems differentiated by sex, and the fact that such data is not necessarily available.

²⁸ Huugo – Työelämän alkoholiohjelma (Workplace alcohol programme).

²⁹ See also the 'Health 2015' public health programme.

Gender impact of the alcohol legislation

The readiness to identify (and recognize) gender-differentiated problems related to the consumption and harmful effects of alcohol arising as a result of the alcohol policy mainstreaming report, and particularly the foundation it provided for legitimizing gender-sensitive action, have also had a profound influence on the process of alcohol legislation reform.

In line with the Government's alcohol policy action package, it had been the intention only to print on packaging warnings about potential damage to the foetus from alcohol consumption. However, greater gender equality awareness among the law drafters concerned led them to consider other warning texts, too. If bottles only carry warnings about the risk to foetuses, say the drafters, the sole focus is on drinking by women of child-bearing age. Controlling drinking by women alone is not very equal, however, especially when we know that risk consumption and substance abuse problems continue to affect mainly men, and that besides the damage to the foetus, alcohol has many other serious effects on human health.

The gender impact of the law was also assessed in reforming the alcohol legislation. The evaluation was made at the end of the drafting process and took a form typical of impact assessment, being based on the drafter's expertise and judgement (for more details of gender impact assessment of legislation, see 3.4.1). As the content of the final bill is still open, however, the assessment can as yet only be conditional: the gender impact will depend on what is decided about the warnings on packaging. In the assessment several problems with warnings solely about damage to the foetus are mentioned, such as the fact that at worst a warning could increase a woman's sense of guilt and raise the threshold for seeking help with substance abuse problems.

Otherwise, the gender equality report on alcohol policy has had little impact as yet. Progress needs to be made specifically in production of statistics, in assessment of the targeting of public funding, and in the development of substance abuse services. The gender equality perspective on alcohol work done by the State Provincial Offices has also made slow progress. However, one positive example that can be mentioned is the SOTKANet indicator bank at STAKES (National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health), to which more indicators on women's and men's use of substance abuse services are to be added. In addition, a few individual officials have learned to identify in their own work matters of significance for the promotion of gender equality. Assuming that gender impact assessment during the alcohol legislation reform process affects the content of the new legislation, this alone will have far-reaching effects.

Speaking generally of the mainstreaming report commissioned by the Alcohol Programme, we can say that it has functioned very well as a first attempt to bring gender, women and men, into the heart of alcohol policy. Though the report was produced only after the programme had been launched, it has had an impact on alcohol policy operations. However, good practice would be for the gender equality perspective to be taken into account at the stage when a project or programme is being planned, for instance when expert members of working groups are selected and project resources are allocated. To this end, many projects and programmes set up on a fixed-term basis should be provided with a clear guide or instructions on the stage and the manner in which the gender equality perspective should be taken into account in project implementation. This is also important because those working on a project may come from outside the ministries and thus know less than civil servants about central government's obligations regarding the gender impact assessment.

3 GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE WORK OF MINISTRIES

The following examines mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective in work at ministries, using five viewpoints. The first sub-section (3.1) studies the actor structure and resourcing of mainstreaming in more detail. The second sub-section (3.2) deals with the mainstreaming training of civil servants, which has been available to the Government as a whole and to individual ministries. The third sub-section (3.3) examines recognition of the importance of gender for instance in statistics used by ministries and in project and programme work. Actual gender impact assessment is dealt with in sub-section 3.4 and mainstreaming steering methods in sub-section 3.5.

3.1 MAINSTREAMING RESOURCES AND ACTORS

3.1.1 Steering and coordination of mainstreaming at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

The work of coordinating mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective is entrusted to the Gender Equality Unit which comes under the Finance and Planning Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Actual coordination and incorporation of the gender perspective into legislation, performance agreements, the budget and other projects, and personnel policy is handled by a single person at the unit. About half the working time of this person is devoted to procuring information, influencing government processes, developing mainstreaming methods and improving the availability of equality information, and about a third to planning and implementing mainstreaming training and guidelines for it. In addition, this person handles duties related to international cooperation. Also other civil servants in the Gender Equality Unit supply information and expertise related to mainstreaming in various areas.

3.1.2 Working Group on the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality

Implementation of the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality is monitored by a joint working group of Government ministries whose tasks include development of gender mainstreaming and its extension to the entire government administration. Each ministry is represented in the Working Group by one regular member and one deputy member. Except for two political state secretaries, all the other members are high-level civil servants. The expert member of the Working Group is Director Tarja Heinilä-Hannikainen and its secretaries are Senior Research Officer Päivi Yli-Pietilä and Project Manager Hanna Onwen-Huma, all from the Gender Equality Unit at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. State Secretary Leila Kostainen from the same ministry chairs the Working Group.

The Working Group has convened ten times since May 2005, i.e. about every two months. The meetings have mainly dealt with the organization of gender equality affairs in different ministries, monitoring of implementation of the Action Plan for Gender Equality and the reports prepared on this monitoring. As regards mainstreaming, the meetings have focused on its structures and organization rather than on actual matters of substance. Planning work on how to increase know-how on mainstreaming and the development of tools have begun, however, and matters discussed include the lack of sex-disaggregated statistics and training of administrators under the various ministries. Furthermore, certain central government projects important for the monitoring of gender equality promotion and gender mainstreaming have been presented to the Working Group, such as the local government and service structure reform.³⁰

3.1.3 Gender equality actors at different ministries

In accordance with the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality, the resourcing and organization of gender equality affairs also apply to the internal affairs at the individual ministries. The ministries have appointed specific contact persons for gender equality who form a network of contact persons across the entire Government. In addition, the monitoring group for the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality has stated that mainstreaming of the gender perspective requires the support of ministries' internal gender equality working groups. The ministries have thus been urged either to set up a gender equality working group or to update the terms of reference of an existing working group so as to respond to the objectives of mainstreaming. Most ministries have also appointed persons in charge of the different sub-areas of mainstreaming.

Judging by the information obtained, all the ministries currently have their own gender equality working groups. There are, however, differences between the ministries in regard to their composition, terms of reference and how often the groups convene. Some ministries have observed the monitoring group's recommendation that both the individual departments and sub-areas of mainstreaming should be represented in the gender equality working group. Other ministries have only taken one of these criteria into account or have stressed more the persons' suitability and personal interest in gender equality work. One ministry has designated an enlarged Executive Steering Group as its gender equality working group. In addition to the actual gender equality working groups, some ministries have set up a network of contact persons for gender equality covering all the agencies and departments under them. For instance, the Ministries of Finance, Labour, and Agriculture and Forestry have such networks.

The work of several ministries' gender equality working groups is largely focused on equality planning related to personnel policy, whereas the mainstreaming of ministries' internal activities in other respects is planned and monitored to a varying extent. Also, gender equality action plans often focus on personnel policy issues and seldom deal with mainstreaming. Judged from the information available, only two ministries have a separate operational gender equality plan: the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Furthermore, at least the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

³⁰ The gender equality assessment of the local government and service structure reform is discussed in more detail in 3.3.2.

have issued mainstreaming guidelines to the staff of the ministry and of the agencies and departments under it.

An example of an effective gender equality working group is that at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, which is called TARVO. This has already to some extent dealt with all the sub-areas of mainstreaming mentioned in the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality. The working group has, for instance, developed mechanisms to identify the Government bills requiring gender impact assessment (see 3.4.1 for more), acted as an example in mainstreaming of the budget, and developed the Ministry's performance guidance, personnel policy, training and statistics production. Besides the development of methods and models, the gender equality working group has discussed gender issues relating to the Ministry's main policy areas. As regards the ministry's projects and programmes, the working group has discussed, for instance, the Alcohol Programme, the National Health Care Project and the Development Project for Social Services. Apart from the mainstreaming of the Ministry's own actions, the gender equality working group has done valuable work in developing action models suitable for the entire government administration.

One specific factor contributing to the successful work of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health's gender equality working group is its members' extensive expertise in both the sub-areas of mainstreaming and the processes of central government. Its members also act as an effective communication channel between the group and the rest of the Ministry: they bring up significant gender issues in their field of expertise for consideration by the group and conversely convey information about mainstreaming to their own work community. The gender equality working group brings up the most important decisions for consideration by the Ministry's Executive Steering Group.

3.1.4 Structural development needs in mainstreaming

The interministerial and intraministerial networks built up for mainstreaming are not yet working in the best possible way. This is, firstly, due to the limited resources available for coordination, for which reason the direct contacts between the different ministries are inevitably limited. The most important channel for communication is actually the Government Working Group for Gender Equality, within which it is not possible to deal comprehensively with ministries' internal issues. Another problem is defects in the ministries' internal implementation, which is too focused on fulfilling the gender equality objectives related to personnel policy. The mainstreaming structures are also complicated by the fact that contact person for gender equality in the ministries and members of the Government Working Group for Gender Equality are not necessarily the same persons. The composition of some ministries' internal working groups for gender equality should also be improved. The aim should be that the various departments of the ministry concerned and the various sub-sectors of mainstreaming from training to the generation of statistics and to the drafting of legislation and budgets, are represented in the working groups for gender equality.

At the moment, gender mainstreaming is not considered to be development of administrative processes so much as promotion of gender equality, and this is challenging. In consequence, mainstreaming is solely coordinated and developed by the Gender Equality Unit of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, whereas the expertise and resources of the Public Management Department of the Ministry of Finance and the Administration and Development Unit of the Prime Minister's Office could for instance be made available to it. Implementation

of mainstreaming in an efficient and practical way would certainly require all the bodies developing administration processes and all available expertise to be involved.

3.2 MAINSTREAMING TRAINING OF CIVIL SERVANTS

3.2.1 Training functions for the Government system as a whole

The Working Group on the Government Action Plan for Gender has so far arranged two training functions on gender mainstreaming intended for the Government as a whole. The first dealt with mainstreaming principles and methods at a general level and presented in greater detail a few projects and programmes that have taken the gender equality perspective into account. Examples used were gender impact assessment in the field of physical exercise/recreation carried out at the Ministry of Education, gender impact assessment of the Occupational Safety and Health Act and a mainstreaming report on a policy programme concerning the Citizen Participation Policy Programme. This session was attended by some fifty civil servants, most of them members of the Working Group on the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality and equality working groups at the various ministries.

The theme of the second training function was mainstreaming in formulating the Budget, i.e. gender budgeting. The session dealt with a report compiled by the Ministry of Labour on the gender impact of labour market training, one Finnish local authority's experiences of the planning of social services, and the need and potential for gender impact assessment of the Budget. The session was arranged jointly by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Finance, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities and the Council for Gender Equality, and was attended by about a hundred civil servants and elected officials involved in budget formulation. Twice a year the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health also arranges training on gender impact assessment of legislation. About twenty civil servants working in central government attended these sessions. At all these joint interministerial training sessions, the clear majority of participants were women, with men accounting for only about a quarter.

Good feedback has been received on these mainstreaming training functions arranged by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. There has been special praise for the plain language used in discussing a difficult matter and the positive and human approach. The sessions briefly explained what mainstreaming means, what national and international norms lie behind it, and what the Government Programme and Action Plan for Gender Equality say about it. In addition, information was provided about the need to assess gender impact and ways of doing so, and about sources of more information. It was the specific aim to explain the principles of mainstreaming as clearly and understandably as possible. Using examples, it was also possible so show that mainstreaming has concrete effects.

The next training function for the whole Government, in autumn 2006, will deal with incorporation of the gender perspective into the generation of data and statistics.

3.2.2 Mainstreaming training at the various ministries

Some mainstreaming training has also been arranged within individual ministries. The person responsible for mainstreaming coordination and training at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has given a presentation on mainstreaming at meetings of the Executive Steering Groups at all the ministries and on request at other functions arranged there. At least the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry have also arranged their own training on mainstreaming or gender impact assessment. The Ministry of Labour, for instance, has provided mainstreaming training related to law drafting and decision-making for its management and law drafters. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has also arranged training for its civil servants and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry for the staff of the rural departments of its regional administration.

Individual mainstreaming training at the ministries is being planned at least by the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Defence, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and Ministry of Labour. At the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, for instance, a mainstreaming seminar will deal with the Equality Act, mainstreaming and gender impact assessment. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in turn, is planning three fairly short training sessions, the first to deal with practical examples of gender impact assessment of official actions, the second with equality planning in the workplace and the third with equality issues in development cooperation. The sessions are being planned by the ministry's Gender Adviser from the Department for Development Policy.

The Government Action Plan for Gender Equality states that by 2007 the gender equality perspective will be incorporated into all ministries' internal training programmes from induction training upwards. Current monitoring data indicates, however, that so far only a few ministries provide basic training with content on gender equality or mainstreaming. At the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, though, gender equality has long been a fundamental element in the preparatory course on international affairs and in development cooperation training. The Ministry has also given some attention to the gender breakdown of trainers. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Prime Minister's Office now also include some equality content in their basic training. A few ministries are planning incorporation of the gender equality perspective into their management training.

Nearly half the ministries have not as yet arranged or planned any mainstreaming training of their own as far as we know. Thus their staffs have only received a minimal amount of training, and in practice this is provided only for certain members of the ministry's management group or equality working group.

3.2.3 Developing mainstreaming training

There continues to be a substantial need for mainstreaming training. The ministries themselves judge that only a small percentage of their staffs are familiar with the concept of mainstreaming, and even fewer are aware of its content, objectives or meaning. Overall, the concept is considered difficult to grasp, theoretical and remote from the everyday work of individual staff members. Many ministries in fact hope for more concrete methods and guidelines for implementing mainstreaming, and the kind of training that would be closer to their areas of concern and work currently in hand. As well as the training provided by the

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the ministries also hope for finished training material to back up their own training provision. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has already started planning the production of on-line study material for this purpose.

One factor preventing the development of training is a general lack of resources for the coordination of mainstreaming. In practice, training, training planning and cooperation among different training bodies accounts for only about one fifth of the duties of a single staff member. Thus, though the quantitative need for training continues to be great, there is very little time for developing actual content.

One important target group considered for training is ministers, who could be provided with personal training without incurring the pressures that arise within a group concerning existing knowledge and the coordination of schedules. At such events it would be possible to go through all the matters relative to the promotion and mainstreaming of gender equality that concern an individual minister. Another possible option that was raised in the interview with the Minister for Equality would be to schedule training for the political leadership immediately after the formation of a government, when ministers have not yet settled in and their calendars are still fairly empty. Already, ministers are given induction training, for instance on current security issues. Mainstreaming themes would also fit in well with such training.

3.3 RECOGNIZING THE GENDER RELEVANCE

3.3.1 Gender perspective in data and statistics generation

One of the targets of the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality focuses on the statistical data generated and used by ministries. The plan requires government authorities to differentiate as fully as possible between women and men when compiling data. At the moment, personnel statistics are well differentiated by sex, but there is still much to be done in other areas.

The specific problem lies in the fact that statistics are generally believed to include all the data relevant to the matter in hand. However, a closer look reveals that lack of differentiation by sex conceals some important information of significance for gender equality. In time-sequence material, for instance, a trend for the whole population may well be different for men and for women. Women and men should be consistently present in all statistics and research concerning people. It is impossible to know in advance just which data may prove to be significant for gender equality.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has actively developed its output of data on its branch of the administration. At the same time it has established how far sex-differentiated data is available. Most of the statistics commissioned and used by the Ministry are differentiated by sex, though sometimes there is insufficient information or data has to be compiled from several different sources. The reason for inadequate statistics is often that those involved have not understood the need to differentiate. Specifically, there are shortcomings in the Ministry's administrative branch in the operational statistics compiled by local authorities. The Ministry of the Interior, too, has noted deficiencies in the availability of information differentiated by sex, and has worked to incorporate the gender perspective, for

instance into statistics on regional development. The Ministry of Trade and Industry, in turn, is improving its statistics on female entrepreneurship.

In addition to differentiated statistics, mainstreaming the gender equality perspective needs support from data on women's studies and equality studies. A national Internet portal called *Minna* has in fact been created to support mainstreaming which contains information on gender equality, articles, news, links, women's studies bulletins and an expert search feature.³¹ The portal's content is being updated gradually. Work currently in progress includes an information and instruction package of gender mainstreaming for civil servants that will cover gender-related projects in various administrative branches. According to a report by a Ministry of Social Affairs and Health adviser, there is also a need for a permanent gender equality data service that would document and distribute the information needed by various users concerning women, men, the gender system and other factors affecting the equality situation.³² As yet, the location and funding for this data service have not been resolved.

Information as a background to gender equality work is also provided by the Gender Barometer published every third year by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, which contains data on public attitudes, expectations and opinions related to equality matters. In addition, a municipal-level gender statistics data bank accessible to all has been produced to promote gender equality work within local authorities. However, this has not been updated recently.³³

3.3.2 Gender equality perspective in projects, programmes and areas of policy

In order to achieve the objectives of the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality, mainstreaming should also be extended to the internal functioning of ministries, such as their project and programme work. The first mainstreaming projects proper at the end of the 1990s strove to incorporate the gender equality perspective into youth policy, rural policy and environmental design policy, for instance (see sub-section 1.2). Since then, the perspective has also been incorporated into the areas of culture and sports, development policy, support for entrepreneurship, prevention of violence, health and substance abuse policy, and projects to encourage citizen participation. The following outlines some of the most important measures taking the gender equality perspective into account in these fields. It also studies the latest action on mainstreaming the perspective in employment policy and regional development, both extremely important areas in terms of gender equality. Mainstreaming in alcohol policy was dealt with in section 2.

Reform of the local government and service structure

Preparations for a reform programme to achieve greater productivity in and strengthening of the local government and service structure started in mid 2005. The aim was to consolidate

³¹ *Minna*, national women's studies and gender equality portal.

³² Grönroos 2005.

³³ Gender Barometer 2004; Finnish Gender Statistics Website.

the local government structure by combining municipalities and integrating parts of some of them into others. Also, services requiring a broader population base than that of a single municipality were to be integrated by increasing intermunicipal collaboration. In June 2006, the minister-led group working on the local government and service structure reform put forward a proposal for a framework act that would provide outlines and a timetable for the next phase of the reform.³⁴ The Government bill proper will be put before Parliament later in the autumn.

In early 2006 the ministries involved in the drafting, Parliament and the Working Group on the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality became interested in the possible gender equality impact of the project. A preliminary assessment was made by an unofficial working group under the Ministry of the Interior, which also included representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. The assessment was placed before the local government and service structure group. Its recommendations were that the gender equality impact of the reform programme should be assessed from the viewpoint of local government employees, service users and social participation. Incorporation of the gender equality perspective during the implementation at the regional level was considered particularly important. With this in mind, it was decided to design as concrete as possible a tool to help with assessing gender impact. Guidelines produced by the unofficial working group referred to above provide information on mainstreaming the gender equality perspective and assessing gender impact, with examples of differences between women and men in working life, economic status, education and training, need for services and social participation. The working group aimed to get the gender impact assessment requirement included among the clauses of the framework act. The local government and service structure reform group's proposal, however, included no mention of the performance of such assessment in implementing the regional phase.

However, it is impossible to give an assessment of the final results of the incorporation of gender perspective into the reform, as no final Government proposal has yet been put forward and implementation has not begun. The outcome will largely depend on the weight attached to the gender equality perspective in the reform as a whole. One matter as yet unresolved is whether the gender impact requirement will be included among the actual sections of the framework act on the local government and service structure reform or in its justifications (or indeed whether it will be mentioned in the Government proposal at all). Another open issue is how the gender impact of the framework act itself will be presented. How the guidelines drawn up for gender impact assessment of the implementation stage are distributed and marketed will certainly also be of importance.

Whatever the chosen manner of implementation, taking the gender equality perspective into account in preparatory work on the local government and service structure reform has proved useful. It has, for instance, given the minister-led structure reform group and the law drafters additional information about the possible effects of the reform on the status of women and men. Also, the guidelines prepared for use by the municipalities are helpful in all kinds of reform work affecting the standing of citizens – both in the municipalities and in the ministries involved in regional development.

³⁴ Municipality and service structure reform group proposal for a framework act, 28 June, 2006.

Rural development programmes

Promoting gender equality has also been one objective of the regional rural development programmes coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The programme for 2000–2006, for instance, aims to ensure that half of all jobs created go to women and that 30 to 40 per cent of new businesses are set up by women. Advance assessment and planning for the new programme period also incorporate the gender equality perspective: in 2007–2013, one focus will be on the kind of regional projects that strive to prevent the social exclusion of men in rural areas and the movement of women away from rural areas.³⁵ The gender equality perspective has also been included in training seminars under the rural areas programme intended for Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry administrators and local action groups.

One important equality actor in developing the countryside and rural areas is the rural women's theme group which operates on national development funding and aims to strengthen and make visible the activities of country women. The theme group acts as a nationwide network involving women who work in administration, advisory organizations and research institutions in both town and country. Other partners include the Regional Councils, the Employment and Economic Development Centres, women's resource centres, advisory organizations and projects all over Finland. An important tool of rural gender equality work is the Rural Women's Action Programme, which aims to promote opportunities for women to live in rural areas, work and earn a living there, and set up a family. In 2005, an action programme was also set up for the foundation and development of regional resource centres for women. These are small-scale centres of grass-roots know-how that aim to take account of and develop the specific character of women in entrepreneurship, regional development and the promotion of gender equality.³⁶

The Citizen Participation Policy Programme

The citizen participation policy programme is one of Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Government's four policy programmes. The others concern entrepreneurship, employment and the information society. The policy programmes represent a new approach based on cooperation between the various administrative sectors in which the aim is to strengthen political control and promote attainment of the targets laid down in the Government Programme. The citizen participation policy programme is the only one of the four that has comprehensively analysed mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective in its implementation.

The initiative for taking the perspective into account came from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, which asked for a report on gender equality promotion in all four policy programmes. The citizen participation policy programme was assessed by a group of researchers from outside the Ministry, who analysed the documents setting up the five projects within the programme and interviewed their responsible programme managers. The main observations were compiled in a workbook designed to help those responsible for policy programmes to incorporate the gender equality perspective into their work. A monitoring report has also been commissioned on the implementation of mainstreaming.

³⁵ Regional rural development programmes for 2000–2006 and 2007–2013.

³⁶ Action Programme for Rural Women 2005–2008; Proposal for a women's resources programme 2007–2013.

According to the independent researchers' report, the project documents and interviews revealed the existence of some problematic ideas about gender equality and its implementation. Equality was not generally felt to be a problem or then it was thought to have been achieved already. It was also often understood only as a computational quantity, for instance in the composition of working groups or the choice of speakers. Moreover, the civil servants in the projects had no competence in mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective, and lacked familiarity with both national and international gender equality norms. The report also judged that promoting gender equality still faces challenges at the level of both attitudes and knowledge, the gender equality perspective not yet being recognized in the themes of civil servants' own projects. Incorporating gender into future policy programmes already at the preparatory stage, when the gender equality perspective would be an operational objective to be monitored and adequate resources could be allocated for it, is certainly a challenge to be faced.³⁷

Mainstreaming in culture and sports

Since completion of its youth policy pilot project at the end of the 1990s, the Ministry of Education has promoted mainstreaming primarily in the areas of arts and culture, and sports and physical recreation. The job of assessing the arts and culture area was given to the Foundation for Cultural Policy Research, which was also asked for suggestions for action to promote gender equality. Its report stated that in arts and culture the biggest differences between women and men concerned pay and finding professional work. There is also inequality in training, opportunity for influence and access to top jobs. The gender quotas called for in the Equality Act have improved the situation regarding women's access to positions of influence and thus indirectly also access to grants and project funding, for example. However, the Act has no impact outside the public sector, such as in copyright bodies or the culture industry. The report recommended gender impact assessment for instance in implementing programmes for loans or other financial support for new entrepreneurs, performance agreements in the field and monitoring achievement of performance targets.³⁸

In sports and physical recreation, gender equality has been an aim since the mid 1990s, when a Ministry of Education working group put forward the first action programme in the field aimed at promoting gender equality.³⁹ The latest report examines application of the gender equality perspective in key areas of the budget for sports and physical recreation: in sports organizations, construction of facilities, municipal sports departments, and research and training. A memorandum from the group working on the report states that gender equality should be specifically considered in connection with government funding for various sports and physical recreation organizations. It also proposes separate performance-based funding for individual organizations or municipalities which have done good work in promoting gender equality. Likewise, it notes the importance of the systematic incorporation of gender perspective into statistical data on sports and physical recreation.⁴⁰

³⁷ Gender mainstreaming: Analysis of the state of equality between the sexes within the Policy Programme for Citizen Participation. Equality Workbook 2004; Saari 2005; Wakeham 2005.

³⁸ Mitchell & Kanerva 2004.

³⁹ Piikkareilla nopeammin, korkeammalle, tasa-arvoisemmin (Faster, higher, more equally) 1995.

⁴⁰ Tasapeli – Sukupuolten välisen tasa-arvon edistäminen ja sukupuolivaikutusten arviointi liikunnan alalla (Promoting gender equality and assessing gender impact in sports and physical recreation) 2005.

As a result of such gender impact assessment in the sphere of sports and physical recreation, the City of Hämeenlinna has been given a grant to develop models promoting gender equality in its work with young people, culture and sports. Incentive awards are also to be given for work to promote gender equality by other municipalities. In addition, in the area of sports facility construction guidelines have been drawn up on manège building for the riding that interests so many girls and women. A decision has been taken to assess the gender equality impact of budgeting for sports and physical recreation at the latest in the budget proposal for 2008.

Gender impact assessment in this field is comprehensive and thorough. However, the data and experiences gained during assessment have not spread into other Ministry of Education operating sectors as might be hoped. The working group's memorandum has not, for instance, been discussed by the Ministry's internal gender equality working group. Likewise, its experiences have not been utilized to promote gender impact assessment of the whole Ministry's budget proposal, though in the unit responsible for sport and physical recreation policy and youth and culture policy, the gender equality perspective has been incorporated well.

Gender equality in working life

At the Ministry of Labour, the gender equality perspective is mainly taken into account in targets and action to raise the employment rate and cut unemployment, to train immigrants, to reconcile work and family, to share out the costs of family leaves more evenly, and to support entrepreneurship. These component areas are also viewed as important in the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality.

Gender is also taken into consideration in the Ministry's administrative branch in the European Social Fund's labour policy Objective programmes, principles for granting project funding, and its financial monitoring. Some ESF funding goes straight into projects to promote gender equality. Each project application must also explain the target group, and its expected gender impact. A special gender equality expert takes part in the stage at which projects are selected and implemented. However, the interim evaluations of the Objective programmes reveal that a substantial proportion of those running projects do not know what the promotion of gender equality in projects means. Having projects that are gender-neutral often seems to be the ideal.⁴¹ Questions on application forms assessing gender impact are considered hard to answer, and the value of retaining them is sometimes debated. Without such questions, however, it is difficult to get any information about the allocation of project funding by sex.

The Ministry of Labour also coordinates the employment programme which is one of the Government's four policy programmes. Its main objectives include reducing structural unemployment, preventing exclusion, preparing for labour shortages because of the changing age structure, increasing productivity and improving the organization and rationality of work. The gender equality perspective was not included in implementation of the employment programme from the start, so its promotion is barely visible in either the programme content or its projects. As gender equality in working life is one of the main components in the Government's gender equality policy, this is regrettable. However, the targeting of the

⁴¹ Hanhela 2004.

employment programme's main legislative project, the reform of labour market subsidy, has been examined from the gender equality perspective.⁴²

Promoting women's entrepreneurship

As part of its implementation of the entrepreneurship policy programme, the Ministry of Trade and Industry has set up a working group to ponder ways of improving the preconditions for women's entrepreneurship. To this end, the group's report proposes that a women's entrepreneurship development project should be set up in 2006–2008 aiming to raise the percentage of women among all entrepreneurs to 40. This would be done for instance by developing advisory and financing services, improving the availability and quality of statistics and research work on women's entrepreneurship, and by setting up regional and sectoral cooperation networks. According to the group's recommendations, the women's entrepreneurship perspective should also be made more visible in implementation of the entrepreneurship programme generally. Judging by the central government project register, however, the women's entrepreneurship project has not yet been set up.

The entrepreneurship policy programme does not take the gender equality perspective into account in accordance with the mainstreaming principle. The reason is the same as in other Government policy programmes, i.e. the gender equality perspective was not incorporated into programme implementation right from the start.

Mainstreaming in development policy

Very few ministries have their own gender equality action plan (see sub-section 3.1.3), though the first such plan in foreign affairs was approved as long ago as 1994. This and later plans have striven to further incorporation of the gender equality perspective into preparatory work and international cooperation. The most recent plan dates from 2003.⁴³ In addition, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has approved a gender equality promotion strategy and action plan for 2003–2007 in Finland's development policy and has incorporated the gender equality perspective into the decree on the activities of the foreign affairs administration.

Gender equality objectives have been fulfilled quite well in the Ministry's administrative branch, especially in UN and human rights policy and in development cooperation. Mainstreaming targets have been promoted in, for instance, development cooperation projects, in which institutional mechanisms promoting gender equality have been created in the target country's system of governance. Equality issues are also an integral part of collaboration with development cooperation NGOs and funds.

Reducing violence

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has an action programme for 2004–2007 aiming to combat intimate partner and domestic violence. This focuses on developing the service system and preventive measures. Mainstreaming the gender equality perspective in violence reduction is in turn visible in the incorporation of the violence against women theme in other

⁴² See also Government Action Plan for Gender Equality, Follow-up Report (March 2006).

⁴³ Ministry for Foreign Affairs gender equality action plan III.

national projects and programmes to reduce violence. These comprise the Ministry of Justice's national programme for the reduction of violence, the Ministry of the Interior's internal security programme, and the police administration's programme to combat violence.⁴⁴ The Ministry of Defence reports that themes related to violence against women have also been included in its conscript training.

3.3.3 Obstacles to recognizing gender relevance

So far, the gender equality perspective has been incorporated into the preparation and implementation of only a few projects, programmes and policy packages within central government. In these cases, the influential element in taking gender into account has often been the activeness of individual civil servants at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health's Gender Equality Unit or at the ministries concerned. Other influential factors may also be requirements concerning gender equality objectives expressed in the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality, in Finland's international obligations or in public debate. The main practical problem in project and programme work is that the gender equality perspective is not taken into consideration early enough, i.e. at the planning stage. Adding gender equality content retroactively does not produce adequate impact on the structures, content and resource allocation of projects and programmes. For that reason, the results are often unsatisfactory.

One obstacle to recognizing the relevance of gender equality is that that this perspective is only felt to concern certain matters in which gender issues come to the fore naturally, as it were. In other matters, people often fail even to suspect that they may have a gender impact. Promoting gender equality is also frequently felt to be a completely separate area of policy rather than a choice of perspective that can be applied to all policy issues. For this reason, perhaps, its implementation is often felt to be a matter solely for the authorities in charge of equality matters. The problems involved in dealing with equality issues are further increased by the fact that gender equality is not a quantity that can be simply and universally measured. Consequently, recognition of the significance of gender in ministry programmes and elsewhere continues to demand greater expertise from civil servants on issues related to gender equality.

3.4 ASSESSING GENDER IMPACT

3.4.1 Gender impact assessment in legislation

The 2004 Bill Drafting Instructions (HELO) provide guidance on assessing the effects of proposed legislation. HELO states that Government proposals should briefly explain the main impact of proposed provisions. They should also state how this impact was assessed. The main effects of a piece of legislation are its economic impact, its effect on authorities'

⁴⁴ Police measures to prevent and reduce violence 2005; National programme to reduce violence 2005; Everyday safety – internal security programme 2004.

operations, its environmental impact and its social effects.⁴⁵ Further instructions on impact assessment have also been issued by individual ministries, and include the following:

- Instructions on assessing the economic effects of law proposals (1998)
- Instructions on assessing environmental impact (1998)
- Instructions on estimating business impact (1999)
- Instructions on assessing effects on regional development (2003)
- Guidelines for assessing gender impact (2003) and
- Memorandum on taking impact on crime into account in law drafting (2002).

As an element in the assessment of social impact, instructions are also issued on carrying out assessments of gender impact. According to HELO, assessing gender impact means striving to establish in advance the effects of a law on the status of men and women so as to ensure that when the law is put into effect it does not have any indirect discriminatory impact. The gender equality perspective is also incorporated into the HELO instructions on assessment of economic impact, focusing on proposals that will affect households, which must demonstrate how such effects will be felt by different types of family, and what the impact will be on the two genders. As an aid here, HELO urges the use of the 2003 handbook on gender impact assessment. No Government Resolution has been issued on these additional instructions, however, contrary to the case regarding economic, regional development, business and environmental impact.⁴⁶

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2003 guidelines for gender impact assessment provide clear and concrete instructions on carrying out gender impact assessment, and on the principles behind it. The guidelines state that the need for gender impact assessment of every new law project should already be established at the planning stage, and written justifications should be provided for the relevant Director General. The actual assessment should compile and analyse all factors of significance for gender equality in the sphere of life concerned. As background material, the guidelines recommend statistics and research studies, and both Finnish and international legal praxis and equality norms. In the law drafting, outside expertise can also be enlisted, specialist opinions obtained, experts consulted or separate reports commissioned, for all of which the project budget must make allowance. The findings should be reported as part of the drafting project. The guidelines also provide key data on the current gender equality situation and suggest some questions (see below) that could be asked as an aid to assessment. The themes referred to in these questions are dealt with in more detail in the guidelines.⁴⁷

The gender impact assessment questions are as follows:

1. Is the project aimed at (groups of) people?
2. What are the differences between women and men in that sphere of life?
3. Will the law project affect areas in which there are major differences between women and men in
 - financial standing
 - opportunities for parenthood and for combining work and family life
 - education and vocational development

⁴⁵ Bill Drafting Instructions (HELO) 2004.

⁴⁶ Bill Drafting Instructions (HELO) 2004.

⁴⁷ Ministry of Social Affairs and Health guidelines for gender impact assessment 2003.

- job opportunities, employment, and professional and career development
- fulfilling opportunities for social influence and participation
- health and morbidity and the need for related services
- security and threat of violence
- ensuring social participation
- use of time, leisure pursuits and need for recreation, and
- other areas of importance for promoting gender equality?⁴⁸

The first gender impact assessment was probably made by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health during the drafting of an act on employment contracts in 2000. It noted, for instance, that the act offered few solutions to problems with reconciling work and family or to the status of fixed-term employees. A very good example of a gender impact assessment of legislation is the amended Occupational Work Safety and Health Act of 2002, in the drafting of which the gender equality perspective was taken into account right from the start. The tripartite committee involved in the drafting expanded the old idea of occupational safety from the safety risks in male-majority fields (e.g. occupational accidents and deaths) to the kinds of risk typical among women workers or female-majority fields (e.g. harassment and exhaustion). This early-phase assessment thus had an impact on the content of the whole proposal.⁴⁹

Gender impact assessment in Government proposals

Despite the various drafting guidelines issued, impact assessments made of legislation are rather deficient overall. This is particularly true of the most recent types of impact assessment, including those on gender impact. A survey by the Ministry of Justice's Bureau of Legislative Inspection found that impact is often assessed only towards the end of a law project, when the Government proposal is being finally formulated. This means that the assessment has hardly any effect on its content. In addition, the most commonly used method is a set of conclusions based on the individual drafter's experience and expertise, instead of a thorough assessment. Evaluations also conclude, often without proper justification, that the law concerned has no gender impact whatsoever.⁵⁰

Specifically gender impact is assessed only rarely in Government proposals. In 2005, for instance, altogether 232 Government proposals were tabled. Of these, gender equality or gender impact had been assessed in only 30 (13%) of the cases, for one third of which the conclusion drawn was "the project has no gender impact". Similarly, the proposals did not state how any impact assessments had been made, so it is impossible to know whether "no gender impact" was the finding of an actual gender impact assessment or merely a judgement made based on the drafters' thinking and intuition. Notwithstanding the small volume of assessment and the commonly superficial implementation, however, nearly every ministry has dealt with gender impact in at least one law proposal so far. Most such assessments have been made in proposals related to employment or social security, the majority of them by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

⁴⁸ Ministry of Social Affairs and Health guidelines for gender impact assessment 2003 (edited and summarized by RS).

⁴⁹ See also Suomaa 2003 (complete text appended to this report).

⁵⁰ Tehokkaampaa, suunnitelmallisempaa ja hallitumpaa lainvalmistelua (More effective, systematic and controlled law drafting) 13/2005.

Need to develop gender impact assessment of legislation

Gender impact assessment of legislation currently relies on how far individual law drafters are able to follow the guidelines issued on it. The drafting timetables for proposals are often tight, and there is simply no time for conscientious gender impact assessment. There also appears to be a lack of management support; assessments are seldom asked for and implementation is not monitored. Another problem is that law drafters do not know enough about gender equality matters. A further problem preventing gender impact assessment is that the guidelines drawn up by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health are not always viewed as applying to drafting by other ministries. Thus one way of getting impact assessments made is to formulate guidelines applicable to the whole of central government.

The Ministry of Justice is in fact currently working on new guidelines on the impact assessment of laws. The aim is to combine all the instructions issued by the different ministries into a single clear and consistent whole that will provide the most concrete possible tool for practical drafting work. The members of the working group concerned represent all the ministries that have issued special instructions on impact assessment. The new guidelines should explain the importance of impact assessment at the various phases of the law drafting process and indicate the level of quality required from it. It will cover the following:

- why impact assessments should be made,
- how areas of impact should be identified,
- how various impacts should be assessed,
- how findings should be reported and
- how these findings should be reflected in Government proposals.

Another function of the working group is to plan the necessary supporting and monitoring systems to promote efficient compliance with the guidelines at the various stages of law drafting. There are plans for the creation of a supportive network of experts on impact assessment who will provide advice on assessment techniques and suggest sources of additional information. However, responsibility for carrying out the assessments proper will remain with the law drafters.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has also devised mechanisms for monitoring law drafting projects which will ensure that gender impact assessments are actually carried out. The Ministry's legislation programme is currently surveyed twice a year at meetings of law drafters chaired by the permanent secretary. These meetings represent the last opportunity to establish all the Government law proposals that need gender impact assessment. The survey is coordinated by the member of the Ministry's equality working group in charge of law drafting matters. One of the Ministry's departments has also appointed a person to monitor implementation of gender impact assessment in law drafting. The same practice is also recommended to other departments.

3.4.2 Gender budgeting

Provisions on drafting the Budget are laid down in the Constitution of Finland, (Chapter 7), in the Budget Act and Decree, and in the Act on Criteria for Charges Payable to the State. In accordance with the performance-based budgeting and steering model, the most important tools for central government finances are the operating and financial plans, the spending

limits defined by the Government for the ministries, the annual and supplementary budgets, and reporting and auditing concerning central government finances.

Formulation of the budget proposal starts in December, more than twelve months before the start of the budget year, when the ministries submit summaries of the operating and financial plans for their administrative branches to the Ministry of Finance. After that, negotiations on spending limits begin between the administrative branches and the Ministry of Finance, dealing with the most significant proposals for changes to the Budget. The Government adopts the spending limits for the ministries' branches during March. Based on the spending limits and the instructions issued by the Ministry of Finance, formulation work continues at the ministries, which then submit their budget proposals to the Ministry of Finance in May. The Ministry of Finance decides on the draft budget in the middle of July. As of that date, the proposal and the formulation material are public. A further round of negotiations is conducted with the ministries on the content of the Budget, and thereafter the Government makes its final proposal for parliamentary consideration. Parliament decides by the end of the year on the Budget for the next year and related finance and expenditure laws.

The budget proposal consists of the General Strategy and Outlook, numerical tables, detailed criteria and appendices. It is a compact document that only states the appropriations. Detailed provisions on their use are issued under separate legislation. The appendices contain background information for the Budget. So far, though, they have not dealt with gender impact assessment.

Integration of a gender perspective into the formulation of the budget proposal

Integration of a gender perspective into the budget procedure, i.e. gender budgeting, has been developed since 2004 in a pilot project at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, which has in the first phase concentrated on formulating the Ministry's own budget proposal. The aim here has been to develop methods to assess the gender impact of the entire Budget at the same time. The project forms part of a Nordic Council of Ministers' project to develop gender budgeting.

Related to this pilot project, the Government Institute for Economic Research has carried out a survey on the gender budgeting for the main expenditure title of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. According to the survey, key factors in formulating a Budget that takes the gender perspective into account include a sufficient basis of information on gender equality and various channels of application for the assessment – apart from the General Strategy and Outlook and the specification of appropriations in the Budget, e.g. appendices to the Budget, law proposals including financial effects, and various Budget monitoring documents.⁵¹

The information compiled in the context of the pilot project has been used in developing the gender budgeting for the entire government administration. The most significant advance has been made in the Budget formulation guidelines to which, as a result of the negotiations between the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Ministry of Finance, the general directives for formulating the Budget state that a guideline requiring gender impact assessment has been added. The general directives for formulating the Budget state that the preambles to the main titles of the budget proposals should include a summarized review of

⁵¹ Haataja, Järviö & Mustonen 2006.

any activities with significant gender impact that are related to the budget proposal.⁵² This means that every ministry must include in its budget proposal a summary of any operations related to its administrative branch that have a significant gender impact. The idea is that the actual gender impact assessment will take place in connection with law drafting and drawing up project plans.

According to the representative of the Ministry of Finance, it is exceptional for the technical instructions for the implementation of the Budget to incorporate a given issue of substance that has to be taken into account in formulating the Budget. It is most usual merely for separate guidelines to be issued on impact assessment of the Budget. Thanks to the active work done by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, however, an addition to the guidelines was in fact ready one year in advance of the objective defined in the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality. Formulation of the Budget for 2007 according to these guidelines should nonetheless be considered as a trial. It will demonstrate how the instructions of the Ministry of Finance are interpreted by the different ministries and what kind of further instructions may be needed for the formulation of the 2008 Budget. The aim is to monitor gender budgeting among other matters in the Financial Statement and Report of the Government which the Government financial controller's function (the supervision and guidance authority for the national financial administration) places at the disposal of the civil servants responsible for formulating the Budget.

During the trial year, the function of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is to serve as an example by specifying in its budget proposal the actions related to strategic objectives that have gender effects. The Ministry's internal gender equality working group has taken an active part in this process, e.g. by monitoring the formulation of the budget proposal and pointing out where gender impact assessment could be included. The working group has also reviewed from a gender perspective certain important reforms in the Budget for the previous year and pondered what could have been said about them in the budget proposal. For instance, it was noticed in the review of the package for combating poverty that many of its measures were clearly targeted at only women or men. As an example, the increase in the rate of the national pension was aimed specifically at women, since they account for 80 per cent of all national pension recipients. In Finland, those who are not entitled to an earnings-related pension or whose earnings-related pension is small can obtain a national pension.

The Ministry of Labour is also developing gender impact assessment of the Budget. Labour market training, which covers 10 per cent of the appropriations under the Ministry's main title of expenditure (about EUR 200 million), has been chosen as the first object to be assessed. Labour market training for instance plays an important role in alleviating segregation in female and male-dominated sectors.⁵³ So far the Ministry of Labour has not developed any specific methods for gender impact assessment of the Budget, but awaits the issue of guidelines for the entire Government. The aim is that, based on the experiences obtained in the first year of application, at least the Budget for 2008 can be formulated by all the ministries taking its gender impact into account.

⁵² Drafting of the operating and financial plans, partly amended on 6 April 2006.

⁵³ Uitamö 2005.

Trends in the gender budgeting

So far, gender budgeting has only been developed with regard to the allocation of appropriations, i.e. advance gender impact assessment. In the budget procedure, it is, however, also possible to develop assessment that can be made after the budget year, examining what has been achieved by appropriations and reforms and how that responds to the objectives defined.⁵⁴ The aim is that feedback from the assessment will influence the drafting of the next year's Budget. This approach, based on result assessment, is well suited to the principles of performance guidance followed in Finland's government administration, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

3.5 WAYS OF STEERING MAINSTREAMING

3.5.1 Performance guidance

Performance guidance has been used in Finland's government administration for more than a decade. This guidance is an agreement-based model that aims to balance the available resources and the objectives that can be achieved by them. Achievement of the policy objectives laid down in the Government Programme is boosted by means of this guidance model.

The most important document for performance guidance is the Budget. Basing themselves on the preliminary performance targets stated in the Budget, the ministries conclude performance agreements with the agencies and institutions in their sectors, agreeing on performance targets and resources for their achievement in the budget year concerned. All the agencies and institutions report on implementation of the agreed targets in the annual report constituting part of their final accounts. Furthermore, the ministries report on the performance of their entire branch in the Financial Statement and Report submitted to Parliament.

The performance targets of each ministry, i.e. objectives for increasing the social effectiveness and profitability of operations and financing, are also recorded in the operating and financial plans made for a four-year period. Besides the performance targets, these plans include a description of the operating environment in the ministry's sector, policy lines, and the priorities and goals of operations. They also present a proposal for spending limits prepared by the ministry for its administrative branch, on which the formulation of the next Budget will be based.

Depending on the administrative branch, several performance guidance models are in use. A fairly common method used in drawing up and describing a strategy is the *Balanced Scorecard (BSC)* model, in which targets and assessment criteria are structured from four main angles. Those are effectiveness, resources and the economy, processes and structures, and renewal and working capacity. Another comparable model is the performance prism recommended by the Ministry of Finance, in which the basic criteria for profitability are classified as social effectiveness, operational efficiency, outputs and quality management, and

⁵⁴ Aula 2002, 11–12.