

# Reports of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2006:75

*Edited by Jouni Varanka, Antti Närhinen and Reetta Siukola*

## *Men and Gender Equality*

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## Towards Progressive Policies

Conference Report





## Summary

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Men and Gender Equality – Conference Report. Helsinki, 2006. 210 s.  
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The Conference Men and Gender Equality – Towards Progressive Policies was held in Helsinki on 5–6 October 2006. The conference formed a part of the Finnish EU Presidency programme and its organisation was the responsibility of the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in cooperation with the European Commission. The Conference gathered together experts in the theme of men and gender equality from different parts of the European Union.

By organising the Conference on Men and Gender Equality, the Finnish EU Presidency wanted to highlight the important role of men in promoting gender equality. The starting point was that by paying more attention to the relationship between men and gender equality, we could increase men's contribution to the promotion of gender equality as well as address some problems men in particular are facing. This, in turn, would promote gender equality and, most importantly, the status of women.

During the Conference, the main focus was on policies, i.e. what has been done and what should be done concerning men and gender equality. The Conference concentrated on the themes of 1) reduction of segregation in education and training, 2) gender mainstreaming in health policies and practices, 3) violence, and 4) reconciliation of work and family life. This report pulls together the presentations given at the Conference. Furthermore, it includes the reports of the discussion in the working groups.

**Key words:** gender, gender equality, gender equality policy, gender roles, men's status, women's status



## Tiivistelmä

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Miehet ja tasa-arvo – Konferenssiraportti. Helsinki, 2006. 210 s.  
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Konferenssi *Miehet ja tasa-arvo – Edistyksen tiellä* pidettiin Helsingissä 5.–6. Lokakuuta 2006. Konferenssi järjestettiin osana Suomen EU-puheenjohtajaohjelmaa ja sen järjestelyistä vastasi sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö yhteistyössä Euroopan komission kanssa. Konferenssi kokosi yhteen miehet ja tasa-arvo -teeman asiantuntijoita eri puolilta Euroopan unionia.

Järjestämällä konferenssin *Miehet ja tasa-arvo* Suomi halusi korostaa miesten tärkeää roolia sukupuolten välisen tasa-arvon edistämässä. Lähtökohtana oli, että kiinnittämällä enemmän huomiota miesten ja tasa-arvon väliseen suhteeseen on mahdollista lisätä miesten panosta tasa-arvon edistämässä sekä käsitellä erityisesti miehiin kohdistuvia tasa-arvokysymyksiä. Nämä puolestaan auttavat edistämään tasa-arvoa, ja mikä tärkeintä, naisten asemaa yhteiskunnassa.

Konferenssin aikana pääpaino oli politiikassa – siinä, mitä on tähän mennessä saatu aikaan ja mitä on edelleen tehtävä miesten ja tasa-arvon suhteen. Yleisen näkökulman lisäksi konferenssissa keskityttiin neljään teemaan 1) koulutuksellisen segregaaation purkamiseen, 2) sukupuolinäkökulman valtavirtaistamiseen terveyspolitiikoissa ja -käytännöissä, 3) miehiin ja väkivaltaan sekä 4) työn ja perheen yhteensovittamiseen. Tässä raportissa kootaan yhteen konferenssissa pidetyt puheenvuorot. Lisäksi se sisältää raportit työryhmäkeskusteluista.

**Asiasanat:** miehen asema, naisen asema, sukupuoli, sukupuoliroolit, tasa-arvo, tasa-arvopolitiikka



## Sammandrag

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Män och jämställdhet – Konferenserapport. Helsingfors, 2006. 210 s.  
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ISBN 952-00-2131-0 (inh.) ISBN 952-00-2132-9 (PDF)

Konferensen *Män och jämställdhet* hölls i Helsingfors den 5–6 oktober 2006. Konferensen ordnades som en del av Finlands EU-ordförandeskapsprogram och för arrangemangen svarade social- och hälsovårdsministeriet i samarbete med EU-kommissionen. Konferensen samlade experter på temat män och jämställdhet från olika delar av Europeiska unionen.

Genom att ordna konferensen *Män och jämställdhet* ville Finland betona den viktiga rollen för män när det gäller att främja jämställdhet mellan män och kvinnor. Utgångspunkten var att det är möjligt att öka männens insats i fråga om främjande av jämställdheten samt behandla jämställdhetsfrågor som särskilt riktar sig till män genom att fästa mer uppmärksamhet på relationen mellan män och jämställdhet. Dessa bidrog till främjandet av jämställdhet, och det viktigaste, kvinnors ställning i samhället.

Huvudvikten under konferensen låg på politiken – vad som hittills åstadkommit och vad som ännu måste göras i fråga om män och jämställdhet. Utöver ett allmänt perspektiv koncentrerade sig konferensen på fyra teman: 1) avveckla den utbildningsmässiga segregationen, 2) integrera ett könsperspektiv i hälsopolitik och hälsopraxis, 3) män och våld samt 4) förena arbete och familjeliv. Denna rapport samlar inläggen från konferensen och innehåller dessutom rapporterna om arbetsgruppsdiskussionerna.

**Nyckelord:** mannens ställning, kvinnans ställning, kön, könsroller, jämställdhet, jämställdhetspolitik





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## Preface

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*Joint foreword by Finnish Minister for Social Affairs and Health Tuula Haatainen and EU's Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Vladimír Špidla*

Historically, gender equality policy has been considered an issue of women and for women. This is for obvious reasons as women were and still are the under-represented sex. Women's organisations have worked throughout the years bringing gender equality at the top of the political agenda, making changes possible. For the empowerment of women and the realisation of gender equality we should not limit our focus to women and their position and situation in life and in society. We must also pay more attention to how gender equality policy and the promotion of gender equality are related to men. Taking men and boys into account is not contradictory to the empowerment of women. Quite the contrary, it creates gender equality policy that benefits both women and men and the society as a whole. This work should not compromise equal opportunities initiatives and resources for women and girls.

Gender equality is a productive factor. The countries at the top of the United Nations gender barometers do also well in several different competitiveness barometers. The United Nations have emphasized the important role of men and boys in promoting gender equality. In the European Union, we have increasingly been discussing men and gender equality. The European Commission has financed several projects on men and gender equality with a focus on policies to reconcile work, private and family life. Indeed, policies to reconcile work, private and family life that are fair for and equally shared by both men and women are a central part of our efforts to respond to the demographic challenges facing the European Union. In addition to employees, also the employers' attitudes play a central role in how we will succeed in this work. The contribution of social partners is fundamental.

The 2006 Spring European Council underlined the importance of gender equality policies for economic growth, wellbeing, and competitiveness. If we are to make the European Union the most competitive economic area in the world, we need to speed-up our progress towards gender equality. Improving our understanding of how we can make men active partners of women in the common work for gender equality is the key.

The Council of the European Union has traditionally given guidance in the field of gender equality through Conclusions, notably on the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action, gender equality in research, ICT, and others. The European Union took another significant step towards a more equal society by adopting Council Conclusion on Men and Gender Equality on the 1st of December 2006. With this joint expression of political will we can promote, diversify and reinforce the drawing up of gender equality policies both at EU and national levels.

Once again, the European Union has an opportunity to set a good example in the promotion of gender equality. It is important that men support gender equality policies, participate in the equality work and gain from its positive effects and benefits. Equal society is our common interest.

Gender equality needs men and men need gender equality!



Tuula Haatainen  
Minister for Social Affairs and Health,  
Finland



Vladimír Špidla  
Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs  
and Equal Opportunities



## Introduction

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By organising the Conference on Men and Gender Equality, the Finnish EU Presidency wanted to highlight the important role of men in promoting gender equality. The starting point was that by paying more attention to the relationship between men and gender equality, we could increase men's contribution to the promotion of gender equality as well as address some problems men in particular are facing. This, in turn, has a positive impact on gender equality and, most importantly, the status of women: it creates positive attitudes towards gender equality issues and enhances the use of all the existing resources. Increased awareness and knowledge of the gender aspects will also help to avoid stereotypical treatment of both men and women in society. During the Conference, the main focus was on policies, i.e. what has been done and what should be done concerning men and gender equality.

In total, there were more than 200 participants in the Conference, most of which were government representatives from the EU Member States, but the representation of the social partners and NGOs was also strong. It should also be noted that approximately 35 percent of all the participants were men, so there is at least some increasing interest towards gender equality policies among men. The diversity of participants and speakers guaranteed that differences in approaches and perspectives to men and gender equality became visible in the Conference.

The opinion of the EU Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men on Men in Gender Equality (July 2006), The EU Commission's Road Map for Equality between Women and Men 2006–2010, and the Finnish Strategy Document on Men and Gender Equality Policy (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2006) were used as background material for the Conference. During the Conference, participants had the opportunity to see a Swedish film, *Blind Spot (Ingen ser oss)*, which aim is to broaden the discussion on violence against women and thus contribute to its prevention.

At the Conference, it was emphasized that gender inequalities and imbalances between men and women still exist. Thus, the participation of men and boys in achieving gender equality must be consistent with the empowerment of women and girls, and resources for gender equality initiatives for men and boys should not compromise resources for equal opportunities of women and girls. Men and gender equality should not be seen as contradictory to the empowerment of women and the realisation of gender equality. On the contrary, the Conference's findings confirmed that the best way to promote gender equality is reciprocity and cooperation (between different actors and both sexes).

It was also mentioned during the Conference, that men have their own specific problems that should be addressed by gender equality policies. Therefore, the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategy should take into account the specific interests and needs of both men and women. This necessitates men's participation in the concrete implementation of gender mainstreaming. Like Jeff Hearn said at the Conference:

Much of what men do is not seen specifically as related to gender policy, gender politics or gender equality. It is not seen as "about gender"; it is not seen as making gender relations and gender divisions more or less equal or unequal. What men do is generally perceived and felt as (if it is) "normal". Much of men's practices are not gender-conscious activity: they "just happen".

The relationship between men and gender equality is often discussed in the context of work and family life. At the Conference, it was underlined, however, that the issue has a much broader scope. The question of men and gender equality should go beyond the reconciliation of

professional and private life. At the Conference the following specific themes were discussed in relation to men and gender equality: 1) reduction of segregation in education and training, 2) gender mainstreaming in health policies and practices, 3) violence, and 4) reconciliation of work and family life.

We need, of course, more gender-related research, including research on men and gender equality. This conference report gives a brief outlook on the actual situation of the research in this field as well as inspiration for new ideas for further development of gender equality policies<sup>1</sup>.

The report pulls together the presentations given at the Conference. The content of the report follows the structure of the Conference. Each presentation starts with a short abstract. Other relevant material and information on the theme and about the Conference can be found at the end of the report, including for example the Conclusions on Men and Gender Equality by both the EU Council and the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women as well as short descriptions of the speakers.

To enhance the future discussions and follow-up of the theme as well as its visibility, the Finnish EU Presidency drafted Council Conclusions on Men and Gender Equality. The Conclusions were partly based on the Conference and its findings. The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council accepted the Conclusions at its meeting on 30 November – 1 December 2006.

The Conference formed a part of the Finnish EU Presidency programme and it was co-funded by the European Commission. National organisation of the Conference was the responsibility of the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. To help to prepare the Conference and its substance, the Ministry set up a national ad hoc working group that consisted of representatives from relevant Ministries and NGO's among others.

We would like to use this opportunity to express our humble compliments to the Commission for its financial, but especially for its expert support. At the same occasion we would like to thank the national working-group and all the other people who were involved in the Conference preparations, the content wise as well as with the practical matters, for their hard work and straightforward cooperation.

We wish you a rewarding and inspiring reading!



Marja Airio / Lehtikuva<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Report is also available at the following website: <http://www.stm.fi/Resource.phx/eng/index.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> All the pictures in this Conference Report are taken by Marja Airio (Lehtikuva).

Part I: Introduction to the Theme Men and  
Gender Equality

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## 1 Opening Speech, Minister for Social Affairs and Health, Finland

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*Tuula Haatainen*

Madam chairperson, director Pavan-Woolfe, Conference delegates and representatives of the government, organizations, the academic world and the media, Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you all to the conference Men and Gender Equality – Towards Progressive Policies. Over the next two days, we will be discussing men and gender equality from a number of perspectives. We will gain a clearer and a more diverse view of what the relationship is between men and gender equality. We will also talk about what measures we need to take in this field in Europe.



The approach taken at this conference may seem surprising to some of you, but it is by no means a new idea. As early as in 1995, the UN Beijing Platform for Action recorded the decision to encourage men to participate fully in all measures designed to promote gender equality. Nevertheless, the focus in gender equality policy tends to be on women, the status of women and the actions of women. This is only natural, of course, because in most gender equality issues women are weaker than men. However, over the past ten or fifteen years, it has become clear that this is not enough. Men have to be given greater attention in gender equality policy.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women supported this view in its conclusions in 2004. The Commission stressed that men and boys play a crucial role in the promotion of gender equality. However, turning attention to men and boys must not interfere with the improvement of the status of women. I myself see no contradiction here. By giving more attention to the actions and attitudes of men, we can promote gender equality, improve the status of women and increase the range of choices available to men. Gender equality needs men, and men need gender equality. This is not a dichotomy or a competition between the status of men on the one hand and women on the other. This is about finding mutual interests. Men's actions affect women, and vice versa. In Finland, the administrative structures pertaining to gender equality are designed so as to support this broad approach. This afternoon, we will be hearing in more detail from the Subcommittee on Men's Issues of the Finnish Council for Gender Equality, which has been meeting regularly for 18 years.

The debate on men and gender equality in the EU has picked up speed in the 2000s and particularly very recently. The topic or individual themes such as the reconciliation of work and private life were discussed at various EU Presidency conferences in the early 2000s. The first extensive conference on the topic was held in Örebro in Sweden in 2001.

The theme of men and gender equality is linked to the EU debate on demographic change and the employment goals of the Lisbon Strategy. The countries that head the list in UN gender equality barometers also head the list in various competitiveness comparisons. We will do well to remember this as we try to turn the EU into the world's most competitive economy. We need greater understanding of the links between gender equality and competitiveness. It is important that men, even men in high positions, support gender equality policy and contribute to its efforts.

The Commission's statement will no doubt contain more information on how the theme of men and gender equality is progressing at the EU level. There are as yet no EU-level policies on this topic. I feel that a good basis for such policies could be found in what I said earlier: Gender equality needs men, and men need gender equality. We should also remember that men (like women) have problems of their own that must be addressed. My hope is that we will be able to shape such policies during our Presidency. This would promote and diversify the preparation of gender equality policy at various levels.

We will be producing a proposal for Council Conclusions on the topic of men and gender equality for the Employment and Social Policy Council in November and December. I hope that this conference will yield useful material for the shaping of EU policy in this field.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Gender equality is often seen as a zero-sum game, meaning that any gains for women are automatically seen as privileges lost for men. I do not consider this a constructive approach. It would be difficult to understand why all men would want to support gender equality if this were the case. We must emphasize the fact that progress in gender equality, gender equality policy and the status of women is in the interests not only of women but of men too. An equitable society is in everyone's interests.

I would like to mention a tangible example. When the Act on Gender Equality was being prepared in Finland in the 1980s, the aim was to prevent gender discrimination against women and to improve the status of women in working life. The Act as it now stands prohibits gender discrimination regardless of whether the affected party is a woman or a man. The Act thus protects men too. Of the private individuals who contacted the Equality Ombudsman last year, four out of ten were men. The Equality Act is a good example of how measures designed to benefit women also directly benefit men.

I would now like to say a few words about the conference working groups. Through the themes to be discussed in these working groups, we want to highlight the many different topics in connection with which the relationship between men and gender equality should be addressed. We could actually ask what the role of men is in connection with any gender equality policy issue at all.

Men are usually mentioned separately only in connection with the reconciliation of work and private life. The Finnish Government has just submitted a bill where men are encouraged to make more use of family leave. Involving fathers in the care of small children is not only an issue of family wellbeing but also of gender equality. Legislation is not enough, however. Public opinion is also highly important. Employee attitudes and employer attitudes are of paramount importance to the success of the reconciliation of work and family life.

Men are also in a key position with regard to the dismantling of segregation. Segregation will not decrease if we cannot manage to attract men to sectors traditionally dominated by women. We will hear more about this in the talks and working groups.

The working groups will also be discussing violence. Violence against women is a sensitive yet serious issue. It has widespread and far-reaching impacts that in the worst cases can affect children too.

A Finnish publication on the relationship between men and gender equality is background material for this conference. One of the key observations in this publication is that mainstreaming the gender viewpoint is a significant way of highlighting men's problems. Many of the problems experienced by men fall beyond the area of the labour market status of women, which is

considered the core of gender equality policy. The best way to resolve men's problems is to focus on the mainstreaming of the gender viewpoint. The health care sector is a good example of this. Mainstreaming the gender viewpoint in the health care sector will improve the response to the health care needs of both women and men. The report on alcohol policy in Finland last year provides a case in point. It says that the practices employed in substance abuse treatment are principally designed for men, whereas preventive measures are principally aimed at women. The needs of men and women have to be better addressed, with an awareness that there may be shortcomings in different areas.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I hope you will have a very successful conference. I hope and believe that it will represent a step forward in our efforts to integrate men more closely into gender equality policy. There are two parallel goals here: we must give more attention to men, to the links between men and gender equality and to the role of men in improving the status of women; and, on the other hand, we must enhance the participation of men in gender equality efforts and the gender equality debate. Gender equality needs men, and men need gender equality.

## 2 Address by the European Commission

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*Luisella Pavan-Woolfe*



Minister, Honourable member of the European Parliament, Ms Záborská, ladies and gentlemen,

Presidency's conferences represent an important moment for the EU and its Member states to monitor progress towards gender equality and to analyse new trends and ideas. They are also an instrument of good governance, as they gather together members of Parliaments, government representatives, civil society and Social partners.

Today's event is special, because for the first time the role of men in the promotion of equality between women and men will be the subject of our discussion at a presidency conference.

It is with pleasure that I note a particularly high presence of men today. I hope this will not remain an exception but will become common practice at our conferences. Gender equality is not a women's issue. It touches also the lives of men. For this reason, it is important to have men on board if we want to achieve equality.

Let me begin from what I consider the starting point.

With the Beijing Platform for Action we began to adopt the so-called "dual approach": specific measures for the advancement of women and gender mainstreaming, that is integrating a gender dimension in all policies – with a view to promoting equality between women and men.

This is a strategy designed to make room for everyone in society - women and men. It's an approach aimed at creating a shared vision of sustainable human development.

Thus the role of men in promoting gender equality is in a way implicit in the concept of gender mainstreaming.

Historically, gender equality has been a women's issue and for obvious reasons: women were and are still the "under-represented" sex. Women's organisations have worked throughout the past century to try to eliminate gender inequalities and gender gaps. Economic growth and general progress in society have also made developments towards gender equality possible.

Against this background, we have started to talk more and more about the role of men in the promotion of gender equality.

We have done so in the international context in the Commission on the Status of Women. Next year, the UN member countries will review the subject of men and gender equality and will discuss what they do to promote an active role by men in gender equality policies. The experience of this conference will be very valuable in that respect.

In the European Union, we have also started to work on the issue of men and gender equality.

In 2005, the Programme on equality between women and men financed 15 projects, run by European NGOs, and other organisations working on gender equality, on the subject of "Men and

gender equality". Another 12 projects have been developed by National authorities. In total, 8.3 Million Euros have been devoted to this subject. These projects are now in their final stage and we hope to have some good results to share with you soon.

The majority of the projects tackle the issue of men's participation in family life, the possibility and obstacles they encounter while taking parental leave and the redistribution of tasks between women and men, as we asked the promoters to focus on reconciliation issues.

The programme of this conference shows that reconciliation between work and family life is not the only issue concerning men and their contribution to gender equality. This is true. However, reconciliation remains an important issue because it is one of the keys to increase women's participation in the labour market and to achieve equal economic independence for both women and men. This is a central message in the Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010.

It is only through a balanced sharing of responsibilities between women and men in their private and working lives that we can achieve the Lisbon targets.

If we look at how European women and men spend their time, we see that women still spend much more time than men looking after children or doing other family related activities. To change this we need to change cultural and stereotypical behaviours. We also need to provide good care services and to give both women and men the possibility of taking parental leave and of working in a more flexible way without being penalised in their careers and pay.

Reconciliation policies have often been seen as benefiting women only. This is a misleading idea which we must change! Reconciliation policies are the best example of men benefiting from gender equality policies. They increase the choices and the possibilities not only of women, but also of men. The Advisory committee on equal opportunities has highlighted this issue in its recent opinion on the role of men and gender equality.

The Committee, which is made up of representatives of Member states, social partners and NGOs, highlighted that stereotypes affect women but also men. Masculinity and role models for men, are as dangerous and negative as the ones for women. They limit the life choices of individuals and make people less adaptable to a changing society. This is why gender equality, by changing these roles and stereotypes, is positive for both women and men.

During the conference, we will have the opportunity to discuss stereotypes and the role of education and training. Choices made at an early age have strong influences on the future life of women and men in terms of careers and pay. We have up until now concentrated our efforts on encouraging women to make educational choices that are typically considered suitable for men. We are now starting to work on encouraging men to pursue courses and careers, which have traditionally been female dominated. But of course, this is far more difficult; not only because of existing stereotypes but also for objective reasons as female dominated sectors typically attract lower salaries. If we continue to give a lower value to female-dominated sectors we will not convince boys and men to choose those sectors!

During the conference we will also talk about issues where the win-win approach to gender equality may seem less evident. I am thinking for instance of violence. Indeed, when we speak of men and gender equality, we inevitably have to be concerned about gender-based violence, whose main victims are women. Violence against women can take many forms – i.e. domestic violence, rapes, sexual abuse, mobbing - and may differ in degree, but it is clear that violence against women is the single most prevalent and universal violation of human rights. It knows no geographical boundaries, no age limit, no class distinction, no cultural, and no racial differences. The

Commission has undertaken many initiatives aimed at combating various forms of violence against women. The effort to eliminate violence is tackled from various angles: human rights, trafficking and migration, crime prevention, gender equality, public health. In the Roadmap for equality between women and men, one of the priority areas for EU action set out is the eradication of gender-based violence. This confirms the Commission's commitment to combating gender-based violence.

In the Roadmap, the Commission commits itself to support Member states and NGOs and to implement programmes for victims as well as perpetrators. It is important to tackle this issue from both these angles and to see the positive aspects for women, men and society as a whole of having not only measures to punish the perpetrators – which remain necessary - but also prevention policies. This wider approach can only be taken keeping in mind that our aim is gender equality and the well-being of both women and men.

Available statistics and studies show that men are also victim of violence, although of a different type than women. They are often victims in public spaces and often the violence is perpetrated by other men. We should ask ourselves why this is so, and what part the image our societies have of women and men and of their roles play in generating violent actions. Working on stereotypes and changing societal roles and models for women and men, represent an important step for the prevention not only of gender-based violence but of all forms of violence.

I would like to conclude with an important point also stressed by the Advisory committee on equal opportunities.

We must avoid the risk of the work on men and gender equality merely empowering men to maintain a status quo characterised by persistent and significant inequalities experienced by women.

Working on men in gender equality needs to be supportive of women and equality for women. Men's experience cannot be seen as opposed to and competing with women's. This is also true in terms of available resources.

These are important challenges but they can be partly overcome if we work from a gender mainstreaming perspective.

I am convinced that without the mobilisation of men to support and engage in the promotion of gender equality, we cannot succeed in achieving real equality between women and men.

Equality between women and men concerns gender relations and implies changes for men as well as for women. Gender equality is also a "men's issue", and men can also gain new opportunities. We need to look at how gender equality is beneficial to men, an aspect which is useful for making gender equality more visible and making society at large aware of its benefits.

I look forward to hearing about your experiences and I wish you all a good conference.

### 3 Address by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament

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*Anna Záborská*



Madame Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we can no longer separate three key aspects of promoting the common good on the European continent. Along with the two factors that have long been emphasised – the Lisbon Strategy and the demographic challenge – there is now a third dimension: the importance of the role of men when implementing progressive gender equality policies.

You will recall that this subject was first broached by the Swedish presidency. In 2004, the Austrian government held the first European conference dedicated to the role of fathers. The aim was to shed light on the importance of men and fathers to the common good in the Member States and the European Union. At the informal meeting of ministers of equality during its presidency, the Austrian Government once again brought up this fundamental aspect of the implementation of equal opportunities, which has unfortunately often been overshadowed by various women's movements over the years. I am pleased to note that the Finnish Government continues to support this approach in the interests of enhancing political benefits to all citizens of the European Union.

In light of the experiences and requirements of equal opportunities, I am convinced that we must adapt both our philosophical and practical approaches, even on the financial level. Equal opportunities for both women and men will prove impossible to achieve if we constantly set one against the other. The full name of the parliamentary commission I have the honour of heading is: the EU Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality but, despite its name, it refers to men as well as women. What are the practical implications of this approach?

Since the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy are well known, as well as the demographic challenge, let me begin by asking if we really understand the correlation between the Lisbon Strategy and the promotion of birth rates. If political activity teaches us anything, it is that daily family life in our communities is far more concrete and natural than the documents of our national or European institutions. Therefore, it is reasonable to give a little added consideration to the political and financial aspects of certain tangible social facts. By taking a look at daily life, we find a huge resource that has never officially been taken into account: human capital. By this I mean the totality of skills outside the formal professional arena. Using the term employed by Gary Becker, winner of the Nobel Prize in Economic Science – we call this the Economics of Life.

In European politics, the integrated approach to equality based on men's situations is nothing other than a perpetuation and extension of classic women's-rights policies, which complements the application of feminine methods and principles in politics. It also leads to a need for a masculine approach, one that still maintains respect for both sexes as they are. The male element would profit from the same attention that has been afforded to female-oriented policies. The new, progressive approach to equality will benefit both national and European politics in this field, by expanding and reinforcing them.

Ladies and gentlemen, the progressive approach to gender equality is a movement that has a bearing on our everyday lives. It is a huge opportunity. "Being in movement" means having the

opportunity to adjust and improve newly begun strategies at every stage. This is necessary, since – despite political efforts to empower women – there remains a mutual lack of understanding between the sexes. The right to freedom from gender-related discrimination is equally important to men and women. This is why I emphasise that the European Gender Institute must not solely work from a unilateral, female perspective, but must also integrate the masculine perspective, with the same priority as the feminine one, into its statutes and internal organisation. On a practical level, we have much to learn from the Austrian Minister for Equality, who has created a special unit for this very field. Certainly, efficiency represents one of the duties of public institutions? By the same token, non-governmental organisations that work in the equal-opportunities field should in the future be required to prove that they respect the masculine element just as much as the feminine if they are to obtain public funding for their projects or to cover their expenses. I will soon be discussing this with the responsible European Commissioner, my colleague Vladimír Špidla.

In short, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to switch the focus to human capital. This approach will unite all three dimensions – the Lisbon Strategy, the demographic challenge and the masculine perspective in the progressive approach to equal opportunities.

In fact, the Lisbon Strategy and the demographic challenge are two political issues that cannot be solved by men and women in politics alone. For one thing, we all know that the economy is subject to its own laws. But if the will exists, politics and national governments can, without hiding behind other factors such as the market economy or the individual behaviour of citizens, create the conditions to make citizens feel strongly responsible for the success of the Lisbon Strategy and the demographic challenge. And succeeding in these two efforts will above all be the task of citizens.

Today, the number of workers is decreasing, while the number of pensioners is on the rise. This shift is a potential source of conflict. In addition, economic growth is dependent on demographic growth, yet we see the population declining and economic growth slowing down in the 21st century. Increasingly, faced with a lack of qualified workers, industry is responding by outsourcing.

Individuals are not machines that can be programmed at will; they are not adaptable to all situations. A family does not spend its time searching for opportunities; it puts its faith in human rights and in the natural sentiment of both men and women that everyone can win if they can just find the right environment. Have we learned that human capital is a key factor in the economic well-being of a nation, even if there are no GDP statistics defining that factor?

In his works on the economic cost of discrimination, Gary Becker stated that if businesses could specialise effectively by hiring women, the wage disparity between the sexes for the same work would be far less than levels of prejudice against women. As recently as yesterday, in the European Parliament, I presided over a public hearing on gender budgeting, where we heard some encouraging news regarding budget specialisation in favour of women and men. The commissioner responsible for the budget promised she would try to apply this in European budgetary policies.

Ladies and gentlemen, we do not attach enough importance to the concept of human capital. The extensions of these theories are numerous: the formation of human capital is a key to professional success these days. In a family, human capital is evidenced by the distribution of tasks between the man and woman, and in politics, as we all know, the presence of human capital determines whether or not the caste of politicians and bureaucrats is open to new members. So why not provide concrete affirmation of this human capital represented by every human being? Our national statistics ignore this capital because they are based solely on figures. The gross domestic product (GDP) of every Member State of the European Union is distorted by the fact that it does not take consideration of the human capital of its citizens.



We too could be inspired by the family. Families are surely the epitome of a long-term investment that benefits everyone involved. I do not mean to idealise families at any cost; naturally we all know families that need support to stay afloat. But the family remains the best example of effective intergenerational management, considering the network of solidarity it creates across the age barrier. As political decision makers, we must respect the conditions under which parents have decided to invest in their children, to prepare them for the future. A huge amount of legislation deals with retirements, public health systems, fiscal policy and the freedom of parents to make decisions about their children's education.

This is where the masculine element can also benefit. As long as men are not recognised in their role as fathers, they will remain trapped in the traditional perception of workers with mouths to feed. Personally, I am not in favour of extreme regulation by European or national institutions, and we can see the effects of such policies if we look to the former Eastern bloc. However, something can be done, and governments have the legal authority to do so. Voluntarist policies to encourage, for example, having a second or third child would be very expensive and therefore a question of national priorities, which governments would defend.

We might ask ourselves what role men would play in the politics of an integrated approach to gender equality. It seems to me that the Austrian and Finnish presidencies have succeeded in highlighting an essential problem in all equality policy: ignorance of the evidence that men can also be victims of gender discrimination, and ignorance that men are also part of the integrated approach to equality. This ignorance calls to mind the feminism of the past, which categorically declared all things masculine to be the enemy of all things feminine. This old juxtaposition has often hampered the women's movement. And that is why I would like to conclude by saying that a future-oriented approach can be based on the past, since the past can exercise a lasting, positive influence on attitudes and values. It is my hope that henceforth the women of Europe will make men their allies and partners in advancing the women's movement.

I would to thank you for your time, and once again express my thanks to the Finnish presidency for placing this fascinating subject on the agenda.

## 4 Men and Gender Equality Policy

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*Jeff Hearn*



### *Abstract*

*What have men got to do with gender equality? How do men fit into debates and discussions on gender equality? These are questions that are now being asked more clearly and more openly. The relationship of men to gender equality is not necessarily straightforward or uncontested. Many different positions can be taken on these questions, for example, from anti-feminist to profeminist. Drawing on previous EU-funded policy research across a range of European countries, this session focuses on these issues, with special attention to two arena: men's violences, and men's health.*

### *Introduction*

Men seem to becoming slowly and surely more interested in gender equality. According to the Finnish Gender Equality Barometer 2004, almost half of men fully agree that men benefit from increased gender equality. In 1995 The Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women read:

The advancement of women and the achievement of equality between women and men are a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and should not be seen in isolation as a women's issue. ... The Platform for Action emphasises that women share common concerns that can be addressed only by working together and in partnership with men towards the common goal of gender equality around the world. (United Nations 2001.)

Since 1995, these issues have been increasingly being taken up in the UN and its various agencies and in other transgovernmental organizations' policy discussions, including the EU. In 2003 the UN's Division for the Advancement of Women organized a worldwide online discussion forum and expert group meeting in Brasilia on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality as part of its preparation for the 48th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, with the following comments:

Over the last decade, there has been a growing interest in the role of men in promoting gender equality, in particular as the achievement of gender equality is now clearly seen as a societal responsibility that concerns and should fully engage men as well as women. (Division for the Advancement of Women, United Nations 2003.)

### *Focusing on men*

Focusing on men in developing policy appears to have become more popular in recent years. In some ways this is not anything special; it is not new; and it is not necessarily, in itself, linked to any radical project of social change and transformation. There have long been state and related policies on men and masculinity. This is perhaps most obvious in policies on conscription, militarism and crime, but also in many areas, such as fatherhood, marriage, education, and so on. It all depends how developing policies on men and men's practices is done:

- Are policies on men developed explicitly or implicitly, or are they done in passing?
- Are men seen as gendered or non-gendered?
- Are policies related to feminist and other critical gender research and policy development?
- According to what assumptions about men, women and gender?
- And with different relations, or lack of relations, to the various approaches to gender equality?

So what is newer is the explicit naming of men as men in policy development, whether in relation to gender equality or more generally.

### *Studies on men and masculinities*

This short background paper draws on recent international social science perspectives in studies on men and masculinities. This necessarily involves a number of different national, disciplinary and methodological traditions. While not wishing to play down debates and differences between recent traditions in studying men, the broad, critical approach to men and masculinities (see e.g. Kimmel et al 2005) that has developed in recent years can be characterised in a number of ways, by:

- a specific, rather than an implicit or incidental, focus on the topic of men and masculinities;
- taking account of feminist, gay, and other critical gender scholarship;
- recognising men and masculinities as explicitly gendered rather than nongendered;
- understanding men and masculinities as socially constructed, produced, and reproduced rather than as somehow just “naturally” one way or another;
- seeing men and masculinities as variable and changing across time (history) and space (culture), within societies, and through life courses and biographies;
- emphasising men’s relations, albeit differentially, to gendered power;
- spanning both the material and the discursive in analysis;
- interrogating the intersections of gender with other social divisions in the construction of men and masculinities.

### *The European Research Network*

Since 1999 the Research Network on Men in Europe (Critical Research on Men in Europe, or CROME) (<http://www.cromenet.org>) has been researching collaboratively on the study of men’s practices, including policy development. The Network project “The Social Problem of Men. The Social Problem and Societal Problematisation of Men and Masculinities”, formally began in 2000 was funded to 2003 by the Research Directorate of the European Commission under its Framework 5 Programme (Hearn et al. 2004; Hearn and Pringle 2006; Pringle et al., 2006). This built on the work of EU Framework 4 European Pro-feminist Men’s Network (<http://www.europofem.org/>). The work of CROME continues as part of the Concerted Action on Human Rights Violations within the EU Framework 6 Programme (<http://www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de/>). The CROME Network comprises researchers initially from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, and the UK, and subsequently also Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Spain and Sweden.<sup>3</sup>

The Research Network aims to develop empirical, theoretical and policy outcomes on the gendering of men and masculinities. It has focused on two closely related questions: the specific,

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<sup>3</sup> I warmly acknowledge the work of all the members of CROME and related networks, particularly that in the chapter on ‘law and policy’ (Pringle and Hearn et al. 2006), for their contributions to the thinking in this paper.

gendered social problem of men and certain masculinities; and the more general, gendered societal problematisation of men and certain masculinities. There has been a strong emphasis on the relations between the problems men experience and the problems men create.

Four main themes have been addressed (men's relations to home and work; men's relations to social exclusion; men's violences; men's health) and four main methods used to gather information and develop research on critical research on men (academic literature; statistical data; governmental and quasi-governmental legal and policy statements that explicitly address men; media representations, particularly national press output). In each case, during the course of the project national reports (making a total of 40 reports, each addressing the four main themes), as well as transnational summary reports, have been produced. The Network has also acted as an information resource for other researchers, policy-makers and practitioners. This has included the web-based European Database and Documentation Centre on Men (<http://www.cromenet.org>), and paper-based resource of over 1500 items.

### *The policy context*

Men and masculinities are understood as set within changing policy contexts. There have been huge historical changes in forms of masculinity and men's practices; yet there is also stubborn persistence in some aspects of men and masculinity. The most obvious of these is men's domination of the use of violence, and men's domination at the top of organisations, including business and government. Changing gender relations both constitute governments and other policy-making institutions, and provide tasks for governmental, partnership and third sector agencies to deal with. In this sense governments and other policy institutions are part of both the problem and the solution.

The historical legacy inherited by the EU includes attempts to develop broad social democracy and stop fascism happening again. The EU itself can be understood as a project of positive possibilities largely led and negotiated by men politicians after the Second World War in contradiction to short-term nationalistic interests. It can be seen as a project devised to reduce men's historical tendency to nationalistic conflict and war, and so achieve relative stability in Europe. There is increasing recognition of the central place of men and masculinity in the collective violence of war, including imperialist wars, and the apparent increased use of rape and sexual violence by men in war.

To understand the national and transnational policy context also involves considering the relevance of 'the social problem of men' within organisational and governmental policy formation, in national, regional and EU institutions. It is necessary to analyse and change the place of men within the gender structure of governmental, transgovernmental and other policy-making organisations. This includes the relative lack of attention to men in power, including men in the EU, the implications of mainstreaming for men, and men's relations to gender equality. The social problem of men also relates closely to existing EU social agendas, including EU policies on equality, gender equality, social exclusion, and racism. There is a need to develop policy options on men, including 'best practices' and illustrative policies on men.

Addressing policy around men and masculinities is important and matter. There are indeed risks and dangers in non-action, for example, in the intersection of various 'new' and 'old' masculinities, nationalisms, racisms and xenophobias. There are also key issues around the changing policy context in Europe. These include the relation of the EU to eastward expansion, including the specific conditions of application and accession; questions of migration, especially of young men, and their implications for women and men, in countries of both emigration and immigration; trafficking in women, children and men, especially the actions of men as the consumers within the EU member states. The 'social problem' of men is thus of central and urgent

interest to the EU and the applicant countries. It is necessary to analyse and change the place of men within the gender structure of governmental and other policy-making organisations. There is also a need to develop policy options on men, including best practices and policies on men. Addressing policy around men and masculinities is an important and urgent matter.

### *Gender equality policy*

Much of what men do is not seen as policy or political activity; it is not seen as related to gender equality at all. It is not seen as “about gender”; it is not seen as making gender relations and gender divisions more or less equal or unequal. Much of men’s practices, in public and in private, in work, negotiations, persuasion, networking, lobbying, pressurising and so on is not seen as gendered. They are generally done, perceived and felt as (if they were) “normal”. Much of men’s practices, in public and in private, in work, negotiations, networking, lobbying, pressurising and so on is not seen as gendered. They are not usually gender-conscious activity: they “just happen”!

In contrast, there has been a significant growth of men’s more gender-conscious activities, often in relation to gender equality. There are many reasons why men might be and are interested in gender equality: they range from anti-feminist motivations suggesting gender equality is unnecessary or worse, to profeminist attempts to support gender equality and feminism. Gender-consciousness does not necessarily mean pro-gender equality; male supremacists are indeed gender-conscious, just as white supremacists are “race”-conscious. In between are those forms of men’s politics that see “gender equality” agendas as opportunities to benefit men, without much concern for women. There are also men’s gender-conscious activities that emphasise differences between men, by sexuality, racialisation, religion and so on, as the most crucial. But this is only the beginning: as when men say they are interested in gender equality, there may be key differences in what is actually meant by gender equality. To put this another way, gender equality, like feminism, can be understood by men in various ways and for various reasons, including from (liberal) reform, (standpoint) resistance, or (deconstructive) rebellion positions (Lorber 2005; Hearn and Holmgren 2007).

Women have been the driving force in the development of gender equality policies. Policy debate on gender equality has developed primarily in terms of what women have to gain from greater gender equality. This has become the “mainstream” of gender equality work and thinking. At the same time, men are also involved and implicated in gender equality policies and practices – in a whole variety of ways, as: spouses, fathers, and other family members; colleagues and trade union members at work; managers and employers; policy-makers; active citizens in social organizations, and so on. Sometimes this has meant some men resisting moves to gender equality or seeing it only as “women’s business”. But this situation is slowly changing. We can now ask:

- What part can men play in gender equality?
- What gender equality policies need to be developed for men?
- How men can contribute positively to gender equality?
- How do such questions look for men of different ages, ethnicities, classes?

Key areas of policy development include: men relations to home and family; men at work and in management (both public and private sectors); home-work reconciliation; men’s health; social inclusion/exclusion of men; men’s violence. Examples of areas where focused, explicit policy on men has been developing in recent years include:

- men as workers/breadwinners/heads of family and household;
- fatherhood and paternity (including legal rights and obligations of fathers, and paternity leave);
- fatherhood, husband and other family statuses in immigration and nationality;
- gay, queer and transgender issues;

- crimes of sexual violence;
- programmes on men who have been violent to women and children;
- conscription;
- men's health education programmes;
- reproductive technology and reproductive rights.

I now briefly discuss two policy areas – men's violence and men's health – that in some ways have contrasting implications for men and indeed women and children. Put very simply, the first can be seen largely as a problem men create; the second as a problem men experience.

### *Men's violences*

The persistent and widespread nature of the problem of men's violences to women, children and other men is the recurring theme here. Men are overrepresented among those who use violence, especially heavy violence. This violence is also age-related. The life course variation in violence with a more violence-prone youth phase has been connected to increasing exposure to commercial violence and to other social phenomena, but these connections have not been well mapped.

Violence against women by known men is becoming recognised as a major social problem in many European countries. The Council of Europe has reported that for women between 15 and 44 years old, domestic violence is thought to be the major cause of death and invalidity, with 20 to 50 percent of women in Europe victims of such violence. The range of abusive behaviours include direct physical violence, isolation and control of movements, and abuse through the control of money. There has been a large amount of feminist research on women's experiences of violence from men, and the policy and practical consequences of that violence, including that by state and welfare agencies, as well as some national representative surveys of women's experiences of violence. There has been considerable research on prison and clinical populations of violent men; there is now growing research on the understandings of such violence to women by men living in the community, men's engagement with criminal justice and welfare agencies, and evaluation of men's programmes intervening with such men.

Child abuse, including physical abuse, sexual abuse and child neglect, is now also being recognised as a prominent social problem. Both the gendered nature of these problems and an appreciation of how service responses are themselves gendered are beginning to receive more critical attention, both in terms of perpetrators and victims/survivors. The intersection of sexuality and violence is likely to be an area of growing concern. There is some research on men's sexual abuse of children but this is still an underdeveloped research focus in most countries. In some countries sexual abuse cases remain largely hidden, as is men's sexual violence to men.

There has also been some highlighting of those men who have received violence from women. Men's violences to ethnic minorities, migrants, people of colour, gay men and older people are being highlighted more, but are still very unexplored. They remain important areas for further policy development. Examples of men's violences that are still rarely addressed in a gendered way include 'civil disorder', terrorism and state violence. EU, European-wide and transnational policy priorities include:

- to stop men's violence to women, children and other men, and assist victims and survivors;
- to enforce the criminal law on physical violence, that has historically often not been enforced in relation to men's violence to known women and children;
- to make non-violence and anti-violence central public policy of all relevant institutions, including educational institutions;

- to assist men who have been violent to stop their violence, such as men's programmes, should be subject to accountability, high professional standards, close evaluation, and not be funded from women's services;
- to recognise the part played by men in other forms of violence that are still often seen as non-gendered, for example, racist violence, riots, militarism.

### *Men's health*

The life expectancy of men and thus men's ageing has increased markedly since the beginning of the 20th century, and the differences in mortality between men and women are generally decreasing. As Meryn and Jadad (2001) note, 'Despite having had most of the social determinants of health in their favour, men have higher mortality rates for all 15 leading causes of death and a life expectancy about seven years shorter than women's.' (bold in original). The major recurring theme is thus men's relatively low life expectancy, poor health, accidents, suicide, morbidity. Some studies see traditional masculinity as hazardous to health. Men suffer and die more and at a younger age from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, respiratory diseases, accidents and violence than women. Socio-economic factors, qualifications, social status, life style, diet, smoking and drinking, hereditary factors, as well as occupational hazards, can be important for morbidity and mortality. Gender differences in health arise from how certain work done by men are hazardous occupations. Generally, many men neglect their health and for some men, especially for some younger men, their 'masculinity' is characterised by risk taking, an ignorance of their bodies, and reluctance to seek medical intervention for suspected health problems. Men's morbidity and mortality are central topics of public discussions in some countries. In some countries, such as Estonia, this is argued to be the main social problem of men.

There have been major problems for some men post-transition in some Central and East European countries, and particularly so in the Russian Federation, where the gap in life expectancy between women and men is close to 10 years. Rieder and Meryn (2001) comment that: 'In 2000, the WHO report suggested a 77 percent increased risk of premature death for Russian men between 1987 and 1994. With life expectancy, the gap between the sexes generally decreases as average life expectancy increases. Russia has one of the lowest life expectancies and, therefore, the widest gaps between sexes in healthy life expectancy in the world (66.4 vs 56.1 years for men compared with women).'

Gender-neutral perspectives on gender and health remain common amongst a wide range of European sociological and public health researchers on social inequality in health. There has been relatively little academic work on men's health and men's health practices from a gendered perspective in many countries. On the other hand, some studies point to the complexity of gendered health differences. Some health indicators suggest that women have slightly poorer health than men, even with longer life expectancy. Indeed sometimes, gender differences may remain surprisingly stable even during economic depression, and be surprisingly immune to possible extra impacts of education, employment status, region, and family status during economic downturn.

EU, European-wide and transnational policy priorities include:

- to improve men's health.
- to facilitate men's improved health (or 'illth') practices, including more appropriate use of health services; men's relative lack of use of health services, delaying of use or use only after appointments have been made by women are examples of health practices with vital implications for medical and other professional intervention.
- to focus on the negative effects of men's health problems upon women and children.

- to ensure that focusing on men's health does not reduce resources for women's and children's health.

More generally, there is the need to connect men's health to forms of masculinity, such as risk-taking and "unhealthy" behaviour. Risk-taking is especially significant for some younger men, in, for example, smoking, alcohol and drug taking, unsafe sexual practices and road accidents. In this context it is interesting that some research finds that men are over-optimistic regarding their own health. To fully understand, and deal with, the dynamics around the health problems of at least some men we may need to connect those problems to dominant, or even in some cases oppressive, ways of "being a man": for instance, risk-taking behaviour relevant to some injuries and addictions; or an almost "macho" unwillingness to take one's health problems seriously and seek medical help; or the marked violence which enters into the methods which a number of men seem to use to commit suicide. Recent studies on men have often been concerned to show how men too are affected by health risks, violence and so on, without connecting the theses more systematically to societal context. These points are examples of a more general conclusion from the Research Network, namely that in developing policy interventions, the splitting of studies which focus on "problems which some experience" from those which explore "the problems which some create" needs to be bridged.

### *Conclusions*

Gender equality provisions. The implications of gender equality policy for men are under-explored. Different men can have complex, even contradictory, relations to gender equality and other (in)equalities. Men's relations to gender equality can include: assisting the promotion of women's greater equality; attention to the gendered disadvantage of certain men, as might include gay men, men with caring responsibilities, men in non-traditional work; men's rights, fathers' rights, and anti-women/anti-feminist politics. There is little attention to how men might assist the promotion of gender equality in ways that assist women. EU policy harmonisation should include policies whereby men assist the movement towards gender equality. Gender-neutral language is still generally used in policy-making, though for different reasons within different legal-political traditions, rather than the naming of men as men. Gender mainstreaming. The implications for efforts towards gender mainstreaming in law and policy for men need to be more fully explored, whilst at the same time avoiding anti-women/anti-feminist "men only" tendencies that can sometimes thus be promoted.

Gendered welfare state policy regimes. Different traditions of welfare policy regimes have definite implications for men's practices; this is clearest in men's relations to home and work, including different constructions of men as breadwinners. If one looks at Western Europe welfare systems in terms of the extent to which they demonstrate an awareness of men's violences to women and children and a willingness to respond to it, then the transnational patterns that emerge in Europe are almost a reversal of the standard Esping-Andersen (e.g. 1990, 1996) classifications. The criteria which can be used to look at each country would include: levels of research on the topic in different countries; extent to which the prevalence of men's violences has been researched and/or acknowledged publicly; extent to which legal frameworks focus on men's violences; extent to which welfare initiatives aim at dealing with the outcomes of men's violences; extent to which welfare professionals are trained to address men's violences.

Intersection of men, gender relations and other forms of social division and inequality, such as ethnicity, remains an important and undeveloped field in policy development. There are many important interrelations between the various aspects of men's positions and experiences, and their impacts on women, children and other men, and strong interconnections between different policy areas. This applies to both men's power and domination in different arenas, and between men's



unemployment, social exclusion and ill-health. Men dominate key institutions, such as politics, management, trade unions, churches, sport; yet some men suffer marginalisation as in higher rates of suicide, some illnesses and alcoholism than women. Such interrelations are key in policy development.

Let us take two examples. First, there are links between social exclusion and men's health. Much research illustrates high correlations between poor health, and the social disadvantages of class, ethnicity and other inequalities. There is a need for policy attention to social inclusion and more research on men's practices in both social exclusion and inclusion. Another example is that in most of Europe the two topics of fatherhood and men's violences are treated as separate policy issues. Indeed, there may be enthusiastic promotion of fatherhood and then, quite separate, policy on men's violences. An integrated policy approach joining up these two policy areas is rarely adopted. Why this is so hard to do this is a question policy-makers need to address. Gendered questions remain in both the focuses and 'objects' of policy-making, and for policy-makers and in policy-making themselves.

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## 5 Themes of Home and Work and Social Exclusion from CROME Project

Iva Smidová



### *Abstract*

*At first, the paper will present themes relevant for policies on men and gender equality based on the CROME project, with specific attention directed to the spheres of home and work and to social exclusion affecting men in EU countries with totalitarian past. The paper will shortly question the frequent and easily made East-West divide concerning also but not only gender relations and reproduction of the status quo.*

*The paper points to overlaps, gaps and connections between problems caused and faced by men in various European settings, and refers to policies that address or fail to address them.*

### *Introduction*

Focusing on men and masculinities both in gender informed policy and research have brought to attention themes mentioned by the paper by Jeff Hearn, especially violences and men's health. They have also introduced topics of social exclusion and dis/balance of paid and unpaid work, or in other, more general terms "home and work". And, as I personally come from one of the so called "new" EU member states, from the Czech Republic, I will use mostly examples from that region of the EU experience.

Attention to problems relevant to men and equality concerning the themes of home and work and of social exclusion in different regions of the EU should derive from the historical, cultural and social contexts of the respective countries. For example consequences of the nation- (re)building processes of the USSR/Soviet Bloc of the early and mid-1990s, with the destruction of the national infrastructure of the totalitarian labour market and access to economic and material resources, do affect arrangements of home and work as well as social exclusion. Also, transition to a market economy in these countries, with serious structural and institutional reforms in the context of globalization opens new arenas of problem creation, restoration as well as modification in these regions. Relevance of the ideology of the so called "equal distribution of wealth" from the totalitarian times affects recent developments, too: in the praxis of informal social networks (for example in attempts to find a job/better job in case of Estonia). It also has an influence on new experiences with migration trends that – also – affect both the sphere of home and work as well as create new exclusionary practices – both in new and old EU member states. Certain other topics reoccur in various countries regardless of their recent political regimes. Strong influence of normative patriarchal structures rooting in the earlier phases of history is easily recognizable, interconnecting gender with ethnicity and sexuality.

### *Home and Work*

When opening the theme of home and work, it is important both to think and not to think of it not as of two separate worlds at the same time. Paid and unpaid work has clear links to the gender division of labour. Various arrangements around work and family life cut across lines such as age, education, ethnicity, sexuality as well as the settlement or class structure along with gender (Hearn et al. 2005).

The gender arrangements of home and work interconnect with social exclusion, violences, and health. Men's social exclusion from home or work is likely to create problems in the respective other arenas. This is likely to have even more impact on the women, children and other men in that arena, as partners, work colleagues, and so on. Men are also active in assisting and reproducing the social exclusion of both women and men, at both work and home. Much violence occurs in the home, in the form of men's violence to known women and men's child abuse, including child sexual abuse. The home is a major site of men's violence. (Hearn et al. 2005.)

Thus, even though this part of the presentation concentrates on topics of home and work and of social exclusion, the intersectionality of relevant issues should be considered here, and also should appear and be reflected (and sometimes they are) in policy making processes.

Particular problems relevant to men and equality faced by European countries with recent totalitarian history include gaps in policy strategies to resolve the consequences of the transformation processes. New experiences include for example unprecedented work overload for both genders and its effects upon family, child upbringing and self-education; (new varieties of) segmentation (segregation) of labour market follows the lines of stereotypically gendered division of labour. The case of the Czech Republic clearly illustrates the lack of legal measures and absence of criteria to compare jobs in the horizontally segregated labour market along gender lines (e.g. the practice of feminized and masculinized occupations), and where the measures are necessary for resolving questions relevant for equal pay or gender wage gap.

In Poland, as another example, and elsewhere, there are relevant data missing that would describe the relationship between housework and professional activity. Data (sometimes abundant) are collected separately for each sphere and this makes comparisons impossible.

Ratification and adoption of new international Conventions and EU laws in the area of home and work (as well as others) happens *de iure* and the *de facto* situation lacks systematic implementation; NGO's play an important role there. It only adds to the picture of failure of public (governmental) policies addressing the complex issue of gender equality, or at least gender relevant issues.

The rapid transformations influence, at various levels, also the processes of redefinitions of masculinities in the countries. The perceptions of this issue range from social and economic "emasculatation" of men after the breakdown of the regimes, such as the case described in Latvia: "our men are in crisis, and we must help them", and at the same time "let us return our men to families to revive our nation" (Novikova, [www.cromenet.org](http://www.cromenet.org)) to its reverse descriptions for the Czech Republic (Havelková 1997) – fast restoration of traditional breadwinner masculinity model after the totalitarian emasculated form of masculine identity, which was in a way career-less and family bound. In the totalitarian Czech Republic, the conventionally expected career of men was conditioned by their acceptance of the regime, e.g. by becoming members of the communist party. After 1989, the stress on market economy and career success brings a strong pressure for reinforcement of conventional public - private spheres division.

My repeated and very strong experience with the public discourse in gender debates is marked with strong dominating hegemonic, homophobic, and essentialist approaches. Popular psychology inspired by sociobiology still plays an important role, and the primary role of medicine and genes has not been even questioned. More generally, this is visible in the stress on "essential blood-lines" in discussions on fatherhood and the importance of research for example on biological fatherhood (esp. in connection to fathers' custody over children after divorce). Policy attention, and I need to say visible and constant, towards parental leave, and esp. paternal leave is contrasting to absence of linkages with the labour market arrangements and policies.

The list of other relevant themes from the CROME reports just adds to the complexity of the picture: major shift in expectations concerning family-workforce roles; combination of high employment rates of women (full time CZ, more jobs Baltics) and unemployment and poverty for specific groups of population – educated older women together with high youth unemployment rate for young men (combined with homelessness and other forms of social exclusion); homophobia (Poland) and general absence of tolerance to alternative forms of intimate arrangements); specific problems concerning mostly men related for example to transformation of national armies, such as professionalisation or cancellation of Army and Civil service often accompanied by general distrust to these authorities (including police). Among the topics that lack serious policy as well as critical research attention, there are men on the top – men “excluded” to the top ranks in the public sphere, this applies to EU countries in general.

It is clear from the picture, that there are policy gaps, misleading tracks as well as lack of complex approaches to the theme of home and work. Not only the interconnections of the private and public spheres in relevance to gender deserve more attention, the complexity and relevance of other themes, such as men’s health, violences and social exclusion, and categories such as class, ethnicity and sexuality must be reflected and incorporated in the policy making processes on both local (national) and EU levels.

### *Social Exclusion*

It appeared very problematic to define social exclusion in the CROME project. Approaches within countries vary to a large extent, indicating also the complexity of the issue. The differences of policy attention on transnational level are accompanied by heterogenous focuses of relevant institutions (academic research, statistical sources, government) within each country itself.

Among the key issues in social exclusion concerning men, CROME has recommended the following concentration of policy attention concerning the issue of social exclusion and men:

- on marginalized young men, affected both by unemployment, low level of education and risk taking practices (violence); on men suffering racism, and men suffering multiple social exclusions;
- on social exclusion of men upon women and children (esp. gendered violence on men and sexual violence on children);
- to ameliorate the effects of rapid socio-economic change that increase the social exclusion of men;
- to specifically address the transnational aspects of social exclusion of men, in, for example, transnational migration, and homosexual sexual relations;
- to change men’s actions in creating and reproducing social exclusions of various forms (Pringle et. al. 2005a).

The transnational analyses has indicated serious disproportions in research and policy attention concerning social exclusion and men, sometimes concentration on unemployment, homelessness, poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, criminal acts and imprisonment, on racism, migration and social exclusion of ethnic (language) minorities (Baltic states - Estonia, Latvia etc.) and violences in yet another countries (GB). These topics were approached disregarding their intersectional and multilayered character.

Generally also, law and governmental policy documents tend to use more gender insignificant approaches (and language), which may sometimes hinder and conceal the relevance of dominant patterns of masculinity, and thus certain problems relevant to social exclusion of men never get on the policy agenda. The mismatch between policy and academic research attention towards the defined social problems also points to the patriarchal structures working within these institutions.

The extent of a social issue is thus constructed and mediated in the patriarchal relations of power (Pringle et al 2005a).

Besides variations of attention towards issues of social exclusion, the theme of interconnections between the forms of social exclusion on transnational level has its relevance. There is, again, a considerable overlap between social exclusion, violences and health issues. The levels of complexity of this picture are multiple. It points to necessity of constant attention directed towards “thinking about the complex ways in which various forms of power relations always inter-connect with one another, often in a somewhat contradictory fashion.” (Ibid.)

We should not expect to understand forms of social exclusion in terms of them ever being completely independent from one another. For, the social processes generating oppressive power relations associated with gender are always likely to also be generating oppressive power relations associated with, for instance, ethnicity and/or sexuality and/or age and/or class and/or dis(ability) – and vice-versa. And, of course, the complexity of these processes of mutual constitution is frequently compounded by the fact that the relationships between them are just as likely to be contradictory as they are to be parallel. So, the fact that our study of social exclusion in terms of men’s practices uncovered so many – and such complex – overlaps between various forms of social exclusion is totally consistent with those broader international debates about “mutual constitution” and “intersectionality. (Pringle 2003; Hearn et al, 2004a.)

So, in the case of social exclusion, the chosen approaches – methodological and theoretical – to policy construction and development processes concerning the issue of men and gender equality play a crucial role. Gender insignificant approaches conceal certain problems, such as issues of dominance, from the policy agenda. Similarly as was the case of home and work, interdependence of processes generating social exclusion with other problems as well as intersectionality of gender with other stratification categories relevant for societal structures need to be reflected in attempts to produce social policy resolving aspects of “men and equality”.

### *“East-West” divide*

Most examples I have given come from the region of countries with recent totalitarian, or Soviet Bloc, past. I would like to make one more relevant point to this issue, and I assume, it can be a bit difficult to be told by and heard from a person coming from that “affected” region. My stress is on a well recognized phenomenon in gender studies – on the issue of “otherness” as a sign of hierarchical approach. Here, I borrow the academic and policy reflection of the “other” concerning gender identity, and apply it to rhetoric sometimes heard in relation to citizens of the former totalitarian countries. Sensitivity to such categorizations, and labelling of “East-West” divide, of the “former Soviet Bloc” or even “the new” EU member states connotes “the otherness”, and the public media discourse has very quickly adopted the phrase of “the second class citizenship” in my country when describing relevant EU debates concerning the larger EU (this approach can be easily adopted also by other local institutions – reconfirming then its so called “original” legitimacy).

I am not attempting here to disregard any relevant historical, cultural and social differences in relevance to gender constructions in different regions of Europe, I just want to put the stress on the importance to point to these spatial divides only when relevant problems are concerned, such as vast migration (brain-drain) of young educated people to economically more prosperous territories (for example from Latvia to Ireland); and try to look for other, intersecting, and perhaps more appropriate categorizations in other contexts (such as strong catholic tradition in certain countries which affects level of tolerance regarding sexual minorities but also reproductive rights, and also family arrangements and gender relations within them, etc.). Even though they are sometimes not easy at hand. This approach is, I believe, challenging in attempts to find similarities and to indicate

gaps that take part in the reproduction of the status quo in gender regimes or that present the potentials for changes – regarding or regardless of the territory.

*Concluding remarks on overlaps, gaps and connections between problems caused and faced by men in various European settings with reference to policies that address or fail to address them*

Now, back to home and work, and to social exclusion in a few final remarks. From what has been already said, it is clear that any policy recommendations concerning men and equality should build on the complexity, the difficulties with adequate definitions of the relevant issues, on the absence of reflection of some problems due to ignorance of key structural elements of societies and the atmosphere of neglect and reluctance towards implementing gender sensitive practices in various regions.

To repeat and sum it up, policies concerning men and equality in the spheres of home and work and social exclusion should, according to transnational CROME analyses, follow the following recommendations:

to encourage men to devote more time and priority to caring, housework, childcare, and the reconciliation of home and paid work. This is clearly an important and difficult goal for all countries, including the Nordic region that is often applauded for progress in this field. Indeed even there the changes in everyday practice have often not been very substantial. If major social policy inputs and governmental commitments to increasing men's actual parental leave can result in relatively modest results, then that suggests the need to reconsider carefully whether top-down policy initiatives are of themselves often sufficient for changing men's behaviours. In particular, a crucial factor is often the power relationship between men and women in relationships: specifically, the fact that men generally possess much greater power to choose the extent of their involvement than do their female partners.

Other recommendations include: removing men's advantages in paid work and work organizations, with the persistent gender wage gap, non-equal opportunities practices in appointment and promotion, and domination of top level jobs; developing policies on men in transnational organizations and their equality policies; encouraging men's positive contribution to gender equality; removing discriminations against men, such as conscription of men into the armed forces, and discriminations against gay men.

While there are growing governmental and related discourses about men at home and work, including the reconciliation of the demands of home and work, there is usually a lack of explicit focus on men, especially in clear and strong policy terms. There is also a lack of linkage between men as parents and governmental documentation on men, for example, as violent partners or violent parents. (Hearn et al. 2005)

And to repeat in summary policies relevant for social exclusion, it should concentrate on: marginalized young men, affected both by unemployment, low level of education and risk taking practices (violence); on men suffering racism, and men suffering multiple social exclusions; also on social exclusion of men upon women and children (esp. gendered violence on men and sexual violence on children); amelioration of the effects of rapid socio-economic change that increase the social exclusion of men; specifically addressing the transnational aspects of social exclusion of men, in, for example, transnational migration, and homosexual sexual relations; and on change of men's actions in creating and reproducing social exclusions of various forms. (Pringle et. al. 2005a.)

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## 6 Gendering Men: Implications for Gender Equality

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Bob Pease



### *Abstract*

*This paper provides an overview of the main questions about men's involvement in policies and practices toward gender equality and the key debates and issues that arise from them. It argues for the importance of locating this issue in the context of the limitations and potential of gender mainstreaming and an understanding of the gendered nature of the state and the social construction of men's gender interests. It*

*articulates the case for encouraging men's involvement in gender equality, whilst being conscious of the dangers of involving men, and outlines a strategy to work through the dilemmas and tensions.*

### *Introduction*

In considering the matter of men in relation to gender equality, it is important to recognise that we have more questions than answers at this historical moment. In this paper my aim is to provide an overview of the main questions about men's involvement in policies and practices towards gender equality and the key debates and issues that arise from them. I am conscious that I raise these questions from within a specific geo-political space and that I'm directing my observations and analysis at another geo-political space. One of the things that we have learnt from feminism is the importance of situatedness when discussing theory, policy and strategy. There is no objective, detached perspective on these issues.

While the topic of men's involvement in gender equality has been slow to emerge in gender policy debates, it has been an issue of concern in the Western critical masculinity studies scholarship for some years. Michael Kimmel in the USA, Jeff Hearn in the UK and Raewyn Connell in Australia have all addressed this issue over a number of years. Meanwhile feminists have debated the potential and limitations of such a project.

I am going to approach this issue through a series of questions and I want to suggest that how we answer these questions will significantly influence the ways in which we approach men's involvement in gender equality policy.

- Why a focus on men and gender equality now?
- What is the case for men's involvement in gender equality?
- How do we understand gender and how does this shape the way in which we analyse men and masculinities?
- When considering how to motivate men to support gender equality, how do we understand men's gender interests?
- If gender is institutionally reproduced, then what does this mean about the gendered nature of the state and how do changes in policies of the state relate to wider changes in gender relations?
- What are the risks and dangers of involving men in the project of gender equality?
- Finally, in light of the above, how can we move forward to establish a partnership between women and men to work towards gender equality?



## *Gender Mainstreaming and Men*

The issue of men's involvement in gender equality arises in the context of the policy shift towards gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming arose as a result of a concern that gender was considered only as a problem for women. Rather than focusing on policies pertaining specifically to women, gender mainstreaming proposed a strategy that would examine gender issues in all policy arenas (Walby 2004). The argument was that if we regard gender to be essentially about women, then we are unable to recognise the relational dimension of gender and the way that institutionally-based unequal power relations are reproduced. Men's gender identities are also left unexamined and are thus seen as natural.

Since gender mainstreaming was adopted by the European Union as the foundation for its gender policies, it has become clear that its impact varies considerably across the different policy domains and between different countries (Walby 2005). As a result of this variance, there is considerable debate about whether gender mainstreaming has furthered the project of gender equality on an international scale (Bacchi 2004).

A number of male writers have also raised the issue of whether gender mainstreaming adequately took men and masculinities into account and they advocated the importance of mainstreaming men to ensure that men and masculinities are integrated into gender mainstreaming (Ruxton 2004; Flood 2005). What does taking men and masculinities into account mean? If gender mainstreaming is to be successful, it means that men's behaviour needs to change. One of the progressive implications of gender mainstreaming is that the project of promoting gender equality becomes the responsibility of men as well as women (Coles 2001). However, there is a concern that the focus on men may shift the debates away from women's interests and a danger that men and women will be treated as facing similar obstacles.

In Australia the concept of gender mainstreaming is viewed critically by many women's organisations because it has legitimated the closing down of women's policy units and women-specific services. The rationale was that if gender was mainstreamed, then specific policy units and services concerned with women's interests were no longer needed (Bacchi 2004). We have to locate this development in the context of the election of a conservative Liberal Government in Australia in the 1990s. When Prime Minister John Howard came to power, he downgraded the existing women's policy machinery (Sawyer 2003) and relocated the Canberra-based Office of the Status of Women from the Prime Minister's Department to the Department of Family and Community Services.

Mainstreaming was not only used to cut women's services, it also legitimated the funding of men's services. In 1999, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women portfolio allocated \$100,000 to the Lone Fathers' Association to set up a refuge for men who were allegedly assaulted by their female partners (Sawyer 2003). In Australia gender mainstreaming was also used to support the claims of men's rights activists that Australian men were victimized by the Federal Government's Child Support Scheme. It led to a major review of the Child Custody Legislation and resulted in men having equal access to children after separation and divorce even when there was suspicion of violence and abuse. So in Australia, gender mainstreaming has fuelled the men's rights discourse about men as victims and led to a retreat by the Australian government away from gender equality.

The Australian case is worth studying to learn about what not to do. Charlesworth (2000:2) argues that 'gender mainstreaming [in Australia] has deployed the idea of gender in a very limited way and has allowed the mainstream to tame and deradicalise claims to equality'. In her view, gender mainstreaming has constructed a bland and insipid concept of gender that has little potential for social change. She observes little progress towards gender equality after ten years of gender mainstreaming practice.

### *The Case for Men's Involvement in Gender Equality*

What is the case for involving men in strategies towards gender equality? A number of writers have pointed out that men are the main obstacles to women's equality. Kimmel, (2005) for example, says that the greatest obstacles to women's equality are the behaviours and attitudes of men. Certainly, the way that men act in relation to women's demands is an important issue. Connell (2003:24) talks about men as the 'gatekeepers for gender equality'. The question as she sees it is whether men are willing or unwilling gatekeepers. Are men only obstacles or can they be something other than the problem? This is an issue that has plagued gender politics for over thirty years. Can men change to support and promote gender equality? Would they only do so on the basis of altruism or do they have things to gain?

There is overwhelming evidence of men's resistance to gender equality. We see it reflected in men's rights and fathers' rights movements and backlash responses by men world wide. The reasons for men's resistance seems clear: the material benefits provided by the patriarchal dividend, the ideological belief in male supremacy, the deeply embedded psychological fear of change and the resentment by those men who seem not to have benefited from the patriarchal dividend (Connell 2003). There are thus times when the potential for men and women to work in partnership does seem small (White 1994) and many feminists are sceptical about the possibility for real alliances. However, the point is often made that men are not only representatives of fixed and monolithic structures of power (Hearn 2001), and that some men do respond positively to feminism. We need to remind ourselves of situations where men have acted in solidarity with women.

The vision of shared power and responsibility between women and men in the home, in the workplace and in the wider national and international community is something that many of us are striving for (Erturk 2004). We know why women want such a partnership but why would men want to relinquish their power to work and live in partnership with women? Those who use sex role theory as an explanation of gender argue that men have the same interests as women in escaping the restrictions of sex roles. However, this understanding of gender is clearly inadequate (Connell 2002; Pease 2006).

A number of theoretical arguments have been advanced by profeminist masculinity studies writers for men's involvement in gender equality. Connell (2003:23) talks about constructing gender equality as 'a positive project for men'. In a paper presented at the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on The Role of Men and Boys in Achieving Gender Equality, she provides an outline of why men might change.

**Relational interests:** based on men's relationships with women as wives, partners, mothers, daughters, colleagues and friends. The quality of men's lives is seen as being dependent to some extent on the quality of these relationships.

**Personal wellbeing:** involving the experience of negative effects on men's health and well being in the current system. There are costs for men associated with dominant, controlling and competitive behaviours. It is said that men distort their humanity when they reproduce an oppressive system. So when they join with women to undo male privilege then they offset some of the costs of that system.

**Collective interests:** whereby gender equality is seen to be relevant to the wider community or society in which men live.

*Principle:* when men challenge gender inequality for political and ethical principles related to social justice.

Some profeminist writers, Michael Kimmel in North America and Michael Flood in Australia in particular, are optimistic about these reasons as a basis for men to change. They have each written at length about what men have to gain from gender equality (Flood 2000; Kimmell 2005) and on this basis have strongly advocated the importance of involving men in gender equality campaigns. Kimmel (2005:1) has said that men must recognise that 'gender equality is in their interests as men' in terms of balanced work and family life and 'richer, fuller and happier lives'.

Those who are optimistic about change say that men will support gender equality when they can see the positive benefits for themselves and the women in their lives (Connell 2003) But how does this relate to the ethical responsibility men have to change the system that benefits them unfairly? In eliciting men's support for gender equality on the basis of men's interests, concerns and problems we need to ensure that women's struggle for gender justice is not compromised.

Does gender mainstreaming require that gender projects have to consider the benefits to men as some male critics suggest (Ruxton 2002)? Arguing that gender mainstreaming will benefit men may win over some men but at what cost? Coles (2001) raises the question of whether men will support gender equality when it is not a 'win win' situation and when they have to relinquish power and privilege. Hearn (1999:6) states the obvious when he says that 'If there are to be more women in management, it needs to be accepted that there will be fewer men there'. This is not always acknowledged. Clearly men are more likely to support gender equality if women's benefits will also allow men to win as well even if they do relinquish some privileges (Singly 1997). It is much harder if men see it in terms of a zero sum game where men will lose out as women make gains.

### *Gendering Men, Gendering Institutions*

If men are to engage with gender equality, they must recognise that they too are gendered. Most men do not think of themselves as gendered because they regard gender as a women's issue and something that only women are concerned with. What does it mean then when we say that men are a gender too?

Many writers have commented on how the invisibility of men as men protects men's privilege (Johnson 1997; Kimmel 1999; Flood and Pease 2005). One of the dimensions of privilege is its invisibility. Members of dominant groups do not think of the statuses that give them privilege. I have argued elsewhere (with Flood) that the concept of privilege is a useful way to name male dominance (Flood and Pease 2005). Over ten years ago, Eveline (1994) asked why there was no demand for men to justify their 'advantage'. She noted that while men's advantage is assumed in feminist analysis, it did not become a 'rhetorical figure of speech' (Eveline 1994:129). By interrogating the invisibility, normalisation and sense of entitlement associated with privilege we can examine how men's gender interests are socially constructed and psychically embedded and in so doing critique the routine accomplishment and reproduction of privilege (Flood and Pease 2005).

To talk about gendering men, we need to revisit the concept of gender. While it has the potential of emphasising the need for men to change, it is not always clear what we mean by gender (Erturk 2004). The concept of gender is open to many interpretations, and it can be used for reactionary as well as progressive purposes. Hawthorne (2004) argues that the concept of gender is overused and that it can be depoliticised. I have demonstrated how in the Australian context, the concepts of gender and masculinity embedded in government policies have been predominantly informed by sex role theories and socio-biological approaches to gender (Pease 2006). The critical scholarship on men and masculinities has not influenced government policies and programs targeted at men and boys. A gendered analysis of policy will thus have different implications depending upon the conceptual framework used (Kaber 2003).

If we are to ensure that gender is used in a progressive way, we need to ensure how it is defined. It is sometimes used to mean women and sometimes it is used interchangeably with sex. When gender is used to argue that we need to focus on the problems facing men (Beasley 2005) or when the issue is stated in terms of adding the male point of view, we should be concerned. We have to avoid the development of parallel policies for men, as we have witnessed in relation to men's health policies and boys' education strategies. It is important to focus gender equality policy on the power relations between men and women rather than on men and women as separate categories of people (Connell 2003). The former is what constitutes a gender relations approach to policy analysis and I believe that this should be the conceptual framework used to analyse men and masculinities. I also want to argue that we should talk about gender as a verb. Gender is something that we do rather than being a characteristic of a person. It is through the processes of 'accomplishing' gender, race and other forms of social difference that social dominance in social institutions is reproduced (Flood and Pease 2005).

While gender has become synonymous with women in some contexts, in others it is understood to mean the socially constructed cultural differences between women and men (Connell 2002). In policy analysis, we have to move beyond this narrow definition of gender as the social identities of men and women to embrace gender relations and institutions. If we only focus on social identities, we will lose the feminist insights (Baden and Goetz 1997). If the focus is broadened beyond individual men to include institutionalised patriarchal norms, then this shift is potentially transformative (Bacchi 2004). So gendering men is not only about individual men but rather should also focus on the 'institutions, cultures and practices that sustain inequality along with other forms of domination such as race and class' (White 1997: 21-22). A gender relations analysis then focuses on the institutional rules and resources that men use to promote and defend their interests (Kaber 2003) and consequently it recognises that gender equality requires institutional and structural change.

Gender mainstreaming and involving men in strategies for towards gender equality takes place within the context of the state. The state of course is gendered and controlled by men (Connell 2003). What this means is that policy is itself gendered rather than just being a response to gender differences. States are actively involved in reproducing unequal gender relations (Bacchi 2004). Connell (2002: 103) expresses it in terms of the state 'doing gender' by regulating gender relations in the wider society. If gender inequality is embedded in state machineries, to what extent then can state institutions promote women's interests?

We have to be careful not to have too optimistic a view of the state as an instrument for social change. We should not assume that enlightened policy makers will simply move towards gender equality (Daly 2005). The state is an arena of conflict over gender and different expressions of gender interests will be advanced by different policy actors. I think that it is useful to return to the literature which conceptualises state-based social justice struggles in terms of being 'in and against the state' (London to Edinburgh Weekend Return Group 1980). We also have to remember that gender inequality does not only reside within the state, it is also widespread throughout society. So while transforming public policy can alleviate gender inequality, it cannot eliminate it (Daly 2005).

### *Dangers of Involving Men*

In promoting the involvement of men, we must be mindful of the potential dangers and problems. Some of the concerns have been well documented.

#### *Reducing funding for women's programs and services*

I have spoken already about the impact of gender mainstreaming and targeting men in the Australian context where women's policy units were closed down and women's services were cut back.

*Weakening the feminist orientation*

There is understandable anxiety that focusing on men and masculinities may lessen a commitment to ending gender inequalities (Cleaver 2002). Some writers, for example, fear that bringing men in under the wider umbrella of gender will dissolve the feminist agenda (Cornwall 2000). Men may espouse a commitment to gender equality but not follow through with action (Lang and Prewitt 1999).

*Conveying the notion of symmetry between the problems facing men and women* Bacchi (2004) expresses the concern that when men are considered as part of the solution, attention is often diverted to focusing on 'men at risk'. So men are represented as potential beneficiaries of gender mainstreaming under the notion that they too can be a disadvantaged group (Eveline and Bacchi 2005). We have to move beyond the 'men have problems too' approach because it undermines gender equality.

*The possibility of men taking over the campaigns*

One of the arguments often put about involving men is that men are more able to influence other men. Men are more willing to listen to men than to women. While it is important to have profeminist men involved in gender equality projects so that women do not have to take responsibility for changing men. (White 1997), when men speak for gender equality, do we perpetuate male dominance?

Generally, profeminist men demonstrate an awareness of the dangers. They recognise the potential to distract attention away from women and the danger of coopting gender equality projects for their own ends (Ruxton 2004). However, most profeminist advocates argue that the potential for positive outcomes outweighs the risks involved (Ruxton 2004, Kimmel 2005, Flood 2005).

Women have to be able to move beyond their experience of discrimination by men to be able to support men working in this area (Coles 2001). Many women remain sceptical about whether men have the capacity to change. While many of the arguments about men's involvement focus on how men will gain from gender equality, the reality is that most men do not see the gains as benefits. In this view, much of men's opposition to gender equality is based on their ignorance of what is in it for them. Too often gender equality is conceptualised in terms of attitudes, as if the real issue is in people's minds. So if only we construct a good enough argument, most men would change their minds. Magnusson (2000) argues that focusing on what men will gain by gender equality has not seemed to work very well for practical gender equality policies. She also notes that gendered power and privilege are ignored in this approach.

In determining a pathway through these dilemmas, I think that we need to move beyond the single strand of gender analysis towards an intersectional framework to understand how the divisions between men shape their gender interests.

*Beyond Gender: Intersectionality and Men's Interests*

Gender mainstreaming does not seem to have come to terms with intersectionality. Kantola and Dahl (2005) have suggested that white middle-class working mothers are the women who appear to have benefited most from gender equality policies, resulting in many women being left out. A number of writers have argued that gender equality and gender mainstreaming should not be seen in isolation from other social divisions and that we need to avoid essentialising and homogenizing men and women (Walby 2005). Women and men are internally divided and the constitution of gender is shaped by race, class and other forms of inequality.

The recognition of plural masculinities enables us to look beyond gender to identify the ways in which gender intersects with class, culture and sexuality. This means both that some men may be subordinated and some women may exercise power over some men. It also creates diversified gender interests of men and women (Erturk 2004). Given the hierarchies between men, it also means that the existing system disadvantages some men (White 1994). One of the implications of an intersectional analysis is that resistance to gender equality may also be attributed to the defence of class and race interests by both women and men (White 1997).

The issue of what men might gain or lose requires us to analyse the concept of gender interests of both women and men. Men often resist the idea that their interests may be shaped by their gender or any of their other social statuses for that matter. Whereas it is assumed that women's interests are always partial. The concept of men's gender interests reminds us that we should expect strong resistance to gender equality by men. It would appear to be in men's gender interests to deny that gender inequalities exist and that if they did recognise their existence, to posit that they are the product of nature rather than being socially constructed (Kaber 2003). Understanding the basis of men's resistance to gender equality and addressing it, is perhaps the most important issue facing those who support a partnership approach. The general advice given about how to work with men is often couched in terms of how we minimise hostile and defensive reactions by men (Connell 2003). Many men experience criticisms of patriarchy and male domination as a denigration of men as a sex (Moberg 1997). They are often unable to separate out a critique of patriarchy, or of hegemonic masculinity or of actual abusive behaviour by some men from a critique of what they perceive to be their essence as men.

Over twenty years ago Molyneux (1985) wrote a classic article on the gender interests of women and men, distinguishing between practical interests and strategic interests. The former are based on improving one's situation within society as it is, while the latter interests are related to radical change in the system. Kaber (2003) argues that the concept of strategic gender interests is useful in gender analysis because even women's strategic interests are not given. Molyneux's conceptual framework enables us to recognise that men may have contradictory gender interests, some of which resist change while others provide the basis for partnership with women. There is some evidence of men opposing men's dominance and male privilege if they conceive of their strategic gender interests being in gender equality. This requires men to reconstruct their interests, to change their perception of what constitutes their gender interests and to reconstitute their gender identities (Pease 2000; Pease 2002).

### *Principles to Inform Men's Involvement in Gender Equality*

If men are to be more involved in gender equality policy, we need to be clear about the principles informing that involvement. There are ten principles I would like to emphasise as important in developing a strategy through the dilemmas and dangers that I have outlined.

- Name men explicitly in gender policies to unmask their privileged and normative status.
- Critically interrogate the concepts of gender and masculinity to ensure that these concepts are informed by feminism and the critical scholarship on men and masculinities.
- Focus on gender relations between women and men rather than on separate gender groups.
- Avoid portraying men as a homogeneous group and recognise the social divisions and inequalities between men as well as their different ideological standpoints.
- Ensure that the involvement of men in gender policies is connected to equity and social justice.
- Develop alliances and partnerships between women and men to develop non-patriarchal visions and forms of accountability to women's interests.
- Protect and defend women's space and women-focused policies and programs.
- Recognise the need to transform the institutionalisation of patriarchal gender norms within the state and state policies.

- Acknowledge the intersections of gender hierarchies with other divisions of domination and oppression.
- Explore the contradictions of men's strategic and practical gender interests to build on those gender interests that can support gender equality.

We need to develop strategies to encourage men to move away from privilege and dominance. As Hearn (2001) says, the question is not whether men are to be more involved but on the terms of that involvement. While we should not lose sight of the potential of engaging men in gender equality, we have to be very careful in how we frame the strategies and the ends to ensure that the feminist vision of gender democracy is not compromised or co-opted.

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## Part II: Regional Perspectives



## 7 Men and Gender Equality Policy in Finland

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*Jouni Varanka*



### *Abstract*

*This paper outlines perspectives on men's relationship to gender equality, major challenges at strategic level related to men and gender equality, and means to respond to these challenges. Furthermore, it contains proposals for concrete measures and projects. There are two major viewpoints in the relationship of men to gender equality: gender equality needs men and men need gender equality. The overall strategic aim is to reinforce the focus on men as a part of the entirety of gender equality policy. This can be done by increasing the gender equality projects aimed at men, strengthening men's participation in the relevant discussion, continuing the work to mainstream the gender perspective at the same time underlining that it is question of men and women, as well as by establishing the particular attention paid to men during this government period as a part of the normal state of gender equality policy.*

### *Introduction and delimitations for the policies*

The 2003 Programme of Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Government states that gender equality issues would also be assessed from the male viewpoint. The Government Equality Programme in turn says that a report would be drawn up on the issue of men and gender equality, which would define the relationship between men and gender equality policy. This paper comprises the publication *Men and Gender Equality Policy*, used as a background document for the Conference *Men and Gender Equality*.

In Finland, the Act on Equality between Women and Men and the Constitution Act constitute the legislation defining the goals of gender equality. The Act on Equality basically strives to reduce gender-based discrimination and promote gender equality, and to improve the standing of women. Women's status on the labour market is the thematic core of gender equality policy. Improving the status of women is a more intrinsic goal of gender equality policy than improving that of men, meaning that any focus on men – for instance in preparatory work on future action – must not undermine the status of women. Though improving the standing of women is a key objective, gender equality policy also aims to prevent discrimination against men and to improve the status of men.

The United Nations (UN) plays an important role in Finnish gender equality policy. Key UN gender equality policy strategies such as the CEDAW agreement and the Beijing Platform for Action clearly focus on women and the situation of women, with the main objective of improving the status of women and eliminating discrimination against women. Men take a back seat and are referred to primarily for comparison purposes only. A particularly important UN contribution was the meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2004, where one of the two key themes developed was the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality. The gender equality strategies drawn up at the UN level are binding on Finland, too, which is reflected in the areas highlighted in this paper.

EU law on gender equality contains fewer provisions than UN legislation that have a direct impact on the area covered by this paper. The EU Directives that mainly focus on working life rule on issues related to the equal treatment of women and men rather than on improving the status of women per se. Up to now, EU gender equality policy has not paid much attention to the issues

discussed in this paper. Now, however, the situation may be changing. The men and gender equality issue is clearly becoming more important in EU gender equality policy, where the relevant current themes focus particularly on ways in which men can reconcile work and private life.

### *The basics of 'men and gender equality'*

The subject discussed in this paper is referred to as 'men and gender equality'. The basic question is how men are related to gender equality. Most of the literature on the subject is written in a global context or in the context of development work, NGO work or the English-speaking world. Writings focusing on governmental action are few and far between.

There are two key angles on the relationship between men and gender equality which at the same time provide one answer to the question of why the issue warrants attention in the first place: gender equality needs men, and men need gender equality.

It has been noted that the efforts and support of men are essential in promoting gender equality. Equally, opposition, indifference and passivity from men are known to hamper and complicate the promotion of gender equality. The people who hold posts of key importance for gender equality policy are often men. Men are also needed as evaluators, as partners in discussion and as bringers of new viewpoints. Greater participation by men would enrich the gender equality debate. At present, most of the debaters are women.

Men need gender equality because men benefit from it. This benefit can be divided into three parts:

#### 1) Benefits to men from women's gaining a better status:

- the progress of the common good in the form of gender equality,
- a more efficient, just and well-functioning society,
- enhancing the quality of life of women close to men, and
- personal benefits to men.

#### 2) Benefits to men from action aimed at improving the status of women:

- the Equality Act, originally drawn up to eliminate gender-based discrimination against women,
- other action to improve the status of women that also benefits men in a similar situation,
- gender mainstreaming, in the sense that it originally became a key strategy for gender equality policy because it was a useful tool for improving the status of women.

#### 3) Various measures to improve the status of men:

- e.g. efforts to reduce male suicides.

The same situation can be problematic for both men and women, but in different ways. Influencing the actions of men is one way of improving the status of women, and vice versa. Men are not just men; each man is also the sum of many other characteristics. When working on gender equality policy measures that affect men, the complexity of men's situations should be taken into account.

There are three possible risks in focusing more on men in gender equality policy:

- blurring of the big picture in gender equality (the priority of improving the status of women);
- emergence of competition between action to tackle problems of men and action to tackle the problems of women;
- seeing the relationship between men and gender equality from a narrow and one-sided viewpoint.

The meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in March 2004 was the most significant effort to date to chart the relationship between men and gender equality, gathering together work done over several decades by experts in many fields. In the previous year, an Expert Group Meeting held on the same theme produced a summary of basic principles to be observed in programmes and policies concerning men and gender equality.

All work on men and gender equality should comply with these basic principles, noted in the papers of the UN Expert Group Meeting:

1. Gender equality work with men should take into account the general situation between the genders.
2. Emphasize the active stake that men and boys have in gender equality, that is, the gains to men and boys.
3. Recognize the well-being of men and boys as a legitimate aim of gender equality measures.
4. Recognize the diversity of men's (and women's) situations and circumstances.

### *Key challenges related to men and gender equality*

The general strategic challenge is to increase focus on the relationship between men and gender equality. This paper focuses on three specific challenges.

The most important objective, mentioned in many contexts regarding men and gender equality, is to increase men's participation. Promoting gender equality has been a women's activity, with men in a distinct minority. It has become increasingly clear that now and in the future men have a crucial role to play in efforts towards an equal society. The most important form of men's participation in the present situation is to contribute to the gender equality debate. At the moment, only a small minority of participants are men.

Men's involvement in the gender equality debate is important because gender equality affects men, and because men can contribute constructive new angles and themes to the gender equality debate. An equally important reason for more participation by men is that it commits them to promoting gender equality and adds credence to the idea that promoting gender equality is a matter for both men and women. One key challenge related to men and gender equality in Finland is the need to increase male participation in the gender equality debate.

Another strategic challenge relates to the fact that most gender equality-promoting projects and measures are directed towards women. Because gender equality also affects men, much more effort should be put into measures aimed specifically at men.

In the case of measures aimed specifically at men, there is some tension between two approaches concerning what should be done first and what can be left until later. One approach insists that the most important thing is to concentrate on action aimed primarily at supporting the role of men in improving the status of women. Such projects include action to reduce the clientele of prostitutes (because most such clients are men). The other approach stresses that the main concern is to work to reduce problems specifically affecting men. Primary tasks in this approach could include setting up centres to help men in crisis situations. The second key challenge is to find a balance between these two approaches in prioritizing action focusing on men.

The thematic core in Finnish gender equality policy has been to improve the labour market situation of women. But many issues related to men and gender equality (such as gender-specific needs for health services) lie outside this core. Often there is no practice of including the gender perspective in these issues. If gender perspective is mainstreamed, however, attention can be given to issues which are related specifically to men but which lie outside the thematic core in gender

equality policy. The third challenge related to men and gender equality is to strengthen gender mainstreaming in policy areas outside the thematic core area of gender equality.

### *Strategy for incorporating men into the heart of gender equality policy*

The most important objective concerning men and gender equality at the strategic level is to bring men and gender equality into the heart of gender equality policy. What this means in practice is that men must be considered in gender equality policy too; after all, men are the other gender. In working towards this goal, applying the ‘dual-strategy’ gender equality policy is a useful approach. Applied to men and gender equality, the dual strategy means that on the one hand a separate effort concentrating on men is needed, involving separate projects, and on the other hand a focus on men needs to be mainstreamed in gender equality policy more widely. This in turn means that whenever gender equality measures are being worked on in any given area, consideration should be given to how the issue dealt with relates to men, and what different roles men play in relation to it.

The goal of incorporating men into the heart of gender equality policy can be approached in five different ways:

#### *1) Increasing gender equality policy action focusing on men*

So far, the most common thematic area where there has been explicit focus on men is the support of fatherhood. However, there is no real reason why measures aimed specifically at men should not be taken in other thematic areas. Action would be valuable for instance in areas in which the Government has already made statements aimed at promoting gender equality. For example, if the Government wishes to promote equal pay, there could be projects focusing on men that affect the wage gap.

It is possible that some gender equality matters related to men have not even been identified yet as ‘gender equality issues’.

#### *2) Ensuring more male participation in the gender equality debate*

There are several ways to increase men’s involvement in the gender equality debate. When requests for opinions are sent out, it is important to ask not only for the views of women’s organizations but also for views from bodies pondering matters from the perspective of how they affect men. When events dealing with gender equality are arranged, special attention should be given to inviting organizations that will send a male representative. Expert influence is also exercised through unofficial channels, and in unofficial interaction on gender equality it is important to set up networks that include male specialists.

#### *3) Paying attention to men in gender equality policy rhetoric*

The most important observation regarding rhetoric is that men are an essential part of the audience whenever gender equality is talked about. At the very least, any talk about gender equality aimed at the public at large should be constructed so that it addresses men as well as women. Speaking about men in a highly stereotyped or biased manner ignores this. Taking the complexity of men’s situations into account means men have more possible ways of looking at any given issue and thus more access channels to the gender equality debate. It is essential to underline the benefits to men of action designed to promote gender equality.

It is good to approach men as partners in solving gender equality problems, especially issues in which the problematic behaviour of certain men plays a key role (e.g. violence against women). It is worthwhile to pay attention to criticisms of gender equality policy voiced by men and to refine any suggestions they present in order to create better proposals for action.

#### *4) Gaining more profound expertise on men and gender equality*

For long-term work on men and gender equality to be pursued in gender equality policy, the special attention that has been given to men and gender equality during the present Government's term should in future become part of normal practice. This requires some degree of institutionalization.

The best way of ensuring the continuity and further advance of work on the 'men and gender equality' theme is to continue the policy of having a dedicated civil servant for the theme located at the Gender Equality Unit. A special unit dedicated to men and gender equality would risk competition between the mainstream work for gender equality on the one hand and men and gender equality on the other. Such a unit might be marginalized in the work for gender equality. However, merely mainstreaming the 'male perspective' is not sufficient, because the theme still needs development, which requires dedication.

Expertise concerning men is shallow and dispersed in Finland. Getting the men and gender equality themes into the heart of gender equality policy requires an increase in this expertise. One important way of promoting deeper and broader expertise concerning men in Finland is to provide financial support both for studies on men and for gender studies that also deal with men. In addition, we must ponder ways of financially subsidizing men's organizations that work for gender equality as part of overall support for non-governmental organizations promoting gender equality.

#### *5) Supporting gender mainstreaming and stressing that mainstreaming must involve men as well as women*

It was noted earlier that strengthening gender mainstreaming will play an important role in responding to challenges related to men and gender equality in various component areas of policy. Mainstreaming means that men can be integrated into the gender perspective: when we look at things from the female angle, we also see them from the male angle. Another important reason for strengthening mainstreaming is that as a result, many issues related specifically to men come to the fore. In some countries, mainstreaming has in practice meant only looking at the situation of women. From the 'men and gender equality' angle, however, it is vital to stress that mainstreaming should not concern merely women, but women and men.

## 8 The Nordic View on Men and Gender Equality

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*Tomas Wetterberg*

*Abstract*

*The speech will present the personal experience and view of the work that has been done in the Nordic countries in the field of men and gender equality during the last 25 years. It will take the audience into a journey of the interesting work and hopefully give some advice and some thoughts about what can be the obstacles and what can bring success in a work with men and gender equality.*

This lecture is in your programme as being on men and gender equality from a Nordic perspective, or a Nordic view. So it will be, since I am a man from Sweden, which is one of the Nordic states. I also worked on a project on men and gender equality from 1999 until 2003 for the Swedish government, so this will give the gender view. In this project one of my tasks was to be a member of a group composed of men and women from the Nordic countries, elected by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The group's task was to study the work on men and gender equality in the Nordic countries. So, of course, this speech will be a Nordic view even though it will be based on my experience and what I have found during the years I worked on this topic.

There are small cultural differences between our countries when we speak about masculinity and gender equality, but at the same time we try to learn from each other. When we talk about masculinity, there are many differences even within each of our countries, even within a small group of men, so in a 30-minute speech I will be very structured. However, from the beginning I would like to say that this is my own interpretation and view of the work to involve men in gender-equality issues in the Nordic countries.

In the Nordic countries there has been a lot of work at the political level to get men more involved in gender issues. And there have also been different kinds of male movements over the years. In Sweden, for example, the first known male movement working for the emancipation of men was around the beginning of the 70s. 'Liberate the Man', was its name.

At the political level, one example of involving men in gender issues is that all our countries have had parental allowances for many years. In Sweden we have had the parental allowance for both parents since 1974. In Norway this has been possible since 1977, in Finland since 1978, Iceland since 1981 and the last of the Nordic countries to introduce parental allowances was Denmark in 1984.

From our point of view, the parental allowance for both the father and the mother is an important political way of implementing more gender equality in society, especially when we think about how to involve more men in the issue of gender equality. But it is also one way of giving a woman a better opportunity to stay in working life, even when she is a parent. Since 1995 we have had a special father's month in Sweden, which from 2001 has increased to two father's months. The fact is that these are two special months that are for the parent who will stay at home for the shortest period of parental leave. This is an entitlement for both parents that is not transferable between them, as is the rest of the parental allowance.

Norway, however, was the first country to introduce some kind of 'fathers' quota', or as we prefer to say 'paternity leave', in 1993. After this came Sweden in 1995 and Denmark followed in 1998. But Iceland was the first country that made the parental allowances a sort of obligation for fathers, and since 2001 they have divided the parental allowance into three parts: one for the father, one for



the mother, and one that is up to the parents to divide in the way they think is most functional for the family. As I noticed in a recent report, this part often goes to the mother, as it does generally in our countries. In 2002, only 19.6 % of the parental leave days were utilised by men. But with this division Icelandic men represent the largest share of parental allowance anywhere in the Nordic countries, probably in the whole world. If you want to know more about the Nordic experience with parental leave and its impact on equality between women and men, you can find it in a report by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Parental allowance is important for both parents when we consider the possibilities of combining working life with family life. In the first discussions about paternity leave in the 60s there were those who really felt that an increasing number of fathers should have the same opportunities to stay at home as mothers, and this would in the future lead to a more gender-equal society. With this experience these men would develop more caring behaviour. We still don't know if their prediction has come true, but we can see that during this period of about 40 years, it has been difficult to convince all men to take advantage of this opportunity to be with their child from the beginning of its life. But we can see that this father-friendly policy has done something to men in the Nordic countries. The number of fathers that use this preferential right increases every year, but not as fast as some of us would wish.

Parental allowance is not the only area that relates to gender equality and men, but it is what most people talk about when the question of men and gender equality is on the agenda.

And because so few men took their share of parental leave (in Sweden as a whole in 1980 about 5% of all the parental allowance was utilised by men), the Swedish government was interested in seeing if they could do something about this issue and other issues that concerned men and masculinity.

If men don't involve themselves voluntarily, what can the political system then do to help? Before the Government started anything, it wanted to see if Swedish men really were interested in gender equality at all.

After a large-scale survey carried out by Lars Jalmert, a professor in psychology and perhaps one of the first researchers in masculinity in the Nordic countries, the answers to this question were briefly:

- Yes, of course Swedish men would like to spend more time with their children,
- Swedish men thought that there should be more men in the daycare centres and in the school system
- Swedish men wanted to have both men and women in all workplaces, i.e. both in industrial work and in caring professions like nursing, etc.
- And maybe what is more important was that Swedish men really were opposed to men's violence against women
- Yes Swedish men really liked the idea of gender equality...

Swedish men want to have more gender equality, but they wanted someone else to work on this. From then on some of us working on gender equality have still used at least one line from the results. The Swedish man is a man of principles.

In principle he wants gender equality, but...

There was also a large-scale survey carried out in Norway in 1988 that showed almost the same results as the Swedish survey.

In 1983, after the research in Sweden, the Minister for Gender Equality Affairs put together a working group on the role of men. Both men and women were included in this ideas group and they worked until 1992 on information and opinion-building activities in order to influence attitudes to male issues in different sections of society.

Among other issues, the group worked on men's violence against women and men's violence as a whole.

- They also worked on the issue of what happens when men become fathers. They recommended, inter alia, this special period in the parental insurance scheme, so that the father could have the chance to be alone with his child.
- They also looked at the male himself, the male role, with its conflicting emotions and the male way of solving the issues concerning family life and working life.

At this time there was not so much discussion about the power structure of men's dominance over women. In 1987, the Swedish delegation for research in gender equality was given an assignment to identify areas in society where more knowledge was needed to show the consequences of gender equality for men. A report called 'About masculinity – The man as a research project' was the result. I think that these initiatives and research about men, masculinity and gender equality have been important for the growth of public debate, research and different initiatives on how to change the old male structure in the Nordic countries.

In 1993/94, there was considerable discussion in Sweden about men's responsibility for violence against women. At that time the male members of the board of Save the Children took the initiative to start a male network for men against violence. About a year after it was started there were around 2,000 men in Sweden working on opinion-building in relation to this issue. And in some of the other countries there were some initiatives in starting national white ribbon campaigns. One of the results of starting this network was that we now have a lot of networks for men in Sweden. One of them is a national network, coordinating the work among men and supported by money from the Government.

Today there are also a lot of networks for men working at day-care centres, networks for men working as nurses, networks for men working on men's violence against women and other non-governmental organisations of men in the Nordic countries.

But there are still questions about the kind of obstacles there are to men becoming involved in gender equality issues. The project I worked on had to find the answers to this. And today my answer is more like the questions: do men, as a group, really want to have more gender equality? Or what do we mean by gender equality?

I was also responsible for finding ways of working with this kind of change for men. Do we still have problems with men's roles? Do we need a new form of masculinity? Or is it the gender power system that has to change so that both men and women can be free to choose their own way of creating their approaches in a gender equal society?

When I speak about the gender power system, I am talking about a kind of invisible contractual obligation between women and men. A Swedish professor in history, Yvonne Hirdman, has formulated what she calls the twin logics that constitute an informal gender power structure: Partly the general division between male and female worlds, which we can all see for instance in the home with respect to housework. We can see it in the toy shop and we can see it in the labour market; and partly the precedence of the male norm in the world shared by women and men. The expectation that the leader should be a man, the breadwinner should be a man, and men play football, or else we have to talk about women's football, which is supposed to be something other than football.

Today, I think that both masculinity and the structure of gender are the reasons why it is so difficult to engage men in the issues we call gender equality. The reason is that these two structures are interlinked.

There has been a lot of research in the field of critical studies on men today relating to hegemonic masculinity, or rather hegemonic masculinities. This is what we previously talked about as the stereotype of man, or the male role. The young man growing up and searching for his identity has this stereotype to relate to when he thinks about manhood.

If he doesn't act like a man, what can he then become? Everybody thinks that the opposite of man is woman. And what kind of boy will be a woman. If a boy, or a man, does a thing that a woman usually does there is often someone around who is in one way telling this boy, or man, that he is not like a real man. Why do we so often think in terms of needing an opposite position to understand our position today?

A study has been carried out in Sweden where the researcher asked doctors working together with male-nurses what they thought about a man who is a nurse. Two answers were common in that study. One was when the doctor had some ideas about this man's future. Of course a man can't be a nurse. He will soon be a doctor. The other answer was that there must be something wrong with this man. Maybe he is a homosexual?

My interpretation, which is one also shared by some of the researchers, is that you have to act like a man if you would like to be seen as a real man. Other researchers tell us that when you look at what kind of man you are, you relate to what other men are doing and saying about manhood.

A comprehensive Norwegian study carried out a couple of years ago by Øystein Gullvåg Holter and Helene Aarseth, entitled Men's Life Contexts showed that there is a lot of negotiation about masculinities among men these days. They studied a group of Norwegian men in the vanguard of society, who are within the Norwegian avant-garde regarding gender equality. The researchers looked at the motives for these men to be involved in gender equality and found three archetypes.

The first one is what they call the man of justice. Most men favour 'justice' in principle. In practice, however, many find that as individuals there are a number of things preventing them from living up to these principles. But the man of justice does in fact practise what he preaches. And one example of behaving in a just manner is to share responsibility for home and family.

The second archetype is *the careerist*. When considering his family, he starts from his work. He may have discovered that organizations in the modern world are less hierarchical than they used to be. He has learned that these new organizations often suit women more, and he decides that in order to be more competitive in the job market of the future, it might be a good idea for him to learn about the things women can do. The best method, he concludes, is to stay at home with the children for a while. So this is what he does, hoping that the move will boost his future career.

This may sound a bit suspect, but the researchers point out that in this way, he does in fact get closer to his children than many others do. After all, it is through this closeness that he hopes to learn something about relationships with other people. This might be what some researchers in Sweden say is the result of a father-friendly policy?

The third archetype, finally, is the caring man. His involvement in family life is not confined to his responsibilities as a father. As he sees it, family life is an important part of life in general. He considers that being an active, committed partner in the family unit, and not just a breadwinner, enhances the quality of his life.

All these motives – and possibly others as well – may be important in mobilizing men in the drive for gender equality, but I personally think that the last one – being actively involved with his

family – is the most crucial of them all, the motive that may persuade men to mobilise and march on behalf of gender equality.

To summarise, I would like to say that men and women in the Nordic countries have come a long way in terms of gender equality. There are a lot of men taking responsibility for their children and there are also a lot of men sharing the work at home with their wives. There is what the critical male researcher Connell would describe as a lot of negotiation with hegemonic masculinity going on in the Nordic countries.

And I think that this political change from thinking of gender equality as a women's issue to an issue for both women and men has also encouraged a larger discussion about men's roles in childcare and in other parts of society, like daycare centres and other caring professions and the general change in the old male role, so to speak. There is also a lot of discussion about how we can best find practical ways for both men and women to combine family situations with their working life. But because men still have higher incomes than women, and because of a less than modern masculinity there is still a lot of negotiation in Nordic families and workplaces.

What we are doing today is finding the ways we can change the structure, the system that makes men and women more equal in society. The pay gap is only one of these structures. We are also working with the question of men's violence; particularly violence against women, which has, contrary to expectation, increased over the last couple of years.

But at the same time as we talk about opportunities for men from gender equality, I have to say that it is also important to talk about some disadvantages. After all, why don't men bother about gender equality as much as we would like? What is in it for men? If men are likely to lose materialistically from gender equality, in terms of weaker positions of power, the abolition of the wage gap, less power in families, why should men be interested at all in gender equality? These so-called disadvantages are also my reflections on the opportunities for men in gender equality.

Power has to be shared. One of the reasons for this is that decision-making is difficult and democracy needs more than one sex; it needs both women and men. The more experience is used in decision-making, the better results you will produce.

With more gender equality men don't have to be the ones who perform most and best all the time. They don't have to be the breadwinner. Because of traditional masculinity, men die and suffer more and at a younger age from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, respiratory diseases, accidents and violence than women.

Gender differences in health arise from how certain jobs done by men are hazardous occupations. Generally men neglect their health and for some men at least their 'masculinity' is characterised by risk-taking, especially for younger men (in terms of smoking, alcohol and drug-taking, unsafe sexual practices, road accidents, and lack of awareness of risk).

Another opportunity is the deeper relationship with their children. If men have the opportunity to be with their children as much as they want to, maybe as much as the mother, they will develop a closer and more understanding relationship with their children. Or as Michael Kimmel, a professor in sociology in New York, argues in his book 'The Gendered Society':

I believe that as gender inequality decreases, the differences among people – differences grounded in race, class, ethnicity, age, sexuality as well as gender – will emerge in a context in which each of us can be appreciated for our individual uniqueness as well as our commonality.

Today I think men hinder the gender equality because they don't have the knowledge about this issue. Tomorrow I think men and women can't live without gender equality.

## 9 Prevention of Violence in Spain

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*Elisa Nieto*

### *Abstract*

*This presentation gives an outline of the Law's main guidelines for action on prevention and awareness raising and give out some examples of gender violence sensitization campaigns ran by several institutional bodies. It also explores the ideas that are essential for the correct understanding not only for gender violence but also for the understanding of gender itself. Awareness raising with regards to prevention of gender violence is about giving society enough cognitive instruments in order to eliminate gender stereotypes, recognise the beginning of gender violence and identify the role played by women and men as victim and aggressor respectively.*

It is an honor for me to be here today in this forum to share with you a brief presentation on the legal changes introduced by the Spanish Act on Integrated Protection Measures Against Gender Violence passed on the 28th of January 2005. I will try to outline the Law's main guidelines for action on prevention and awareness raising and give out some examples of gender violence sensitization campaigns ran by several institutional bodies.

### *Conceptual framework*

But first, let me start by sharing with you some ideas that are obvious and indeed essential for the correct understanding not only for gender violence but also for the understanding of gender itself.

Gender violence is the most brutal symbol of inequality existing between men and women. It impinges on the physical or psychological integrity of the woman who suffers it, and also assaults the principles of equality, security and freedom that rule the systems of democratic coexistence.

We are convinced that traditional gender socio-cultural standards constitute the root, the essential source and main explanation of gender violence. Therefore, gender violence is the evidence of the incomplete women citizenship. And this breach on women's citizenship achieves its greatest intensity when it occurs between two persons that have or have had a close relationship. It is in the field of couples or former couples where this flawed women citizenship reaches its most intense expression and questions daily women's basic civil rights as: life, physical and psychological integrity, health, dignity and freedom.

Therefore, the paradigm that must be questioned in order to give transparency to the dimensions of violence against women is the one that gives legitimacy to the symbolic *unexistence* of women. This cultural violence exerted by the patriarchal paradigm perpetuates an unequal situation and women's subordination. In this sense, the eradication of this type of violence will be achieved only by the overhaul of the pervading social mentality.

### *Spanish act against gender violence: General aspects*

In order to solve this attack on the essential values of democratic systems, the recognition of the public character of this problem is a *conditio sine qua non*. This was in the mind of the Spanish legislator when the Act on Integrated Protection Measures Against Gender Violence was passed: we are facing a public problem, which hinders the effectiveness of equality between men and women proclaimed in our constitutions.

But also, statistics show that it is a public problem to belong mainly in the private context. And within this private context, gender violence is produced mainly in existing relationships or relationships that have broken down.

Statistics show us that of the total deaths occurred in my country due to domestic violence during last year (90), in 74.4 percent of the cases (67) the victim was a woman. In 2006, 72.3 percent of the women dead due to domestic violence (76) died at the hands of their partner/spouse or former partner/spouse (55). The conclusion being that, in my country, the leading cause of intentional death is due to gender violence in the context of close relationship. Therefore, our Law against gender violence deals with violence against women exerted by the person who is or has been her partner/spouse, although there may not have been cohabitation.

Facing violence thus legally profiled, the Law establishes a system of global protection measures that mainly affect three fields of action: awareness and prevention; recognition of the victims' rights; prosecution and punishment of the aggressor. The ultimate aim of the Law is to achieve the eradication of this violent phenomenon, through the common implication of men and women in the construction of new gender relationships, a new scale of values based on tolerance, dignity and freedom.

#### *Awareness raising and prevention: Social and legal aspects.*

It is important to go over the general meaning of awareness raising and prevention in order to understand its recent legal development in the Act against Gender Violence. Thus, a primary definition of awareness raising could be the act of giving society enough cognitive instruments in order to eliminate gender stereotypes, recognise the beginning of gender violence and identify the role played by women and men as victim and aggressor respectively.

In this context, the objective of prevention would be to avert the violent act in its three stages:

1. Primary prevention: when conflict has not yet appeared
2. Secondary prevention: when conflict is already going on.
3. Tertiary prevention: when the victim has been judiciary declared as such.

The prevention process must set out resources that permit socialization (to develop non-violent behaviour) as well as re-socialization (giving individual identity back to the victim), as the essential conditions to hinder the reproduction of gender violence.

Nevertheless, I would like to stress that, when it comes to prevention of new gender violence cases, it is also essential to concentrate efforts on the aggressor's rehabilitation. In this sense, the Spanish Act against Gender Violence includes different measures like eventual substitution of jail by re-education courses and psychological support (only when the victim's security is totally guaranteed and when the aggressor has certain requisites).

Therefore, as we may see, awareness raising and prevention are core to the system of global protection designed in the Law. The instrument defined as the axis of awareness raising and prevention is the National Awareness Raising and Prevention Strategic Plan Regarding Violence Against Women, included in the first title of the Act. At present, this Strategic Plan is being elaborated by one of the workgroups of the State Observatory against Gender Violence. At present, we are implementing this law demand through a fully participative elaboration process built on three essential aims: citizenship, autonomy and empowerment.

We are persuaded that the only way to reach women's full citizenship is through the strengthening of their autonomy and the promotion of their empowerment. As I said previously, gender violence is a symptom of women's incomplete citizenship, one of the traditionally tolerated symptoms endorsed by deeply rooted cultural parameters.

Equality and full citizenship will be achieved only by the transformation of women's essential conditions in society. In this context, reaching women's autonomy means liberating her from the chains of traditional roles, considering her as a fully free person. But citizenship requires also women empowerment, which means equal authority, equal value and full economic independence.

### *Fields of intervention for the eradication of gender violence*

These three aims are projected in all fields of intervention, which the regulation affects: education, health, communication and media, justice, public security, and social attention. Thus, specialization is demanded from all professionals who intervene in this fight: police, judges, public prosecutors, social workers, psychologists, lawyers, educators and journalists.

#### *Education*

Regarding the field of education, the main objectives of the Act and its Strategic Plan are to strengthen the equality values among men and women and respect for everyone else's basic rights. This important task includes two essential elements:

- a) The elimination of gender stereotypes from school materials and from educators' speech and acts.
- b) The promotion of peaceful solution of all conflicts.

In order to guarantee an early detection of gender violence it is necessary to intensify parents' involvement in student's school life and to open new channels of communication teacher-student and teacher-parent. In this field, I would like to emphasize the recent approval of a new Education Act, which creates a new high school subject called "Education for Citizenship", based on the principles of equality and peaceful solution of conflicts.

#### *Health*

In the field of health, the work on early detection of the professionals is crucial. Protocols have been developed to unify criteria and to give clear parameters on the detection process. In this field, the health Committee against Gender Violence is another useful coordination instrument. The medical report is one of the most frequent steps that activates the institutional system for the victim of gender violence. Thus, awareness raising and ongoing training programmes for specialization are a key aspect in order to put into operation.

#### *Communication and Media*

The most important task of the media is to help visualizing in order to build strong social conscience on gender violence as a public problem. This task, that may seem obvious to all of us, is not, as we know, been assumed spontaneously by most of European media. The Act and the Strategic Plan establish that gender violence awareness raising messages should be directed mainly towards young people and vulnerable social groups.

Nevertheless, in 2005 the State Observatory for Publicity has received 400 complaints (on over 184 campaigns) for sexist publicity, which represents an increase of 16 percent. This shows us two important things: that there is still a lot work to do, but, also, that there is a significant rise on society's awareness on inequality and gender violence.

#### *Integrated social assistance and the full recognition of rights*

The recognition and full guarantee of rights is, let me insist, key for the achievement of full citizenship, but is also an extremely effective awareness raising instrument for the victims or potential victims as well as a useful prevention measure. A victim that is aware of her rights will

more easily find strength to report to the police, confront her situation and break sentimental ties with her partner or former partner.

The rights recognized by the Act against Gender Violence are, in summary:

- a) Integrated social assistance: information, psychological attention, social support, educational training, labour guidance and specialized care.
- b) Free legal assistance.
- c) Employment rights
- d) Economic rights

### *Institutional framework*

As we may see, the global character of the regulation demands active collaboration of all the parties concerned in the fight against this serious social problem - public administrations, justice professionals, experts, women's organizations – and their coordination in order to guarantee global action and joint evaluation of all actions. Coordination is one of the most important functions of the Special Government Delegation on Violence against Women, the unit that I am proud to be representing here today.

The State Observatory on Violence Against Women is the agency responsible of the evaluation of the different measures and the permanent follow up and evaluation of this violent phenomenon.

Finally, the Law establishes further parliamentary legal development. In this sense, both the Government Special Delegation and the State Observatory will report, on a three-year basis the former, and annually the latter, on the efficiency of the measures implemented and their impact on achieving the final aim of eradication.

Indeed, the social and legal debate generated since the Act against Gender Violence was passed by the Parliament has been it self a useful awareness raising instrument. According to a December 2005 official statistic 73,5 percent of the population was aware of the existence of the Act. In this sense, there has been a constant increase in society's confidence on the institutional net for the protection of victims.

### *Justice: Specialized Courts*

I would especially like to point out the importance of the specialization of the Courts. The Law articulates a system of specialized Courts that guarantee effective legal protection as well as uniform treatment of legal, family and social situation of gender violence victims.

Due to the peculiarities of this violence, different from any other, there is a demand for rigorous knowledge and shared parameters in order to guarantee the victim's attention without incurring a double victimization.

### *Conclusions and assessment*

I would like to conclude my speech by emphasizing that women are not a minority: they are, at least, half of the population, half of our society, half of our democracy. Women's subjection to men reminds us daily one of the black holes of our democratic systems.

Therefore, we must guarantee full transparency of the incomplete citizenship of women, for only by jointly fighting against discrimination we will be in a position to finally look at the eradication of gender violence as its most brutal consequence.



Part III: Institutional Mechanisms Dealing  
with Men and Gender Equality

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## 10 Unit for Men's Affairs in Austria

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*Johannes Berchtold*



### *Abstract*

*The Unit for Men's Affairs was established in March 2001 in the Federal Ministry of Social Security and Generations. Its key task is basic research of male-specific topics. Another priority of the Unit is to support projects relating to men's concerns. In addition, its agenda includes public relations, disseminating information and coordinating men's policy. In the spring of 2006, the Unit presented the National Council of Austria with the first national report on men's policy issues, a result of its first five years of political work. The men's policy, as it is conducted by the Unit, is a necessary complement to women's policy, in the sense of an integrated gender policy.*

### *Men's policy: introduction and outline*

#### *Establishment of the Unit for Men's Affairs in 2001, prerequisites, intentions and realisation*

The Austrian Unit for Men's Policy was established in March 2001 in the Federal Ministry of Social Security and Generations. The Department's task is to lay the foundations for a nationwide men's policy, but it is also an important pioneer at European level. While this poses certain challenges, it also creates major opportunities.

When the Department was established, the Ministry comprised separate areas for social security, health, family affairs, youth, senior citizens and – represented in an own Directorate General – women. The addition of a men's unit, currently part of the Directorate General for Family Affairs, Youth and Elderly Citizens, was prompted by two interconnected factors.

1. A very pragmatic reason lay in the large number of male-specific questions directed to the Ministry when there was no contact point qualified to deal with them.
2. A more substantial reason, and the explanation for the increasing volume of said questions, lay in changed expectations directed towards male roles and awareness. Comparing our grandfathers' generation with young fathers of today, this change/development has been radical. The last few decades have witnessed a "silent revolution" in terms of male/paternal self-perception. However, there is still a gap between this self-perception and the external expectations encountered by men, caused by – among other factors – a lack of reflection and conscious examination of male identity and role concepts.

The fact that leading positions are commonly occupied by men does not guarantee a conscious men's policy. On the contrary – restricted opportunities for active participation in parenthood, occupational diseases typical of males and a lower life expectancy are characteristic of men in leading positions. An emancipatory men's policy which appropriately reflects the relationship between the sexes is not guaranteed by establishing men in positions of power.

The achievements of the women's liberation movement and the ensuing redistribution of responsibilities and activities between men and women have positioned women as actors in the process of gender mainstreaming, and men as objects. Women's policy has postulated a demand

for "new" men and fathers, and women's liberation has also affected men. If an all-encompassing gender policy is to be achieved, men must free themselves from outdated role and identity models as a necessary addition to the women's policy of the last few decades. The necessity of a distinct men's policy and the inclusion of men as actors in the gender discussion has emerged as a result of the women's policy itself.

### *The topics of men's policy in Austria*

#### *Specifically male-oriented topics and tasks within the Unit for Men's Affairs – result of five years' work*

Over the past few decades, the perception and division of responsibilities within families and at the workplace has undergone a fundamental change. Combining family life and gainful employment is part of many women's – and increasingly more men's – self-perception and everyday life. The alteration of gender-specific role distribution in society, economics, politics and private life imposes new challenges on men, forcing them to reorientate themselves. As a consequence of this, male-specific issues and needs have become, for the first time, topics of public interest, creating a demand for basic research and political objectives as well as for target-oriented accompanying measures in everyday social work with men, i.e. counselling, education and meetings.

The varied scope of male-specific topics includes reconciliation of family life and work, men's health, relationship and family issues (including problems related to divorce), as well as gender-sensitive education of boys.

The Unit for Men's Policy has formulated these topics into concrete tasks and worked on their realisation. One of its priorities is the scientific exploration of male-specific interests and problems in Austria. A key source of new research ideas lies in direct contact with people who turn to the Unit in search of counselling.

Besides the central research unit, the promotion of male-specific projects is an important area of work for the Unit. A focal point is the accompanying service for divorced fathers on access visits to children who live with the other parent. The Unit also maintains "visiting cafés" (accompanied visitation) where fathers can meet their children on evenings and weekends, helping them to fulfil their parental duties after divorce or separation.

Many men turn to the Unit for Men's Policy in search of legal counselling. Typical problem areas are divorce-related issues such as child support and the refusal of visiting rights by the other parent. Another task is the coordination of men's policy in Austria. The majority of projects commissioned by the Unit for Men's Policy are aimed at educating the public. The results of all research projects are published in print, on DVD or on CD-ROM, and may be obtained free of charge from the Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection.

Public relations are a key aspect of men's policy as a new field of politics. For this reason, the Unit has published a Guide for men on the Ministry's home page. An abbreviated version of the Guide is available in print. Its topics are family, work, health and sickness, social interaction and lifestyle. The Guide provides up-to date information on services, counselling, regular events and literature. It features articles and statements from scientists and public figures. Its online version has already been visited around half a million times. Another attractive info package for men consists in our two DVDs dedicated to male and father-specific issues.

### *Publications and results of five year's work – The first National Report on Men's Policy*

The first National Report on Men's Policy, submitted to the National Council of Austria in March 2006, marks a milestone in the national history of gender mainstreaming politics and contains summaries of the following surveys and publications:

- First Austrian report on men's health, focusing on preventive health care
- Family competence among youths, focusing on fatherhood issues
- Social work for men in Austria: Counselling, education, meetings
- Divorce and its consequences for men – Legal, psychological and economic implications
- Suicides among Austrian men – A statistical and epidemiological survey
- Missing the father – A study of literature
- 1st European Fathers' Conference
- Social work for boys and young men in Austria
- Positive fatherhood and male identity. Father and child in everyday life.

The first National Report on Men's Policy is divided into three chapters, dealing with boys, men and fathers in Austria. The report clearly demonstrates that Austria needs more comprehensive social work for boys, catering for the actual needs of boys and young men and considering their problems from diverse points of view. Many teachers maintain that deviant behaviour is more easily recognized in boys than girls. Statistics reveal the increasing incidence of such behaviour among boys at a very early stage. During the first years of day care, two thirds of all behaviourally challenged children are boys, the proportional relationship later rising to four out of five. Kindergarten statistics also record a figure higher than 75percent.

In adult age groups, men's greater tendency towards risky behaviour poses gender-specific issues. The first National Report on Men's Health summarises a phenomenon well-known to many but seldom analysed using scientific tools: Austrian men die an average of five years earlier than their countrywomen and suffer disproportionately from non-gender-specific illnesses such as cardiovascular diseases, cirrhosis of the liver and liver cancer. Although suicides, traffic accidents and serious injury at the workplace are also significantly more common among men, men tend to feel healthier in general and visit the doctor more rarely than women.

The study, *Social work for men in Austria: counselling, education, meetings*, concludes that men with serious problems wait an average of six to seven years before turning to professional counselling. This demonstrates the need for male-specific social work (counselling, education, interaction) and public relations.

### *Men's policy in the EU – Outlook*

#### *The need for an EU-wide men's policy basis*

As the Green Paper, "Confronting demographic change: a new solidarity between the generations," urgently points out, European society is currently undergoing a profound restructuring process with far-reaching consequences. Almost all EU countries share a trend towards lower birth rates, correlating with citizens' higher life expectancy. New approaches must be explored in order to maintain Europe's economic, social, cultural and political standards in the long run. The fundamental role played by the family as the basis of social solidarity has become a focal point in this respect.

During Austria's term of EU presidency, the expert conference, "Demographic Challenges – Family Needs Partnership," was held, one of its main issues being fatherhood. Integrating male and

father-specific aspects into family policies has an immediate, positive impact on women's career interests and their participation in working life. Integrating work and family interests also encourages couples to have more children, which – as the Green Paper points out – is a common wish among European parents.

The political realisation of these goals requires better communication and networking of family-related activities at European level. The 1. European Fathers' Conference in the fall of 2004, initiated by the Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection, was the first European meeting of its kind and united experts, ministerial staff, NGOs and family and gender researchers of about 14 European countries in a discussion of various models and approaches relating to fatherhood. This conference laid the groundwork for a sustainable, gender-aware family policy, one of the main pillars of which is fathers.

Gender mainstreaming provides an excellent tool for satisfying the gender-specific needs and interests of men and women in the EU, but male-specific topics have yet to achieve the required level of recognition. Therefore, the theoretical basis of the gender mainstreaming strategy needs to be revised.

To do justice to the different interests of men and women, the basic assumptions of gender theory ought to be developed with regard to the available social constructivist approaches for multidisciplinary scientific study. Gender equality and equal opportunities policies must acknowledge the differences between the sexes and include consideration of their different needs.

The restructuring of male self-perception and role expectations implies the evaluation of different and complementary functions administered by both parents in childrearing. From the gender mainstreaming point of view it is mandatory to develop and promote the gender-conscious inclusion of fathers in family planning, childrearing and family activities in general. All activities of the Unit for Men's Policy of the Austrian Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection are directed towards a gender policy that is appropriate to both sexes. Men's policy is an inalienable complement of women's policy on the path towards a true and sustainable partnership between men and women.

## 11 The Subcommittee on Men's Issues of the Finnish Council for Gender Equality

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*Sirkka-Liisa Anttila*



*Abstract*

*The Council for Gender Equality (TANE) in Finland has focused attention on both women and men ever since it was set up in 1972. However, it was only in the early half of the 1980s that work dealing specifically with men was launched. This was prompted by the realisation within the Council that the gender equality debate must be a dialogue between women and men, and it was to address this point that the Subcommittee on Men's*

*Issues was set up in 1988. The long-standing themes dealt with by the Subcommittee have been active fatherhood and supporting it, violence against women, work with male immigrants, men and working life, reconciliation of work and family life, custody as well as plurality of masculinities. Newer themes include equality education for boys and young men. In 2003 the Subcommittee was expanded and renamed the Subcommittee on Men's Issues and the Media.*

The Council for Gender Equality (or TANE) is one of Finland's three equality authorities. Established in 1972, it is a permanent parliamentary body working under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and fulfilling an advisory role in state administration. Its task is to promote gender equality in society. TANE is a forum where politicians, authorities, researchers and NGOs collaborate to develop Finnish gender equality policy.

Ever since its inception, TANE has been focusing its attention on both women and men. As long ago as 1973 it proposed that childcare leave be granted also to fathers. In the mid-1970s it demanded that fathers, and not just mothers, be given an entitlement to leave to look after a sick child and recommended the introduction of paternity leave, which happened in 1978. However, it was only in the first half of the 1980s that TANE's actual men-related programmes began. An expert working group tasked with charting men's studies conducted in Finland was created on TANE's initiative in 1986. The working group considered what should be studied in Finland with respect to the status, roles and image of men and what possible themes could be brought up in the social discourse. Its report titled "Approaching the Man" is regarded as having launched public discussion of men's studies in Finland.

There was a realisation within TANE that the gender equality debate must be a dialogue between women and men, and the Subcommittee on Men's Issues set up in 1988 has tried to facilitate one. The Subcommittee continued and expanded the efforts of the working group that had drafted the "Approaching the Man" report.

A defining feature of the Subcommittee's early stage was uncertainty about what was expected of the working group and what form its activities would take. There were no actual models to follow; instead, activities had to be devised almost from scratch. The Subcommittee decided that it would not contact equivalent bodies in the other Nordic countries in the initial stages. Instead, it wanted first to define categories of themes based on Finnish thinking and its own experiences. Quite soon, uncertainty was replaced by an embarrassing abundance of ideas, and not all of the good ideas were implementable.

The Subcommittee has been trying to increase men's interest in and enthusiasm for gender equality issues. It has promoted men's studies in Finland and in the early stages also tried to change the thrust of these studies. In the 1980s Finnish men's studies had acquired a negative image, according to which they concerned themselves with men's problems only. The Subcommittee wanted to distance itself from what had begun to be styled "misery studies". From the very beginning it has been at pains not to strive for one right model of being a man, preferring instead to prompt discussion of a plurality of masculinities. Another important task that the Subcommittee has performed is exploration of men's special problems from the perspective of gender equality.

Work with men in Finland remained in a marginal role until the 1990s, but grassroots groups in which men talked about their experiences or feelings began springing up in the beginning of the decade. One example was called "Lyömätön linja", which the Subcommittee helped to set up and began its work in March 1993. The name "Lyömätön linja" is a wordplay on a Finnish verb meaning "hitting" or "beating" and describes a programme to help men with a history of using violence in their close personal relationships to kick the habit.

The Subcommittee has participated in Nordic equality cooperation from the very beginning. Ever since we joined the European Union, there has also been a growing amount of cooperation with the other member states, but the Subcommittee has had its strongest contacts with the other Nordic countries and, since the late 1990s, with the Baltic States, especially Estonia. In addition, TANE has participated in several cooperative projects with the Nordic Council of Ministers. These include the Men and Child Care Leave project in 1990-92 and the "Tracking the Father" conference in 1998.

One of the Subcommittee's strengths is its role as a meeting place for politicians, authorities, researchers and organisations. Every effort has been made to use each member's special expertise as effectively as possible. For as long as it has existed, the Subcommittee has functioned as a forum where persons with different views on men and equality cooperate with each other.

The aim has been to keep the atmosphere in the subcommittees discursive and especially in the end of the 1990s the feeling that "personal is political" was accentuated.

Thanks to the diversity of its composition, the Subcommittee on Men's Issues has been able to keep the theme of men and gender equality dynamically to the fore. In addition to positions on and initiatives concerning gender equality policy, the Subcommittee has drafted many of TANE's publications and guide books on men- and fatherhood-related themes, planned and implemented national information campaigns, organised national and international seminars, arranged a biographical writing competition for men, made a short film titled *Isyysmatka* (meaning "A Journey Into Fatherhood") and handled the arrangements for the prize "A Man's Work", which TANE has been awarding annually since 1998.

"A Man's Work" is awarded in recognition of efforts to promote gender equality. The prize is meant to demonstrate that gender equality is also a matter for men and to encourage men who have set a positive example to keep up their good work. So far, it has been awarded for, among other things, educational work done in schools, work against violence, efforts in the sectors of active fatherhood and critical men's studies as well as for the use of theatrical art as a means of promoting gender equality. The choice of recipient is based on a recommendation of the Subcommittee on Men's Issues. The prize has now been awarded eight times.

The Subcommittee has been highlighting the importance of active fatherhood since its inception. Other long-standing themes include gendered violence, work with male immigrants, men and working life, reconciliation of work and family life, guardianship and well as the plurality of masculinities. Newer themes include equality education for boys and young men as well as a discussion of men as buyers of sex. In 2003 the Subcommittee was expanded and renamed the



Subcommittee on Men's Issues and the Media. In addition to the theme of men and gender equality, it now also deals with media representations of men and women from a gender perspective.

The Subcommittee has given gender equality work with men a higher profile and above all gained acceptance for it in society. Over its lifetime, men's studies have gradually achieved a recognised status as a part of the research field in Finland. Whereas it was still too early to talk of men's studies in Finland at the time the Subcommittee was set up, the situation was quite different by the time the 1990s were drawing to a close.

The Subcommittee's attainment of the age of 18 is significant even in an international context. As far as we know, it is the only expert body that has been dealing continuously with gender equality issues from a man's perspective for so long.

The Subcommittee's aim has been to bring gender equality issues closer to men's everyday lives and to encourage them to engage with these issues. It has prompted a discussion of men-related policy in society and thereby contributed to highlighting men's perspectives in the Finnish debate on gender equality.

A challenge for the future is to encourage, on the EU level, governments and other influential actors to create operational models that will inspire men to take part in discussion of equality policy and participate in related activities. For example, family leave systems must be developed in a way that encourages men to avail themselves of them more than is now the case. When promoting gender equality is discussed, greater attention will have to be paid to problems affecting men and the ways and environments in which men act – and, of course, to the fact that there are several different role models for men. It is important to learn to recognise these roles so that, if necessary, they can be dismantled and re-built on healthier premises. The "A Man's Work" prize that I have already mentioned is one of the ways in which TANE has tried to encourage this thinking. Another concrete example is the "Equality Cookbook", which TANE has produced and is meant for both men and women readers. It contains recipes and gender-equality-related aphorisms. The Subcommittee's task will continue to be that of prompting a discourse on equality that takes men's viewpoints especially into account.

Both the old and the new EU countries have in recent times been eagerly visiting us to learn and seek ideas about our way of dealing with Union matters in our national parliament. The Finnish Parliament has a unique arrangement for doing this, namely the Grand Committee, which deliberates national policy associated with EU membership. Thus the Finnish Parliament is not simply told what decisions are on the way, but is instead kept awake at a very early stage in the legislative drafting process.

Finland could have also another superb export to offer the world and our European partners, namely equality matters. We have developed excellent ways of being aware of and intervening in gender equality questions on various levels. We welcome you to learn and freely copy these processes – and what is there to stop us going elsewhere to tell about them if we are asked!



Part IV: Men and Advancement of Gender  
Equality: New Directions, Concrete  
Measures

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## 12 Men in Gender Equality

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Niall Crowley



### *Abstract*

*This paper is based on an opinion prepared by the EU Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men on the issue of Men in Gender Equality. The author chaired the Working Group that drafted the opinion. The paper explores the objectives that need to be established for work on men in gender equality. It emphasises a primary objective for this work as being to strengthen the role and contribution of men in challenging and changing inequalities experienced by women. The paper highlights pitfalls*

*that must be avoided in work on men in gender equality and sets out a strategic approach for this work. It emphasises the importance of a strategy that is holistic and covers a wide range of actions. Finally it identifies recommendations made by the Advisory Committee to the European Commission in seeking to progress work on men in gender equality.*

### *Introduction*

The Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men recently produced an Opinion on Men in Gender Equality. I chaired the working groups that drafted the Opinion and wish to use this paper to highlight some of the key ideas in the Opinion.

The Equality Authority holds one of the two Irish Seats on the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men. I am a member of the Advisory Committee and was able to participate in the preparation of the Opinion on Men in Gender Equality.

The Advisory Committee includes representatives of member States, specialised gender equality bodies and the EU level social partner organisations. The Advisory Committee was established to assist the European Commission to formulate and implement Community measures aimed at promoting equal opportunities for women and men and to encourage ongoing exchange of information on this theme between the Member States.

The Advisory Committee fulfils this mandate through the preparation of Opinions for the European Commission on a wide range of gender equality issues. The agreed thinking of the members of the Advisory Committee on the issue is set out in the Opinion. As such the opinions benefit from a broad range of perspectives and experiences across the European Union. Opinions however do not necessarily reflect the position of the various Member States nor are they binding on the European Commission or the Member States.

The Equality Authority is a specialised equality body established under Irish equality legislation to promote equality of opportunity and to combat discrimination in the areas covered by the legislation. The legislation is composed of:

- The Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004 which prohibit discrimination in the workplace and in vocational training.
- The Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 which prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and education.

This legislation seeks a holistic approach to organisations with a focus on equality for both employees and customers or clients. It also seeks to be comprehensive in covering nine different grounds- gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion and membership of the Traveller community.

The Opinion emphasises the importance of clarity in establishing objectives for work in relation to men in gender equality. It highlights a range of potential pitfalls in this work that must be avoided if these objectives are to be realised. Finally it establishes a strategic approach to work in relation to men in gender equality so that there can be a coherent wide ranging response to the challenges posed by the theme of men in gender equality rather than being limited to isolated initiatives and restricted to specific issues.

### *Objectives for Work in relation to Men in Gender Equality*

The primary objective for work in relation to men in gender equality must be to strengthen the role and contribution of men in challenging and changing the structures, institutional policies and practices, and culture (including stereotypical attitudes) that generate and sustain the inequalities experienced by women.

Gender inequality is predominantly experienced by women. It is both widespread and persistent. Women experience inequalities in the workplace and in access to economic development. The representation, standing and status of women reflects gender inequality. Women experience inequalities in access to power and decision making roles. Gender equality can also be reflected in relationships with men that involve violence, abuse, being patronised and disrespect. These inequalities experienced by women are a product of societal structures, institutional systems and practices, and societal culture and individual attitudes. It is important that work in relation to men in gender equality is, and is perceived to be, supportive to women's empowerment and to greater equality for women.

A gender equal society will inevitably involve a redistribution of resources and power from men to women. However it is important to acknowledge that a gender equal society will involve significant gains for men. These gains include:

- Liberation from the inflexibilities imposed on men by current dominant models of masculinity and male behaviours.
- New relationships of respect, care and solidarity between men and women.
- Access to new roles for men particularly in the caring domain and to a new balance between paid employment and caring work.
- Structures and institutions in society that work more effectively and without discrimination for people – men and women.

A number of ancillary objectives can also be pursued as part of this primary objective for work on men in gender equality. These ancillary objectives would include:

- To support the emergence of new models of masculinity and male behaviour and the cultural change required to embed these new models across societal structures, institutions and values.
- To support new gender relations where women's experiences of male violence and abuse and of being patronised or disrespected by men are replaced by relations of respect, care and solidarity.
- To address the needs that are specific to men in health provision.

### *Pitfalls*

It is important to develop this work in relation to men in gender equality with some care. There are pitfalls facing those involved in designing and implementing this work.

These pitfalls need to be avoided to ensure that work in relation to men in gender equality does not diminish or limit work on gender equality.

These pitfalls include:

- the danger of shifting the focus in gender equality work away from the experience and situation of women to that of men;
- the risk of this work merely empowering men to maintain a status quo characterised by persistent and significant inequalities experienced by women;
- the problems that arise where work on men in gender equality is not felt to be or is not supportive of women and equality for women or where this work can be experienced as oppositional to equality for women;
- the dangers of this work competing for the scarce resources currently available for gender equality work rather than this work being a focus for additional funding;
- the limitations of an approach that does not take into account the diversity of men in terms of their particular identity, role, attitude and situation.

These pitfalls present important challenges that must be met in this work on men in gender equality. However they are not presented in any way as a reason for not progressing this work.

### *Strategic Approach*

A strategic approach to work in relation to men in gender equality is required. A strategic approach should involve objectives, activities, indicators, targets and resources capable of meeting the following challenges:

1. To develop an institutional infrastructure adequate to develop and drive forward a strategic approach to work in relation to men in gender equality. This institutional infrastructure should be adequately linked to and coherent with the wider institutional infrastructure established to address gender equality goals.

The development of institutions with responsibilities in relation to men in gender equality is central in securing a strategic approach to the issues involved. It is important that such institutions operate in a manner that is supportive of equality for women and that reflects an expertise in gender equality issues for women.

In the Opinion the Advisory Committee highlighted the approach in Finland where the Council of Equality, which was established to focus on the overall promotion of gender equality, has set up a subcommittee on men's issues.

2. To develop an adequate knowledge base to underpin work in relation to men in gender equality. This would include developing an understanding of current perspectives among men in relation to gender equality issues, and an understanding of current barriers to the effective involvement of men in gender equality issues and of how best to address these. It would also involve identifying the key topical issues for work on men in gender equality.

It is important that work in relation to men in gender equality is evidence based. Knowledge development is required to enhance an understanding of:

- The role and contribution of work on men in gender equality to greater equality for women.
- The changing perspectives of men on gender equality issues and equality for women.
- The issues of diversity among men and the relevance of this for work on men in gender equality. This diversity involves the different identities, roles, attitudes and situations of different groups of men.
- The barriers faced by men in what have been traditionally defined as women's jobs.

In the Opinion the Advisory Committee highlighted the work of the Equality Opportunities Commission in Britain which has published research in relation to men's roles as fathers.

3. To build solidarity and leadership from men for equality for women.

There is a need to:

- Develop understanding among men of the experience and situation of women.
- Create opportunities for peer education among men in relation to gender equality.
- Generate an understanding of the right to and need for gender equality and the shared benefits that flow from this for men and women.
- Stimulate a support from men in taking up public positions against issues such as male violence against women.
- Support a leadership on gender equality from men already in positions of power.

This solidarity and the development and expression of this solidarity must be at the heart of any work on men in gender equality if the primary objectives for this work in relation to men in gender equality are to be realised.

In the Opinion the Advisory Committee highlighted work in Ireland and Austria to sensitise men in leadership positions about issues of diversity management and women in leadership and issues of work life balance. Work in Finland and Lithuanian was also highlighted targeting men that use violence against their partners in order to stop the violence and to support attitudinal change and new ways of relating.

4. To secure a more equal balance in the sharing of caring between men and women. Positive action targeting men in this area, the development of statutory leave entitlements targeting men, workplace initiatives on reconciliation by men of work and family life and information and awareness campaigns all have a role to play in this.

Much of the current work in relation to men in gender equality has focused on this theme of men in caring roles. The need for this is evident from the persistent and significant inequalities in the sharing of caring between women and men. It is important therefore that such work continues to be further developed and is extended to the sharing of family responsibilities. Equally however it is important that such work is part of a wider strategic approach to men in gender equality.

In the Opinion the Advisory Committee highlighted the use of statutory leave entitlements to stimulate and ensure take up by men in France, Portugal, Finland, Slovenia and Germany. Public awareness campaigns to encourage debate on men in caring roles were highlighted in Slovenia, Austria and Lithuania. The work of the European Social Partners in developing a framework for action on Gender Equality which included a focus on addressing gender roles and gender segregation, and on addressing work life balance was also highlighted.



5. To address issues of labour market segregation by a range of initiatives some of which should seek to shape and inform choices made by boys and young men. Education, guidance counselling and similar interventions have a particular contribution to make in this regard.

A segregated labour market involves choices made by men and by women along with the social conditioning that can shape those choices. Work is required and has been pursued to broaden the choices being made by women and to open new areas of labour market participation by women. Work in relation to men in gender equality must also be concerned with labour market choices made by boys and men.

In the Opinion the Advisory Committee highlighted a nation wide pilot scheme in Germany to support “New Paths for Boys- Expanding Future Opportunities in Work and Family Life”.

6. To stimulate and support cultural change to facilitate the emergence of new models of masculinity and new thinking about and expectations of men, men’s behaviour and the role of men. Education, media, research on men and masculinity, and statutory policy initiatives have a particular contribution to make in breaking current stereotypes of men and addressing current social conditioning of men.

Attitudinal change at the level of the individual man is important in work in relation to men in gender equality. However cultural change at the level of society must also be an important goal.

Cultural change must challenge the dominance of particular and fixed models of masculinity and of specific expectation in relation to male behaviour. This involves a focus on identity and how society constructs male and female identities. This is not a well developed area of work within this focus on men in gender equality.

In the Opinion the Advisory Committee highlighted work in France in a project on men in caring roles, in Ireland in funding a Men’s Development Network with the mission “Better Liver for Men, Better Livers for All”, work in Luxemburg in a transnational project on the role of men in the promotion of gender equality and work in Italy in a transnational project to support awareness towards a more equal society.

7. To identify and meet needs specific to men as men. This would focus on areas such as health provision issues, social exclusion and rural isolation experienced by men in some Member States but could expand with new knowledge developed in this area.

This challenge raises the need to focus on issues specific to men - meeting the needs of men as men - within work in relation to men in gender equality. Such initiatives have focused in the area of health provision given specific needs that flow from biological difference.

In the Opinion the Advisory Committee highlighted work in Ireland to develop a policy for men’s health and health promotion, and work in Lithuania seeking to address the gap between men’s and women’s life expectancy.

### *Conclusion*

The Advisory Committee concluded that work in relation to men in gender equality could usefully be further developed and deepened. The Committee identified a particular role for the European Commission in promoting and supporting this work through new policy initiatives.

In particular the Committee recommended that the European Commission should develop a Communication on men in gender equality. In relation to policy initiatives the committee recommended that the European Commission should stimulate a focus on men in gender equality in guidance for Member States' National Reform Programmes and for the Open Method of Coordination in relation to social protection, health and pensions, and in any further development of regulations and guidance in relation to the Structural Funds. The Committee also recommended a review of current legislation in relation to statutory leave entitlements and work life reconciliation issues with a view to assessing their role and contribution to men in gender equality.

It is important that the Opinion the Advisory Committee on Men in Gender Equality is also given serious consideration at Member State level. Government Departments, state agencies and specialised gender equality bodies could usefully take action on foot the Opinion to build and pursue a strategic approach at Member State Level to the challenges posed, and the opportunities presented, by this theme of men in gender equality.

## 13 Men's Situation and the Need for Equality Policy Focusing on Men

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Walter Hollstein



*Abstract*

*Masculinity is traditionally associated with power, exercising control and being strong. The cost of always being dominant, controlling and strong is actually high (health/illness, social relations, criminality, family problems etc.). The various problems of boys and men today demonstrate clearly that the issue of gender equality (gender democracy) should also be viewed from a male perspective. Therefore, conceptions of men's liberation*

*should not be based on female premises, but on the needs and wishes of men themselves. In view of these social conditions it is important to target action (of male change) both at the macro structural level, at the level of men's liberation movement as well as at an individual level. A special policy should be established to consider the needs of problematic groups such as fatherless boys, poor men, homeless men and older men.*

Considering the current state of masculinity, we are confronted with an array of ambivalences. Firstly, men are still the dominant sex in the industrialised countries of the European Union in terms of power politics, but male affairs are neglected in public discussion. The women's liberation movement succeeded in establishing the problems of women and girls as a mainstream topic, but men's issues have remained at the periphery of social discourse. Men continue to be commonly viewed, and even more so to style themselves, as the "stronger sex". Men's potential for critically evaluating their own role is still somewhat low.

The second ambivalence lies in the troublesome dialectical connection between male power on the one hand and male powerlessness on the other. For example, men are identified in the public consciousness as committers of ecological destruction, domestic violence and sexual abuse on various levels, but this "coherent" pattern is disturbed by the fact that men can also be victims. This explains the continuing taboo with respect to the more than 80 percent of victims of male aggression being themselves male.

A third, ambivalent, issue is the public view of men. The strong androcentric traits of our recent history, where men have been – sometimes totalitarian – rulers over others, particularly over women, seem to make it very difficult to identify ongoing changes to the disadvantage of men.

I will try to give a clearer picture of this within the limits of this short presentation.

The male role has been defined through action and power, where the position of power must be attained first and then upheld by his own efforts. A much more difficult position may be to strive for power in line with this role, but to fail to attain it. This is the fate of the overwhelming majority of men, who have to cope with the ensuing schizophrenic situation. Traditional masculinity – whether hetero- or homosexual – demands control, emotional distance, competition and toughness with respect to others as well as oneself. Daily abidance by these behavioural imperatives results in a continuing violation of the male self. In this context, it has been pointed out repeatedly that such an interpretation and practice of manhood contravenes humane and welfare imperatives.

Even where the male power base remains stable, one fact can no longer be ignored: the quality of men's life has strongly deteriorated over recent years. Counselling services for men in the German-speaking countries identify the following problems, among others:

- men suffer from growing difficulties in their relationships and families,
- men miss true friendships and social networks,
- men report emotional problems,
- the general health of men has deteriorated significantly,
- an increasing proportion of men – six million in Germany alone – suffers from impotence. (This is another context in which it is interesting to follow public discourse: while the trend in western and central European countries has been to drag even the most intimate details of sexuality into the light of day, the dramatic increase in male impotence has been covered by a shroud of silence.)

These developments notwithstanding, the powerless flip side of traditional masculinity continues to be largely disregarded. The defining imperatives of performance and power prevent men from examining their own difficulties and problems. There is no point in declaring men victims or becoming sentimental, as has become the fashion among certain groups of men. It is necessary, however, to acknowledge reality in an undistorted and impartial manner. Empirical findings show six environmental restrictions on men, often labelled as "constraints" in social science texts:

1. A restricted emotional life. Men have difficulties expressing their feelings freely and openly. They do not want to relinquish their emotional control and betray their own vulnerability, and shy away from new emotional experiences. The consequences of this suppression are anger, frustration, enmity and rage, which are often released explosively in the form of violence.
2. Homophobia. This refers to the male fear of intimacy with regard to other men, predicated on the fear of being viewed as effeminate, soft, unmanly – and thereby, homosexual. To the forefront of homophobic self-defence, however, is the pattern of inter-male competition. If the other man is a potential competitor, one is not allowed to bare one's emotions to him. This also explains why true friendship between men is rare.
3. The constraints of control, power and competition. Defeats are identical with demasculinisation – a loser is not a man.
4. Inhibited sexual and affective behaviour. Traditional manhood is marked by the fear of admitting "feminine" personality traits. This gets in the way of feelings, sensuality, intimacy and love, and often results in a split between sexuality on the one hand and tenderness and emotionality on the other. Men measure themselves according to the imparted aspects of performance and dominance, and social scientists agree that male sexuality consequently falls victim to an obsession with achievement and success. However, commitment and devotion, not dominance, are the essence of love and sexuality.
5. The addictive pursuit of achievement refers to the compulsive necessity to make one's manhood tangible and measurable over and over again. Men derive their self-esteem, happiness and meaning primarily or even exclusively through their work and the related gratification. Of special significance with respect to this is the connection between two male roles: participation in working life and nurturing one's family. The more wealth a man is able to provide his spouse and offspring, the more reassured he feels in terms of his masculinity. The logical consequence of this pursuit of material success, however, is that he invests most of his time and energy in his work, thereby increasingly placing an

emotional distance between himself and his wife and children. In the end, he finds himself successful in his work but alienated from his family.

6. Disregard for personal health. Men do not relax or exercise enough, rarely see a doctor, ignore warning symptoms and have scanty knowledge of health issues. Caring for one's personal condition is again dismissed as effeminate or even being a sissy. Accordingly, men in general are more plagued by illness than women, and their life expectancy is more than six years shorter.

Health is only one aspect of the powerless side of the male role. Nowadays, boys and men are beginning to experience disadvantages even in working life, where they are still presumed to be strong and dominant. While the employment rate for women continues to be on the rise, that of men is steadily decreasing. In the German-speaking countries, proportionally more men are laid off than women. In large German cities, for example Berlin, more women than men are engaged in gainful employment and pay social insurance contributions. This development promises to become even more pronounced in the future. A factor in this trend is the widening educational gap between girls and boys. Girls are significantly more successful at school, whereas boys make up the bulk of problem children, truants, failures, dropouts and juvenile delinquents.

It is no longer correct to assume a general imbalance of privileges in favour of men over women. To maintain this assertion would be to affirm an ideology rather than understanding the reality.

It remains correct, however, to refer to a male hegemony or partial dominance of men. Men still hold most positions of power in the economy, politics, culture, public administration, churches and the entertainment industry.

While female employment is on the rise, its overall rate is still below that of men. The workload of women is lower, and their average income less than that of men. A fundamental reason for this is the unresolved issue of combining employment and family life. In the German-speaking countries in particular, conciliating these different realms is still considered the task of women alone, disregarding the equal responsibility of men as fathers. This places a double burden on women, limiting their available energy at work and their career opportunities. On the other hand, this traditional arrangement supports the careers of that segment of men which is offered this kind of emotional and reproductive support by their wives and families.

These circumstances call for a paradigm shift: the responsibility for reconciling work and family life needs to be equally shared by men and women, and the traditional division of labour between the sexes needs to be generally reconsidered in family politics.

Last but not least, fatherhood must be given some thought. Cultural criticism has pointed out that the importance of the father has systematically diminished over the past five decades. This development has been fuelled by radical feminists who reduced the father's role to that of a mere "sperm provider". A positive model for fatherhood is missing. In this context, it is not enough to offer a higher child care allowance for fathers. What we need is a philosophical and pedagogical discussion of men's role in childcare and in family life as a whole.

When debating masculinity, male power and male privileges lie at the focal point of critical examination. The discussion invariably assumes these to apply to the entire sex. In reality, however, positions of power and privilege are available only to a very small circle of men, who exert those privileges not only at the expense of women, but also at the expense of the vast majority of their fellow men. Another commonly disregarded fact is that the "bottom" or margin of society – the homeless, many of the chronically ill (e.g. HIV patients), war invalids, migrant and high-risk/low pay workers – is almost exclusively made up of men. While criticism of the male

usurpation of power and status is certainly justified, it must differentiate between individual men, male environments and social strata to avoid a distorted view.

In this context, the approach offered by pro-feminist male studies appears increasingly questionable. Accepting the feminist system of categories *a priori* leads to a narrow view of certain issues. Based on a feminist critique, this strand of male studies rightfully criticises male power, male violence, sexual abuse and sexism, but is usually insensitive towards the disadvantages suffered by men as a consequence of the perceived male role and of ongoing developments in society.

Poverty, illness, addiction, violence, vandalism, downwards social mobility and poor life prospects are dramatically increasing among boys and men. To take just one example: 95 percent of all penitentiary inmates in Germany, Switzerland and Austria are male. Offence, accident and crime statistics reveal undisputed male dominance. For many crimes, the offenders are exclusively male, among them running amok, vandalism, rape-related homicide, organised crime, kidnappings and taking hostages. Predominantly male crimes include murder, assault and battery, aggravated robbery, blackmail, trafficking of women and children, right-wing violence, drug trafficking, serious traffic accidents and domestic violence-related homicide.

Obvious as they are, these gender-specific issues have chiefly been ignored so far. Likewise, the necessity for preventive measures has been shrugged off, although the above crimes place an increasing strain on public finances. Pioneering studies in Holland and Switzerland have found the impact of domestic violence alone to amount to several hundred million euros and francs, respectively. If other types of crime are included and if male violence is classified as damage to one's self or others, the total rises to several billions, since most such criminal activities result in the utilisation of various social services, such as the police, court, administration, hospital care, social work and therapy.

Even publicly acknowledged problems that have been understood for years have not led to corrective measures in many cases. For example, almost 90 percent of all serious traffic accidents in Germany are caused by young men between 18 and 25, but no specific driving lessons are provided for this risk group. Or take the fact that during the past four years, every three weeks somewhere in the German-speaking region a man killed his family and himself, without any resulting political action. And as a third example, I would refer to the rise of right-wing extremism in the German-speaking countries; it is well known that this is predominantly a male problem, but not even the most rudimentary gender-specific approach for pre-emptive action has been developed.

While the socialisation of girls has undergone a massive change, that of boys has remained largely confined to tradition. From an early age, boys are forced into a social corset of masculinity. Based on surveys from various fields, socialisation and male studies have shown that boys are relentlessly drilled towards achievement. On the other hand, in their early years they are discouraged from physical contact and tenderness. In addition, they are expected to solve their own problems before they are actually capable of doing so, and conditioned towards a masculine self-reliance that consigns interpersonal commitment, friendship and social networking to the margins. Pillars of personal identity such as introspection, empathy and sociability are still neglected in the socialisation of males.

Having said that, it should be noted that boys experience public education, with all its female child carers, teachers, psychologists and social workers, as a continuation of maternal dominance at home. Whether in day care, kindergarten, school or counselling institutions, they are constantly exposed to feminine behavioural patterns and limits. Therefore, boys often express their resistance to educational institutions as female bastions through attitude and unruly behaviour. This resistance

has never been fully understood, by feminists in particular, and has been misinterpreted as dominant male behaviour rather than as a cry for help.

The male question, which is yet to be publicly asked, is proving more and more of a major obstacle to our social and gender-political development. If not enough is done with respect to men, women will not be able to attain true emancipation either. This connection between male and female issues has not received enough consideration so far.

Presenting the benefits of a new approach to all concerned, as well as to work and family life in a constructive manner, is a task for national politics. The American feminist scholar Susan Faludi has pointed out that governments need to offer alternative ways for men, just as they have done for women since the 1970s.

As much as the role of women has changed, the role of men has remained fixed in tradition. A reason for this is that society has encouraged women to respond to change, but not men. In addition, social institutions have shown no inclination so far to support alternative role models for men.

Furthermore, men are not offered the same variety of information, education, training, change management, self-realisation and personal growth that is available to women. This means that men usually have to fall back on private, and often expensive, services offered by pedagogues and psycho- or physiotherapists.

When criticising this lopsidedness, equal opportunities commissioners in the German-speaking countries (all of them women) are quick to display their few brochures and programmes aimed at fathers. This is another form of a restricted female point of view: men are, first and foremost, men – and then possibly fathers. They do not want to be viewed as fathers only – and seek proper status as fathers per se, not only with respect to unburdening women. Their own needs as men should be realised and taken into account. However, this need has not been covered by equal opportunities politics, an insufficient approach which constitutes, after all, another form of sexism.

Official gender policy has until now treated men almost exclusively as objects of criticism, which poses many problems. It is against the democratic principle to exclude an entire sex from political endeavours. What is more, this approach has proved counterproductive, since women's policy cannot make genuine advances without a corresponding men's policy: if men do not relinquish any of their positions and do not share their power, and if men do not take on responsibility for the conciliation of work and family, then women cannot attain their own freedom.

The one-sided manifestation of German gender policy as women's policy already shows strong counterproductive tendencies with respect to the wholesale development of society.

A comprehensive survey on young people in Germany – the Shell study – has very recently shown that wishing for a family and children is far more common among young women than young men. The alleged reasons for this are the unresolved role conflicts of young men within society.

Another example is the growing frustration among men in the face of a political agenda that only concerns itself with women's and not at all with men's needs. The latter would comprise the promotion of education, pedagogical provision for boys, counselling services for men, corrections of the inequalities regarding divorce and custody, and a men's health report corresponding to the existing reports on women. Increasing numbers of dissatisfied men in the German-speaking region are forming men's rights groups, and recently a "men's party" has been founded in Germany. However, right-wing and misogynist tendencies can be observed among many of these groups, which poses the threat of radicalisation.

Here is my constructive summary:

To begin with, it would be necessary to identify the described issues as existing problem areas in the German-speaking countries. This includes the banal but obviously tabooed realisation that men constitute a gender too, and its ensuing implementation in the form of actual men's politics. This would include public support for projects aimed at men and boys. None of this, however, would free men from their individual and collective responsibility of working actively towards change.



## 14 Gender Equality and Men: Learning from Practice

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*Sandy Ruxton*



### *Abstract*

*Drawing on the conclusions from Oxfam GB's 'Gender Equality and Men' project, this paper acknowledges there are risks in including men in gender equality strategies, but argues that the potential gains can make such efforts worthwhile. Based on programme interventions in a number of fields (such as men's health, fatherhood, and gender-based violence) from a range of countries, the author identifies ten critical elements of good practice. These include the need for a clear conceptual framework, awareness of different masculinities, the development of appropriate messages to approach men with; and understanding of how and where to reach men. The paper concludes with a set of principles for policy development at governmental level, and identifies significant policy areas.*

### *Introduction: Oxfam's work on gender equality and men*

Oxfam GB works to overcome poverty and suffering in more than 75 countries worldwide (including in the UK). Our activities include advocacy, education, campaigning, and development and humanitarian programmes<sup>4</sup>. Oxfam GB is a member of the Oxfam International family, a confederation of 12 organizations working with partners around the world – in the EU, there are also members of varying size in the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Ireland, and Spain.

Over the last twenty years, Oxfam GB has developed programmes whose immediate beneficiaries are women and their dependents, based on continuing evidence that women are the majority in the poorest groups worldwide. More recently, whilst support for women remains at the heart of what we do, analysis of the obstacles to gender mainstreaming has led Oxfam GB (and other development organisations) to believe that addressing men is also a critical element of efforts to build gender equality.

This resulted in the establishment in 2002 of the 'Gender Equality and Men (GEM) project', funded both by Oxfam and the UK Department for International Development. Through initiatives such as regional workshops, an internal training course, and innovative project work, the project has explored how to involve men and boys effectively in gender equality strategies.

The project has led to two specific outcomes. First, in 2004, an Oxfam book ('Gender Equality and Men: Learning from Practice') was published; this edited collection brings together contributions from fourteen development practitioners and researchers from many parts of the world who are working to promote gender equality among men.

Second, we subsequently developed a 'toolkit', an intranet-based resource containing practical frameworks, strategies, guidelines, workshop material and case studies, developed by a range of local, national and international organisations. Thematic chapters cover: gender-based violence; fatherhood; conflict; livelihoods; and reproductive health.

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<sup>4</sup> Oxfam GB's work focuses on five key aims: sustainable livelihoods; quality education and health care; protection from disasters and violence; right to be heard; and right to equity (gender and diversity). See [www.oxfamgb.org](http://www.oxfamgb.org) for further details.

In the comments below we draw upon the conclusions of the book and the toolkit. The paper explains briefly the rationale for working with men, and then sets out key principles for effective practice.

### *The added value of including men in gender equality strategies*

There are risks in promoting the involvement of men in gender equality strategies. Feminist practice could be watered down, and the drive for justice for women and girls undermined. Funding could be diverted from programmes that support women – particularly in a context where the latter are often struggling. And men may attempt to take over or co-opt existing gender work to support rather than challenge inequality.

However, there are also risks if men are not involved. Working with women only can leave power relations unchallenged, increase women's workload, and reinforce static definitions of men (e.g. as breadwinners) and women (e.g. as carers). Excluding men can also fuel their hostility.

There are potential gains from integrating men and boys into gender work. Such efforts recognise that gender inequality is closely tied to men's practices and identities, and to discourses around masculinity, and that men can play a positive role in building gender equality (Flood 2005). According to Kaufman (2003), for instance, involving men and boys may (inter alia):

- create a broad social consensus among men and women on issues that previously have been marginalised as only of importance to women;
- mobilise resources and institutions controlled by men, resulting in a net gain in resources available to meet the needs of women and girls;
- isolate those men working to preserve men's power and privilege and to deny rights to women and children;
- contribute to raising the next generation of boys and girls in a framework of gender equality;
- encourage positive shifts in the attitudes and behaviour of men and boys;
- address the negative consequences of some men's behaviour for men themselves (e.g. to their emotional and physical health), and for women and children.

### *Effective practice in engaging men in gender equality work*

Based on examples of interventions in a number of fields (men's health; fatherhood; gender-based violence; livelihoods) from a range of countries<sup>5</sup>, Oxfam GB's work indicates the following ten elements are critical to effective practice:

1. A clear conceptual framework for thinking about men, masculinities and gender relations, drawing upon feminist thinking and in line with feminist goals. Key aspects are: the invisibility of gender issues to most men and the notion of the 'patriarchal dividend' (i.e. the privileges that all men draw upon – higher incomes, care and domestic services – simply by virtue of being male); how norms are usually set around men's interests – most statistics, interventions and institutions are shaped around men (although they appear gender-neutral); how masculinities are actively constructed; how men conform to narrow definitions of what it means to be a man ('be tough, compete, don't cry'); and the dynamic nature of masculinities over time (Connell 2003).

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<sup>5</sup> Including Brasil, Canada, the Caribbean, Georgia, India, Mexico, Pakistan, South Africa, Timor Leste, UK, and Yemen.

2. Awareness of diversity. It is essential to recognise the commonalities and differences between men, as well as between men and women, and the significance of cross-cutting structures of class, race, sexuality, age and religion. In practice, the ‘patriarchal dividend’ is shared unequally, and some specific forms of masculinity are dominant, and others marginalised (Connell 1995).

For example, in the UK (and other countries), there is much popular talk about the ‘crisis’ of boys failing in education. This overstates the issue; in fact, it is usually boys from working-class families about whom concern is expressed – those about whom there has always been concern. The issue is not about boys in general, but boys from particular backgrounds.

3. Positive messages: In general, men should be addressed through positive messages, which highlight the shared benefits of gender equality to women and men. It is important to use language that resonates with men, is grounded in their own experience, and encourages constructive involvement. However such an approach must not undermine improvements in the position of women and girls, or avoid addressing men’s negative or harmful behaviours.

An example is the White Ribbon Campaign, which uses the ribbon as a symbol of public promise by a man never to commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women (Kaufman 2004). The message addresses men directly: ‘You have the power to end violence against women in your community’.

4. Effective Messengers: There are advantages in getting boys or men to engage other boys or men with gender issues (e.g. around men’s violence) and of supporting and nurturing such groups. Male peers and educators may be regarded as more credible, or taken more seriously. More positively, men who are gender-aware may act as role models for others, and can demonstrate in practice how men can take responsibility for addressing gender inequality, rather than leaving it to women.

Another important motivator for men is hearing about and understanding the effects of gender inequality on women and girls (See e.g. Rogers 2004). Supportive female voices – including in particular sisters, mothers, grandmothers, wives, and girlfriends – can therefore also be instrumental in encouraging men to change.

Within projects and programmes, male and female facilitators can work together effectively, role modelling partnership working, however this depends on considerable degrees of trust, self-awareness, and skill (Keating 2004).

5. Engaging with men’s emotions and behaviour: There is a clearly negative impact for men, women and children of men conforming to restrictive definitions of masculinity - dominant images of men needing to present themselves as ‘strong, tough, in control, independent’. Attempts to encourage men to engage more actively with their emotions and behaviour are essential, and it is important to create space for men to undertake such exploration. In situations where they feel they will not be treated judgmentally, men are able and willing to open up about personal issues that matter greatly to them. However, the pace of change can be slow and efforts need to be sustained.
6. Reaching men: There are venues where and times when men congregate – such as at sports events and religious celebrations, in workplaces, clubs, youth centres, and in social locations such as bars or cafes – and these can be focal points for intervention (e.g. EngenderHealth’s ‘Men as Partners’ Programme, Mehta et al. 2004). Creating alternative

safe all-male spaces where men can meet and talk openly can be valuable, however it is important that such groups avoid reinforcing sexist attitudes and practice.

Efforts to make health and welfare services more ‘male-friendly’ (e.g. by targeted recruitment, varying opening times, attention to the project environment) are also worthwhile. The perspectives and assumptions of staff are highly relevant too; it is important to make gender visible within welfare services, by providing opportunities for staff – both male and female - to reflect upon the gendered nature of the work and their practice.

7. Key transitions in men’s lives: Sometimes personal change in men can come about as a result of a significant life event: becoming a father or grandfather; relationship breakdown; or illness. It is important to identify the ‘opportunity’ moments, and to explore appropriate intervention at these points. For instance, becoming a father is a tremendously powerful experience when men may be relatively open to renegotiating roles and responsibilities, and seeking advice from welfare services. Also true of older men when they retire, are bereaved, or suffer significant health problems (Ruxton 2006).

Gender workshops can also promote change, if they are logically structured and sequenced through various developmental stages, and employ diverse methods (e.g. exercises, games, skills training, stories).

Opportunities to promote change can be closely linked to the context within specific societies. Societal ‘crises’ (including, for example, the HIV epidemic, large scale unemployment and poverty, and panics about men's violence) can all give rise to shifts and crises in gender relations, providing new opportunities for intervention (De Keijtzer 2004).

8. Alliance-building between men and women, and protection of ‘women’s space’: Although not widespread, there are examples of men working together for gender justice. Men’s groups have much to learn from feminist groups; such connections can reduce the risk that men will shore up traditional masculinities. Women only and women-focussed programmes should also be protected to maintain and develop women’s solidarity and empowerment – particularly for those who are most disadvantaged by gender inequality.
9. Focus on what men can change: Practice should identify the concrete actions that men can take in their lives, including specific changes in their personal lives, commitment to engaging with other men they know around gender equality, working as peer educators, or acting as a mentor (Flood 2005). An emerging example is Oxfam’s ‘We Can’ campaign to reduce the social acceptability of violence in six countries of South Asia. The campaign is unusual in that it is based on achieving personal change (in one’s own life) as a critical factor in bringing about sustainable and mass change. The campaign is strongly supported by both men and women at grassroots level.
10. Monitoring programme effectiveness: Given the embryonic nature of much work with men, only a few examples of research into the effectiveness of programmes exist (e.g. Promundo’s ‘Programme H’ in Brasil, Barker et al. 2004). Further monitoring is necessary, both to demonstrate whether such work has an impact (and if so, what kind), and to clarify whether devoting resources to it is valuable.

### *Principles and Policies to engage men*

Beyond the project/programme level, Connell (2003) has suggested a useful set of principles for policy development at governmental level. These include:

- Developing integrated gender policies rather than separate parallel policies: Gender policies should focus overall on ‘gender relations’ rather than on men or women as separate groups. Parallel policies ignore the relations between men and women, and encourage segregation.
- Naming men and boys in gender equality policies, rather than leaving their presence implicit: Men are often implicitly present as background in policy discourse about women. This makes it hard to explore issues about men and boys without falling into ‘backlash’ stance - and hard to attract men to engage.
- Promoting a clear public statement on why we should involve men and boys in gender equality strategies: It is essential to define ‘gender’ as men’s concern as well as women’s, to articulate reasons for men and boys to support gender equality, and to disseminate this statement widely.
- Addressing the specific needs of men and boys, where they differ from needs of women and girls: There may be circumstances where gender analysis leads to the conclusion that specific action orientated at women or men is necessary.
- Funding new initiatives from existing programmes that implicitly address men and boys: It is vital to avoid competition for funding with programmes addressed at women. Sensitising men who control resources about gender issues should lead to greater pool of overall resources for gender work.

Building on these principles, potential policy responses may include:

- Developing support and commitment from those in leadership positions (especially men)
- Encouraging less restrictive public imagery of masculinity
- Reviewing the impact of mainstream policies on men and boys, as well as women and girls
- Improving work-life balance, and strengthening workforce gender equality measures in ways that engage men
- Creating incentives for caring work by men
- Sustaining public pressure against gender violence
- Developing specific programmes (e.g. fatherhood, anti-violence, sexual and reproductive health, boy’s education)
- Supporting NGOs/community groups working with men, especially those in partnership with women’s groups
- Disseminating effective practice, both nationally and internationally.

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## Working Groups





## 15 Working Group 1: Reduction of Segregation in Education and Training: the Role of Men

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*Chair: Brigitte Gresy, Inspector General, Ministry of Health and Solidarity, France*

### *Introduction*

The aim of the first working group was to discuss different possibilities for encouraging men to enter female-dominated educational fields, including the role of prevailing gender stereotypes.

In many European countries the labour market is segregated into female and male majority fields and professions. Female-dominated fields include social work whereas fields such as engineering are male-dominated. This has been identified as one of the key gender equality problems. The workshop focuses on gender segregation in education and training. Women and men often follow traditional education and training paths, which often place women in occupations that are less valued and remunerated. The possible negative impacts on men of this situation are less often mentioned.

The Commission states in its Roadmap for gender equality (2006–2010) that: “It is as important to facilitate women’s entry into non-traditional sectors as it is to promote men’s presence in sectors traditionally occupied by women.” However, it seems that in many European countries policy action targeted to reduce gender segregation in education and training has focused almost solely on women. There has been much less attention, both in projects and in research, on the goal of increasing men’s education in female-dominated fields. It is clear that reduction of gender segregation in the labour market proceeds faster, if more men, as well as more women, educate themselves to the non-typical professions. The workshop on reduction of gender segregation in education and training thus acts as an example of an important field in gender equality policy, where more attention on men and boys is needed.

### Presentations in the Working Group 1:

1. Duncan Fisher: General Introduction: Men in Childcare – Why So Few?
2. Sine Lehn: Cheat the Stereotypes – On Gender and Counselling
3. Manuela Galaverni: Gender Segregation in Education and the Labour Market in Italy
4. Janne Hyppönen Case Example: SOTEMAN Project, Getting Men into Female Dominated Fields

## 15.1 General Introduction: Men in Childcare – Why So Few?

*Duncan Fisher*

### *Abstract*

*Last year the Equal Opportunities Commission in UK published a report on men in childcare that showed 25 per cent of boys express an interest in entering into caring professions - yet only one 2 per cent are offered the opportunity to explore this option by careers advisors. Men's interest in childcare could be linked to the increasingly active role of men as fathers. The EOC's research showed that a more diverse workforce significantly improves the quality of childcare in the opinion of childcare workers and parents.*

### *Occupational segregation in childcare professions*

Last year the Equal Opportunities Commission published a report on men in childcare that showed 27 percent of men would consider working in the childcare sector, yet only 2 percent of childcare workers are men. In a survey of 1300 15 year olds, 25 percent of boys express an interest in entering into caring professions - yet only one 2 percent are offered the opportunity to explore this option by careers advisors.

Men's interest in childcare could be linked to the increasingly active role of men as fathers. Other research by the EOC released in 2005 showed that 4 out of 5 new fathers said they would be happy to stay at home and look after their child, and 9 out of 10 were as confident as their partner at looking after their baby.

The EOC's report, *Men into Childcare*, which includes a review of evidence and current activity to recruit men to the sector, was released at a time when the UK Government needs to attract more men into the rapidly expanding childcare.

The Department for Education and Skills estimates it will need a further 163,000 workers over the next few years – increasing the size of the current childcare workforce by more than 50 percent. Parents still often report difficulties in finding suitable local childcare.

Men comprise 10 percent of after school care workers, signalling potential positive returns from focusing on recruiting men to support extended schools initiatives.

### *Benefits of diverse workforce*

The EOC's research shows that a more diverse workforce significantly improves the quality of childcare in the opinion of childcare workers, by exposing children to a wider range of positive role models. The majority of parents support bringing more male childcare workers into the profession - over three-quarters (77%) of respondents in a survey were in favour of more male carers.

### *Barriers*

The EOC has identified the following key barriers to recruiting men into childcare:

- Low pay, poor terms and conditions keep men away from the sector.
- The perception of childcare as being 'women's work' and a belief that men are unwelcome.

- Insufficient information for boys at schools on caring careers and apprenticeships, despite high levels of interest.

Boys need to be given careers advice and support to attract them into childcare, and allowed to make their choice of career without the bias and prejudice of others shaping their decision.

And in the longer term, the status of the profession needs to be raised through better pay and conditions. Working with children is a rewarding and important job. It needs to be given the status and financial benefit it deserves.

#### *EOC recommendations*

The EOC is therefore calling for the government to act to:

- raise the status of the caring profession through qualifications and an emphasis on training, which, in turn, should result in better pay for both men and women in the profession;
- provide better information for young people about non-traditional career options;
- make non-traditional work experience placements for boys and girls more widely available.

#### *A social revolution in UK: the role of men in caring for (their own) children*

The EOC has published a series of research reports on how parents are actually spending their time and distributing care of children. This research has provided definitive evidence for a revolution in the way that fathers are engaging in the care of children. This provides both the cultural opportunity for recruiting more men into childcare professions and particular opportunities – when men become fathers they are more likely to look at professional childcare.

Some of the key changes revealed are:

- Women work in 55 percent of families with children under 5 and 78 percent of families with children 6-13 years old.
- Fathers do one third of parental care, 8x 30 years ago and more than any professional.
- 94 percent of men take time off after the birth of a baby.
- 31 percent of fathers work flexitime in 2005, compared to 11 percent in 2002 (demonstrating a rapid change).

With actual change come changes in aspirations and attitudes.

- 77 percent of mothers say fathers are as confident as they at caring.
- 62 percent of women reject father's main role is breadwinner.
- 56 percent of mothers of babies think men are just as good as caring as women.
- 70 percent of fathers want to be more involved in caring for their children.

The research identified the following barriers to greater participation by men in caring:

- fathers on low incomes work longer
- the long hours working culture in UK
- family services that support the role of mothers only
- the pay gap between women and men
- cultural definitions of gender roles.

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## 15.2 Cheat the Stereotypes – On Gender and Counselling

*Sine Lehn*

### *Abstract*

*The young people who break with the gender-cultural expectations and limits have a special need for counselling and support. And quite a few of them in fact do: 35 percent of the women and 16 percent of the men have considered a gender-untraditional choice. The need for counselling in this group arises because it is not always so easy to want something that is different from what we expect. Many of these young people feel that they have lacked counselling or have felt alone with their choices. Not all young people have the experience of the counsellor supporting their untraditional wishes. Especially boys and young men who want to take up a gender untraditional occupation risk ridicule and warnings.*

### *A free choice?*

How can it be that the young make such relatively gender-traditional choices? Studies (Nielsen & Sørensen 2004, Mehlbye et.al 2000) indicate that the choices of the young people are not as free as they themselves see it. It could be said that the choice is framed by a number of factors that are co-determinant for what the youngsters choose. The key factors in their choices are:

- the parents' educational and social background
- society's attitude to education in general
- specific limitations in educational intake, and
- gender-cultural expectations and limits

The fact that only 16 percent of the Danish young men have in fact considered a gender untraditional occupation draws attention to the fact that it is the boys that a counsellor should be particularly aware of. Because it would seem to be a little easier for girls to see themselves in an untraditional job than it is for boys. Nor are the boys with 16 percent (compared with the girls' 35%) as inclined to consider an untraditional occupation. But why is this so?

The study by Nielsen & Sørensen (2004) points to a remarkable difference in the way in which boys and girls view the connection between gender and qualifications. While less than 14 percent of the girls think it is important, more than 22 percent of the boys think that it is important that their gender suits their occupation. Also, there is a tendency for more boys than girls to think that there is a difference between what women and men can do and what jobs they can get. This would seem to indicate that the boys in general have a more limited conception of the occupation they can choose – in other words they limit themselves.

There is, of course, no simple explanation of why boys are less inclined to think along untraditional lines. But perhaps a boy would choose to focus on what is traditional and most usual if their counsellor does not take them seriously when they want to do something different from the other boys?

### *Gender-blind counselling?*

The study "Gender-blind counselling?" (Lehn 2003) shows that young girls and boys especially, cannot rely on getting support from counsellors if they wish to take up gender untraditional occupation.

The starting point for initiating the study was an assumption that counselling in the basic school is not adequately gender conscious. However, one of the results was also that to a high degree the counselling may be characterised as "gender blind", i.e. is not aware of the role gender plays in choice of education and occupation nor allows for the barriers that have to do with gender.

The great majority of the 29 counsellors interviewed were not of the opinion that gender equality was a key theme in connection with counselling. The good intention is that everyone should receive equal treatment and that gender, therefore, does not mean anything at all.

But closer examination of counselling practice – carried out by means of observations studies - shows that the counselling of young people is not as gender-neutral as the counsellors say. It could almost be said that the intention of equal treatment for all has caused the baby to be thrown out with the bath water, in that the lack of awareness of the significance of gender leads to the typical and traditional choices coming to the forefront and the unequal position of men and women on the labour market being consolidated.

One of the explanations for gender-blind counselling is that the counsellors do not wish to influence the young but rather to discover what the youngster's wishes are. The theory of the competent counsellor operates with a 'self', a 'core' in the pupil with which the counselling links. The way in which this 'self' is created and thus how the youngster's wishes have arisen is not viewed in a gender context. Nor is constructivist-counselling theory interested in the significance of gender, even though it would be obvious to include gender as one of the many influencing factors. It could thus be said that in general counselling practice has a gender-blind theoretical basis.

It emerges from the study that about half of them regard gender-untraditional educational and occupational wishes as not serious and unrealistic. There is general scepticism about untraditional wishes, which are frequently regarded as something some pupils should be allowed to "try out" – a formulation often used by counsellors. While this can be seen as a sign of openness, at the same time it shows how an untraditional wish is first and foremost considered an experiment where there is a great risk of failure.

According to the counsellors, not only do the boys risk lower pay by choosing a gender untraditional occupation – they also risk being seen as feminine and thus being bullied. And these aspects make it hard for the counsellors to encourage and support boys' untraditional choices directly. Strikingly, boys are heavily evaluated against the heterosexual norm, while girls largely escape having their sexual preferences questioned. It is also intriguing that boys if choosing (or thinking about choosing) a gender untraditional education or job are not defined as mentally strong – as are the girls choosing untraditionally.

### *Recommendations*

What can be done to combat the gender-blindness of counselling? First of all, it is essential to focus on the attitude of the counsellors. If counsellors view gender equality as an issue of irrelevance to their profession, this needs to change. Gender equality and the problems of the gender segregated labour market need to be recognised as relevant. Secondly, the level of knowledge about the gender segregation of the labour market and its problematic consequences for both men and women must be strengthened. This boosting should comprise knowledge about the mechanisms of the gender segregation and also statistical knowledge.

Last, but certainly not least, counsellors need to be highly aware of the difficulties boys and young men face when considering making a gender untraditional choice. One aspect of this may be a close examination and questioning of own stereotype conceptions of masculinity. This would support counsellors to do what they set out to: to support the individual and his search for a meaningful future occupation. Untraditional or not.

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### 15.3 Gender Segregation in Education and the Labour Market in Italy

Manuela Galaverni<sup>6</sup>

#### *Abstract*

*Gender segregation in education and training used to be a major characteristic of the Italian system. At present, the situation looks significantly more balanced, with only few gender segregated sectors. The efforts to change the previous situation have been mainly targeted at women. Having tackled the emergency, the issue of how to target men in this area is still at its initial stage. The approach is to work on different levels: cultural policies, in order to overcome gender stereotypes, as perceived by the population as a whole, but also, and specifically, by teachers and trainers; welfare and labour policies, in order to assure women and men that whatever choice they make, as far as education and training is concerned, they will not find more crucial and definitive problems in the labour market.*

#### *Some general elements concerning the Italian context*

The issue of focusing not only on women, but also on men in order to reduce segregation in the educational field seems to be a very interesting and innovative approach. The way to tackle the problem, however, needs, in our opinion, to be strongly related to the national context and the related gender priorities.

For this reason, it is important to briefly present some general elements concerning the Italian situation, in order to describe both the main characteristics of segregation in education and training and the proposals that the Department for Rights and Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministries is carrying out in the frame of the European Funds new programming period.

Italian context is still characterised by strong gender segregation in education, in working life as well as in income levels, with women being in the weak position.

Gender-based segregation in the labour market is particularly strong and has a twofold aspect: there is a high concentration of women both in some professional fields, and in professional levels (i.e. we face both horizontal and vertical segregation).

Some data: the participation rate is 37,9 percent for women and 61 percent for men; the employment rate is 34,1 percent for women and 57,2 percent for men; the unemployment rate is 10 percent for women and 6,2 percent for men, with wide differences across the Country, the South being in the worst position.<sup>7</sup>

This is why our major efforts have been directed, and still are, towards reaching equal work opportunities for women, female employment being one of our highest priorities.

Reasons for the above-sketched situation are several:

- Its origin lays in gender-based choices in education, i.e. we have types of studies that are traditionally chosen by girls and others that are traditionally chosen by boys. This situation is changing, but it is still present and rooted in the general attitude.

<sup>6</sup> Co-authored with Stefania Belmonte.

<sup>7</sup> Istat 2005, Labour Force Survey; Istat Report on Country Situation.



- Italian welfare still lacks in services to support care work, and men still have very little participation in family and parental duties. This is the main problem and is reflected to women's educational and professional choices addressed to jobs that more easily allow for reconciliation of work and family life.
- Gender-based stereotypes, linked, for example, to the role of man and woman in the family. The idea of man as main income-earner is still dominant. It is thus more important for men to have a prestigious and well-remunerated job.

Italian Government believes that in order to modify such a situation we must act having the educational system as a starting point, in order to produce the cultural change we need, and have to favour a balanced participation of women and men to the social, economic and productive system.

To this end, in the frame of the European Funds new programming period, we are working on measures to strengthen women's competence, to favour their choice of scientific disciplines linked to innovation, to design specific actions to foster women's participation in life-long learning. Great attention is devoted to counselling, with gender-targeted actions.

### *Female Segregation: The current situation*

Gender analysis of statistical data concerning education, training and transition to the labour market, shows the presence of segregation areas. These are not numerous, but when considering the labour market trends, they appear related to sectors, which are characterised by the highest occupational growth (technical/scientific/engineering disciplines) and to innovative fields. This is the reason why women's choices in education are less rewarded in the labour market, where further gender-based disadvantages are found.

Gender based tradition in the choice of education has already been mentioned. Even if the development is undeniable, it conserves strong and consolidated roots in the general attitude.

In the past, some professions were closed to women, but more in general, women mostly used to choose those jobs, which more easily allowed reconciling work and family life (public sector, teaching, etc. which had more guaranties for maternity and working hours more suitable for family care).

What about the present situation? Women's progresses in education are decidedly remarkable, particularly if observed in a sufficiently long time-span, during which women have moved from "disadvantage to overtaking".

Young women are increasingly taking part in traditionally male-dominated courses, both at the high school and at University; the situation is more balanced, with increasing rates of female participation in different courses and decreasing segregation rate (High School Segregation Index: 24,1; University Segregation Index: 30,18). Nevertheless there are still untouched gender-characterised areas (with a strong female presence or male citadels).

At the secondary education, the female component is currently well integrated in traditionally male courses, even if still remains the strong majority in schools for teachers (women being 86,1% of the students in 2004/2005) and confirming, on the contrary, its under-representation at the technical schools, which, at the secondary educational level, are both the most professionalizing and frequented (women amounting to 35,6% of the students).

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<sup>8</sup> Istat elaboration on MIUR data 2001/2002.

At university level, we can observe how women are present in all curricula, including the scientific ones (chemistry, pharmacy, agriculture), with participation rates higher than 50 percent. However, the presence of women at university level is still concentrated in humanities and more generally in studies leading to teaching professions. If we analyse the percentage of graduates in different areas, we can notice the following female contribution: 91 percent of graduates in the teaching area; more than 70 percent of graduates in the linguistics, psychology and humanities. These trends confirm that educational segregation remains. On the contrary, in engineering, which is second for overall number of graduates, we find a thin 17,5 percent of women who graduated in 2004/2005. Therefore, the share of women graduates in scientific disciplines, though improved, remains the minority.

Women's performances are usually better than men's in all education types and levels; moreover, women enter higher education (2nd and 3rd degree) more than men and have better success rates. However, it is during the transition period to work that gender gaps become more critical.

Women have to cope with many difficulties in entering the labour market, even those who have followed non traditional educational paths encounter difficulties in finding a job, have lower salaries. Sometimes women themselves accept professions not adequate to their high qualification for reconciliation's sake. Limited welfare services and cultural stereotypes have been mentioned already.

Finally, in a lifelong learning perspective, special attention needs to be given to adult population, characterised by strong disparities in education and training levels. Chances for women participation in continuous and lifelong training need to be increased.

### *The role of men*

Those who are nowadays working in the field of equal opportunities cannot avoid the question of what strategies are needed so as to involve male population in contrasting gender segregation in education and training.

Men play a cultural and behavioural role which must be taken into account and which may be targeted by adequate actions.

As already remarked, educational segregation is a dangerous root for professional segregation and overtaking it represents a very important policy goal, which involves aspects of cultural progress.

First of all it is necessary to go deeper in the knowledge of those motivations, which determine boys' and girls' choices towards specific educational channels. Surveys on young people behaviours and values can offer effective work paths, tuned to different cultures and traditions.

The design of policies in this sector requires as a priority the work on the cultural change. It is also necessary to work on the educational system (education and training, as well as lifelong learning). The education system must foster the progress towards a culture based on equal opportunities. It seems to be quite evident what a crucial role is played by teachers in this respect: they need to be gender-educated and a policy of higher male presence at school should to be pursued, in order to favour a more balanced vision, starting from scholastic institutions. Other interventions could concern curricula, which on the one hand must to be enriched with a gender sensitiveness and on the other hand must stimulate men's interest towards those disciplines with a marked influence on the social identity formation (pedagogy, philosophy, sociology, etc.), in order to favour the development of new professional aspirations. A key role can be played by gender-aware counselling, with sex-specific actions focused on segregation reduction, as well as awareness raising campaigns aimed at introducing new, fearer visions in the public opinion.

Concerning the possibility of more binding measures, specifically aimed at men, in order to favour male presence in usually female professions, these can be studied and designed. However, when it is question of educational choices, the Italian approach is that of leaving a free choice, without quotas. Limitations only concern access to specific higher education study fields and do not include gender based quotas.

Sometimes there are supporting instruments, but always generalised for men and women (e.g. scholarships, tax reduction to incentive the choice of specific university courses). It could be possible to design scholarships and grants to incentive the participation of the under-represented sex in a specific profession.

The attractiveness of professions is decidedly a central point in order to favour men's entry into female dominated jobs. Income, career progression, image and social role of a profession definitively constitute a fundamental incentive. Looking at Italy, one immediately sees primary and secondary teaching as a typical female job. And it is exactly the progressive loss in terms of prestige, experimented by teachers and trainers, which can be identified as a direct cause for low social recognition, poor wages, and of a generally superficial attention. As far as university professors are concerned, on the contrary, professors who enjoy higher social prestige and income levels, are men for the vast majority.

In conclusion, there are many innovative working hypotheses all aimed at balancing male and female responsibilities towards a more representative social and economic equilibrium. In our context, however, they still are essentially accompanying policies, with strong potential impact, while the continuation of direct measures for women remains crucial.

## 15.4 Case Example: SOTEMAN Project, Getting Men into Female Dominated Fields

*Janne Hyppönen*

### *Abstract*

*The purpose of the project was to encourage more men to apply to the qualification based social service and health care education and training by enhancing publicity, recruiting and guidance and by improving the knowledge of the guidance personnel and by improving their skills to advise men to apply to the field. The project carried out a marketing and publicity campaign with the title "To men by men's means". In the campaign project workers paid visits to the army, comprehensive schools, fairs, various associations and employment agencies. They produced brochures and posters. As the guidance material www-pages were produced. Guidance personnel were prepared towards better knowledge of the Social service and health care field and they were introduced to gender sensitive guidance methods.*

### *Need of the project Soteman<sup>9</sup>*

In 1999 the amount of men within the labour force at the social service and health care sector was 10 percent and the amount of women 90 percent. The strong segregation in the field has an influence on the quality of services received by the customers.

Especially in the sectors of children's day care, child protection, in the field of mental health, crises and intoxicant abuse as well as in the other forms of institutional care the need of the male role model, the masculine way of thinking and acting and the need of the physical strength, assertiveness and determination is evident in order to enrich the services and to make the services more functioning.

### *Background factors in the region*

The fact that the structure of livelihood is changing in Southern Kymenlaakso, because the industrial work keeps declining, sets challenges to develop services and new kind of entrepreneurship. An important role in this development is to increase private quality services. Also the aging of population increases the need of non-institutional services given at clients' homes. Due to these facts recruiting new labour force and starting private businesses in the social service and health care field will be emphasised in the future.

### *Equality in Education*

Out of the students in Initial Vocational Training and in the training leading to the University of Applied Sciences 85 percent were women and 15 percent were men in the year 1999. The amount of male students has been the same during the whole 1990's.

The starting point in the project were the following presumptions: various kinds of attitude related, knowledge related as well as cultural and social factors have a background influence on the small amount of applying to the training. Ideas, images and prejudices about the social service and health care field are being developed through the upbringing models at home, in day care and at school.

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<sup>9</sup> The SOTEMAN-project was funded by the EU, the Provincial Government of Southern Kymenlaakso, the city of Kotka, the University of Applied Sciences in Kymenlaakso, and the Trade Union Super. It was implemented in Etelä-Kymenlaakso Vocational College and in the University of Applied Sciences in Kymenlaakso in 2002–2005.

When a young person is choosing a career at the end of the comprehensive school there are several things influencing his/her choice. Some of these things are the parents' opinions, the circle of friends and the general cultural ideas about careers suitable for men.

*Questions to be answered by means of the project Soteman*

1. Is it easy to find realistic and correct knowledge of the social service and health care field and of professions within that field?
2. Is Career Counselling given at correct time, is there enough variety in its methods, does the counselling personnel have enough information on the social service and health care field?
3. Is the marketing of training programs organised by vocational colleges and institutions sufficient?

*Aims*

Long-term aim is to lower the threshold for men to apply to the training in the social service and health care field. Immediate aims are to find out factors influencing the low application rate of men, to make recruiting to training and counselling more efficient, and to improve the knowledge of the counselling personnel of the social service and health care field.

*Ways of action in the project*

*Target groups and actions*

<b>Target groups</b>	<b>Actions</b>
Guidance Counsellors at comprehensive schools and at high schools, Career Counselling Psychologists, Employment Counsellors	Surveying, training, study visits to work places in the social service and health care field
Pupils at comprehensive schools and at high schools, vocational training drop-outs, the unemployed having earlier work experience in the field, people changing their occupation, men at civil service and men working in various organizations	Information given in the community, (meetings, leaflets and brochures) Career counselling and student counselling Preparatory training

*Survey*

The purpose of the survey was, among others, to clarify the group of potential applicants, reasons to apply to the social service and health care field and the ideas of the counselling personnel, male applicants and men working in the social service and health care field.

In total of 1600 men working in the field, 30 male applicants, 66 Career Counselling Psychologists, Employment Advisors and Guidance Counsellors participated in the survey.

Results of the survey strengthened the presumptions and ideas that the amount of men applying to the social service and health care field is small. The answers revealed lack of knowledge as well as wrongful ideas about the salaries, the contents of the work and about the job description.

It appeared in the answers of those working in the field that the choice of social service and health care field had very often taken place a little later than as a young adult and after getting work experience from various work places.

#### *Training of the guidance personnel and other actions*

The main aim of the training days organized for the counselling personnel of employment agencies and for student guidance counsellors was to make visible and to put under consideration the stereotypical ideas related to the gender roles. Those ideas influence on the counselling given by the counselling personnel. The purpose was to estimate the influence of those ideas on counselling methods. The topics of the training days were “The ways to approach counselling”, “Gender conscious counselling” and “A man in a mainly feminine working community”.

Study visits to work places in the social service and health care field were arranged by the project. During those visits professionals introduced their work by short lectures, in concrete work situations and in real working environments.

#### *Publicizing and marketing campaign*

The presumption of the project was that there are potential men interested in the field who are not reached by the existing publicizing and counselling system.

The project carried out enhanced marketing, publicizing, recruiting and counselling to the target group outside school life by paying visits to the army, schools, fairs, organizations and employment agencies. During those visits one emphasized the strengths of the social service and health care field, professions in the field attractive to men, comparability of the salary to other male-majority, low-salary professions and the possibilities to advance at work as well as the variety of work.

In the publicizing and marketing campaign a new kind of “to men by masculine means” approach was aimed at. The purpose of the procedures was to reach and find potential men interested in the social service and health care field and to direct them to apply to a training targeted to a qualification in the social service and health care field.

#### *Preparatory training and career counselling*

Participants to a preparatory training for the social service and health care field were searched for by an open advertisement in a newspaper. Career counselling and student guidance counselling, possibilities to get acquainted with the teaching, possibilities to carry out parts of the qualification and possibilities to learn about the work tasks were arranged for the group mainly consisting of unemployed people. Almost all those who had been in this group continued the training preparing for the practical nurse qualification organized by the employment agency.

#### *The products and results of the project*

##### *Publicizing events*

In total of 1530 people participated in the publicizing and information events arranged in the army, at civil service centres, in sports clubs and at comprehensive schools. Those people form a well-covering and wide sample of the 15–20-year-old young men who were in the phase of applying to vocational training and who were living in the area.

*Preparatory training*

The 13 adult, unemployed men participating in the preparatory training applied for training in the social service and health care field aiming at the qualification. The project also played a part in the fact that the training for men aiming at the practical nurse qualification was started in spring 2004 by the employment agency.

The preparatory and counselling training in the field proved to be necessary and had good results. During that preparatory training the result of the survey was verified: quite a few men choose social service and health care as their occupational field at the adult, and more mature age.

*Increase in the amount of applicants*

The aim of the project was that the amount of applicants would be increased by 4 percent. This was multiplied in initial vocational training through the influence of the training by the employment agency that was started in 2004. By contrast, the influence of the publicizing carried out among the young men cannot be estimated in the short term because the results might be seen after several years.

*Preparation and Training of the counselling personnel*

About a hundred people attended the training sessions and events arranged for the counselling personnel. That number covers almost all the people in the area employed in the career counselling. Based on the feedback from them the procedures carried out in the project, there has been an impact on the quality of the counselling and on the knowledge of the social service and health care field. The project has also made it easier to introduce the field to men.

*Marketing campaign and counselling material*

The project produced and disseminated leaflets and brochures introducing professions in the social service and health care field. Internet-pages were produced as material for counselling.

## 15.5 Working Group Report

*Reetta Siukola*

In many European countries the labour market is segregated into female and male majority fields and professions. This segregation has its root in education and training, where traditional paths often place women in occupations that are less valued and remunerated. However, the possible negative impacts on men and boys are less often elaborated. What are these impacts on men? Why and how to reduce segregation in education and training? And how to influence especially the career choices of boys and young men? These were the topics of the first working group at the Men and Gender Equality Conference in Helsinki.

The discussion in the working group focused on several themes concerning both the good practices in the field of education and training as well as policy measures for reducing segregation at the national and EU level. First of all, the problem of occupational segregation was elaborated further. On the one hand, as the presentations showed, many men and boys would consider working in the female-majority fields, such as in social and health care. On the other, however, they seldom actually end up on these fields: they are for example influenced by the social and cultural gender stereotypes, low status, working conditions and pay of the care professions as well as lack of information about these fields.

The problem of occupational segregation was seen especially vivid in the career choices of boys and men, because they seem to be more influenced by traditional gender roles and also more often classified by the heterosexual norm than women or girls. This leads to the fact that men continue to make stereotypical career choices, while women, on the contrary, are challenging the gendered roles and entering into male-majority fields. Many care work fields would, however, benefit from male workers and their input in terms of male role models, masculine ways of thinking and acting as well as physical strength and other qualities more likely attached to men.

### *Legislation and other policy measures*

To reduce and eliminate occupational segregation several policy measures, including legislative measures, were mentioned. First of all, it was mentioned that there should be special legislation that ensures equal rights for school children against discrimination on grounds of sex, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Similarly, there should be legal obligation to mainstream gender perspective into educational policies and practices. Educational quota provisions, however, did not come up in the discussion.

At the national level it is possible to influence the educational practices through for example the national curriculum, which gives the guidelines for the content and focus of the education given in schools. Also textbooks play a crucial role in creating images of typical men and women, boys and girls, as well as their career choices. Therefore the content of these books should be carefully scrutinized and perhaps renewed so that they could better avoid restrictive gender stereotyping. Also some kind of common guidelines for mainstreaming gender into education and training were called for.

It was also seen important to influence the teachers' education so that all the graduating teachers and student counsellors would be aware of the negative impacts of the gender-blindness in educational system and so that they would be able to recognize and reconstruct traditional gender stereotypes.



Reducing gender pay gap and the low status of female-majority occupations, such as care professions, was mentioned as the most important indirect policy tool for tackling occupational segregation. It was also said that integrating men as actors into the gender equality policies would have a positive impact on issues concerning segregation in education and training as well as in labour market.

At the EU level common strategies and guidelines on how to integrate gender perspective into education and training were needed. Reducing segregation should for example be a priority in the European educational programmes and projects, such as in the Bologna process and in the European programme for education (Socrates). It was noted that these common strategies should aim at reducing both educational as well as labour market segregation.

### *Other measures: Information provision and gender conscious campaigns*

In the discussion it was held important to influence gender stereotypes as well as individual attitudes in the surrounding culture. According to the participants this was best accomplished by humour and by playing with the gender stereotypes. The Dutch campaign was mentioned as a good example of making the restrictions of traditional gender roles visible in the otherwise rather gender-blind culture. It demonstrated for instance the fact that when men take part in child-care they often concentrate on the part that is most fun; that is playing with the children! Also turning gender stereotypes upside down was considered a good way to influence people's perceptions.

It was mentioned as a good practice to invite parents to tell about their occupations in the schools. This way boys and girls are able to get a better understanding of the contents of different professions and also reflect on their suitability for different fields. By choosing men and women that have made unconventional career choices it can also be shown that it is possible to cross the traditional gender boundaries.

In addition, it was reminded that the ethnic diversity must be taken into consideration when trying to reduce segregation in education and training. It was mentioned that very often both gender stereotypes and occupational segregation are stricter and more unquestioned among immigrant groups.

It was also noted that even though there are already many methods to reduce segregation in education and training, there is at the same time a lack of cultural and political support to actually using them. This has to do with the fact that the social and cultural structures are constantly reproducing gender stereotypes and the 'natural' capacities and characteristics of women and men. Therefore, in addition to trying to produce ambitious educational strategies and a total cultural transformation in the educational system, it is also important to continue the smaller endeavours to change the educational practices step by step.

## 16 Working Group 2: Gender Mainstreaming in Health Policies and Practices

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*Chair: Peter Makara, National Institute for Health Development, Hungary*

### *Introduction*

The aim of the second working group was to discuss ways of strengthening the gender perspective in health policies and practices and the relation of health and gender equality policy.

There are marked differences in the health between women and men. Medical research and many health and safety standards relate more to men than to women. On the other hand men have much lower life expectancies than women. The life expectancy of men varies more across countries than that of women. A significant issue that impacts on the health of working age population is lifestyle and gender has a significant impact on lifestyle. Conceptions and expectations of ones gender affect health behaviour. “Real men take risks” is a common thought that kills.

Gender differences in health and wellbeing have not been in the forefront of gender equality policies. Thus gender mainstreaming is an important tool to enhance gender equality in the health sector. However, there is still need for updating the analysis of the gender dimension in health, as identified by the Commission in the Roadmap for Gender Equality.

Presentations in the Working Group 2:

1. Alan White: General Introduction: Men, Health and Gender Equality
2. Marita Sihto: Are There Policies and Tools to Reduce Gender Differences in Health?
3. Jaroslaw Waligóra: Gender Mainstreaming and EU Health Policy
4. Vasco Prazeres: Men’s Health and Gender issues in Portugal

## 16.1 General Introduction: Men, Health and Gender Equality

*Alan White*

### *Abstract*

*The consideration of health within the Gender Equity debate is essential as there are many circumstances where both men and women are missing out by persistence with health strategy and provision aimed at the entire population. "Men's health" relates to a wider range of concerns than those affecting the male specific reproductive disorders, with a significant number of health issues that should affect men and women equally being seen to have a heavier impact on men. The reasons for difference being a consequence of biology, lifestyle and societies expectations on men and therefore require action at many levels to see change occur.*

### *Introduction*

The call for health to be part of the gender equality debate is long overdue. There has been a recognition that gender impacts on many aspects of our lives and that differences between men and women have resulted in significant areas of inequity. Both men and women are affected by this and though this paper relates specifically to men it can be seen that there are also many areas where women's needs also have to be identified and focused on (for instance coronary diagnostics and alcohol programmes that move away from the male norm, within the broader gender mainstreaming agenda). By addressing the issues that are seen to either uniquely, or predominately affect one gender as opposed to another has additional benefits for both women and men, for it is so often seen that what affects women has a great impact on men and that which affects men also affects women (for instance the trauma to the whole family of a young male suicide). The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to explore those aspects of men's health that need to be part of a serious consideration of gender mainstreaming health provision.

The differences between men and women go much deeper than those related to reproductive anatomy and physiology. With every cell having either a XX or a XY genetic base the biological variations between men and women appear from conception and have fundamental implications for the way we develop and how our bodies work. There is, however, another factor that may be more profound and this involves society's expectations of how men and women should act and the effect this has for the way we develop our health beliefs and behaviours. The socialisation of men and women creates from the moment of our birth a powerful set of rules about what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour that not only influence the individual man or women but also the reactions of others such that the very way we think and act about our own health and that of others will be affected.

There is now sufficient evidence on the gender equality issues that this creates to warrant a move away from population based approach towards the formulation of health policy that recognises gender as significant as age, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. The Vienna Declaration on Men's Health is an important statement on the need for men and their health to be taken seriously within policy decision making at all levels

In order to understand the challenges men face it is necessary to look at the epidemiological data relating the state of men's health, but then it is necessary to explore why this situation exists in order to determine how best to help men through more equitable health policy. The need for this

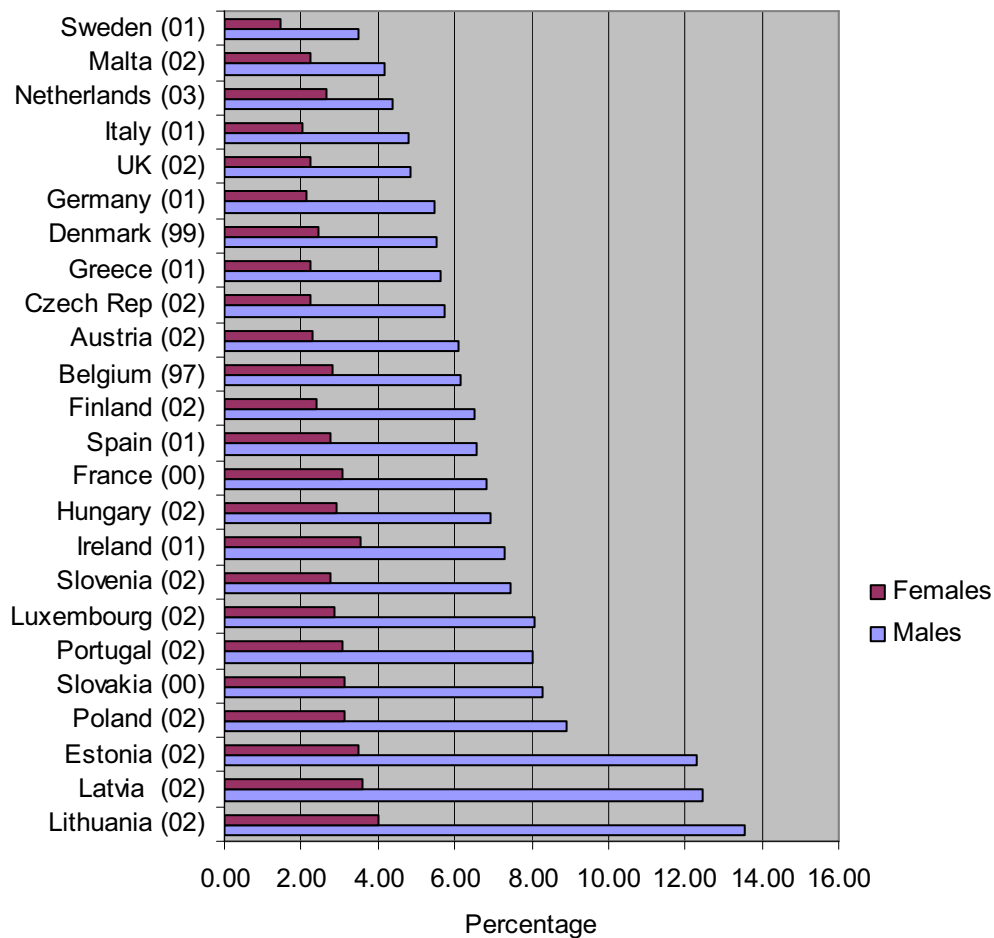
examination is well overdue as the cost, both personal and economic, of an ailing male population is huge and impacts not only on men but on their partners and family as well.

*The problem*

The first and most obvious difference between men and women’s health is in relation to life expectancy, with women living on average 5 years longer than men, but this well known fact (to the point of being ignored by many) masks a great deal of meaning.

The second is that the excess of male deaths is occurring across the age spectrum up to the age of 75, where female deaths start to exceed men. A recent study (White & Holmes 2006) explored patterns of mortality in young men and women (aged 15-44 years) across 44 countries; chart 1 shows the proportion of deaths occurring in this age band and demonstrates large variations both between the countries and between men and women. Though some of these differences may be accounted for with the different population sizes within this age group it does suggest that the impact of social factors appears to have a bigger impact on men, with relatively small levels of difference between the highest and lowest female figures (Sweden 1.5% to Lithuania 4% of total deaths) as compared to the male figures (Sweden 3.5%, Lithuania 13.5% of total deaths).

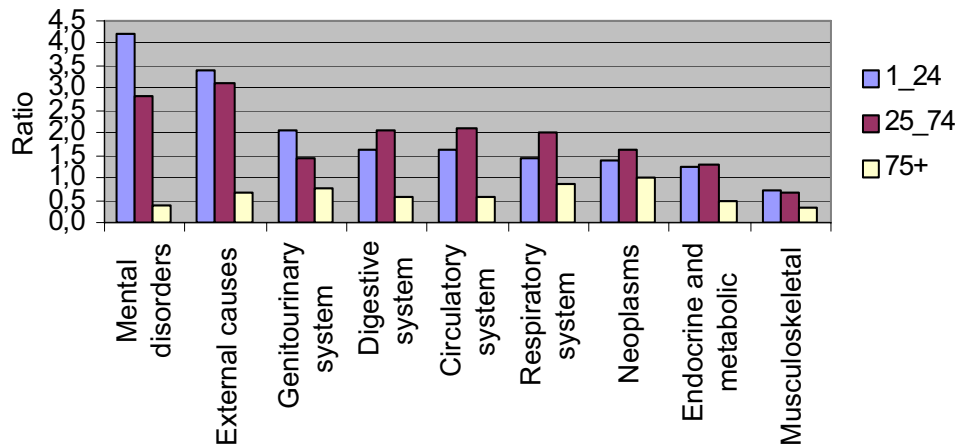
**Chart 1: Percentage of deaths occurring within the age band 15–44 years for men and women for the States of the European Union (year of data in brackets).**



Data for Cyprus not available of WHO Mortality Database

The third issue is in relation to what is the cause of such premature death and an analysis of 17 Western European Countries (White & Cash 2003) demonstrated that men were dying at an earlier age of nearly all causes of disease that should affect men and women equally (chart 2).

Chart 2: Ratio's of male deaths to female deaths across a selection of the major disease classification groups, broken down by age.



White & Cash 2003.

The fourth issue is that these averages mask huge variations that occur within the countries as a result of ethnicity, but more significantly socio-economic factors. At the recent EU conference on Inequalities in Europe Jonas Mackenbach (2005) highlighted how men's health stood out as a significant problem in this regard and has a huge economic as well as personal consequence.

### *Possible contributory factors*

The Men's Health Forum (England) have suggested the following definition of men's health:

'A male health issue is one arising from physiological, psychological, social or environmental factors which have a specific impact on boys or men and/or where particular interventions are required for boys or men in order to achieve improvements in health and well-being at either the individual or the population level.' (MHF 2004).

This provides a useful platform for considering where the problems may exist and what may be achieved by targeted action.

### *Biological*

There are implications for being biologically born a male, with the American Medical Association recognising the following key differences between males and females:

- Differences associated with the sex chromosomes
- Differences in immune response
- Differences in symptoms, type, and onset of cardiovascular disease
- Differences in response to toxins
- Differences in brain organisation
- Differences in pain (Wizemann & Pardue 2001)

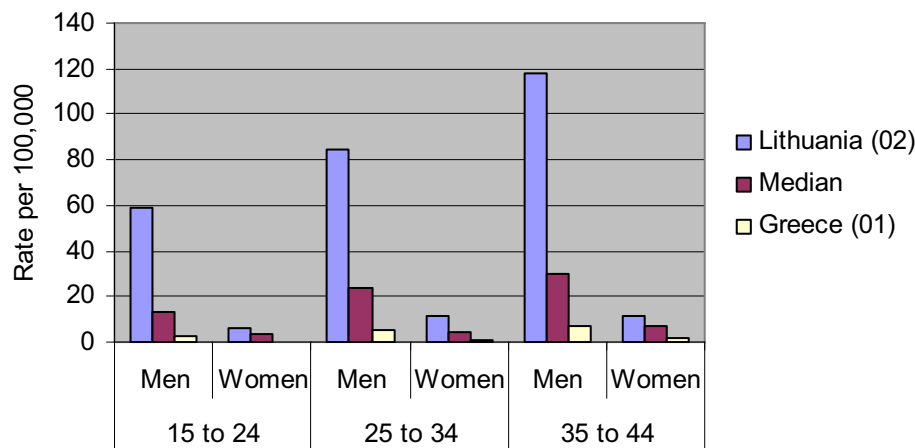
And whilst these can account for some of the reasons for men's increased susceptibility to develop and die earlier from conditions that should affect men and women equally they do not account for them all, such as the large country by country variations or the effect of socio-economic factors. It can be argued that the most significant issues are most certainly not biological but socio-cultural in origin and therefore amenable to change.

### *Lifestyle*

Examination of the patterns of mortality across 44 countries in young men and women (White & Holmes 2006) highlighted that in the earlier adult years "accidents and external causes" along with suicide were the principal causes of death, with disease processes coming more prominent by the age of 35-44 suggesting that men's lifestyles were predominately to blame, with smoking, alcohol, drugs, coupling with risk taking behaviour, a reluctance to seek health care and the increasing problem of obesity in men being the most significant factors.

With regard to men's mental health and wellbeing the high levels of suicide in men in some countries (chart 3) as compared to others, with over a million years of life lost in men from the EU as a result of suicide, is another indication of the impact of culture and social pressures as opposed to biological fact. A big indicator of the need for a more gendered approach to health care is in relation to the comparatively low levels of consultation for psychological problems, which suggests there is a male form of depression that is not being recognised (Brownhill et al 2005) or that services are not targeting these men at risk appropriately. There is a huge cost to this in both human and economic terms, with men turning to alcohol, drugs and violence both to themselves and others as a means of compensating for their loss of emotional wellbeing. ‘

**Chart 3: Comparison between men and women for the European Union countries1 with the highest, lowest and median levels of male suicide. (Years of data in brackets.)**



Adapted from White & Holmes (2006). Data on rates of death not available for Malta and Luxembourg.

Obesity is a specifically gendered condition that has significant implications for men. Men tend to deposit their fat abdominally which increases the risk of developing hypertension, high cholesterol levels, diabetes and the fat related cancers (Campbell 2004). It is estimated that in the UK three quarters of men will be overweight by the year 2010 and currently there are an estimated 14,000 deaths a year directly attributable to obesity. It is recognised that many men have a different relationship with regard to their body image and dieting as compared to women and that strategies that work with women do not necessarily work well with men.

It is unfair to see men as being totally to blame for their health shortcomings. Male socialisation forces many men into a way of life that is damaging. The push to become independent risk takers who should not admit weakness and to see help-seeking as a sign of vulnerability is not conducive to living a healthy life. In addition many of the jobs that are predominately undertaken by men have higher risks associated with them; they are also more likely to be employed full time with less opportunity to get access to health services.

### *Conclusions*

Men's health is not driven solely by their biology; lifestyle is implicated in the majority of health conditions in men

Even though health is improving for many conditions there are still marked inequalities that exist, both between countries and between men and women.

Targeting the young can have significant impact on the reduction of the burden of disease and premature death.

There is a need for careful planning of health policy with consideration of gender as a key factor is required for the most effective and efficient services.

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## 16.2 Are There Policies and Tools to Reduce Gender Differences in Health?

*Marita Sihto*

### *Abstract*

*In most EU countries women tend to live longer than men. Whereas, many women live in poorer health and disabilities make worse the quality of life of older women in later life. There is a reason to believe that these health differences are not due to biological factors, but instead, basically to social and psychosocial conditions and social experience. Gender has long been recognised as an important determinant of health. However, gender is not a homogenous category but shaped by social position (e.g. education, income and ethnicity). This presentation draws on recommendations of the international expert committee on the Inclusion of Gender Differences in Health Policy appointed by the Council of Europe.*

### *Introduction*

Women tend to live longer than men. Male mortality rates are higher across a number of different causes of mortality. Women have lower rates of mortality, while men seem to have more fatal illnesses than women. Illnesses shorten the life of men but worsen the quality of life of women (Lahelma et al 2003). However, it has been assessed that this longevity gap is closing as women have adopted more 'male' lifestyle- related behaviours (e.g. smoking and heavy drinking).

Inequalities in health related to gender are manifested according to many health indicators (including life expectancy, healthy life expectancy; mortality and morbidity as well as self-assessed health; health-related behaviour including smoking, alcohol consumption, eating habits and exercise; the health care system including access to health services). The health pattern of gender differences varies in relation to magnitude, age and the phases of the life cycle.

Health varies between genders but it also varies within gender. This indicates that gender health is not a homogenous category but is shaped by social position (education, income, occupation, ethnicity etc.). For instance in Finland, according to the data from early 2000, the average life expectancy of a male aged 35 in upper white-collar groups was about 6 years longer than among blue-collar workers. In women the corresponding difference was about 3 years (Valkonen et al 2003).

These gender-based inequalities have been frequently documented in the last ten years in research reports, statistics and in many recent administrative reports. Gender differences in health may not be a problem unless they have unequal consequences. Gender differences contribute to different health outcomes, which could be seen as unfair and ethically unacceptable. Tackling gender differences in health may increase health potential and benefit both women and men.

### *How to influence gender differences in health?*

There is a widely accepted perception that these health differences between genders (and differences within gender) are not basically due to biological and genetic factors, but instead to social and psychosocial conditions. Those differences between men and women that are based on physiology or biology are unavoidable differences. These are not maintained as a result of bias or unequal treatment.



Differences related to gender health that cannot be considered as necessary and are thus avoidable are likewise differences that can be influenced and addressed. In other words, inequalities stemming from avoidable and/or unfair causes could be reduced or eliminated (e.g. Whitehead 1990). These avoidable differences relate to different explanations on the reasons for gender equality:

- psychological issues (masculinity-femininity)
- health-related behaviour (smoking, alcohol, eating habits, exercise) and use of health care services
- sociological issues (life course, role in the family, structural matters)
- structural factors (position in the labour market, social class, education)
- methodology (how to report on health) (compare Luoto et al 2003).

Gender and other dimensions of individuals' social status (socioeconomic position, ethnicity) shape people's experience of and exposure to virtually all psychosocial, behavioural and environmental risk factors for health and these in turn operate through different mechanism to influence causes of diseases (Graham 2004, 112 drawing on House & Williams 2000). Individuals' social status, including their sex should therefore be regarded as a key determinant of health and an important factor for improving health. This social status influences people's access to health determinants (Graham 2004, 112).

Determinants of health<sup>10</sup> have been defined as referring to factors that have the most significant influence on health. This determinants-oriented approach focuses and pays attention to structural determinants (such as the labour market, education system) and intermediate factors (living and working conditions, behavioural factors and health and social care) affecting people's health and the health of both women and men.

This suggests that the goals of influencing gender health relate to social determinants of health on many levels. It is essential thus to examine determinants of health that can improve the health of both women and men. This indicates that there is a need to pay attention to a broad range of health determinants (see Commission on Social Determinants of Health 2006). Usually these determinants are categorized as 'upstream' and 'downstream' approaches. 'Upstream' refers to fundamental causes of health through structural determinants such as determinants related to the labour market, education system and other welfare state policies. A 'downstream' approach (tackling immediate health problems e.g. through health care) could be seen as relating to intermediary factors or pathways by which social conditions will be translated to health and impacts on wellbeing.

These socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental conditions and 'upstream' and 'downstream' factors may generate wealth, power and prestige. However, these same factors may also generate inequalities in the distribution of resources and benefits and services (e.g. Östlin 2002).

The challenge of this determinants-oriented approach in tackling gender differences is to identify and develop policies, strategies and action plans. The challenge is also to identify gender specific<sup>11</sup> strategies and gender sensitive<sup>12</sup> health policies that can tackle gender-related health differences.

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<sup>10</sup> Determinants of health have been defined to include the social and economic environment, the physical environment as well as individual's particular characteristics and behaviours (WHO 2006a). Social determinants of health refer to social conditions where people live and work and these determinants point to specific features of the social context that affect health and to pathways by which social conditions translate into health impacts (WHO 2006b).

<sup>11</sup> Gender-specificity refers to the point that some conditions are experienced by only one sex (an example being maternal mortality).

<sup>12</sup> Gender-sensitivity means that gender differences and needs are observed and are taken into account. It is an opposite to gender blindness.

From the gender perspective, these determinants that define health and ill health may not have the same effects on men and women. This is a reason why policies that are sensitive to gender and social group are also needed in the field of health.

### *Interventions to reduce gender differences - the need to move forward*

Although inequalities related to gender health have frequently been reported, there is a gap between gender health and the policies, strategies and action plans on how to tackle these differences. It is common that when the issue is addressed and relevant evidence-based data exists, there is still a long way to go to develop strategies and action plans and implement gender-related policies.

Some international organizations, such as the WHO European Office, the Commission of the European Communities and the Council of Europe have recognized that the health dimension related to gender is a part of gender equality and there is an added value to investing in gender health improvement in promoting public health.

In the Madrid statement by the WHO European Office (Mainstreaming Gender Equity in Health: the Need to Move forward, 2001) it is stated that "gender equality means the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person's sex in opportunities, allocation or resources or benefits, and access to services". Gender mainstreaming<sup>13</sup> has been seen as a strategy for achieving gender equity<sup>14</sup>. The main tasks in this statement are as follows:

- governments should express their political commitment to gender mainstreaming in health policies at all levels of society;
- financial and human resources should be allocated to implement gender-sensitive measures where evidence is at hand;
- public health policies and programmes should contain a well defined and transparent gender dimension; and
- the structural capacity should exist, in the form of appropriate coordinating and implementing bodies formed by all involved sectors.

One example of the work on gender health by the Commission of the European Communities, is a working document (2005) where it is states:

- there are clear links between gender and health;
- actions have already been taken under the current public health programme, one example on this being an expression in this document that there is a "need to ensure that the health data collected can be broken down by gender".

The most recent work on this issue relates to the work of the Committee of Experts on the Inclusion of Gender Differences in Health Policy by the Council of Europe. This is a committee that was set up in 2005. The representatives come from 12 European countries and some other European organisations. The objectives of this committee are:

- making an inventory of data related to gender health;

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<sup>13</sup> Mainstreaming: promoting the idea that gender differences need to be taken into account in policies, programmes and projects related to health.

<sup>14</sup> Gender equity means fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits, power resources and responsibilities between women and men. The concept recognises that women and men have different needs, power and access to resources, and these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalance between sexes. (Madrid statement, WHO 2001).

- analyzing gender-related difficulties in order to overcome them and genuinely incorporate gender differences in health policies;
- determining good practices and drawing up clear recommendations on how to integrate different dimensions of gender into public health programmes;
- integrating the gender dimension in training programmes.

In assessing the situation in Europe in terms of gender health and related activities it is stated by the Committee that there is a need:

- to recognize that European countries still face in different degrees unacceptable gender inequalities between men and women and that health policy makers, health care providers and health professionals are increasingly challenged to understand and address the different needs of women and men;
- to consider that many inequalities between genders' health stem from social, cultural (including religion) and political arrangements in society;
- to acknowledge that genders are not homogenous groups and that different social circumstances may distinctly affect the health needs of each gender and various groups within gender;
- to convince that health policies should take social determinants of health into account since socioeconomic factors (income, employment, education etc.) are unevenly distributed among the population which may account for many health differences, including those between men and women.

The Committee has drafted concrete recommendations on how to promote health by raising awareness on gender-related issues. Some (tentative) examples include:

- producing regular gender-based reports on health;
- ensuring that in the most relevant health surveys and programmes all routine data collection systems are sex-disaggregated;
- promoting gender-sensitive information systems and gender-sensitive indicators;
- including gender disaggregated information related to other determinants that interacts with gender: i.e. income, poverty levels, labour force participation, education level etc;
- promoting the education of health professionals.

The Committee is now completing its report and recommendations. The work is supposed to be finalized in 2007.

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### 16.3 Gender Mainstreaming and EU Health Policy

*Jaroslav Waligóra*

*Abstract*

*Currently gender equality issue gains importance in EU health policy. The Programme of Community action in the field of public health – complementary to national policies – aims at protecting human health and improving public health. The European Commission has also taken up work on producing comparable information on health and health-related behaviour of the population, on diseases and health systems. This work has resulted in the production of the first set of European Community Health Indicators (ECHI). The Healthy Life Years indicator, which measures the number of remaining years that a person of a certain age is still supposed to live without disability, is the most important indicator describing the condition of health of both women and men.*

There are often differences in morbidity and mortality related to various diseases in men and women. These differences are due to purely biological differences as well as social behaviour. Due to recent discoveries there is more discussion about the person-driven medicine but such a vision seems to lie far ahead. At present one should focus upon gender differences.

According to the definition which can be found on the website of Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of European Commission gender mainstreaming is the integration of the gender perspective into every stage of policy processes – design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – with a view to promoting equality between women and men. It means assessing how policies impact on the life and position of both women and men – and taking responsibility to re-address them if necessary. Gender equality is a fundamental right, a common value of the EU, and a necessary condition for the achievement of the EU objectives of growth, employment and social cohesion.

The legal basis for Community action in the field of gender mainstreaming can be found in the Treaty establishing the European Community (EC Treaty). Article 2 of the EC Treaty provides that promotion of equality between men and women is a task of the European Community. Furthermore, Article 3 paragraph 2 provides that the Community should aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality, between men and women in all its activities. The fact of inserting such considerations into the Treaty obliges the European Union to undertake action in this field. Although the importance of this issue is clear, concrete action was only undertaken recently.

At present many other documents of European institutions totally or partially tackle the gender equality issue. One of the most recent documents broadly treating this subject is a Roadmap for equality between women and men (2006–2010). This document is also important as it lays down the working framework of European institutions in the field of gender equality for the forthcoming years. The Roadmap is a Communication from the European Commission adopted in March 2006. It outlines six priority areas for EU action on gender equality in for the period 2006-2010, which are the following:

Paragraph 1.5 "Recognising the gender dimension in health" concerns directly health and according to which: "Women and men are confronted with specific health risks, diseases, issues and practices impacting their health, including environmental issues such as chemicals and pesticide use, as they are often transmitted during the pregnancy and through breast feeding. As

medical research and many safety and health standards relate more to man and male-dominated work areas knowledge in this field should be improved and statistics and indicators further developed. Social, health and care services should be modernised with a view to improving their accessibility, quality and responsiveness to the new and specific needs of women and men."

From the health equality point of view the most important document is "The Public Health Programme of Community action in the field of public health" which is a key instrument conditioning the development of the Community's health strategy.

On 23 September 2002 the European Parliament and the Council adopted a Decision establishing a programme of Community action in the field of public health (2003–2008). The principal aim in the first three years of the programme was to lay the foundations for a comprehensive and coherent approach, by concentrating on three key priorities: health information, health threats and health determinants. Actions under this programme were designed to create self-sustaining mechanisms which enable the Member States to coordinate their health-related activities. A Work plan is prepared for each year of the Public Health Programme.

New priorities have been identified in the 2006 work programme on the basis of the priorities already mentioned in the previous work programmes. Priorities for 2006 cover the following new areas which are important for gender equality:

- gender specific health problems (e.g. infertility);
- data and information on vulnerable and target groups (young, elderly, migrants, ethnic minorities, social groups with low living standards);
- sexual and reproductive health.

In the work plan for 2007 the gender's health is mentioned explicitly.

Information on public health of Member States are gathered by EUROSTAT and DG Health and Consumer Protection.

The short list of Community health indicators is now on-line and regularly updated. Now there are 40 indicators available and many others in preparation.

The Lisbon Strategy Healthy Life Years indicator is reported in the Spring Report and is also available on-line.

In the majority of European countries there are more women than men. The average for European countries equals ca. 105 women per 100 men, however in certain countries, such as Latvia there are more than 115 women per 100 men.

The average life expectancy in all countries is higher for women than men. This indicator is the highest for women in a country like Sweden and they are the lowest in Latvia and Estonia. The gender differences differ from country to country and amount from ca. 4 to 10 years. These data indicate the differences that exist among Member States and in particular between EU-15 and EU-10.

The Healthy Life Years indicator - HLY (also called disability-free life expectancy) measures the number of remaining years that a person of a certain age is still supposed to live without disability. An improvement in Healthy Life Years must be the main health goal for the EU. At present, HLY expectancy at birth in the former EU-15 is, on average, 12 years shorter than overall life expectancy for men and 17 years shorter for women.

The data calculated by EUROSTAT for the year 2003 show clear differences in life expectancies with no disability between Member States with available data. It's expected that in 2003 men in the EU-15 will live 84.9 percent of their life without disability. Men in Italy (92.3%), Cyprus (88.8%), Belgium (88.8%), Poland (88.7%), Czech Republic (87.1%) and Spain (86.9%) are those expecting to spend more of their lives free of disability than people in other Member States. Women could expect to live 81.3 percent of their lives free of disability. In Italy (90.2%), Poland (87.4%), Cyprus (85.5%), Austria (85.3%), Belgium (84.8%), Greece (84.1%), Spain (84.0%) and Ireland (81.0%) the Healthy Life Years are beyond 80 percent.

Death in transport accidents is a very important indicator which demonstrates gender differentiation. Data indicate that men are more exposed to risk of serious car accidents. Practically in all countries this indicator is by ca. 10 higher for men.

According to EUROSTAT next dangerous behaviour which much more often characterizes men is the take-in of stimulants (coffee, alcohol, tobacco, etc.). Smoking tobacco is much more popular among men in all age groups than among women.

Due to above-mentioned differences between men and women in the field of health future actions on the level of the EU and Member States are necessary. For the first time in the EU the new Public Health Programme 2007–2013 will include gender dimension in all the health policies. As for future action, there is also a need to establish a strategy for gender impact assessment in EU health policies. A Report on EU Men's health should be prepared in the future. These actions should lead to align the quality of life and health among genders.

## 16.4 Men's Health and Gender issues in Portugal

Vasco Prazeres<sup>15</sup>

*Abstract*

*In this presentation we want to give evidence of some health indicators as a starting point to address the discussion about men's issues, namely how to acknowledge sex, gender and other relevant social variables as health determinants. Moreover we will try to attend jointly to epidemiological data and planned courses of action in order to assemble gender mainstream in Portuguese health policy. Regarding this point we will make reference to a starting project that aims at establishing how legal, normative and technical documentation in health sector acknowledge sex and gender as determinants of both men and women health status.*

A long time ago, when I was nothing more than a colourless clump of cells the size of a grape pip clinging to the dark inside of my mother's body, something happened to change the entire course of my life. Deep within my cells, a muffled detonation on one of my chromosomes triggered an unstoppable and irreversible chain reaction. A new genetic force pulsed through my minuscule body, throwing one cellular switch after another and resetting the coordinates of my embryonic voyage. Imperceptibly at first, degree by degree, I was diverted away from the normal course of development. Cells within my body laid aside one set of genetic instructions, unrolled another blueprint and set to work altering my small anatomy. Doors that had opened onto long corridors I was following were suddenly closed, and I could not turn back. Other doors opened that led me off in a different, unfamiliar direction, a direction which was eventually to set me apart from half of humanity. Seven and a half months later I was pushed out from my warm home into the blinding white light of the world. The very first words I ever heard defined what I had become. "it's a boy".

Bryan Sykes, 2005

In this presentation we want to give evidence of some health indicators as a starting point to address the discussion about men's issues, namely how to acknowledge sex, gender and other relevant social variables as health determinants. Moreover we will try to attend jointly to epidemiological data and planned courses of action in order to assemble gender mainstreaming in Portuguese health policy. Regarding this point, we will make reference to a starting project that aims at establishing how legal, normative and technical documentation in health sector acknowledge sex and gender as determinants of both men and women health status.

Differences between men and women regarding health indicators are well none and documented; nowadays, research start to question lifestyle patterns, mortality indicators and access to healthcare, as a result of a complex set of relations between what can be assigned to biological factors or to social vulnerabilities.

Regarding health indicators, it is important to highlight that in Portugal, as in other European countries, sex dissimilarities in the burden of mortality are due to different lifestyle patterns that we must start to account. Health policies are gradually acknowledging the need to go beyond simplistic biological explanations.

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<sup>15</sup> Co-authored with Ana Rita Laranjeira, Social Psychologist, General Directorate of Health.



We are now aware of differences, so we must move forward to a twofold effort in order to put gender mainstreaming in health policies into practice – first, by approaching inequality as a measure of differences in health practice and outcomes; second, by recognizing also inequity, conceptualized as differences in opportunity that result in unequal life chances and consequently in health, as stated by Whitehead, in 1992 (cit. WHO, 2006).

Discourses concerning sex differences are not new; despite the growing amount of research, namely in social sciences, the essentialist vision of men and women endured by health sciences has remain almost unquestionable across time. In fact, last decades have been characterized by rising endeavour to acknowledge the complexity of human interaction and how it affects health conducts. An example of this newly effort was the First World Congress on Gender-specific Medicine, which took place last February in Berlin.

Health had traditionally adopted almost a blind position regarding sex as a relevant variable that deserves to be taken systematically in account (with some exceptions in specific domains that are biologically exclusive of each sex). It's a false neutral position because the reference is always the masculine. We find evidence to this theoretical postulate in official statistics were whenever the sex is unknown it's considered by default a male person.

Regardless of these considerations, we cannot say that in Portugal we have failed to acknowledge gender in health. In fact, there is a growing attention to masculine and feminine social roles, how they relate to specific behavioural patterns and its impact on health. Despite this growing awareness it is important to get a little deeper in the analysis; in Portugal, similarly to other European countries, gender issues in health emerged clearly linked to sexual and reproductive health. These contextual factors were indeed justified by the need to empower women health status as a way to reduce social inequities that penalize, at first place, women's health. These social movements contributed in fact to remarkable improvements in the majority of health indicators.

Although, the attempt to integrate gender issues in health turned out to be partial in Portugal. Nowadays, men's sexual and reproductive health continues an incipient field, despite some erratic theoretical efforts. It seems to be quite a paradox; if we ought to develop evidence-based interventions, it is clear that the other side of the gender mainstreaming agreement remain uncovered. If we look to some health indicators, there is an unambiguous pattern that put men into disadvantage in terms of health results. Despite the decreasing movement in mortality rates, when considering men and women separately it becomes obvious an outstanding and persistent masculine over mortality.

Taking for example 2003 data, mortality rates were 9.8/1000 inhabitants for women and 11.1/1000 for men. Considering natural and violent causes separately, the difference between sexes turn out to be even more impressive; while natural causes prevailed in women, violent causes acquire great expression in men's mortality trends, especially in youngest (for example, in 2004, 65% of deaths occurred in 15–29 years old men were due to violent causes; in case of women the proportion of violent causes was 35% for the same age group). There are no doubts that the majority of these deaths are avoidable.

Nevertheless, some of the so-called natural causes of death are, in some way, preventable too. With no doubt, some factors such as demographic, social conditions, ethnicity, income and gender, among others, must be taken into account.

Once more, the example of the Portuguese 2003 data: the mortality rate from Ischemic heart disease was almost double in men (81.5/100000 inhabitants for men and 46.1/100000 inhabitants for women); furthermore, there was significant dissimilarities between men in the different regions of the country; the higher rate was found in Azores (165/100000 inhabitants), and the lower in the Central Region of the country (53/100000 inhabitants).

Despite these acknowledgments, services seem to have failed to accomplish these intents. In fact, there are gender constraints that turn services a more adjusted place for women; health professionals contribute also to sustain these gender representations, in a setting where men, whenever look for healthcare, encounter almost always women providers.

Nowadays, it's a challenge to raise the attention to health, development and wellbeing of men also, particularly youngsters. It's beyond a strictly health concern; promoting gender mainstreaming in health policies is an imperative for gender equality. The burden of preventable deaths demands these efforts; once again it's not just a health matter; to be effective, gender mainstreaming must be accomplished also in other relevant sectors, such as education, welfare, justice, among many.

All these sectors intervene in a more enlarged context, where a clearly established social order prevails; even in presence of a diversity of gender regimes, institutions assure the surveillance of policies and practices according to that major social order (Connell, 2002).

To allow for women's health and men's health separately it's not necessarily a partial and, perhaps, little effective approach; on contrary, we must recognize sex distinctiveness whenever necessary, in the same way we must integrate a relational approach. Accordingly, investments in men's health will contribute also to women's health and wellbeing. As a result, we will be working to promote equality and equity in gender relations.

By now we seem to have acknowledged the relevance of putting sex and gender issues into the agendas of health policies. We have started to focus on sex differences and specificities. The next step is to recognize that it is not enough to verify dissimilarities between sexes in health statistics; besides the differences sustained by biological factors, others exist that rely in socially constructed asymmetrical conduct patterns. For that, a gender dynamic perspective has to be applied to processes of developing health policies and global strategies to improve the health status of both men and women.

Having all the stated grounds, we are now initiating a project, in health sector, that aims at establishing a core of research and planned action regarding sex and gender as health determinants.

By now, we are starting the first studies that will allow putting gender mainstreaming into practice in health policies at three different levels. First, we intend to characterize more deeply mortality and morbidity trends in Portugal, in the last decade, stressing sex and age differences and similarities. Concurrently, critical approach on sex and gender will be addressed in order to account to biological and social determinants of health. With epidemiological evidences and critical analysis we hope to sustain actions, shape strategies and policies in a more enlighten way to attend to differentiated health needs. Second, a study will be conducted to address gender awareness among health professionals in their current practices. We hypothesize differences in sex and gender awareness among different careers. Finally, the third study will address legal, normative and technical documentation in health sector, namely how sex and gender have been acknowledged as determinants of the health status of both men and women.

Thus, with this contribution we intend to attend jointly to epidemiological data and planned courses of action in order to assemble gender mainstreaming in Portuguese health policy. To be effective, this task needs to assemble also other social determinants with implications on population health status, if the goal is to achieve gains in health and wellbeing for both, men and women.

As far as we know today, there will always be male and female individuals, in a strictly biological sense. However, in health, as in other social domains, the biggest challenge is perhaps to account more accurately gender as an ideology that interprets and gives meaning to men and women social role, ascribe behavioural patterns and promote inequality, inequity and power asymmetries. This

does not mean that we ought to develop strictly separate interventions for men and women. A gender sensitive approach demands to account for a relational standpoint, addressing whenever relevant the specificities of each sex.

Now on, to delineate health policies demands to take into account a gendered relational and dynamic approach. The cost of tracing competing opposite paths will be too high – it will only perpetrate inequalities and inequities between them.

If we really want to become effective, we must help, both men and women, to withdraw their mask of gender that covers our lives.

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## 16.5 Working Group Report

*Marjaana Pelkonen*

Aim of the working group was to discuss ways of strengthening the gender perspective in health policies and practices and the relation of health and gender equality policy. The discussion was based on the presentations of keynote speakers and was centred on the identification of the issues on men's health and on finding ways to go forward. No final consensus was reached.

As a starting point, health was considered as essential part of equality. The discussion about men's health is relatively new, especially in political arenas and in media. Even the masculinity theory has focused on other themes such as war, sex and violence. There are two approaches when discussing men's health: male reproductive and public health. Public health approach was considered wider and more fruitful.

### *Key challenges*

Clear gender-based differences in health have been documented between countries, within countries (socio-economic differences) and also between certain age groups (e.g. 15–44 yrs). Socialization of masculinity involves all social classes but the negative influences are seen in lower classes. In a scoping study on men's health following issues were identified: lack of social networks, inability to express emotions, lack of awareness of own health needs, and men's poor access to health services. It was agreed that more attention should be given to emotional development of boys and men.

These gender-based differences in health are mainly due to social and psycho-social factors. Thus, these differences cannot be considered necessary and are thus preventable and avoidable. These avoidable differences relate to different explanations on the reasons for gender equality related to health such as psychological issues (masculinity-femininity), health related behaviour, use of health services, sociological issues and structural factors. At present, there is lack of interventions, policies and strategies.

### *Work in progress*

It was argued that little has been done so far to tackle the issue. However, there is some work in progress in the EU, WHO, EC and in some countries. This work was considered encouraging. Some international organisations have recognised that the health dimension related to gender is part of gender equality and there is added value to investing in gender health improvement in promoting public health. EU has had a pioneering role. This meeting was considered a major indication of progress. EU's New Public Health Programme 2007–2013 includes gender dimension. Information on men's health and gender perspective can be introduced in EU's new Health Portal (valid since June 2006). WHO Regional Office has emphasized gender mainstreaming but not so much men's health. The work of the EC and some NGO's working groups was welcomed. Some countries are making progress such as UK, Ireland, Finland and Portugal. For new member states, gender issues should be high on agenda. Legislation in EU is perfect from the equity point of view but it is not very specific. UK, Sweden and Finland have made progress in legislation.

### *Suggested actions*

Thus, a clear mandate to tackle the issue was recognised by the group. Existing recommendations could be taken as a starting point. Formulating, implementing and mainstreaming new gender-sensitive health policies and strategies, which address essential health determinants, are needed. Policies are needed which recognise the issues and react to them. In addition, actions in the other fields such as education, work and transport are also needed. Especially, gender mainstreaming must be accomplished in other relevant sectors (e.g. education, welfare and justice). Gender stereotypes should be taken account at all levels. Health policy should take into account both men's and women's health issues in order to be effective. In addition to universal policies and strategies, also targeted strategies that focus among other things on social groups are needed. Statement that values young men might be beneficial.

It was emphasized that for health policy options, sound information basis is needed. Especially policy makers need evidence. More specific information and more information gathering are needed. Gender-sensitive information systems and indicators are needed. It is also clear that more research on gender-based health issues and health indicators is necessary. It was recommended that gender perspective should be integrated in health research.

## 17 Working Group 3: Violence and Men

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*Chair: Hannu Säävälä, Oulu University Hospital, Finland*

### *Introduction*

The aim of the third working group was to discuss ways of preventing gender-based violence and the relationship of men and violence more generally.

Violence and men was used as a theme in the conference because it is one of the two most common themes in gender equality policy where men have received explicit attention. It is perhaps also the theme that raises the most heated emotional discussion and debate.

Men are closely linked to violence, both as perpetrators and as victims. Majority of violent acts are committed by men and the more severe an act of violence is, the more likely the perpetrator is to be male. Attention to men and violence in gender equality policy has mostly been on men's violence to known women, such as intimate partners. The most common form of attention or action is usually programs or projects directed to male perpetrators. The discussion on gender-based violence usually depicts men in the role of perpetrator and women in the role of victim. Knowledge about men and women as victims of violence is still lacking in many countries.

The gender specific nature of violence is important to note. But it is also important to note, that although the great majority of all perpetrators of violence are men, only a part of men use violence in their life. A common critique that has been directed towards work against violence against women is that it pictures men in general as violent.

Presentations in the Working Group 3:

1. Maria Eriksson: General Introduction: Current Knowledge and Future Challenges
2. Ingrid Bellander Todino: Daphne Program and Projects Directed Towards Men
3. Minna Piispa: Men and Partnership Violence Against Women in Finland
4. Ralf Puchert & Ludger Jungnitz: Violence Against Men. The Hidden Side of Patriarchy? – German Pilot Study

## 17.1 General Introduction: Current Knowledge and Future Challenges

*Maria Eriksson*

### *Abstract*

*Today we see increasingly sophisticated models for making sense of the fact that men are the “experts in violence” to women, children, other men, and themselves. The growing emphasis of a link between men’s violence and well-established notions of gender implies a link between some men’s violence and all men. This seems to cause some particular challenges when trying to engage men more broadly in the work against men’s violence. The presentation also outlines other key areas of challenges in the work against men’s violence: challenges in interventions to change individual violent men; problems created through boundaries between different domains of policy and practice; and unintended consequences of efforts to promote gender equality.*

### *Understanding men’s violence*

All interpersonal violence is not perpetrated by men, but men are the experts in violence, Jeff Hearn argues (Hearn 1996). The vast majority of violence is perpetrated by men, and men use violence to women, children, other men, as well as to themselves. Furthermore, men’s violence is a massive social problem, not least seen from children’s and women’s point of view. For example, a recent review of prevalence studies in Europe summarising results from national surveys in 13 countries concludes that notwithstanding the methodological differences there is consistency in the fact that physical, sexual and psychological violence by men to women is very high in all contexts – e.g. intimate relationships, the public domain – and in all countries (Martinez and Schröttle et al 2006, 12). According to these studies the lifetime rates of women’s victimisation to physical or sexual violence from men range between 4 and 30 percent. The highest rates – from 20 to 30 percent - have been found in England and Wales, Finland, Germany, Holland, Sweden, and Switzerland. This variation as regards prevalence is probably due to methodological differences and the fact that the studies belong to different “generations” of prevalence research (see Walby and Myhill 2001). More developed and sophisticated ways of measuring tend to result in higher rates. In the context of men’s violence to women, we also need to recognise the, by now well documented, link between men’s violence to known women and men’s psychological, physical and sexual violence to children living in the family (for an overview, see Hester et al 2000).

In spite of the fact that, to a large extent, the problem of violence is a problem of men, it has taken a long time for academics, policy makers and practitioners to recognise the importance of a gender perspective in understanding men’s violence. “Like other superordinate categories and groups (the rich, white people, physically able, and so on), men have been strangely absent from explicit inquiry – and deconstruction”, Hearn argues (Hearn 1998, 3). The gendering of men in studies of men’s violence is of recent date, relatively speaking. The development in explanations for men’s violence to known women is a case in point. At a very general level, this can be described as a movement from explanations centred on the individual, such as testosterone-levels or psychopathology, to more interactionist models focusing on social roles and the social environment, and finally to structural explanations linking men’s violence to women to gendered inequalities and men’s structural power due to the gender order (for an overview, see Hearn 1998, 15ff). Through this process, the focus has shifted from deviance at an individual or group level to broader cultural patterns and a problematisation of what is considered normal in terms of gender (cf. Lundgren 1995). By now, this shift in focus can be clearly seen in research and policy; and, to

use one example that I am very familiar with, the Nordic Council of Ministers' recent five year research programme "Gender and Violence" exemplifies this development (see Eriksson et al 2002; Nordic Council of Ministers 2005).

This growing emphasis of a link between men's violence and well-established notions of gender by implication also creates a link between some men's violence and all men. This seems to cause some particular challenges when trying to engage men more broadly in the work against men's violence. It does not just gender men who are violent, but makes men visible as men more broadly. Thereby, men are asked to problematise themselves as superordinate in the gender order. To judge from certain debates about men's "collective guilt" versus men's responsibility for combating men's violence this may cause some resistance in men. I hope that later on we will be able to discuss how this resistance may be overcome and how we can engage men more broadly in the work to end men's violence and in promoting gender equality through respect for women's bodily and sexual integrity.

*Developing more sophisticated understandings: Doing gender, masculinities and intersectionality*

Before moving on to issues for policy and practice, I want to mention also that gender-based explanations for, and understandings of, men's violence have gradually developed and become more sophisticated. There is not space to go into details here, so I will just indicate four tendencies that currently can be seen both in Europe and elsewhere. The early literature pointing out a link between men's violence and notions of gender tended to be rather structural, focusing upon the gender order (or rather, patriarchy) (see e.g. Dobash and Dobash 1979). However, over time, more interactionist, practice and process oriented models have developed following the trajectory within feminist theory and gender studies more broadly (see e.g. Hearn 1998; Lundgren 1995 & 1998; Messerschmidt 1997; Pringle 1995).<sup>16</sup> According to such perspectives, the exercise of power can be interpreted as integral to the man's way of creating masculinity: a violent man is 'doing gender' as asymmetrical power relations.

Another emerging tendency in gender perspectives on men's violence follows the development in studies on men and masculinities more broadly. In particular it draws upon Connell's model of multiple masculinities linked to hegemony, compliance, subordination and marginalisation in the relationships between men. This notion of masculinities has shown itself to be useful for both the understanding of different patterns of violence from men to women and for the understanding of men's violence to other men (see e.g. Bowker 1998).

Thirdly, I want to highlight the debate on 'intersectionality' (Crenshaw 1991) that has been ongoing in the field of gender research over the last decades: that is, how different relations of power may intersect or mutually constitute one another. The intersection between inequality tied to class, ethnicity and gender has been at the centre of attention, but also inequalities associated with young and older age, disability and sexuality has gained some attention. Intersectional approaches have been shown to be fruitful in understanding men's violence, for example in developing new perspectives on men and crime (Messerschmidt 1997) or in understanding men's sexual violence to children (Pringle 1995).<sup>17</sup>

Finally, it should be noted that today we see attempts in both academic writing, policy and practice to integrate gender perspectives and other explanations for men's violence. The theoretical framework for the Duluth-inspired batterer intervention programme that is now implemented within the criminal justice system in both the United Kingdom and Sweden – the Integrated

<sup>16</sup> This shift to – relatively speaking – more practice and process oriented approaches does of course not mean that the structural perspective is abandoned.

<sup>17</sup> For a further discussion of this point, see Pringle and Hearn (2006).



Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) - is a case in point (National Probation Service for England and Wales 2003).

### *Challenges for future policy and practice*

So, on the one hand we currently know a lot about the scope of the problem of men's violence and we see increasingly sophisticated models for making sense of the fact that men are the "experts in violence". On the other hand, there are clearly big gaps in our knowledge. In particular, research on intervention and attempts to combat men's violence is underdeveloped. This, of course, has direct implications for policy makers and practitioners in this field.

I should add that there are differences within Europe regarding the extent of the gaps in knowledge about intervention. As a result of two large European Commission funded research projects we can begin to outline patterns at a European level.<sup>18</sup> Together these two projects provide, among other things, information about academic studies; official statistical sources; policy documents; media representations related to men in 14 European countries. One of the conclusions that can be drawn from these projects is that in the United Kingdom and Germany – and in particular in the UK – there has been far, far more research on the specific issue of men's violence than in other places in Europe (see Pringle 2005).

However, in spite of these (varying) gaps in knowledge I would argue that we already know enough to identify some major challenges for future policy and practice to combat men's violence. I will outline three key areas: challenges in interventions to change individual violent men; problems created at an organisational level through boundaries between different domains of policy and practice; and challenges due to unintended consequences of efforts to promote gender equality.

### *Changing violent men*

It is clear that efforts to change the behaviour of individual violent men face a number of difficult issues. Not least in work with men who use violence to known women, tensions between different perspectives and interests become visible. After a somewhat slow start with only a few projects in the late 1980s, so-called perpetrator or batterer programmes (and other kinds of work with violent men) became established in several parts of Europe in the 1990s (see e.g. Hanmer, Gloor and Meier et al 2006). The responses to this development have been mixed. On the one hand, it is considered important that men who use violence are held accountable, that they take responsibility for their problem and change their behaviour. On the other hand, if men's violence to women is not a problem primarily caused by men's individual personalities and issues, but a social problem linked to a broader pattern of gender relations – does it make sense then, to spend resources on work with individual men? And is there a risk that resources are transferred from support to victims – women and children – to work with perpetrators – men? And how efficient are the perpetrator programmes in changing violent men?

Some of the existing evaluations of these programmes support a cautious optimism (see e.g. Dobash et al 2000; Gondolf 2002; WiBIG 2005). For example, a recent large study of four well-established programmes in the U.S. showed that when using a four-year follow-up period, approximately half of the men who had completed the programme stopped using physical violence (Gondolf 2002). On the other hand, the evaluation also shows that most men continue to use some

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<sup>18</sup> A Framework 5 funded thematic network on men's practices in Europe (see Hearn and Pringle et al 2006; Pringle and Hearn et al, in press), and a Framework 6 funded co-ordinated action on human rights violations (see [www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de](http://www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de)).

kind of controlling behaviour towards their women-partners. The psychological aspects of a violent behavioural pattern are the most difficult to change.

This is one of the reasons for being very careful in ensuring support to women partners is provided when men go through perpetrator programmes. By now, models for safety-oriented work with women, so-called partner contact, have been developed. For example, service providers need to make sure that the woman knows about possible sources for support and that she does not stay in a dangerous situation with an unrealistic hope that the man will change. Furthermore, some men may use what they learn through the programme to become even more sophisticated in their controlling behaviour. Therefore women need to know about the contents of the programme.

These kinds of safety-oriented interventions are increasingly considered an essential part of minimum standards for good practice in work with violent men. So far, the minimum standards for practice have tended to mainly concern support to women. However, models for support to children in the vicinity of the men going through a programme are also an urgent matter. This is against the backdrop of two factors: first, our knowledge about children's victimisation when they experience men's violence to women in their family; and secondly, our knowledge about children's need for help and support aimed at them directly. Furthermore, with partner contact and support to children as an integrated part of the work with violent men, new groups of women and children may gain help and support (cf. Gondolf 2002). There is, in other words, no necessary conflict between resources to work with men, on the one hand, and to provide support to women (and children) on the other hand.

However, if interventions to change violent men are to be regarded as a strategy in support of individual women and children who experience violence, safety must be considered a core issue. This also means that safety-oriented approaches need to be implemented in all agencies and services encountering violent men who are seeking help to change their behaviour. This includes general health and social welfare services "outside" of the field of violence, such as, for example, general practitioners or family doctors, mental health services, family counselling, and counselling within religious communities. Here, real challenges await policy-makers who take seriously the need for minimum standards and quality control to ensure safety.

#### *Overcoming boundaries between domains of policy and practice*

There are a number of examples of how policy and practice in the field of men's violence need to overcome "traditional" boundaries and barriers. In relation to men's violence to known women and children's well-being, the British-Danish researcher Marianne Hester has used the metaphor of separate "planets" to capture how different domains of policy and practice are shaped by different histories, problem definitions, sectors of the legal system, professional groups etcetera (Hester 2004). As regards "domestic violence", over the last decades we have seen an increasing criminalisation of men's violence to women, transforming men's violence from a private matter to a public issue. Gender perspectives on violence in heterosexual relationships have been established primarily in this domain. As already mentioned, in this same domain there has also been a lack of child-perspectives.<sup>19</sup> Regarding "child protection", on the other hand, violence tends to be conceptualised as a social problem (rather than a crime); and here it is not "violent men" who are the centre of attention, but "violent families" where the state should intervene for the protection of children. Hester also argues that in this domain it is the (abused) mother's responsibility for protection that tends to be in focus – not the responsibility of a (violent) father. In relation to parental responsibility and the domain of "visitation and contact" after separation or divorce, men's power and violence tend to be marginal issues. Instead, it is primarily parental co-operation and the

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<sup>19</sup> Not least the fact that it has taken a long time to recognise violent men as fathers (Eriksson 2002; Peled 2000) can be interpreted as a sign of a lack of child-sensitivity in this domain.

child's right to both parents that are focused upon (for further elaboration, see Hester 2004; Humphreys and Carter et al 2005).

These boundaries and tensions between the domains create a number of challenges in the work against men's violence, and perhaps particularly in a post-separation context. For example, it is clear that court decisions on child custody or contact may undermine protection orders or other measures to ensure safety, due to the lack of awareness of men's violence and because of a "gap" between 'violent men' and 'fathers' in legal practice concerning custody, contact or residence (see Eriksson and Hester 2001; Humphreys and Carter et al 2005).

### *Unintended consequences of gender equality policies*

Policy and legislation on custody and children's contact with non-residential parents can be regarded as important tools in several interlinked political projects: of safeguarding the best interests of children; of creating a gender equal division of work; as well as in the political project of transforming authoritarian, absent fathers into nurturing, present "daddies". The unintended consequences of these political attempts to change men and make men more involved in care work seem to be the kinds of problems in protecting women and children mentioned previously.

I would argue that such complexities and contradictions in the work against men's violence may become particularly pertinent in the Nordic countries. With many decades of focused and relatively well-funded gender equality "projects", the push for social change as regards gender is perhaps particularly strong here. In this way, the Nordic countries have been arenas for a social experiment. The implication is that the complex and multi-layered features of gender relations might be particularly visible here. Several models for family and gender relations exist side by side – clearly patriarchal models, and clearly egalitarian models; attempts to create present, gender equal, child-centred Daddies, and practices that enable fathers to be violent, etcetera. The Nordic countries can be expected to be more "extreme" in this sense, As such, they are excellent cases for research and of relevance for policy makers. By looking at some of the contradictions and problems that are visible in the Nordic countries, policy makers on a European level may actually be able to avoid some problems, for example, as regards family policy, parenthood and violence, and find more efficient ways of promoting real change in gender relations.

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## 17.2 Daphne Program and Projects Directed Towards Men

*Ingrid Bellander Todino*

### *Abstract*

*The Daphne II Programme is a European Community action programme, managed by the European Commission, with the objective to prevent and combat violence against children, young people and women and to protect victims and groups at risk. Actions financed by the programme tackle violence comprehensively from the angles of prevention, protection, support and rehabilitation. Although most projects work with or for the female or young/child victims, an important focus of the programme is also the prevention of violence by targeting (mostly adult male) perpetrators through treatment programmes, awareness raising, education/training and research. The Daphne Programme has over the years financed various projects working with the problem of perpetrators of violence against children, young people and women, and has in recent years strengthened this focus. My presentation will give a few examples of Daphne project in this area.*

### *Presentation*

The Daphne II Programme is a European Community action programme, managed by the European Commission, with the objective to prevent and combat violence against children, young people and women and to protect victims and groups at risk.<sup>20</sup> It was established in 2004, as a continuation of the Daphne Initiative (1997-1999) and the Daphne Programme (2000-2003), and is running for five years with a total budget of EUR 50 million. For the future, the Commission has presented a proposal for a third phase of the programme, which is currently under review by the European Council and the European Parliament. The new Daphne III Programme will run from 2007 to 2013 with a substantially increased budget.<sup>21</sup>

The overarching objective of the Daphne Programme is to provide European citizens with a high level of protection from violence, including protection of physical and mental health. The programme covers all types of violence against children, young people and women, recognising that it constitutes a breach of the fundamental rights to life, safety, freedom, dignity and physical and emotional integrity. Actions implemented under the programme tackle violence comprehensively from the angles of prevention, protection, support and rehabilitation.

An important characteristic of the Daphne Programme is the promotion of transnational multidisciplinary networks of organisations working to prevent and combat violence and/or to protect and support victims. The Programme is open to participation by non-profit making private organisations and local public authorities and institutions (mainly NGOs but also municipalities, university departments and research centres) from the 25 EU Member States, the EFTA/EEA countries (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein), the candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey and the Western Balkan States. The Commission will fund only projects involving a partnership of at least two organisations from two different participating countries. In this way, the Commission encourages the creation or strengthening of European networks of organisations active in this field. These partners get the opportunity to share their expertise with like-minded

<sup>20</sup> Council and European Parliament Decision No. 803/2004/EC of 21 April 2004, EU Official Journal No. L-143, p.1.

<sup>21</sup> EC Daphne Programme website:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice\\_home/funding/daphne/funding\\_daphne\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/funding/daphne/funding_daphne_en.htm); Daphne Toolkit (information and documentation on all Daphne-funded projects): [www.daphne-toolkit.org](http://www.daphne-toolkit.org).

organisations in other countries when designing targeted actions to combat violence, and will thus provide a 'European added-value' to their usual actions.

Since 1997, Daphne has funded almost 500 projects that have worked to protect from, and to prevent, various areas of violence against children, young people and women, including physical assault, sexual violence, emotional and verbal abuse, exclusion and quasi-structural violence, coercion and exploitation, virtual violence, psychological violence, gender-based violence and violent cultural practices. Although most projects work with or for the female or young/child victims, an important focus of the programme is also the prevention of violence by targeting (mostly adult male) perpetrators through treatment programmes, awareness raising, education/training and research.

The Daphne Programme has over the years financed various projects working with the problem of perpetrators of violence against children, young people and women, and has in recent years strengthened this focus. During 2004-2006, the Programme has selected 12 projects dealing with perpetrators, including treatment programmes, a study on the male 'chauvinist discourse' regarding gender violence and a study on different paths of violence by juvenile offenders according to whether or not they have been exposed to intimate partner violence in their families. These recent projects are still to be completed, but they will form the basis for a more critical mass of knowledge and experiences that will enable the Commission to draw conclusions regarding the current state of actions in Europe targeting perpetrators of violence. In addition, the Daphne Programme also intends to include as one of the funding priorities for 2007 the mapping of existing research and programming of treatment programmes for (adult or young) perpetrators of violence in Europe and the exchange, capacity building and transfer of knowledge in this area.

Among the completed Daphne projects (1997-2003) dealing with men's violence against women, please find below a few examples:

### *Studies*

The Programme has funded studies focusing on male violence and programmes to deal with this. A comparative study<sup>22</sup> of services in five countries (Italy, Spain, Greece, Norway and Great Britain) looked at national initiatives and policies of intervention aiming to modify violent male behaviour against women. The project found a very varied set of approaches and attempted to evaluate the most effective to elaborate guidelines for the implementation of future interventions. The study concluded that there are a number of good reasons for tackling the problem of violence against women through challenging, controlling and reducing violent male behaviour. Besides reasons of political and cultural nature, programmes directed to men who use violence against women partners is a useful means for change (although not the only solution to the problem). One of the most important challenges identified by the study was how to bring men to the programmes and make them stay until the end of the treatment, a question that was not answered but undoubtedly refers to a broad social, cultural and political context of different countries. The main recommendation of the study was that the theoretical orientation of projects for men who use violence against their partners should recognise the importance of a gender analysis of domestic violence, which refers to its social, economic and cultural roots and to the disparities of power between men and women which are both of a symbolic and material nature. This orientation must be clear and well articulated. A caution was also expressed regarding certain types of treatments or therapy of a violent man alongside the woman (and often children) which often does not take sufficiently into account the guilt and responsibility that the other family members may feel, and can lead to their looking upon themselves as 'equally responsible' for the violence. This is very often the case in domestic sexual abuse, and indeed is often used by abusers to encourage children and spouses to remain silent about the abuse.

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<sup>22</sup> Daphne project 1998-211/W "Responses to men who use violence against women: A European comparative analysis", coordinated by the Italian association Centro per donne che hanno subito violenza).

Another study<sup>23</sup> evaluated the social role of centres for violent men and their effectiveness in combating violence against women. Again, the main challenge identified was the centres' difficulty to receive a sufficient number of men to be treated. In its attempt to make a comprehensive analysis, the project asked pertinent questions and identified several hypotheses as to why there are so few men seeking help (is it lack of funding for these centres? do men seek other types of support, such as private therapy? are there not enough referral structures in place? etc.). The project concluded that financial support to these centres must be combined with information and training for the other social players (private therapists, social services, police services, law enforcement services, etc.), in order to establish structures that can monitor violent men and their behaviour, and thus ultimately prevent violence from happening.

#### *Awareness raising*

Daphne has also supported awareness raising actions regarding male violence against women. In 1999, Daphne supported the launching of the White Ribbon Campaign in Europe.<sup>24</sup> The project represented an initial contribution to men's awareness raising on the gender nature of male violence in Europe. In 2000<sup>25</sup>, the programme funded a project on gender, masculinity and violence that aimed to explore how concepts of masculinity and gender contributed to the male violence against women by inviting speakers from Latin America and the Caribbean to share their experience with practitioners, academics, gender and development specialists and specialists in the field of gendered and domestic violence in Europe. At the time, much of the work in this area had concentrated on the victims (women) and on legal issues, prevention and enforcement rather than the perpetrators (men). These projects aimed to expand the debate on male violence and explore issues that are fundamental to the cause of male violence against women. In doing so, they addressed a politically difficult area as these debates are polemic and fraught with tension. Because much of the discussion has focused on the impact on male violence on women, little attention has been paid to men, and the dialogue between men and women who are affected by this problem has been minimal. These projects set out to build bridges where this dialogue could start to take place through developing awareness of some of the complexities involved and shifting the focus to a more inclusive debate, but without denying the root cause of the problem or the victims.

The Daphne Programme, its projects and its results are recognised throughout Europe and beyond as a unique contribution to the fight against violence and as a model of good practice in this area. The Programme will put an increased emphasis in the future on violence prevention through interventions targeting the perpetrators of violence. By actively encouraging and financially supporting NGO networks and European cross-border multidisciplinary partnerships, the European Commission may help grassroots organisations to offer services which the national authorities very often do not have the power or the ability to provide. In doing this, the Commission is contributing to increased awareness of the issues related to violence perpetrated by men against women (and children/young people) and can support preventive measures and stronger responses for victims as well as perpetrators of violence, by helping experienced organisations share and disseminate their ideas and programmes throughout Europe. By supporting such partnerships, it has been acknowledged that the Commission has achieved, with relatively modest resources allocated, impressive impact and outputs in the fight against violence in Europe.

<sup>23</sup> 2002/041/W "Evaluation des programmes pour hommes violents dans différents pays européens", coordinated by the French NGO Les Traboules.

<sup>24</sup> Daphne project 1999-156/WC "Launching a White Ribbon Campaign in Europe Men Working to End Men's Violence", coordinated by the Belgian NGO City & Shelter.

<sup>25</sup> Daphne project 2000-027/W "Gender, masculinity and violence – Conference/speaking tour with representatives from men's organisations", coordinated by the UK-based Catholic Institute for International Relations/International Cooperation for Development.

## 17.3 Men and Partnership Violence Against Women in Finland

*Minna Piispa*

### *Abstract*

*The first survey carried out in Finland specifically to study violence by men against women showed that violence in partnership is quite common. According to the survey, the violence was directed especially toward young women, cohabiting women, women whose partnership had only lasted for a short time and mothers of small children who also often stayed at home to look after the children. First, I'm focusing on how the different population groups are experiencing violence. The data showed that partnership violence was more likely when the husband's behavior was domineering and violent in other ways, too. The results indicated that violence in intimate relationships was more related to the characteristics of men than to those of women. The second aim of my presentation is thus to look more closely how male use of power and control differ in violent partnerships.*

### *The Finnish survey on male violence against women*

A national survey on male violence against women was conducted in Finland in 1997. In Finland, like elsewhere in the world, interest in studying violence against women by the survey method arose because no reliable statistical data were available on the topic. The existing statistics and registers, such as those on offences known by the police, were incapable of describing the extent of the phenomenon in sufficient detail. Violence against women had become one of the central themes in international debate on the position of women and on the furthering of equality between men and women. Prevention of violence against women was also included in the equality programme adopted by the Finnish government in February 1997. The survey offered basic information about the problem of violence against women and its linkages.

Men's violence against women is linked to gendered inequalities and men's structural power due to the gender order. Anglo-American research shows that factors closely associated with women's life-situation, such as small children and children's home care, increase women's financial and social dependency on their violent husbands? Is this the case in Finland as well? Or are the factors behind spousal violence more strongly linked with issues such as gendered power, masculinity and dominating behaviour?

### *Methodology*

The data concerning violence against women in Finland were collected by a postal survey. Data were obtained from the responses of 4,955 women (70 %) aged 18 to 74. A systematic sample was drawn from The Central Population Register. The survey was financed by The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Council for Equality.

The Finnish Violence against Women Survey follows the tradition of the Canadian survey. The study has also been influenced by other surveys on violence against women, like the Australian (1996), American (1996), and New Zealand (1996) studies. Cultural differences, our former tradition of victimisation surveys and economic resources resulted, however, in a different design of the survey. Although the main results were to some degree comparable with other surveys done, the Finnish survey was planned to describe violence against women in the Finnish culture.



In the Finnish survey, experiences of violence were asked both from the last twelve-months and from the respondent's entire lifetime (after 15th birthday). The questionnaire was designed so that the experiences of violence in different spheres of life were asked in separate questions. The starting point for the questions of violence was the woman's relationship to the perpetrator, not the type of act committed. The perpetrators were classified into two main categories: partner relationships and others (known men but not partners, or unknown men). In each perpetrator category the violence against women was measured by using a series of descriptions of acts of everyday violence, from threats to more aggravated forms of physical violence including sexual violence.

The Finnish survey followed the tradition of victimization surveys. Victimology is mainly interested in connections between victimization and personal characteristics or lifestyles of victims. Surveys on violence against women have included detailed questions of women's childhood experiences of violence, background of the perpetrator, controlling behavior of the perpetrator, besides the common variables used in victimisation surveys (age, education, life style etc.). This opens new possibilities to look the characteristics of perpetrator as well.

The survey was revised in 2005. The first results of the second Finnish Violence against Women Survey will be published later this autumn. As far as we know, Finland is the only European country where the violence against women survey has been revised in a methodologically comparable way.

#### *Victim's or perpetrator's characteristics?*

According to the Finnish survey, in one relationship out of five, the woman had been subjected to physical or sexual violence or threats by her current male partner at some point in time. In the course of the past twelve months the prevalence of victims was nine percent.

The results from the Finnish survey showed (Piispa 2000) that the life situation factors that are usually viewed as making women vulnerable to spousal violence, such as having children, cohabiting, low educational level and financial dependency on the male partner, failed to explain partnership violence against women in Finland as such. The Finnish society is built on a system where both spouses work outside the home and women's participation rate in working life is high, 71 percent in 1997 (Women and Men in Finland 1999, 52). The Finnish welfare state has in many respects supported attainment of equality between women and men and reduced women's financial dependency on their husbands. The creation of welfare state services, such as children's daycare, has facilitated women's participation in gainful employment, and gender equality has been supported through many law amendments, such as the law on children's day-care, the abortion law and statutes that improve the benefits connected with maternity leave (Julkunen 1999, 98). Families with children and single parents are supported with special family policy measures and all citizens are guaranteed minimum livelihood by virtue of statutory social security support.

The data showed that partnership violence was more likely when the husband's behaviour was domineering and violent in other ways, too. Men's excessive alcohol consumption and learned model at childhood home to use violence as a mean for solving problem are increasing violence in partnerships. The results indicated that violence in intimate relationships was more related to the characteristics of men than to those of women. Violence is one way of using power and control over women. There are also other features of masculine culture behind power, control and violence, like excessive alcohol consumption. Some violent men use alcohol as a socially accepted excuse for using violence. Attitudes towards male dominance and social support from male peers in the use of violence also maintain violent behaviour, as other studies have shown (e.g. Hearn 1998; Johnson 1996, 154–167).

### *The male use of control and power*

Partnerships violence against women follows at least four different patterns (Piispa 2002). The patterns of violence distinguished from the survey data were based on dimensions describing its seriousness, its physical and psychological consequences, and its duration. The types of violence were a short history of violence (33 %), mental torment (18 %), partnership terrorism (10 %), and episode in the past (39 %). It was typical for the episode in the past that the short or long episode of violence had happened in the past. The other three types describe ongoing violence. The most typical of these was the one, which was called as a short history of violence. This was particularly experienced by young women aged 18 to 29, whereas the other patterns were more typical with women older than this.

The pattern of the short history of violence was one in which the violence had started recently and the man had been violent very recently. It also seemed to be ongoing. The violence had taken severe forms but had not usually caused any serious physical injuries. In this violence pattern, the man's control played a lesser part than in other patterns. With the exceptions of jealousy and name-calling, different forms of control are fairly rare in violence that has started recently.

The other two types of ongoing violence, mental torment and partnership terrorism, describe violent patterns where violence has continued or had been a part of the relationship for years. It is characteristic of both these types that the violence had started a long time ago, on average 5-10 years ago, and has taken even quite harsh forms causing severe injuries. The difference between these two patterns was that in partnership terrorism the man had also been violent during the last year. Violence had taken severe forms and had also caused serious physical consequences. In mental torment control and subjugation had assumed ever-increasing roles over time, which did not mean, however, that physical violence would have stopped completely.

Diverse ways of imposing control (i.e. name-calling, humiliating, jealousy) and limiting woman's space were prominent in the violence patterns of partnership terrorism and mental torment (cf. Jeffner 1997; Lungren 1992). The difference between the two patterns was that destroying joint property, interfering with the woman's finances and threatening to harm himself if she left him were only typical in partnership terrorism cases.

### *The implications of the survey*

In spite of the criticism directed the surveys studying violence against women, the surveys have been recently found to be a useful source of information. In the surveys on violence against women the scope of the content was extended to the consequences and duration of violence, as well as to male control behaviour. They also include several questions on background of male partner. These new content areas open new analysing possibilities. Analyzing the differences between the patterns of this violence helps to diversify the picture of not only its character but also of its significance to the women who experience it and of the options they have for responding to it. At the same time, information is gained about the support the women may be getting from professional helpers in their coping process. Diversifying the picture of partner violence makes it easier for both its victims and professional helpers to identify it and its mechanisms.

The data showed that partnership violence was more likely when the husband's behaviour was domineering and violent in other ways, too. What is important to see is that there is also violence in Finland where the man's control directed to the woman's life has less significance. The limitation of survey data is that the data were cross-sectional, so it is impossible to predict from them the direction in which *short history of violence* might develop given time. If the violence continues, the man's control over the woman's life may tighten, or the violence may change its character, cease altogether or continue unchanged.

The Finnish survey on male violence against women has been important in many respects. The survey results have had a significant role in promoting the theme violence against women as a topic of public debate in Finland (towards the end of the 1990s), and reference has been made to it in public debates as well as in the media. The results of the survey were widely used as background information and as educational material in the Finnish violence prevention program.

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## 17.4 Violence Against Men. The Hidden Side of Patriarchy? – German Pilot Study

*Ralf Puchert & Ludger Jungnitz*

### *Abstract*

*Most perpetrators of most forms of violence are men, but not only women and children are victims. A big proportion of victims are men, but violence against men is seldom analysed in a gender-sensitive way. To be a man and to be a victim seems to be a contradiction. The results of the German pilot study "Violence against Men" give first hints about the amount of violence in different life areas, show possibilities to survey the hidden theme and the necessity of political and social reactions.*

### *Why was this project launched?*

Violence against women and children has been a common topic of discussion over the past few decades. Nowadays, the general consensus is that aggression against women should not be tolerated, particularly domestic and sexual violence, and that a child's right to a violence-free upbringing must be secured. Men, on the other hand, have mainly been viewed as the perpetrators. This is logical since in violence between the sexes, women tend to be the victims and men the offenders.

Police records, however, show that men are not merely the main offenders, but in the case of murder, manslaughter and physical violence most often the victims. This seems to have been accepted as a kind of "natural law" until now. Men themselves, it seems, do not feel particularly endangered by the threat of violent crime. Considering the figures that have accumulated over time, there is reason to wonder why.

On the other hand, there are ongoing disputes regarding the scope of domestic violence against men. Studies based on the so-called conflict-tactic scale (CTS) have repeatedly shown that within a relationship, men encounter a similar amount of violence to women, although the actual acts of violence seem to show a lesser degree of severity and impact. The heated nature of the public debate on the issue may be interpreted as showing that men as victims of violence are striving to gain public recognition formerly denied to them. Since the only available model of gender-specific violence is concerned with violence between the sexes, the discussion of violence against men is mainly centred on domestic assaults on men by their female partners.

Between the two extremes – avoiding the issue of violence among men and exaggeration of women's violence against men – it is difficult to gain a clear picture and develop a political strategy catering to the individual fates of men and women. As a first step towards a more comprehensive picture, the German government commissioned a pilot study on violence against men, parallel to a representative survey of violence against women<sup>26</sup>.

### *What were the expected outcomes?*

The main goal of the survey was to chart a new field of research. The assumption was that existing instruments for evaluating violence against women could not simply be transferred to men. The

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<sup>26</sup> For further information see Jungnitz, Ludger; Lenz, Hans-Joachim; Puchert, Ralf; Puhe, Henry; Walter, Willi (ed.) (2007): Gewalt gegen Männer. Barbara Budrich Verlag, Opladen.

pilot study therefore focussed on describing the current findings and conclusions as well as developing a tool for investigating the scope, relevance, backgrounds and consequences of violence against men.

In other words, the study in itself was not meant to be a representative survey. Regarding the scope of violence against men, only rough estimates were performed at this point. The study was limited to interpersonal violence and did not pay particular attention to structural violence.

The presumed comprehension of violence from the point of view of male victims comprises the areas of physical, psychological and sexual violence, whereby it has not always been possible to establish clear boundaries between the individual areas. The group surveyed comprises 266 men aged between 18 and 86, chosen as being representative for the quantitative survey. In the qualitative survey 50 concerned persons and experts have been interviewed.

### *What were the main conclusions of the pilot study?*

The risks for men and boys of being subjected to physical, psychological and sexual violence are as follows:

For males, the risk of falling victim to physical, psychological or sexual violence is greatest during childhood. Only a small minority reported that they had not experienced any such violence. Physical and psychological abuse was perpetrated by both parents, but ca. 70 percent of interviewees experienced a similar degree of violence outside their close family, at the hands of peers, acquaintances and strangers. The most common forms of non-domestic violence are threats, beatings and robbery. Sexualized violence was experienced by 10 to 20 percent of boys, depending on its definition.

Next in order of magnitude, men are at risk of physical, psychological or sexual abuse during their term of military or civilian service. First of all, up to 60 percent of the interviewees reported harassment and humiliating rituals conducted by (usually male) superiors and peers. In the civilian service, the scope of reported abuse is around half of the military count, but also much higher than in civilian life. The offenders usually being male or female superiors. Many respondents regard violence as being intrinsic to the military system.

With respect to physical violence, the third most dangerous period of a man's life is adolescence (age 14 to 25), particularly the time spent at school and in public places. Generally, most acts of physical violence against young and adult males take place in the public sphere and during the victim's spare time. With regard to psychological violence, the third highest risk is run at the workplace and during vocational training. Considering the entire lifespan of the respondents, each of these two aspects of violence was reported by 20 to 30 percent. Both in public (physical violence) and at the workplace (mobbing), ca. 90 percent of all offenders are male.

In their private lives, the risk of experiencing mild forms of violence such as jostling and light blows is similar for men and women but comparatively lower for men when it comes to more severe forms of abuse and injury. An Irish representative survey conducted in 2005 states that "15 percent of women ... and six percent of men ... have experienced severely abusive behaviour of a physical, sexual or emotional nature from a partner at some time in their lives" . As was to be expected, a comparatively higher percentage of offenders in cases of domestic violence are female. But against the expectation, men are not only in individual cases/exceptions victims of partner violence.

No representative figures are currently available for the scope of sexual violence against male adults. It must be assumed, however, that men bear a far lower risk of being subjected to sexual

violence than women. Yet all forms of it seem have been experienced by male victims as well – from harassment in the workplace to rape.

### *Violence against men as the hidden side of patriarchy?*

Violence in public places, at work and in school is mainly an "inter-male" issue. This entails a fundamental difference in the way men and women are affected by the problem – men form the majority of offenders but also the majority of victims.

Masculinity in patriarchal societies is closely linked to violence. In the criticism of patriarchy, male violence against women is usually interpreted as a strategy for maintaining male dominance – either as a general means of upholding the power gap or as a "last resort" when women are trying to bridge this gap. Not enough attention has yet been paid to inter-male violence as an aspect of gender hierarchies. Masculinity is not only defined by way of the power imbalance between men and women, but at least as much through rivalries and power struggles among men. Especially among male youths and young adults, violent acts are a part of this power game. For example, many surveys on in-school violence show that around half of all violent incidents are reciprocal in nature, with no clear differentiation between perpetrator and victim. Even the loser of a fight is not necessarily a victim and may, if he fought back bravely, even emerge a hero.

Acts within power struggles of this kind are not usually classified as violence by those involved or their spectators. This mechanism of disregarding male violence we term male normality. For the remaining violent acts, however, a clear distinction between aggressor and victim must be assumed. However, these victims receive hardly any public recognition. Neither according to their own or the public point of view are men acknowledged as victims. Rather, this attribute is counterproductive in the construction of a positive male self-image, since it is considered shameful – a man is not a victim, a victim is not a man. This shame mechanism is one of the reasons why violence against men is hardly discussed among men.

In our view, the two above mechanisms explain why there is no public discussion of violence against men, or any prominent social movement to combat it. The acquisition of violent self-assertion strategies is an active process. Boys and men learn violent behaviour largely through interaction with other males. The minimum requirement for them is to learn how to react towards aggression and threats from other boys/men. Only a fraction of the male population ever comes into conflict with the law and only a minority of boys are active initiators of violence, but such aggressors form the focal point of political and pedagogical consideration.

The third aspect, mostly concealed so far, is violence by women against men. Experience from the pilot study has shown that mild acts of physical aggression such as light pushes or slaps are not classified as violence by men. Severe, and particularly repeated, violence is acknowledged though, even if it is contrary to the male's self-image. Female-to-male violence strongly contrasts with the still-prevalent image of women as being incapable of physical aggression and of men constituting "the stronger sex" and never being physically inferior to a woman. In their social environment, battered men meet with disbelief and rejection; a male incapable of defending himself against a woman is easily labelled a "sissy". This common disregard for the issue is manifest in the fact that most European countries do not offer any support programs for male victims of domestic violence.

### *What are the pilot study's policy implications?*

There is an urgent need to present a realistic depiction of violence against men, one which runs counter to the stereotypes of masculinity and male invulnerability (as well as female docility and

harmlessness) commonly found throughout society. This depiction must include and draw attention to the experiences of men and women affected by violence.

Firstly, a competent support system is necessary to help men and boys who have experienced violence. Above all, with regard to types of violence that have in the past been shrouded in taboo (especially sexualised and domestic violence), the prospects for men of receiving support in stopping the violence, overcoming its effects and coping must be improved. Existing services need to be qualified so as to address crises and help-seeking patterns specific to men and boys; information and training should be provided for the actors within the systems.

The results of the study imply that gender-specific help for victims of violence ought to be established for men and boys, with special regard to male self-perception and coping strategies. This includes the workplace, particularly with respect to psychological violence, mobbing and sexual harassment. Successful support models such as the Zürich counselling centre for boys and men, who are victims of violence should be proliferated and further developed. A first step would be the development of model projects for supporting men and boys in European countries.

We consider it necessary to expand general knowledge of the violence-related experiences and coping strategies of men. This will require more male-specific studies as well as male-female comparisons, including differentiated prevalence studies on violence against men and women. Apart from representative research about the frequency with which men experience violence, specialised research is also needed to establish what kind of support they need, how that can be achieved and what form the support must take to ensure that it genuinely helps to tackle the problem. In a broader perspective, there is a need to integrate a gender dimension into violence research, recognizing that men are also sexual and vulnerable beings.

The political anchoring of the subject, "Violence against men," within the executive would be an effective step in promoting said measures. As Carol Hagemann-White proposed in her recommendations to the Council of Europe in December 2005, the identification of a governmental or non-governmental "responsible agent" in each European country would be a practicable approach.

All measures should have the implicit target of making physical, psychological and sexual violence against men publicly thinkable - in particular those kinds of violence that have been overlooked or not perceived as such to date. In line with the ongoing promotion of public recognition and prevention of violence against women, the beginning recognition of violence against men should be actively encouraged. This should include the repertory of governmentally sponsored public education.

All work promoting violence prevention should be performed against the background of changing images of masculinity and femininity and changes in the gender-specific division of work. This includes the de-legitimation of male competitiveness and power orientation. Besides considering the effect on individuals, e.g. within the educational system, competition-based structures at the workplace or in vocational training need to be revised as well, as in the world of sports, which is a common pastime of high cultural significance. The socialisation of males, including military service (being obligatory for young men in many countries), ought to be reconsidered. Inseparable from the commitment to preventing violence against men and women is the social task of gender equality.

#### *Are any related initiatives planned by the German government?*

The German Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, which has conducted the pilot study, is aware of the problem and the necessity of further measures. Since there is no institutional responsibility for this issue in Germany, however, no governmental initiative is currently (August 2006) to be expected.

## 17.5 Working Group Report

*Jussi Aaltonen*

Violence and men is one of the most common themes in gender equality policy where men have received explicit attention. It is also the theme that raises heated emotional discussion and debate.

The aim of the working group was to discuss ways of preventing gender-based violence and the relationship of men and violence more generally.

### *Men as perpetrators*

There was a clear agreement in the working group that men's violence against women is the main issue on gendered violence. Men's violence against women is a huge social problem and it is closely linked to gender and masculinity. It is important to note, that although the great majority of all perpetrators of violence are men, only part of men use violence in their life. To combat men's violence against women we need different kinds of interventions in every level. These interventions can be for example perpetrator projects for violent men, but it is obvious that these projects may vary a lot. That is why these perpetrator programmes have to be monitored and evaluated carefully. Cooperation with women's and children's programmes must be always as seamless as possible.

It is important that the perpetrator projects do not study a violent man out of social context, background and gendered power. Many violent men quit the project and some men can even misuse the knowledge they have got from the treatments to their violent purposes. Perpetrator projects can also give unrealistic hope for battered woman to stay by violent man. It was obvious that battered woman must give up hope that her violent spouse will change before she can leave him.

### *Men as victims and limits of gendered violence*

Puchert and Jungnitz claimed in their presentation that men do not get sympathy as victims of violence. This argument started a lively conversation. Many participants stressed that there is lot of discussion about violence that men suffer - hooliganism in football matches for example. It was clearly pointed that male-male violence is not always gendered. To be regarded as a gender-based violence, male-male violence has to have gender specific background, for example violence against homosexual men.

Men are closely linked to violence, both as perpetrators and as victims. So it is important to notice that men can be victims too. Vast majority of the violence that men experience is perpetrated by other men. But we have to remember that men are not homogenous group and violence is neither homogenous. It was stated that we should use the term violences in plural. When talked about men's violences we must remember the plurality of masculinities. It is important to gender the perpetrator and talk about men's violences against women. It was reminded that we must change the masculinities but on the other hand must also let masculinities change.

Working group wondered why so many men seem to take the collective guilt and get upset because of campaigns combating violence against women. It was also very relevant question that why men feel collective guilt when man kills a woman but not when man kills other man. Difference was explained mainly with social references and gendered role models.



One of the good practices discussed in working group was making good use of educative films or other media to raise awareness among young. Per Östberg<sup>27</sup> reminded that it is very important to educate teachers first so that they are capable to use the material in schools. We must also be aware that campaigns may cause totally different result in different context. So we have to know the context we want to intervene. For example alcohol is used as an excuse for violent behaviour and one has to bear that in mind when launching a campaign.

### *Together we can make a difference*

It was debated in the working group that men ought to support women's empowerment and start talking about violence against women. Working group thought about how men's empathy could be supported.

There was a suggestion that we should approach men as fathers and men as perpetrators: no father would want his daughter to be battered by her boyfriend or spouse.

Working group was also very unanimous that gendered violence is not just a result but active instrument to maintain inequality. It was also argued that gender based violence can be considered a threat to democracy. That is why one must work on every level to combat violence against women. Society must give the signal that battering one's spouse will not be tolerated. It is important that Government's every Ministry work together against violence against women. Gender mainstreaming has to be multidisciplinary and that is also essential prerequisite of efficient work against men's violence against women. Legislative reforms can be also efficient tool in changing attitudes. For example restriction code may have also preventive impact on men, if batterer is the one to leave the home.

It was stated that every male benefit from gendered power although not all men are violent. Every one of us is shaped by patriarchy, but when women and men start to support gender equality together, we can succeed. To get there men's privileges and patriarchy must be admitted.

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<sup>27</sup> Producer of the film *Blind Spot*, shown at the conference.

## 18 Working Group 4: Men and Reconciliation of Work and Family Life: Visions for Future

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*Chair: Hugo Swinnen, Verwey-Jonker Institute, Netherlands*

### *Introduction*

The aim of the working group was to develop and discuss solutions on how men would, in the future, take a greater share of family leaves and parenting responsibilities than today, taking into account the variety of family types.

The reconciliation of professional and private life has been the single most common theme in gender equality policies where men have received explicit attention in Europe. The social partners play a key role in reconciliation policies.

Reconciliation of professional and private life is a more relevant theme for men now than it used to be. As the educational attainment and employment rate of women increase, men are required to participate more in childcare and family duties. It is important to reinforce the cultural link between men and care. Usually care is only associated with women. In discussing care, it is important to emphasize that it applies to men too. Family leave systems should be improved so that men can use them more. One possibility is the special ‘father quota’, reserved only to men to be included in the parental leave. Research shows that if men take family leave, they have better relationships with their children and participate more in childcare and housework.

In creating structures that help in reconciling work and family life, the diversification of family structures and the interests of the children should be taken into account. An increasing percentage of marriages in Europe end in divorce, and the number of single parent households and second families is growing. For a parent living at a different address from his or her child efforts must be made to assist him or her to reconcile work and family and participate in child care as required, for example when the child falls ill.

Presentations in the Working Group 4:

1. Hugo Swinnen: General Introduction: Working Fathers, Caring Men?
2. Yves Roland-Gosselin: COFACE on Demographic Change
3. Anu Sajavaara: Men and the Goal for Better Reconciliation
4. Claudia Menne: The Social Partners’ Role in the Reconciliation of Work and Family Life – Trade Union Perspective
5. Maruša Gortnar: Situation in Slovenia

## 18.1 General Introduction: Working Fathers, Caring Men?

*Hugo Swinnen*

### *Abstract*

*What is the problem? In most European countries labour market participation of women is still (too) low. Men still do not take up on a fair share in the care for household and family. To increase the labour market participation of women, men will have to take up more caring tasks and do less paid work. Why is this a problem? At different levels there are different outspoken or even hidden arguments. One of the arguments lays in the demographic challenge. To ensure our future, we will need having more children AND more people will have to take part (longer) in both paid work and caring tasks. There is a clear need therefore in three policy directions: children friendly equal opportunity policies, policies for alleviating the burden on women, and increase incentives for men to take up more caring tasks.*

### *Introduction*

The title of this paper is also the title of a research report published by the Netherlands Ministry of Social Affairs and our Institute as a result of an Equal project, co-financed by the European Commission<sup>28</sup>.

In the last few decades the number of women entering the labour market has increased considerably all over Europe, but men have not taken up caring tasks in a proportionate way. In all European countries men take the biggest part in paid work, while women do most of the caring for children and the household work. In most European countries women do twice as much caring for children than men do. In all European countries women perform more care and household tasks than men, even if they have a full time paid job. The actual division of tasks between the sexes is a problem as far as it hampers people's freedom of choice. Women, in particular, are confronted with the limits of their possibilities and the restrictions in their freedom of choice. If women have to take up more paid work, men will have to be stimulated to take up more care tasks, and do less paid work.

For different reasons European governments and the European Union would like to see an increase in the labour market participation of women.

On macro level following reasons play explicitly or implicitly a role in this:

- Enforcing the competitive power of (EU) countries;
- Limiting the claims for income substitution;
- Enlarging the (financial) basis for taxes and social security;
- Keeping salary claims within certain limits.

There are also reasons on micro level to put the division of paid work and care tasks between men and women on the agenda. Realising the European countries' and the EU objective of increasing the labour market participation of women, it is only realistic and fair, if this goes along with an increase in the share that men take in the care for children and the household. If men will not

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<sup>28</sup> J.W. Duyvendak & M. Stavenuiter (eds.) (2004). Working Fathers, Caring Men. Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs, Verwey-Jonker Institute. The Hague, Utrecht.

change, women will not increase their labour market participation, or they will have to accept much bigger workload for realising the increase in labour market participation.

Moreover, women have also less freedom of choice when it comes to household tasks. Somebody has to perform the less agreeable tasks. If men do not take their responsibility, women will have to perform these tasks. In the end it is a matter of fair and just division if men give a comparable contribution to the care for children and the household.

An important element of the context for these arguments lays in the demographic challenge. To ensure our future, we will need to have more children AND more people (men and women) will have to take part longer in both paid work and unpaid care tasks.

There is a clear need therefore for initiatives in three policy directions at the same time:

- Children and family friendly equal opportunity policies
- Policies for alleviating the burden on women
- Increase incentives for men to take up more care tasks

Some of the policies developed during the last decades do not support a combination of these three directions. The development of 7 days, 24 hours child care facilities e.g. alleviate the burden for women, but are not necessarily child friendly, neither do they stimulate men taking up more care tasks. Sometimes policy options in different sectors could even be conflicting. One example is the option to increase labour market participation of women and the option for counting more on voluntary caring. Policies to be developed should be proofed for their complementary quality as to these three policy directions.

The existing task division between men and women is influenced by three types of conditions on respectively the macro, meso and micro levels. These conditions influence both the degree of male involvement in care tasks (the quantity), and the kind of tasks that men perform in household and family (the quality).

### *Macro conditions are important*

The macro conditions are related to time (flexible working patterns and leave schemes), money (tax systems) and provisions (child care). For a more fair division of all paid work and care tasks good national arrangements are necessary as to child care, parental leave, life cycle arrangements, the right to work part time etcetera. These arrangements are of great importance to make the first steps on the way to a more just division of tasks. Men will perform more tasks in the household. Women will get a more real possibility to take up paid work.

Some of the macro conditions to improve are in the fields of:

- Flexible working patterns
- (Paid) leave schemes on an individual basis
- Tax advantages for dual-income families sharing care responsibilities
- Adapted opening hours
- Accessible and affordable childcare facilities

### *But more has to be done*

Because even if macro conditions are favourable for enabling men to take up care tasks, men have a clear preference for the type of tasks to fulfil (such as shopping and cooking) and for leaving other household tasks (such as cleaning and doing the laundry) for their partner. Also men have a

clear preference for the care of the children above household tasks. There seems to be, as far as men are concerned, a clear hierarchy in the tasks to perform.

Research has shown that the difference between men and women in taking up care tasks is culturally determined. This means that this difference is open for change, even if change is not easy to realise. It becomes important not only to influence the amount of time that men and women invest in household and care, but also to change the division of the types of tasks. This could be done on a meso level through a qualitative approach of the conditions under which men and women divide paid work and care tasks.

On micro level efforts should concentrate on the dissociation of care tasks and gender stereotypes. This includes creating mechanisms to help women and men sharing care tasks, training men to take care of others and of themselves, campaigning for taking up existing facilities, etcetera. Tasks can become “beyond” gender.

### *The micro level: Degendering tasks*

We need more knowledge about mechanisms behind the unfair division of household tasks. Tasks have a gender connotation. How to get them beyond gender? In the study by Verwey-Jonker Institute this was done through an analysis of three tasks, i.e. shopping, doing the laundry and visiting the baby clinic. The description of each of these tasks shows that it is possible for a specific household task (e.g. shopping) to lose its female connotation. This will then mean that there is no barrier anymore for men to fulfil this task. A stimulating factor can be that a task is part of a “chain”. When men do the cooking, they will consider it fully normal to do also the shopping. Men who dress their children in the morning will get concerned with the availability of clean cloths. The study also shows that visibility of a task and more tolerance (of women) for making mistakes (by men) are important factors for men to take up household tasks. In the Netherlands we observe that visiting the baby clinic is an activity in full transition towards changing its gender connotation, while doing the laundry remains to a great deal a women’s business.

Important interlocked mechanisms for (or against) “degendering” are:

- A “chain” approach: if one task from a chain becomes gender neutral, other tasks from the same chain could follow that direction easier;
- Visibility: men will more easily take up visible, public tasks such as shopping and visiting the baby clinic. If more men perform these tasks this will of course stimulate other men. But it could also influence taking up other tasks as far as they are part of a chain;
- Tolerance: another important element is the fact that men and women perform the same tasks in a different way. If men take up tasks that traditionally belong to the territory of women, tolerance for difference and for making mistakes will play an important role;
- Control and execution: household tasks can be transferred gradually from women to men. This could be first in terms of execution, while women keep control. Step by step men can take up also control over certain tasks. Shopping is a nice example for this. We could observe that older men use shopping lists made by their partner more of the than younger men, who are more independent in shopping. We observed similar mechanisms in doing the laundry.
- Home alone: men take up household and child care tasks more easily if they are alone at home with the children. This point refers to meso conditions, namely the organisation of paid work in relation to the care for household and family.

### *Influence of the conditions: Study of exceptional practices*

In our study we wanted to investigate to what extent the conditions influence both opinions about task division and the factual behaviour. Therefore we questioned household types that could be seen as having an “exceptional” practice in terms of the conditions for combining paid work and care tasks. In the “standard practice” a household is composed of a man, a woman and a child or children; the man has paid work outside the home at regular hours (between 8:00 and 18:00 hours) and the woman (with or without a paid job) is (mostly) responsible for household and care tasks. We consider a practice as “exceptional” if the man works at non-regular hours, or has an unusual work pattern, or is part of a special type of household. We studied 30 exceptional households, consisting of households with men doing shift or remote work and households with homosexual fathers.

The most important conclusion of studying the exceptional practices was that opinions and preferences of men in relation to the task division between men and women are strongly related to the possibilities of men to combine caring with paid work. In households where a more equal task division already exists, competences of men, their preferences and the traditions of their education seem hardly important. The opinions of men are flexible if they – due to changing conditions – have to perform certain tasks. Even (supposedly poor) competences no longer appear to play a role. Being at home alone with the children appears to be an important stimulus for men to really start performing caring tasks. A similar conclusion was drawn from Norwegian research on men on parental leave.

### *Innovations in European countries*

In most European countries it appears that a more fair division of paid work and care tasks between men and women is an urgent issue. But situations and traditions are very different – as well as the issues at stake, the challenges to overcome and the appropriate answers. As an example I give a short image of issues in three countries that stand for three different societal and policy traditions in respect to reconciliation of work and family life: Sweden, France and Spain. In our study we looked into good practices (mostly at local level) for stimulating men to take up child care and household tasks.

Sweden has a longstanding tradition of state intervention in relation to the role of fathers. In this field local authorities developed several initiatives influencing the amount of child care tasks that men take up within the household. Most of these initiatives are indeed limited to the care for the children. Putting the division of household tasks between men and women on the (family) agenda appears also in Sweden a difficult issue.

In this respect it is remarkable that the latter is explicitly the case in Spain. On local level as well as in national campaigns, the Spanish public authorities stimulate men to take up more care tasks. Both care for the children and for the household are included in these campaigns. Apparently Spain is catching up for a more traditionalist past. At the same time, social scientists in Spain are warning for the distance between the political and the social moral in these issues.

In France it seems to be difficult to put the subject of men and care on the policy agenda. The cause lays in the fear for public interference with “private” issues. Slowly the societal climate is changing also in France, as to make it possible to intervene in this field, because the limits of what could be achieved with improvements of macro- and meso conditions become more and more clear. France has a strong tradition on these levels. But people do ask themselves whether the wellbeing of children (and their parents) is served with a stay of more than ten hours a day outside the family. Also, more and more (local) policy makers realise that the principle of non intervention in the “private” sphere leads to a systematic overburden on women, which has great influence also on the possibilities for women to participate in public life.

## *Recommendations*

It is certainly necessary to continue promoting the existing and planned measures at different levels for reconciling work and family life. The effects of these measures on a more fair distribution of care tasks should be carefully monitored. Based on our study I could mention some measures that seem to be crucial for stimulating men to take a fair share in caring.

On macro level it is important to develop individual (paid) leave arrangements (see e.g. Belgium) and specific paternity leave arrangements (home alone). But also more general measures such as the right for temporary part time work as it was introduced in the Netherlands could have a real influence on a more just division of paid work and care work.

On meso level, one should not forget the importance of good provisions, but also a stimulating culture at the level of work organisations.

On micro level I repeat the chain approach and the promotion of tolerance. But also mobilising professionals can be very helpful. This could be done in two ways. One is to stimulate that more men accede to certain professions (health care, baby clinics, child care, home care, household services). The other is to give attention in the training of these professionals to the role of men in the care for household and family. Young parents are absolutely sensitive for professionals systematically asking for the active presence of the father.

The appeal on men to fully play their role as fathers is an important intermediate step towards a more fair distribution of all tasks between men and women. This is one of the basic ideas also behind European programmes on gender equality. A number of local projects in this field are co-financed by the European Commission. I name one example of a project launched by Eurocities. It is called New Faces. A number of cities organise workshops for young fathers to stimulate them for being more involved in the care for their children. During the workshops they can also exchange ideas about coping with material and cultural problems in this. Furthermore, these workshops are also a means to get information about difficulties that should be solved at meso or macro levels.

But men will not only have to play a more important role in the care for children. They will have to get more involved in all household tasks. To call upon men as fathers because of the importance of that role for their personal development and that of other family members, bears the risk that men will continue to leave the less pleasant household tasks to their partner: "this is not why I took up parental leave!" In the longer run one should publicly reflect about masculinity and femininity in relation to the division of tasks. Diversity and freedom of choice are the key in such reflections. The question is no longer IF men will have to take up certain tasks. The question will be about a desirable division of tasks between partners, man and women, within households. Each partner could take part in all tasks: this would be a fair starting point for discussions at the kitchen table.

For this workshop, however the issue is to see what could be a policy perspective for each of the stakeholders involved: public authorities at different levels and in different sectors, work organisations (public and private!) and the social partners, civil society organisations. The basic challenge is to try and develop policies that are coherent with the three directions mentioned in the first part of this paper:

- Children and family friendly equal opportunity policies;
- Policies for alleviating the burden on women;
- Increase incentives for men to take up more care tasks.

## 18.2 COFACE on Demographic Change

*Yves Roland-Gosselin*

### *Abstract*

*No EU Member State reaches the renewal rate of 2.1 children per woman. Even the top two member States only reach almost 2 for Ireland and 1,94 for France. The “dependent” population (0 to 14 year olds and above 65) will increase from 49 percent to 66 percent in 2030. Checking demographic decline has become a political objective of the Union, both for internal and external reasons. Among the internal reasons, (regional, national, European) public authorities need to establish the economic and social conditions to respond to the “desire for a child” expressed by couples, currently not satisfied for economic reasons. Any initiative with a view to set up facilities should be negotiated between the social partners and in consultation with the relevant civil society organisations.*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to thank the Finnish authorities for inviting the Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union (COFACE) to contribute to this workshop.

COFACE is an apolitical and pluralistic confederation that gathers national family organisations of a general scope or those that are centred on a specific family aspect. COFACE has about 50 member organisations throughout the member States of the European Union and whose ethical and political choices are diverse. COFACE also represents the many millions of parents and children, sharing the same goal: To protect and promote families –That’s families plural.

COFACE is obviously a typical representation of Civil Society and, as such, our role is to express our views and projects to the other great stakeholders of the European construction: the political decision making powers of the Union (the Council of Ministers, the Commission, the European Parliament) and the representatives of the economic forces (companies and trade unions).

I will split my presentation into the following three parts:

- I. A reminder of some demographical observations.
- II. A political necessity to act, for both internal and external reasons.
- III. Families and the European Union: methods to develop and means of implementation.

### *I. A reminder of some demographical observations*

In the eighties – 25 years ago! – we alerted the Community institutions to the need for action to stabilise the drop in the birth-rate in Europe; this decline has only worsened since then, which I will illustrate through some particularly demonstrative figures.

- A. In 1960, the generation renewal level was achieved in almost all the member states. Currently, the renewal rate of 2.1 children per woman is no longer achieved in any of the member states. Even the two member states with the highest birth-rate only nearly reach this level – 2 in Ireland and 1.94 in France.



- B. The social dependency ratio (relationship between, on the one side, the number of people aged under 14 and over 65 and, on the other side, the number of active people) was 49 percent in 2005; it should reach 66 percent in 2030.
- C. Along the same lines, the elderly people's dependency ratio (ratio between the population aged over 65 and the active population aged between 15 and 64) was 25 percent in 2005; it should be at 40 percent in 2030, reaching 53 percent in 2050.
- D. When looking at the situation of the EU on the world scale, the European population currently represents 11 percent of the world's population; by 2030 it will only be 6 percent.

## *II. The political necessity to act*

If we are concerned about this problem today it is because there is an urgent need to tackle this demographic challenge head on.

A. Two historical points to be considered:

1. Coming back to the eighties and the contacts between families and community institutions, I recall you that the announcements made by President Gaston Thorn in 1981 and then President Jacques Delors in 1985 courageously broke the silence that was hiding the taboo problem of demography from the eyes of political leaders.

For its part, COFACE had organised a symposium in 1983 and then published a memorandum in 1986 entitled «Families and demographic facts». COFACE firmly warned of the importance of action, I quote, “so that families can realise their family projects in the best conditions of freedom as well as contribute in freedom and dignity to demographic improvement”.

The work of the Social Observatory shows that the number of children in families is less than the desired number of children, and that economic factors cause couples to hold back from, as we wrote in 1986, “realising their family projects in the best conditions of freedom”.

2. In spring 2005, the Commission published a Green Paper entitled "Confronting demographic change: a new solidarity between the generations". It made a wide consultation on an issue that was generally considered relevant to national politics. This was obviously welcomed with great satisfaction by family organisations.

From its very first page, the Green Paper recognises that families «constitute an essential part of European society». Immediately, it also admits that the current environment «is not conducive to child rearing», but that, on the other hand, families will «play an important role in solidarity between the generations».

COFACE is delighted with this recognition of the importance of the family dimension. We express particular satisfaction to Commissioner Vladimír Špidla. COFACE also gratefully noted that Austria and then Finland included this issue in their presidential programmes for 2006; and there are good signs that the German presidency will continue this work in an equally positive way.

- B. Regarding the specific theme of men in the family, this was the subject of a seminar following a year's research by seven of our family associations, in response to the mandate entrusted to COFACE by the Commission. This subject is also at the centre of the current conference organised by Finland within the framework of its Presidency.

Two comments on this subject:

1. In the family context, the role of men can be addressed according to two approaches:
  - Taking responsibility for and educating children (the next generation);
  - Care and sometimes taking responsibility for elderly parents (the previous generation).

If certain measures exist in many member states regarding the first aspect, few have been created for the second; so, there is a lot of work to be done.

2. Considering the importance of such reforms for society, every effort to implement facilities (sharing of time, flexibility, etc.) must go not only through the legislative authority but also the previous consensus of the social partners (employers, trade unions) and a large debate within Civil Society (men's' associations, women's' lobby, etc.).

### *III. Families and the European Union: methods and means*

Following the Green Paper and consultations after its publication, the Commission planned, in the coming days to adopt an action plan; we are expecting for it with great interest.

For our part, we highlight that the stopping of the demographic decline must be one of the objectives of the Union, for both internal and external reasons. At the internal level, the balance between generations must be rectified; at an external level, the place of the Union in the world needs to be, if not increased, at least maintained rather than reduced.

As a major recommendation, COFACE has made the expression «global family policy» its own, to show that a permanent political will is necessary to integrate the family dimension, families' interests and the reality of families in all sectors of different policies (education, health, housing, standard of living, finance, social security, transport, culture, leisure,..).

The family dimension of European policies aims to implement means contributing the support of families in the achievement of their emotional and educational plans while respecting their personal choices.

Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that the right to start a family is an essential individual right. The responsibility to put into place a family policy is, for public authorities, one of the direct consequences of this principal of universal law, which incidentally has been integrated into the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union.

However, at no point in the European Treaties is there an explicit reference to the family. Family policy is thus treated at the level of each member state and in a variety of different ways.

What is perfectly indicated within the framework of the European Union though is the fact of considering and conducting research together on these questions, together with all the actors concerned, including most definitely families.

Concrete approaches are, in particular, exchanges of information, experiences and good practice, and success stories (the legislation of certain member states are exemplary compared to others). This is the method often used by the Union – the “open method of coordination”.

In addition, concerning equality between women and men, the necessity in every debate is gender mainstreaming. We ask that a principal of “family mainstreaming” be developed, which would

enable the impact on family models of each adopted policy to be measured at both European and national level.

Finally, the systematic consultation of European citizens who are, on the front row, the families and also the social partners. A “permanent Forum” on demography would enable to adjust or follow up measures that have already been taken. This task would deserve to be assisted financially as a contribution of Civil Society to community life with all the necessary professionalism. Such financing would also enable the information to be disseminated to the grass-root groups concerned, and the participation of these at the meetings and debates of the associations.

Yes, it will be a great service to Europe and to the millions of families waiting for this gesture, the member state who will take advantage of their presidency to make the following two measures a reality via the European Council:

- The “open method of coordination” in the field of family policies.
- “Family mainstreaming” in the development of Community Law.

In conclusion, I would like to stress two major concepts.

1. There is one central question to make the future of young families possible and if we so wish to favour the arrival of more children: It is the question of confidence in the future. Young couples will perhaps decide to have one more child if they judge that they will be able to bring him or her up decently without having to make large sacrifices themselves.

There are a number of factors which play a role in this confidence-building: a good stable job, a social and supporting environment (the well-known triangle of resources-services-time), a balanced distribution of wealth which avoids the resentment of flagrant injustice, a general feeling of security.

2. We must also ask ourselves – and address the political decision-makers at the highest level – about the founding role of families in society: doesn’t each birth, education and blooming of a child represent a long term investment in human capital?

Doesn’t society itself have an interest in investing in this capital rather than in a series of short term stopgap solutions, which don’t give such a future return as a man or woman of tomorrow?

Wouldn’t an affirmative answer to this question, and the budgetary choices which should ensue, favour this confidence in the future that we are talking about?

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Didn’t the French author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry summarise these thoughts when he wrote “It’s not about predicting the future, but about making it possible”?

### 18.3 Men and the Goal for Better Reconciliation

Anu Sajavaara

#### *Abstract*

*Demographic change means that we need to think of ways to keep older employees longer at work and to encourage more women to enter into the labour market. To enable this, the basic structures to support working families must be in order. Without accessible, reliable and flexible childcare and other family services the double bread-winner model will not work. The social partners play an important role in creating flexible solutions at workplace level to take into account the varying life situations of the individual employees. The social partners can also gather and disseminate good working life practices and mould attitudes away from traditional solutions.*

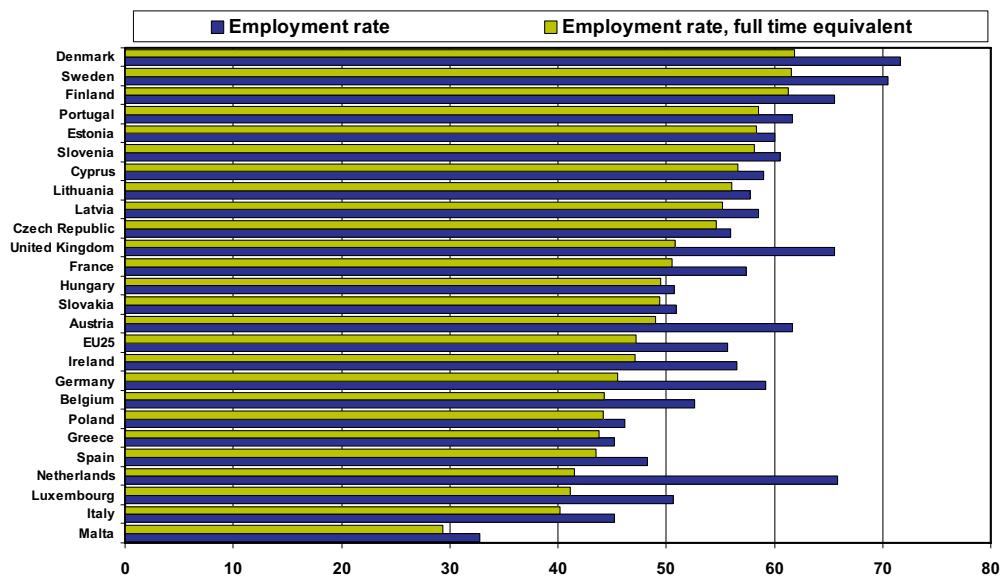
#### *Introduction*

One of the greatest challenges in European labour market is the ageing population. In many countries there are already more people leaving the labour market than entering it. The decline in young entrants to the labour market has led to serious recruitment problems and these problems will increase in the next decades. We are in a situation where we need to think of ways to keep the older employees longer at work for instance by finding flexible working methods and creative retirement models. We also have to attract more women into the labour market, especially in countries where the female employment rate is low.

In the Nordic countries women's rate of employment varies from 67 to over 70 percent, being highest in Denmark and lowest in Finland. The Nordic countries have, however, solved the question of childcare and reconciliation of work and family life in different ways. In Sweden for instance, women work much more often part-time, whereas in Finland most women work full-time. There are big differences between various European countries. For instance in Spain only about 43 percent of women are employed full time and in the Netherlands more than 70 percent of women work part-time.

If women are to participate more actively in the labour market the basic service structures to support employment must be in place. We must have accessible, affordable and flexible care facilities for children and for the elderly, efficient health care and transportation systems. It is also important to balance the division of labour within the families to make women's working possible. We should think of ways to make working life more family-friendly and influence people's attitudes so that men and women, on an equal basis, can participate fully in working life and lead a satisfying life.

Chart 4: Female employment rates in the EU countries, 2004 (%)



Source: EU Commission, Employment in Europe 2005  
 24 April 2006 Anu Sajavaara  
 26.5.2006 Saukkonen  
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Confederation of Finnish Industries 

### *The role of the Social partners: Making better reconciliation possible*

The social partners play a key role in making working life more family-friendly both in the national contexts and at European level. They can gather and distribute good practices relating to working life balance and they have a significant role in forming people's attitudes.

The European social partners UNICE, CEEP and ETUC drafted together in 2005 a Framework of Actions on Gender Equality. It was one way to contribute to the implementation of the Lisbon strategy and to promote gender equality. The four priority areas in the Framework are: 1) addressing gender roles, 2) promoting women in decision-making, 3) supporting work-life balance, and 4) tackling the gender pay gap.

The Framework of Actions contains an extensive Annex on good practice examples from many member states. The follow-up system obliges the national social partners to report annually on actions carried out on the four priority areas. The first report was drafted in June and will be presented to the Social Dialogue Committee in a couple of weeks.

The Finnish social partners and various ministries are currently involved in an extensive gender equality programme which consists of 30 concrete measures to tackle the gender pay gap, to dismantle the horizontal and vertical segregation and to develop and bring wage systems up-to date to support gender equality.

In Finland the social partners and the Government have also worked together at encouraging parents to use family leaves on an equal basis and have just concluded a new family leave package. Research from recent years proves that fathers who stay at home with their children also participate more in household duties and childcare even when they return to work. The "home alone" situations encourage fathers to take up more responsibility for childcare and household chores.

The social partners at local and workplace level are best positioned to look for creative and flexible solutions to take employees' individual life situations into account. We need to train managers and

raise their awareness on ways to promote equal opportunities and take diversity into account. We should look for good practices and visible role models of working mothers and caring fathers. When work and family life are combined in a satisfying way, both parents are able to participate fully in working life.

### *Why should employers promote men's equality?*

It is also in the interests of the employer to promote gender equality and compatibility of work and family life. Successful reconciliation of work and family life increases work commitment and profitability. The employer wants happy and motivated employees whose private life is in balance. Research from past years show that balanced family life also supports work ability and boosts general wellbeing. Family-friendliness can also be a competitive edge in the labour market where the competition for skilled professionals will become all the fiercer.

### *The role of legislation*

In the Nordic countries and some other European countries there is an extensive legislative framework, which supports reconciliation of family and work life. Legislation is not, however, the best tool to influence people's behaviour. The legislator's long hand does not extend inside private homes and cannot dictate how the spouses organise their private life and divide domestic duties. At best, the legislator can give guidance on the equal sharing of family leaves and support both parents' rights to stay at home with children. We need to think of other means to influence people's attitudes. The social partners' framework of actions was an attempt at this direction.

### *New services for families*

One way to promote the two-breadwinners model is to improve services for families combining work and family life. Families where both parents work need all the support they can get. There is a great demand for new kinds of domestic services and support networks for families. In the Framework of actions there was an example of services on site where various services were offered at the workplace (e.g. laundry, banking services etc) so that employees do not have to spend time after work travelling around the town to use these services. One of the ways to support working families is to find flexibility in opening hours and availability of services.

As our life expectancy increases all the time, the reserve of active and healthy senior citizens also increases every year. We should look for ways to bring different generations better together for example by making use of the experience and skills of senior citizens in helping employees with children. After regular retirement, there might be a role for those senior citizens who are willing and well enough to work as child minders or as providers of certain family services. In some countries there are companies, which offer the services of "surrogate grannies" who pick up the children from school or day care or who cook the evening meal for tired mums and dads. This enables parents to spend more time with their children and less time doing housework.

### *Working on attitudes*

To enable men to participate more in taking care of the children and to divide domestic duties more equally between the spouses we must question the traditional gender roles. In many European countries the fathers who want to stay at home to take care of their children still have a long way to go. Father's choice to stay at home to take care of children is not supported by legislation or general attitudes at working life. Even when it is possible, the families, which decide to send the

mother to work and keep the father at home, face many prejudices. Very often this means going against prevailing attitudes and long traditions.

In Finland, the results of various research projects show that men who have just become father work most over-time. In most cases, it is not the employers who demand longer working hours or even the economic situation which forces young fathers to work more. It might have more to do with the new situation at home and the men's confusion on what is expected of them. Men do not necessarily know how to participate more at home. They have no role models because they might be the first generation of men who participate in homework on an equal basis. The tired wife is not always the most understanding of spouses and might even push the man away by dictating how things need to be done. Here we need fathers' mutual support networks and role models who tell in public what it means to become a father.

According to statistics, spouses quarrel most about domestic work. To minimise conflicts at home, spouses should discuss and set the standards on what needs to be done at home together. We easily repeat the behavioural roles of our parents even though our situation is very different from the past generations.

Research shows that after maternity leaves women tend to do more household work than men even though they might have participated equally before the child arrives. If men would use family leaves more, the chores would also be divided more equally.

## 18.4 The Social Partners' Role in the Reconciliation of Work and Family Life – Trade Union Perspective

*Claudia Menne*

### *Abstract*

*Developing tools for a better reconciliation policy on a company level is the best guarantee in achieving the company's goals and respond to the Lisbon strategy for Europe. The social partners play a key role in reconciliation policies. They can provide parental leave regulation, prevent from long working hours, promote flexible and innovative forms of work and set up joint campaigns.*

### *Introductory remark*

“The reconciliation of professional and private life has been the (single) most common theme in gender equality policies where men have received explicit attention in Europe. The social partners play a key role in reconciliation policies.”

These two introductory sentences from the description paper for the Finnish conference on ‘Men and Gender Equality’ outline the two perspectives we have to take into account when talking about visions for better reconciliation policies in Europe and the social partners’ role.

### *Some facts and figures on the issue*

In legislation parental leave provisions have improved considerably over the last few years all over Europe. 75 percent of men in Europe know about their rights of taking parental leave, but 84 percent think they will not take advantage of these possibilities. 40 percent are afraid of financial consequences (less money) and 30 percent are afraid of a negative impact on their career opportunities. Germany for example: 5 percent of men take parental leave, but up to 40 percent wish or could imagine making use of it. The reasons are various why in Europe we do not advance steadily in concrete gender equality in the field of reconciliation. Here are some of the most significant:

- Little acknowledgment at the workplace for men’s efforts / plans of taking parental leave
- Lack of support from the employers’ side
- Financial restraints / gender pay gap
- Less career opportunities
- Traditional role model, i.e. in accepting successful partners/wives
- In society, doing housework like cleaning or washing is less accepted than sharing care work (hierarchy of tasks)

Some other aspects hinder as well the progress in increasing the men’s share in family work. National social security and taxation systems do not provide in most cases the necessary incentives for an equal division of paid and unpaid work between the sexes. They focus on the male breadwinner model.



### *Difference in private and public sector*

The public sector provides differentiated regulation on macro and micro level for reconciliation policies. In the private sector these regulations are not at stake. But the private sector employs more people than the public sector and these policies need to be developed as well. Most national governments prefer code of conducts and other self-regulation solutions targeting also men inside the private sector instead of legislation or stricter regulation. Companies feel free to develop a specific policy or not. Some innovative enterprises have been investing since several years and are well known. What is needed is a broader impact and dissemination of these experiences and efforts.

### *What role for the social partners?*

Leaving the national, legislative level and looking on different social partners' approaches we can define several tasks/obligations for the two actors. Different types of enterprises and branches must be taken into account.

#### A) Responsibility of employers

- Human resource management

Development of a personnel policy, which takes into account the reconciliation question;

Ensure a 'normal' career progression for both sexes Implementation of action programmes to sensitise and promote active fatherhood.

- (Child-)Care solutions

The employer can and should provide differentiated, individual solutions that fit best to the company's situation. The own company's 'Kindergarten' often is not the adequate answer. Mainly financial and organisational support especially in urgent situations together with a supportive culture is needed. Most parents wish for example flexible working hours to respond to family obligations. The company can provide contacts to professionals or organise a network.

#### B) Role of the trade union / workers' representation on company level

Active shop stewards and trade unionists are important for initiating and establishing a good practice and ensure a sustainable policy. Targeting men is specially needed. Especially male representatives from work councils can play a positive and important role in promoting and supporting men.

- Negotiation of framework or collective agreements on enterprise levels for leave schemes

Employees wish to have, on one hand, individual and flexible solutions for their reconciliation problems. On the other hand they need and want reliable structures, regulation and the possibility to influence the working hours (flexicurity) If they reduce working hours for care work they wish to have the opportunity to return to a full employment contract after theses periods. Another solution can be long-term time accounts.

- Developing tools to ensure that work organisation responds both to workers' and companies' needs.

- Struggle for reliable infrastructure for care work adapted to the company's situation
- Initiating cooperation with local and regional authorities, initiatives or supplier of care infrastructure

C) Role of the social partners (macro and micro level)

- Providing parental leave regulations
- Preventing from long working hours /Working time agreements
- Promoting flexible and innovative forms of work: part-time; Job-Sharing, Tele working, working time accounts, ...
- Joint campaigning

*Closing remark*

Developing tools for a better reconciliation policy on company level is an innovative and promising work, which contributes in shaping the European social model. Motivated and contented workers/employees with a better work life balance are the best guarantee in achieving the company's goals and respond to the Lisbon strategy for Europe to become the most innovative and knowledge based economy in the 21st century.

The Lisbon strategy concludes as well the goal of a higher participation of women in the labour market (60%). If more and more women are seeking for a better balance between work and family life, men have to be encouraged to take over more family work. The advantage for gender equality is also to share the 'risk' of being absent from the workplace between the sexes.

## 18.5 Situation in Slovenia

*Maruša Gortnar*

### *Abstract*

*Slovenia is a good example of legal arrangements providing men and women to be active in and balance their professional and family/private lives. Continuing high employment of women and increasing number of fathers on paternity leave are indicators of changing gender relations and roles, from traditional to more gender-equitable, where professional and family/private needs and aspirations of men and women are equally respected. However, Slovenia is facing several policy and social challenges for promoting work-life balance of men. Firstly, raising awareness on the rights and possibilities of fathers is an important factor to promote the role of men in parenting. Secondly, knowledge on men and reconciliation of work and family life, and broadly on men and gender equality has to be strengthened and the issue kept on the employment, family and gender policy agenda. Thirdly, reconciliation of work and family/private life of men has to become a matter of a corporate social responsibility.*

Promotion of gender equality in society cannot be a unilateral activity of women. Only the partnership, co-operation and common activity of women and men in gender issues can bring about fundamental cultural changes, moving away from traditional aspects of masculinity / femininity and men's / women's roles and relations in the private and public sphere. Men and women will only be able to be equal partners in all spheres of social life, if their equal treatment and opportunities are supported by legislation, policy and social recognition. Men, as well as women, can actually benefit from changed – more equal – gender relations: their lives may become more fulfilled in both private and public life. Reconciliation of professional and family/private life of men and women is certainly the topic where personal and structural arrangements reflect the attitudes of the state policy, organizational culture in the public and private sector, and society in general.

In order to discuss the issue of men and reconciliation of work and family life in Slovenia, the situation of women and men in the labour market and the arrangements of family policy have to be concisely explained. High or increasing participation of women in the labour market is not a recent trend in Slovenia. Women have a long tradition in paid work, which places Slovenia among the European countries with the highest employment rates for women (60,5 % of women aged 15 to 64). Besides, women and men predominantly work full-time, 11 percent of women and 7,9 percent of men work part-time. The gender pay gap is among the lowest in the EU (9,5 %). The system of childcare facilities in Slovenia is both qualitatively and quantitatively well-developed and affordable, since parents pay an income related fee, which on average amounts up to one third of the actual costs.

The rights deriving from employment and parenthood are the rights to parental leave and part-time work. Parental leave consists of several types of leave:

- Maternity leave is an individual right of a mother in duration of 105 days with a maternity benefit of 100 percent of earnings.
- Paternity leave is a non-transferable right of fathers to 90 days of leave, of which 15 days have to be taken until the child is 6 months old, the remaining 75 days can be used until the child is 3 years old. For the first 15 days fathers are entitled to paternity benefit of 100 percent wage-

compensation, for the rest of 75 days the state pays social security contributions of the minimum wage.

- Childcare leave is a leave right after the maternity leave, which can be used by one parent or shared between both parents, in total duration of 260 days, with a childcare benefit of 100 percent of earnings.
- After the childcare leave, one of the parents has the right to work part-time until the child is 3 years old. For the period of part-time work the state pays social security contributions to a full-time employment of the minimum wage.

If we look at the data on fathers taking paternity leave and sharing childcare leave with mothers, we can observe the progress in men's participation in family activities in Slovenia. In the late 1990s, less than 1 percent of fathers used the right to childcare leave, while today around 2 percent of fathers use this right. Regarding the paternity leave, in 2003, when this right came into force, over 60 percent of fathers took a right to 15 days of paternity leave in the first days after the birth of a child (on average they used 8 days). In 2004 and 2005, there were approximately 70 percent of fathers using this right and around 9 percent of fathers used the right to the days of paternity leave with social security payment. Despite a specific right to part-time work for parents with small children, this option is not practiced extensively, only 3–4 percent of parents use this right, 10 percent of them are men.

After introducing the right to paternity leave in 2003, the issue of men and their balance between work and family is slowly gaining more attention. Several researches on fatherhood and men's caring role, in relation to their employment or professional life, have been conducted. The results are showing that the involvement of men in family work, particularly in caring for children is strengthening; traditional gender roles are gradually changing toward a more equal distribution of care work between men and women. Future fathers are very active already before the birth of a child, for example they are attending parental schools, and the majority is present at the birth. Paternity leave has a positive influence on forming fathers' identity and fathers' involvement in family work. This is particularly evident in the early development of a child, when fathers take on many child caring and nursing activities and share household tasks with their partners. In general, the social environment, particularly a partner, relatives and friends have a positive inclination to paternity leave and active fatherhood.

Less positive responses come from the working environment, from co-workers and especially from supervisors and employers. Fathers often reported that they could not fully use the right to paternity leave, since they had to be available for their employers via e-mail and phone, and some of them had to attend meetings in their organization. Problems continue after paternity leave, when fathers get back to work. On the one hand, there is a setback to traditional distribution of family work, especially in times when mothers are still at home on childcare leave. On the other hand, men are back to their intensive work, where they are still considered as those who can, more easily than women, work over-hours, be more available to their employers, do not have family obligations etc. The interesting point is that generally, employed men (and also women) are not very critical toward such conditions. In fact, the reconciliation of working and family life is not thought to be the issue of the employer or organizational system, but the issue of individual arrangements between partners, their social networks, and a responsibility of the state. Unfortunately, the positions of the employers/managers do not differ much. Even more, despite their principally positive opinion on parenthood and its influence to work, employers tend to treat employees with family obligations unequally, especially in promotion, mandatory presence at the workplace, selection of candidates etc. Gender is not a decisive factor to such extent as it used to be, but nevertheless, men are considered as less likely to have their needs for reconciliation of professional and family obligations.

Slovenian policy makers are aware of the situation and problems mentioned above, which are among the main orientations of the employment, family and gender policies. A strengthened role of men and fathers in family life is clearly exposed as a way to: overcome traditional division of gender roles in family/private life and achieve fairer sharing of household and childcare tasks between partners on the one hand; and ensure equal participation and representation of women and men in paid employment, and thus their equal economic independence on the other hand.

Then, which are the main challenges and what are the measures for acquiring work-life balance of men (and as well of women)?

#### 1. Raising awareness on father's rights and possibilities, and promotion of active fatherhood.

- In 2005, we have started a public campaign, supported by the European Commission, under the slogan "Daddy, Be Active!" The campaign aimed to promote active fatherhood – the role of men in parenting, with special emphasis to reconciliation of professional and family/private life.
- The campaign "Daddy, Be Active!", with several activities, continues in 2006. Paternity leave and active fatherhood are promoted in the state administration through "Daddies Counter", aimed to track the number of fathers on paternity and childcare leave in the ministries. At the end of the year the ministry with most active fathers and all the fathers on paternity and childcare leave will get a symbolic reward.

In autumn 2006, several municipalities organized the "Daddies Run", an awareness raising sport activity, where fathers got more information on rights, possibilities and benefits of involved fatherhood, and where fathers and children spent an active time together.

The awareness-raising will be reinforced by a set of media series (educational movie and radio shows) promoting active role of fathers in family life and encouraging reconciliation of work and family/private life. A goal of the media series is also to challenge and overcome traditional stereotypes on gender roles in family, private and public life, also with tackling new issues on men and gender equality.

- The issue of rights and active fatherhood are also the custody rights and arrangement of fathers, since the mother's custody after the divorce is still the prevailing practice. The objective of the national gender and family policy is to promote intersectoral and interdisciplinary cooperation, and to provide support to programs for more rapid and efficient treatment and assistance to partners undergoing divorce, child custody arrangements, regulation of alimonies and contacts with children. To this end, a seminar for social workers and judges, dealing with family issues will be organized, providing them with knowledge on equal treatment of and equal opportunities for men and women.

#### 2. Research and knowledge on men and work-life balance and keeping the issue of men and reconciliation on the policy agenda.

- As already mentioned above, a number of researches on men and fatherhood and parenting, reconciliation of work and family/private life have been carried out. The research project on new trends in parenting and fatherhood continue in 2006 and 2007, special focus is also on initiating new topics on men/fathers and gender equality, e.g. men and care for children and other dependants, men and health, men outside traditional male occupations.
- Reconciliation of working and family/private life is among the priorities of employment, family and gender policies. The reconciliation will be the focus also during Slovenian presidency to the EU in the first half of 2008. The measures for an increased role of men and fathers in family work will be given special attention.
- A new European Structural Funds programming period is the opportunity to develop specific programs/projects for reconciliation of working and family/private life, and/or to integrate the reconciliation policies into different initiatives. Slovenia is a partner in the project funded by the EU program on gender equality, the outcome of which will be the Guidelines for mainstreaming work-life balance policies into planning and implementation of the European

Structural Funds programs. The guidelines will be presented to the national managing authorities of the Structural Funds. Special emphasis will be placed upon ensuring equal treatment and opportunities in reconciliation between work and family life for men.

### 3. Reconciliation of work and family/private life for men as a part of the employers' organizational culture.

- Under the EQUAL program, the pilot project for granting a license "Family friendly company" is being developed. The first companies will start the process for acquiring the license in 2006. The intention of the project is to achieve permanent activity in the employment and family policies, where special emphasis will be given to equal opportunities for men and women.
- Reconciliation of work and family/private life is also a matter of a corporate social responsibility. The focus on men will be developed according to the Guidelines for the integration of a reconciliation policy into corporate social responsibility, which will be the outcome of the EU gender equality project with Slovenia's participation. The guidelines will be distributed to the social partners.

To conclude, Slovenian legislation regulating the matters of employment, parenthood and family affairs, and reconciliation of work and private life guarantees equal treatment and equal opportunities of men and women, and provides men with special right to paternity leave. However, the increased recognition of the need for involvement of men (by men) into different gender equality issues and the initiatives with a focus on men are of a crucial importance in bringing about a change of traditional gender roles toward more equal society, which equally respects the needs and aspirations for professional and private/family life of men and women.

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## 18.6 Working Group Report

*Päivi Yli-Pietilä*

The aim of the working group was to discuss and develop solutions on how men could, in the future, take a greater share of family leaves and parenting responsibilities than today, taking into account the variety of family types.

The discussion was based on the presentations of keynote speakers and work group presentations.

The theme reconciliation of work and family life has been debated quite broadly in the last decade or so. But the discussion has concentrated on women's challenges in combining these two areas. Bringing men into the discussion is needed in order to develop new solutions. The different levels of policies and the variety of possible new solutions were identified in the group discussion.

### *Key challenges*

Swinnen summarised that the division of paid work and unpaid (care) work is still very unequal in most European countries. This is a problem both on macro and micro level. To increase the labour market participation of women, men will have to change their behaviour and take up more care tasks. Also the demographic change poses major challenges for societies.

Sajavaara pointed out that with legislation it is impossible to change the distribution of work at home. The employer's organisations in Finland have encouraged women and men to use parental leaves. A greater variety in services, both private and public, should be developed. Menne added that although most men are informed of their rights to paternal leave etc. they are afraid to use it. They are anticipating problems with career progress and employer's attitudes. Gortnar gave examples of Slovenia's family leave system and stressed that reconciliation of work and family life has to become a matter of corporate responsibility, too.

Roland-Gosselin reminded that considering the demographic change, caring for elderly relatives is as well a challenge for families and societies.

### *Suggested policies at different levels*

Three possible policy directions were identified in the discussion: 1. Children and family friendly equal opportunity policies, 2. Policies for alleviating the burden on women and 3. Increasing incentives for men to take up more care tasks. Men will have to share also the less favourable tasks.

Also changes on macro level are needed, for example: accessible and affordable childcare facilities, after school provisions, flexible working patterns, paid leave schemes on individual basis, tax-advantages for dual-income families sharing care responsibilities and adapted opening hours of services. The professionals for example in maternity (sic!) and child welfare clinics should be mobilized to encourage men's participation. Men's networks could be useful in promoting "new, more active fatherhood". Also new ideas of how to improve men's use of already existing provisions are essential.

The importance of dialogue between different actors and the need to develop policies to reconcile the interests and needs of different groups was emphasised. The concept of family should be widened to encompass a variety of families, not only a heterosexual dual income family.





Closing Session



## 19 Address by the Next Presidency

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*Eva-Maria Welskop-Deffaa*

Minister Haatainen, Ms Kostianen, Commissioner Špidla, Ms Záborská, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finland is taking advantage of its Presidency and of this successful expert conference in order to tackle the topic of men and women living together and enjoying equal rights as a concern for women and men. Many thanks. In doing so, Finland has paid special attention to men – as it has been said – “because gender equality needs men and men need gender equality”. I am glad that Germany can follow on from this point in its EU Presidency, which succeeds the Finnish Presidency. The session of the Commission on the Status of Women to be held in February 2007, at which “men and boys” will be on the agenda as a theme for consideration, offers a special opportunity for this.

Which results have already been observed today with regard to the challenges facing us? Do men need gender equality policy? Does gender equality policy really have anything to offer men? And if so, what?

The answers given in the past few days were not unambiguous. There is no doubt that if equality policy is to be taken seriously, it will (have to) continue to question traditional male privileges in order to make progress in the real implementation of equal rights, as our Constitution in Germany explicitly mandates, and which we have set for ourselves as a joint goal in Europe. Gender equality policy will however also (continue to) question the traditional role stereotypes which until the present day restrict the options open to both men and women in terms of the independence of their life planning. Gender equality policy hence opens up new options – for men as well. It opens up greater freedoms, overcomes “constructions” and attributions. Gender equality policy facilitates and demands a re-orientation to be carried out by both women and men.

This opening and challenge for re-orientation is not automatically regarded by all as being an opportunity. We have had a revealing experience of this in Germany this year: On Friday last week, the German Federal Parliament agreed to the draft Bill submitted by Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth Ursula von der Leyen to make it possible for young parents from 1 January 2007 on to receive a parental benefit in line with the Nordic model instead of the previous flat-rate child-raising allowance. The parental benefit is structured as a wage replacement and grants to the parent who gives up or reduces gainful employment in order to look after the child twelve months of state transfer payments amounting to 67 % of the lost income. This is a strong signal which recognises that it is no longer the case that a (male) breadwinner is solely responsible for the maintenance of the family. Today, both parents share the responsibility of safeguarding the family’s income.

The message is underlined by the introduction of “partner months” linked with the parental benefit: Parents who share in the care of their infant in a spirit of partnership and who both take at least two months’ parental leave have a right to two further “bonus months” in addition to the first twelve. These months create a clear incentive for fathers to take an active part in the care and upbringing of the children and to reduce gainful employment in order to take over care tasks in the family.

There was great deal of agitation about the partner months. Prominent male figures spoke in public against what they called the institutionalisation of a “voluntary nappy-changing job” – the expansion of the options was taken up not as an opportunity, but as an imposition.

The excitement has passed. Recent surveys have shown that the parental benefit has strong support, including among employers. However, the agreement is connected with an expectation of many that little will change in the foreseeable future with regard to fathers taking parental leave. This is a sobering conclusion which takes us back to the topic of this conference: How to win men over for an active role, overcoming traditional role patterns?

A new division of labour within the family is an opportunity for men! – This is not only our postulat, but we would also like to make it possible to experience it. All the studies have proven that a re-orientation of the role played by fathers is an opportunity for children. Experience in the pioneer countries confirms that an equal division of family responsibilities stabilises family ties and the future of the partnership.

It should however not be denied that taking leave of the breadwinner model naturally has above all significant effects on women's participation in gainful employment – right through to payment! As long as family duties are clearly allotted only to women, employers will continue to expect women to interrupt their careers more frequently, and mothers to be less reliable in comparison with fathers. These expectation hinder women's career prospects, and they are reflected in lower starting salaries for women with equal qualifications.

In addition to employers and social partners, whom we would like to win over in Germany through alliances with the economy for a "father movement", it is the (future) fathers themselves who are the targets of our male-conscious equality policy. We have brought along for you an example of our communication campaign, which goes hand-in-hand with parental benefit and the partner months: the brochure entitled "I want to be part of it! Becoming a father". We would like the brochure to support men in growing into an active role as a father. The brochure was written by a man, and is based on comprehensive studies by the Federal Centre for Health Education, which is promoted by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, relating to attitudes and perceptions of women and men regarding sexuality, birth control and family planning. The results of the "men live" study presented at the beginning of the year demonstrated a fundamental alienation among men towards the topics of family and birth, but they also showed how unity can be created in partnerships, this bridging this gap, and how understanding and equal involvement can grow. The brochure – which addresses future parents, mothers and fathers alike – also makes a contribution towards achieving this goal.

We are concerned with supporting a new understanding of expectations among men and women, girls and boys not only as regards family and sexuality, but also in other areas of society. The Federal Government is aiming to overcome prejudices of male role models in the area of education and choice of occupation by means of two pilot projects - "New paths for boys" and "Social boys". "New paths for boys" aims to familiarise boys with occupations which are traditionally regarded as being reserved to girls, such as kindergarten or primary teacher, through careers information and workshops, training and round table discussions.

In the "Social boys" project, boys aged from 13 to 16 voluntarily undertake to work in a social facility for a year and experience unaccustomed responsibilities. How indispensable these programmes are is shown by the 15th Shell Study on German Youth, which was presented only a few days ago. Here it says: "Along with well-performing girls and young women who would like to reconcile work and a family, and who express this desire self-confidently, a large number of boys come to notice who are still uncertain and are seeking their role in society and trying to redefine themselves. Boys are subject to contradictory expectations today. They are experiencing completely new challenges as to their gender role. Relationships must be continually re-adjusted in constant negotiation processes. There is no mistaking the fact that many young men feel that this is beyond their ability." The Federal Government's abovementioned projects are actively

strengthening the “close social network of support”, which according to the Shell Study could help find an orientation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In addition to the division of labour between men and women in families and at work, the last two days have confirmed that it is matters related to the health of women and men and questions as to violence experienced in the relationships between the genders which attract major attention if we seek to develop gender equality policy, whilst actively incorporating men’s standpoint. My brief reference to the Federal Centre for Health Education already indicated that in Germany too, in particular the institutions within the health system have at their disposal many starting points for integrative gender research aimed at men and women and at gender equality policy.

It remains unavoidable to consider the topic of violence against women as a topic of violence committed by men if we wish to tackle gender equality policy which explicitly addresses the role played by men. Most of you will know that Germany has been engaged in intensive research in this area for several years, and that we have explicitly included men in our Action Plan against Violence. Reaching the offenders is a major factor here, but the task also includes persuading men to come to the aid of the victims in violent situations and as role models for an environment which does not tolerate violence.

The possibilities to ask men about their own experience of violence and to gain an insight into this were explored in a first pilot study, published in 2004.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We will be expanding the outlined approaches towards integrating male-specific strategies into our gender equality policy in the context of the EU Presidency. We will be increasing our knowledge in this area by means of new studies, and we will be following up on the topic, in particular in connection with migration and integration: We will be studying in greater detail the experience of the differing paces at which migrants accept gender equality-related values in the integration process, and addressing the fear of many men with an immigration background of losing out as a result of emancipation. This fear is a major obstacle to integration when it finds its expression in aggression.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With this conference, the Finnish Presidency has placed a topic on the agenda which – as the lively debates have shown – is by no means “finished”. My impression is that opinions are divided between men and men, between women and women, and between women and men, on the role played by men in gender equality policy, and on the role which gender equality policy plays, can play or should play for men.

The statement of the Commission’s Advisory Committee on “Men in Gender Equality” is in this respect a major contribution towards intensifying the EU-wide discussion on a forward-looking, exciting topic.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the Informal Meeting of Ministers for Gender Equality and Family to be held in May of next year, the German Presidency will be taking up aspects of today’s topic once more in four blocks of subject matter. We are planning to develop the theme of role models to focus on changes in the traditional image of masculinity. We would like to sound out possibilities in order to improve the situation of women and committed fathers in managerial positions, and in doing so also exchange

experiences of “alliances with the economy”. And last but not least, we would like to touch on support for women and children with a migration background in order to actively avert the risk of retraditionalisation of women’s and men’s lives against the background of demographic change.

Germany is the first country to have the opportunity to shape its EU Presidency within a Team Presidency. We have agreed with our Team Presidency partners from Portugal and Slovenia to coordinate our equality policy closely and to develop a joint agenda for the next 18 months. In doing so, we would like to actively and focussedly support the implementation of the projects designated in the Commission’s “Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men”.

The German Presidency coincides with the start of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. We will do our utmost by means of measures and projects under the umbrella of this Year to promote equality between the genders, while also encouraging diversity in our society.

Men and women must reach an agreement as to what room for manoeuvre within society they wish to open up to one another as men and women. They must negotiate and agree on this aspect to enable men and women to find a better way to live together and enjoy equal rights.

I would like to thank the Finnish EU Presidency for generating a fresh awareness of this topic, and am looking forward with great interest to the announced conclusions for the EU Employment Council.

“Out of the niche, into the midst of society” – Equal rights policy will only achieve this goal if there is a joint effort on the part of women and men. We will continue to work on it.

Many thanks.

## 20 Address by the European Commission

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*Vladimír Špidla*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I should first like to thank the Finnish Presidency for organising this conference and choosing the theme of “Men and gender equality”. A choice which once again illustrates that Finland is a country at the forefront when it comes to gender equality.

I should also like to thank all the participants for the wealth of experience they have shared with us and for the quality of their addresses.

Historically speaking, the fight for gender equality has been fought by women and for women. There are, of course, certain notable exceptions, e.g. the famous writers Aldous Huxley and J.M. Barrie, the father of Peter Pan, who at a very early stage understood the importance of genuine equality for everyone.

Unfortunately, there are still too few men involved in the fight for gender equality. This is no doubt because all too often men see this fight as a threat to their privileges.

So why are we talking about men? Our objective is and must clearly remain the achievement of equality. Sadly, women often remain the underrepresented sex. We must therefore continue our efforts to focus on the elimination of the obstacles and traditions which prevent women from being present in all sectors and at all levels.

Focusing attention on the role of men is not incompatible with strengthening the rights of women. It is essential if the condition of women is to be improved and if gender equality is to be achieved. The work on the role of men must not therefore under any circumstance contribute to maintaining the status quo in regard to discrimination against women. Nor must it mean a reduction in the funding of programmes and policies for women.

I agree with the Minister when she says that: “equality needs men and men need equality”.

We have always spoken of the need for men to take an active part in fostering equality. We cannot speak of a balance between family life and working life if this balance remains a matter of concern for women alone.

It is also important to understand what equality brings men. The whole of society will benefit from increased participation by women on the labour market and a better performing economy. This is part of the Lisbon objectives.

Gender equality hinges on better quality of life through the option of better managing one’s time across working life and private life.

Policies on reconciling working life and family life also give men the option of more flexible management of their time in order to allow them to devote more time to their private and family lives.

Equality also means that women and men alike should not be straitjacketed in their stereotyped – and often anachronistic – roles.

It also means removing the most negative aspects of the unevenly balanced power struggle between women and men, particularly when it comes violence against women.

### *Reconciliation*

Reconciling private life and working life is one of the most important factors, but by no means the only one, in the achievement of equality through the active participation of men.

Reconciliation between working life and private life is one of the priorities of the European Union, as is stressed in the Roadmap for gender equality adopted by the Commission in March 2006.

There is also a need for tangible action to encourage men to take on their family responsibilities, particularly through incentives to get them to take paternity and parental leave and benefit from the same leave entitlement as women.

The lack of childcare facilities and care facilities for other dependent persons remains one of the main reasons why the participation of women on the labour market is so low compared with that of men. At the same time, the lack of facilities generates an imbalance between women and men in the distribution of tasks within the couple and tends to perpetuate stereotypes.

I should like to remind you that it is the responsibility of the Member States to attain the Barcelona childcare targets by 2010.

### *Community legislation*

Community legislation guarantees men and women the entitlement to parental leave (Directive 96/34). This is a very important entitlement.

It is interesting to note that the Member States generally go beyond the minimum requirements imposed by this Directive. Some countries are further ahead than others, e.g. with regard to fathers' entitlement to paternity leave.

The Commission intends to encourage the exchange of best practice on this issue.

I also intend to launch very soon a consultation amongst the social partners in order to ask them how they rate the policies under way and whether they feel that the Community framework should be amended or modernised.

### *Stereotypes*

Another key issue is the fight against stereotypes. Part of our endeavour should be devoted to changing mindsets and eliminating stereotypes. The change in mindsets is a fundamentally important task.

And when we speak of stereotypes, we generally think of women. But female stereotypes are often defined in relation to the stereotypes applied to men. Male stereotypes are no less difficult to get rid of.

In actual fact, over the past few years, our societies have changed significantly and the role of women in society has changed by becoming more diversified.



Be that as it may, it is still difficult for a woman to get into a post of responsibility. It is often also difficult for men to secure parental leave or to take on a job which society has defined as a female job. The pressure stemming from culture, tradition, the expectations of society and the world of employment remains very great and has a definite influence on behavioural patterns.

The point is therefore to change these behavioural patterns which define and influence the role of men and women in society. We must resist the stereotypes transmitted through education, culture and the media. This is one of the messages contained in the Roadmap. The Commission will support awareness-raising campaigns in companies. The social partners have a major role to play and have in fact made this issue as a priority in their framework for action for 2006-2008.

The Commission is also committed to the European education and training programmes and the European Social Fund.

The proceedings of this conference will help us to focus our attention on female and male stereotypes alike.

Gender equality policies cannot succeed without the active participation of men.

I thank you for your attention!

## 21 Concluding Words: Minister for Social Affairs and Health, Finland

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*Tuula Haatainen*

Ladies and Gentlemen, this conference has shown that men and gender equality is a European theme. Although the situations in our countries are different, we have however joint points of departure, challenges and strategies.

Until now women have born the main responsibility for the home and child care. We women are also skilled in deliberately assuming that responsibility. Men must have the right to take responsibility and take part in the everyday life of the family. In order to succeed in this we need both legislation and a change in both mothers' and fathers' attitudes. We also need extensive civic discussion about gender equality and the structures that maintain traditional roles and stereotypes. Only a general change in attitudes will enable equal opportunities for both women and men in society.

Men and gender equality thus cannot be a 'separate island' in gender equality policy. It is important that men and gender equality are integrated as a theme into gender equality policy – that it is not dealt with separately from it. In this way we ensure an extensive gender perspective in the drafting of gender equality policies. The purpose is not to bring about a competitive situation. The issue is simply that "gender equality needs men and men need gender equality".

It is important to continue discussing the theme. The EU and its member states have once more a good opportunity for serving as an example in gender equality policy.

Gender mainstreaming must be continued purposefully in polices and legislation. Both women and men must be taken into account in mainstreaming.

We will draw up a proposal based on the theme of this conference for Council Conclusions for the December Council. The proposal for conclusions will be prepared so that it follows the guidelines approved by the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2004. I hope that the other member states will view our proposal for conclusions in a constructive spirit and support their advancement.

This conference gets to the core of the issue. We have discussed mainstreaming. In my opinion mainstreaming benefits both women and men. If mainstreaming will be introduced properly and equitably; both men's and women's needs can be made visible.

I want to warmly thank the Commission for its cooperation and support as well as for its favourable stance on the theme. I also want to thank the German Presidency that will continue the discussion on the issue during its period of Presidency for instance in the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Finally I want to thank all the speakers and participants who have made this conference a high-level one. I also want to thank the interpreters who have, once more, made it possible for us to concentrate on the issue itself.

## General Information



## Conference Programme

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MEN AND GENDER EQUALITY  
TOWARDS PROGRESSIVE POLICIES  
5–6 October 2006

Kalastajatorppa, Helsinki, Finland

Thursday 5 October 2006

**9.00–11.15 1st Plenary Session: Introduction to the Theme Men and Gender Equality**

Chair: State Secretary Leila Kostainen, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland

Opening of the conference

Tuula Haatainen, Minister for Social Affairs and Health, Finland

Addresses

Luisella Pavan-Woolfe, Director DG EMPL, European Commission

Anna Záborská, Chairwoman, Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, European Parliament

Men and Gender Equality in Different Parts of the EU

Jeff Hearn, Swedish School of Economics, Finland

Iva Smídová, Masaryk University, Czech Republic

Gendering Men: Implications for Gender Equality

Bob Pease, Deakin University, Australia

**11.45–13.00 2nd Plenary Session: Regional Perspectives**

Chair: State Secretary Leila Kostainen, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland

Men and Gender Equality Policy in Finland

Jouni Varanka (Replacing Tomas Wetterberg, Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, Sweden: The Nordic View on Men and Gender Equality)

Prevention of Violence in Spain

Elisa Nieto, Special Delegation of Government on Violence Against Women, Spain

Discussion

**Blind Spot**

A film about men's violence against women with focus centered on the man.

(Project leader: Per Östberg)

**14.30–15.45 3rd Plenary Session: Institutional Mechanisms Dealing with Men and Gender Equality**

Chair: State Secretary Leila Kostainen, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland

Unit for Men's Affairs in Austria

Johannes Berchtold, Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection, Austria

The Subcommittee on Men's Issues of the Finnish Council for Gender Equality

Sirkka-Liisa Anttila, Council for Gender Equality, Finland

Discussion

**16.15–17.00 Working Groups, Introduction**

Friday 6 October 2006

**9.30–10.30 4th Plenary Session: Men and Advancement of Gender Equality: New Directions, Concrete Measures**

Chair: Secretary General, Maarja Mändmaa, Ministry of Social Affairs, Estonia

Men in Gender Equality

Niall Crowley, The Equality Authority, Ireland

Men's Situation and the Need for Equality Policy Focusing on Men

Walter Hollstein, University of Bremen, Germany

Gender Equality and Men: Learning from Practice

Sandy Ruxton, Oxfam, UK

**11.00–13.00 Working Groups, Second Session**

**14.30–16.30 5th Plenary Session: Closing Session**

Chair: Director-General Kari Välimäki, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland

Conclusions of the working groups and panel discussion

Brigitte Gresy, Inspector General, Ministry of Health and Solidarity, France

Peter Makara, National Institute for Health Development, Hungary

Hannu Säävälä, Oulu University Hospital, Finland

Hugo Swinnen, Verwey-Jonker Institute, Netherlands

Conference Summary

Kari Välimäki, Director-General, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland

**Closing remarks**

Address by the next Presidency

Eva-Maria Welskop-Deffaa, Director General for Gender Equality, Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Germany

Address by the European Commission

Vladimír Špidla, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

Closing the Conference

Tuula Haatainen, Minister for Social Affairs and Health, Finland

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Zampa-Georgi, Ioanna	Ministry of Education and Culture, CYPRUS
Zdrazilova, Hana	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, CZECH REPUBLIC
Zelenkova, Dagmar	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, CZECH REPUBLIC
Záborská, Anna	Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
de Leeuw, Petra	Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, THE NETHERLANDS
Åsekog, Birgitta	Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communication, SWEDEN
Östberg, Per	Amphi Produktion, SWEDEN
Österberg, Linda	Ministry of Industry, SWEDEN

## Conference Speakers

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*Sirkka-Liisa Anttila* is the First Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Finland. She has made a long career in politics as a member of the parliament (1983–1996; 1999–) as the representative of the Finnish Centre Party as well as the member of European Parliament in 1996–1999. She has worked as the Chair of the Council for Gender Equality since 2003, the Chair of the Centre Women in 1994–2003, the Chair of NYTKIS – The Coalition of Finnish Women’s Associations in 1999–2003 and the Vice Chair of the Finnish Centre Party in 1994–2000. (Sirkka-Liisa.Anttila[at]eduskunta.fi)

*Ingrid Bellander Todino* is Coordinator of the Daphne II Programme in the Directorate General Justice, Freedom and Security of the European Commission. Before joining the Commission in September 2004, she worked as a legal counsel at the International Fund for Agricultural Development, a United Nations organisation based in Rome. She has also practiced EC law in an international law firm in Brussels. (ingrid.bellander-todino[at]ec.europa.eu)

*Johannes Berchtold* works at the Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection in Austria. He is born 1960 in Bregenz. He has been building up and leading the newly erected Unit for Men’s Affairs, founded in the Austrian Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection in March 2001. (Johannes.Berchtold[at]bmsg.gv.at)

*Niall Crowley* is the Chief Executive Officer of the Equality Authority in Ireland since its establishment in 1999. The Equality Authority is the specialised equality body established in Ireland to promote equality of opportunity and to combat discrimination. Prior to this he worked in the community and voluntary sector on a wide range of equality issues. He has been a member of the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) and the National Economic and Social Council (NESC). (ncrowley[at]equality.ie)

*Maria Eriksson* is a sociologist and researcher at the Department for Gender Studies, Göteborg University, as well as lecturer in social work at Kalmar University College, Sweden. She was the programme co-ordinator for the Nordic Council of Ministers’ research programme “Gender and Violence” (2000–2004). Her current research mainly concerns abused children as social actors in family law proceedings (Sweden) and knowledge on and interventions against human rights violations (a European Commission Framework 6 co-ordinated action). (maria.eriksson[at]wmst.gu.se)

*Duncan Fisher* is a member of the Governing Board of the Equal Opportunities Commission in UK. He is also Chief Executive of Fathers Direct, the national information centre on fatherhood, which works with Government to develop policies in family services, employment, schools and the criminal justice system. Duncan Fisher is the father of two daughters, 5 and 9. His main work interest is how government policy can support the caring roles of men. He is currently working on integrating an understanding of men as carers into UK policies that tackle both child poverty and gender equality. (d.fisher[at]fathersdirect.com)

*Mamuela Galaverni*, PhD, works as a consultant for the National Government and several Regional Governments in Italy on design and evaluation of public policies from a gender point of view. She is member of the Isfol Research Group for the Department of Equal Opportunities of the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministries for the definition of gender aware evaluation models for ESF supported Programmes. She is currently involved in gender budgeting

for Regional and Municipal Authorities. (m.galaverni[at]flashnet.it)

*Maruša Gortnar* has graduated from sociology and specialised in gender studies on post-graduate level. Currently, she is employed in the Office for Equal Opportunities as a senior advisor. Her study and research interest is gender mainstreaming. In the Office she is responsible for the network of coordinators for equal opportunities for women and men within ministries. (marusa.gortnar[at]gov.si)

*Brigitte Gresy* is Inspector General in the Ministry of Health and Solidarity in France. She has been an expert in French language and has taught French grammar for ten years. Then, she was a graduate of national school of Administration. She has been the chief of service of women’s rights and gender equality in the ministry for employment and solidarity. Then she began the director of the cabinet of the minister in charge of gender equality. In 2006, she has been promoted as inspector general of the social affairs. (Brigitte.Gresy[at]sante.gouv.fr)

*Tuula Haatainen* is Minister for Social Affairs and Health in Finland. She is in charge of gender equality issues in the Finnish Government. Prior to current task she was Minister for Education for two and a half years. She has been a Member of Parliament since 1996 and Chair of Social Democratic Women 1989–1996. Tuula Haatainen is Master of Political Science and a registered nurse.

*Jeff Hearn* is Professor at the Swedish School of Economics in Helsinki, Finland. He has published many books on men, gender, sexuality, violence, organisations and management. He has co-edited the Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities. He is co-editor of the journal Men and Masculinities, was Principal Contractor of the FP5 EU Research Network ‘The Social Problem of Men’, and is currently researching ‘Men, Gender Relations and Transnational Organising, Organisations and Management’. (hearn[at]hanken.fi)

*Walter Hollstein*, Ph.D., is Professor of Sociology at the Institute for Gender and Generation Studies at the University of Bremen in Germany. His latest publication is Geschlechterdemokratie (Gender Democracy) 2004.

*Janne Hyppönen* works at the Etelä-Kymenlaakso Vocational College in Finland. (janne.hypponen[at]kotka.fi)

*Ludger Jungnitz*, sociologist, works as researcher at Dissens e.V., Berlin, Germany and as counsellor for men in crisis situations at Mannege e.V. He was editor of the journal “Rundbrief kritische Männerforschung” and a researcher in the German pilot study “Violence against men”. At present he is involved in the Daphne II project “Work with perpetrators of domestic violence in Europe”. (Ludger.Jungnitz[at]dissens.de)

*Leila Kostainen* is State Secretary in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland. She is a physiotherapist and a lawyer. Before the current task as State Secretary she has worked as the head of a Finnish central organization of wage earners and as a lawyer of a trade union. Leila Kostainen has specialized among many in the fields of social insurance, working life and gender equality.

*Sine Lehn* has MA in psychology and educational studies and is Ph.D.-fellow at the Roskilde University. In 2002–2005 she was managing two projects supported by the ESF EQUAL programme, focusing on gender equality within vocational and educational guidance. Now she’s studying for her Ph.D., which is on health promotion education, gender and ethnicity. (slehn[at]ruc.dk)

*Maarja Mändmaa* works as Secretary General of Ministry of Social Affairs in Estonia, starting the job in 2002. She is

responsible for general managing of ministry, which covers labour market and employment, social welfare and health policies. Among social welfare questions ministry covers issues of gender equality. This conference is basically first time for her to think more specifically about men and gender equality subjects.

*Peter Makara* works as a deputy-director at the National Institute for Health Development, where he has worked since 1977 with interruptions. He has Ph.D. in Sociology and is lecturer at 3 medical universities. He is former regional advisor of WHO, Copenhagen, in country health policies and coordinator of the Council on Health Research and Development, Geneva. He is Honorary Chair of the Hungarian Pápai-Páriz Health Education Society. (makara[at]oeff.hu)

*Claudia Menne* is member of the presidium of the ETUC women's committee. She is head of department of gender equality at the Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB), executive board. She has experiences in European trade union issues for several years. (Claudia.Menne[at]dgb.de)

*Elisa Nieto Maestro* is technical advisor at the Special Government Delegation on Violence against Women, where she has been working almost since its creation in 2005. She has developed different technical tasks, which include several participations in national as well as international gender violence forums and coordination of the integrated social assistance funds distributed by the State to the regional governments. (enietom[at]mtas.es)

*Per Östberg* is a film producer and project leader at Amph Productions, located in Gotheburg, Sweden. He is currently working with *Blind Spot*, a primary preventative project against domestic abuse and the connection between masculinity ideals and violence. Prior to this, he has been working with preventing sexual violence and he is a frequently hired lecturer on the subject. Per has produced two feature films on gender related topics and *Blind Spot* is his third project on gendered violence and men's responsibility. (per.ostberg[at]rumstockholm.com)

*Luisella Pavan-Woolfe* is the Director for Equal Opportunities Functions and responsible for the European Union's policy development in the area of non discrimination on grounds of race and ethnicity, religion, age, disability, sex and sexual orientation; equal opportunities between men and women and the integration of people with disabilities. She graduated in Political Science from the University of Padova. She taught Anglo-American law in this University. She is the author of several articles on European matters and has written a book on the interrelations between employment policy and social issues in Europe. She was awarded the 1998 European prize by the Bellisario Foundation for Women Entrepreneurs.

*Bob Pease* is Chair of Social Work in the School of Health and Social Development at Deakin University in Victoria, Australia. His most recent books are *A Man's World? Changing Men's Practices in a Globalized World* (co-editor); *Men and Gender Relations and Critical Social Work* (co-editor). He is currently co-editing the *International Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinities*, writing a book titled *Undoing Privilege: Facing the Predicament of Unearned Advantages and researching migrant and refugee masculinities in Australia*. (bob.pease[at]deakin.edu.au)

*Minna Piispa*, Ph.D., works as Senior Planning Officer in Ministry of Justice, at the Department of Criminal Policy and coordinates the National programme for reducing violence. She has studied social policy at the University of Helsinki. Previously she has worked at the Interview Unit of Statistics Finland. Her research interests include criminology, victimisation and survey methodology. She has published several academic articles and publications on violence against women and costs of violence. At present, she is involved in national prevalence study on violence against women. (Minna.Piispa[at]om.fi)

*Vasco Prazeres* is educated as a consultant on family medicine and as a sexologist. He works in the Ministry of Health in the General Directorate of Health in Lisbon, Portugal. His current tasks include working as the Head of the National Youth Health Program and as the Coordinator of PROSAGE (health, sex and gender project). (vascop[at]dgsaude.min-saude.pt)

*Ralf Puchert*, Ph.D., educationalist, works as researcher and manager at Dissens e.V., Berlin, Germany. He was Coordinator of the EU Framework 5 RTD-project "Towards a new organisation of men's lives – emerging forms of work and opportunities for gender equality – Work Changes Gender" and co-ordinated the German pilot study "Violence against men". At present he is member of the executive board in the EU FP 6 project "Co-ordination Action on Human Rights Violations - CAHRV" and coordinates the Daphne II project "Work with perpetrators of domestic violence in Europe". (Ralf.Puchert[at]dissens.de)

*Yves Roland-Gosselin* is the President of the Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union since 2004. Born in Paris in 1935, he studied Law and Economics there. From 1962 to 2000, he led a carrier as a European civil servant at the Commission. In addition, for five years he worked for the cabinet of Mr Jean-François Deniau, Commissioner in charge of external relations and the enlargement of 1973, and then of Mr Claude Cheysson in charge of development. Honorary Director at the European Commission, he joined COFACE in 2001 and was elected President in 2004.

*Sandy Ruxton* is Policy and Communications Manager with Oxfam GB's 'UK Poverty Programme', based in Oxford. He is the editor of 'Gender Equality and Men: Learning from Practice' and author of 'Men, Masculinities and Poverty in the UK'. His current research interest is work with older men, but he has previously focused on fatherhood and men as carers. Before undertaking policy and research work, he trained as a teacher, and worked in a range of community settings (mainly with young male offenders). (sruxton[at]oxfam.org.uk)

*Hannu Säävälä* has been involved with gender equality issues and male gender activism for almost twenty years. He was a member of the Subcommittee on Men's Issues of the Finnish Council for Gender Equality in Finland during 1992–1996. During the last ten years he has been developing therapeutic work with men who have been violent in their intimate relationship. Also he has been developing methods to involve men in active fatherhood from infancy. He works at the moment as a psychiatrist in the University Hospital of Oulu. His scientific research is focused on violence in intimate relationships. (hannu.saauala[at]oulu.fi)

*Anu Sajavaara* is a lawyer working at the Industrial Relations Department of the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK). Her tasks include international and EU labour market issues, general questions related to the development of working life, gender equality issues and reconciliation of work and family life. She is a mother of two children and reconciles family and work every day. (anu.sajavaara[at]jek.fi)

*Marita Sihto* has worked as senior researcher for National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES). Her primary interests have been Finnish national health policies and inequalities in health. Currently she is also chairing the Committee of Experts on the Inclusion of Gender Differences in Health Policy by the Council of Europe. (marita.sihto[at]stakes.fi)

*Iva Smidová*, Ph. D. is an assistant professor at the Sociology Department, Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University in Brno (CZ). Currently, she is the head of the Gender Studies Program. Her recent research studies explored families with nurturing fathers, equal opportunities in Czech companies, and alternative life-courses of Czech men. Now she works among many on researching

parenthood before and after the birth of a child. She is a co-founder of the Gender centre at the FSS MU and a co-ordinator of several educational lecture series on gender issues in the region. (krizala[at]fss.muni.cz)

*Vladimír Špidla* is Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. He is former Prime Minister of the Czech Republic and Chairman of the Czech Democratic Party (CSSD).

*Hugo Swinnen*, sociologist, is Manager for International Affairs at Verwey-Jonker Institute. Apart from the overall co-ordination of crossnational projects, he is actively involved in different projects on local (urban) social policy, poverty and social exclusion, gender, education and on citizens' participation in European countries. He was member of the research team that produced the report "Working Fathers, Caring Men". He is actively involved in different European research and policy networks, such as the European Social Policy Analysis Network (ESPANet) and Eurocities. (Hswinnen[at]verwey-jonker.nl)

*Kari Välimäki* is Director-General (Permanent Secretary 1.1.2007–) in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland. One of his responsibilities is gender equality. He is also the Chair of Gender equality task force of the Ministry.

*Jaroslav Waligóra* has been working in the European Commission in the Directorate General of Health and Consumer Protection in Luxembourg since September 2006. Previous nine years he worked at the Medical University of Warsaw (Poland) in 2nd Department of Paediatrics. He is a Paediatrician and specialist in Clinical Genetics. He is married and has son. (Jaroslav.Waligora[at]cec.eu.int)

*Jouni Varanka, Sos. Lic.*, has worked in the Gender Equality Unit of the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health since 2003. At this moment he acts as a Project Manager with the topic men and gender equality as his main responsibility. During 2002-2004 he was the secretary of the Subcommittee on Men's Issues in the Council of Gender Equality. He has written the publication Men and Gender

Equality Policy and organised several conferences and events dealing with men and gender equality. (jouni.varanka[at]stm.fi)

*Eva Maria Welskop-Deffaa* is Director-General for Gender Equality at the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. She studied economics and history in Munich and Florence. She has worked as Consultant for Matters of Principle at the Catholic German Women's Association. In 1999 she became Head of Division for "Economy and Society" at the Central Committee of the German Catholics. In addition to her professional engagement she works for gender equality in several honorary positions.

*Tomas Wetterberg* has studied gender studies and sociology and has a bachelor's degree. Today he is working at the Division for Gender Equality in Sweden. He has also been working in a specific government project on men and gender equality and with a delegation for gender equality in pre-school. He has been interested in the issue of men and gender equality since he became a father for about 20 years ago. (tomas.wetterberg[at]industry.ministry.se)

*Alan White* is Professor in Men's Health and Director of the Centre for Men's Health at Leeds Metropolitan University. As a leading campaigner for men's health he is also on the Executive Board of the European Men's Health Forum. His research includes the examination of the State of Men's Health in Western Europe and a study of young men's health across 44 countries. (a.white[at]leedsmet.ac.uk)

*Anna Záborská* has a certificate of postgraduate study in otorhinolaryngology; she is Doctor of ORL; she is specialised certificate of postgraduate study in paediatric ORL. She has been elected as a Member of the European Parliament in 2004. She is the Chairwoman of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament and member of the Committee on Development and of the Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.



## Appendices

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## Appendix 1: EU Council Conclusions on Men and Gender Equality

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### Council of the European Union Council Conclusions on Men and Gender Equality<sup>29</sup>

WHEREAS:

1. Gender equality is a fundamental principle of the European Union enshrined in the EC Treaty as well as one of the Community's objectives; a special task for the Community is to take equality between women and men into account in all its activities.
2. The Spring European Council of 23/24 March 2006 stated that gender equality policy was vital to economic growth, wellbeing and competitiveness and, with that in view, adopted a European Pact for Gender Equality.
3. In the UN Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995 for the empowerment of women, men are encouraged to take part in promoting gender equality and this was reaffirmed in the discussion on the theme of the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality in the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2004.
4. The Commission's 'Roadmap for equality between women and men' (2006-2010) states that men still participate less than women in attending to domestic and family responsibilities; that gender-based violence is a breach of the fundamental right to life, safety, freedom, dignity and physical and emotional integrity; and that the present structures in education, training and culture maintain gender stereotypes.
5. In 2005, the role of men in the promotion of gender equality, with a focus on the reconciliation of work and private life, was a priority area in the project financing for the Community framework strategy on Gender Equality. The theme of 'men and gender equality' was dealt with in a separate section in the European Commission's Annual Report on Gender Equality 2005, which focused on the reconciliation of professional and family life. In July 2006, the Advisory Committee on Gender Equality produced an opinion on men's role in promoting gender equality.
6. The Barcelona European Council of 15/16 March 2002 stated that Member States should remove disincentives to female labour force participation and strive, taking into account the demand for childcare facilities and in line with national patterns of provision, to provide by 2010 childcare to at least 90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under 3 years of age.
7. Gender equality policy and an effective reconciliation of professional and private life can contribute to addressing the challenges of demographic changes: an ageing population and the low fertility rate in the EU.
8. There is still a significant gender pay gap in the EU resulting from direct discrimination against women and structural inequalities, such as gender segregation in the labour market.
9. There are gender-based differences in health risks in Member States, which are costly in both economic and human terms. Lifestyles, which have a significant impact on health, are influenced by gender-related norms and conceptions that may differ in respect of women and men.
10. In October 2006, Finland's EU Presidency organised a European-wide expert conference on "Men and Gender Equality – Towards Progressive Policies". Several other previous Presidencies have held conferences dealing with 'fatherhood' and 'men and caring'.

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. NOTES that, in order to improve the status of women and promote gender equality, more attention should be paid to how men are involved in the achievement of gender equality, as well as to the positive impact of gender equality for men and for the wellbeing of society as a whole.
2. NOTES that gender inequalities and imbalances between men and women still exist; STRESSES that the participation of men and boys in achieving gender equality must be consistent with the empowerment of women and girls, and that resources for gender equality initiatives for men and boys should not compromise equal opportunity initiatives and resources for women and girls.

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<sup>29</sup> As adopted on 1 December 2006.

3. CONFIRMS the importance of the effective and overall implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy, which implies that the interests and needs of both men and women are taken into account in order to enhance the appropriateness, quality and effectiveness of policies and measures to achieve gender equality.
4. RECOGNISES that issues related to men and gender equality have not yet been looked at as an entirety, and that the question of men and gender equality should go beyond the reconciliation of professional and private life.
5. ACKNOWLEDGES the need to tailor measures to the specific situations experienced by men and women in different groups or in different life situations, depending on their family situation, age, health, ethnicity, social background, sexual orientation, disability etc.
6. ENCOURAGES the future European Institute for Gender Equality and the different national gender equality bodies to investigate how various circumstances, opportunities, structures and policies affect both men and women, boys and girls.
7. ENCOURAGES the development, from early childcare and education, of pedagogic practices aimed at eliminating gender stereotypes, also paying attention to educational methods and tools that improve the capacity and potential of boys and men to care for themselves and others as a means of contributing to a gender-balanced participation in society.
8. ENCOURAGES the Member States to pay attention to the promotion of gender equality, as well as how men relate to it, through debate and information on gender stereotypes and the relations between men and women, especially with regard to young people.
9. URGES the Member States to reinforce institutional structures for the promotion of gender equality, both in the public and private sectors, and to also support men's involvement in promoting and achieving gender equality.
10. URGES the Commission and Member States to ensure equal career opportunities for both sexes, taking into account the dominance of men in decision-making positions, and to take measures aimed at encouraging boys and men to choose education and employment in female-dominated fields and vice-versa with a view to dismantling gender segregation in the labour market; in this context, INVITES Member States and the Commission to take concrete actions towards eliminating the gender pay gap.
11. STRESSES that the recognition of the gender dimension in health is an essential part of EU health policies and that health promotion projects and services should be tailored, as appropriate, to women's or men's needs.
12. ACKNOWLEDGES that the vast majority of gender-based acts of violence are perpetrated by men; URGES the Member States and the Commission to combine punitive measures against the perpetrators with preventive measures targeted especially at young men and boys and to set up specific programmes for victims as well as for offenders, in particular in the case of domestic violence.
13. RECOGNISES the importance of providing a wide range of policies to reconcile professional and private life for both men and women at all levels of employment, taking into account the great variety of family types in today's society and the child's best interests, in order to support an equal sharing of domestic and caring responsibilities and tasks between women and men.
14. URGES the Member States to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Barcelona targets on childcare facilities by 2010 and to take concrete measures to encourage men to share with women parenting and other care responsibilities, by encouraging them to take up their family leave entitlements, including through the development of parental leave entitlements for fathers, financial incentives as well as information and awareness-raising initiatives.
15. REGOGNISES the crucial role that the social partners and companies play in reconciliation policies, in promoting awareness-raising schemes in companies and the take-up of flexible work options, especially by men, including in male-dominated professions.
16. INVITES the Member States to pay attention, when undertaking measures and projects to promote gender equality, to taking both genders into account.
17. INVITES the Member States and the Commission to identify which issues and challenges relate to men and gender equality by further developing gender-related research and the exchange of good practices, in particular with a view to enhancing the active participation of men in, and commitment to, policies aimed at achieving gender equality at national and EU level, and also with a view to developing greater understanding of the processes that lead to an uneven distribution of power in decisionmaking.

## Appendix 2: UN Commission on the Status of Women Conclusions 2004

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**ADVANCE UNEDITED VERSION**  
**12 March 2004, as adopted**

### **UN Commission on the Status of Women**

#### **Forty-eighth session**

**1-12 March 2004**

#### **The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality**

##### **Agreed conclusions**

1. The Commission on the Status of Women recalls and reiterates that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action<sup>30</sup> encouraged men to participate fully in all actions towards gender equality and urged the establishment of the principle of shared power and responsibility between women and men at home, in the community, in the workplace and in the wider national and international communities. The Commission also recalls and reiterates the outcome document adopted at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century”<sup>31</sup> which emphasized that men must take joint responsibility with women for the promotion of gender equality.
2. The Commission recognizes that men and boys, while some themselves face discriminatory barriers and practices, can and do make contributions to gender equality in their many capacities, including as individuals, members of families, social groups and communities, and in all spheres of society.
3. The Commission recognizes that gender inequalities still exist and are reflected in imbalances of power between women and men in all spheres of society. The Commission further recognizes that everyone benefits from gender equality and that the negative impacts of gender inequality are borne by society as a whole and emphasizes, therefore, that men and boys, through taking responsibility themselves and working jointly in partnership with women and girls, are essential to achieving the goals of gender equality, development and peace. The Commission recognizes the capacity of men and boys in bringing about change in attitudes, relationships and access to resources and decisionmaking which are critical for the promotion of gender equality and the full enjoyment of all human rights by women.
4. The Commission acknowledges and encourages men and boys to continue to take positive initiatives to eliminate gender stereotypes and promote gender equality, including combating violence against women, through networks, peer programmes, information campaigns, and training programmes. The Commission acknowledges the critical role of gender-sensitive education and training in achieving gender equality.
5. The Commission also recognizes that the participation of men and boys in achieving gender equality must be consistent with the empowerment of women and girls and acknowledges that efforts must be made to address the undervaluation of many types of work, abilities and roles associated with women. In this regard, it is important that resources for gender equality initiatives for men and boys do not compromise equal opportunities and resources for women and girls.
6. The Commission urges Governments and, as appropriate, the relevant funds and programmes, organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, civil society, including the private sector and nongovernmental organizations, and other stakeholders, to take the following actions:
  - a) Encourage and support the capacity of men and boys in fostering gender equality, including acting in partnership with women and girls as agents for change and in providing positive leadership, in particular where men are still key decision makers responsible for policies, programmes and legislation, as well as holders of economic and organizational power and public resources;
  - b) Promote understanding of the importance of fathers, mothers, legal guardians and other caregivers, to the well being of children and the promotion of gender equality and of the need to develop policies, programmes and school curricula that encourage and maximize their positive involvement in achieving gender equality and positive results for children, families and communities;
  - c) Create and improve training and education programmes to enhance awareness and knowledge among men and women on their roles as parents, legal guardians and caregivers and the importance of sharing family responsibilities, and include fathers as well as mothers in programmes that teach infant child care development;

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<sup>30</sup> Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13).

<sup>31</sup> A/RES/S-23/3, annex.

- d) Develop and include in education programmes for parents, legal guardians and other caregivers information on ways and means to increase the capacity of men to raise children in a manner oriented towards gender equality;
- e) Encourage men and boys to work with women and girls in the design of policies and programmes for men and boys aimed at gender equality and foster the involvement of men and boys in gender mainstreaming efforts in order to ensure improved design of all policies and programmes;
- f) Encourage the design and implementation of programmes at all levels to accelerate a socio-cultural change towards gender equality, especially through the upbringing and educational process, in terms of changing harmful traditional perceptions and attitudes of male and female roles in order to achieve the full and equal participation of women and men in the society;
- g) Develop and implement programmes for pre-schools, schools, community centers, youth organizations, sport clubs and centres, and other groups dealing with children and youth, including training for teachers, social workers and other professionals who deal with children to foster positive attitudes and behaviours on gender equality;
- h) Promote critical reviews of school curricula, textbooks and other information education and communication materials at all levels in order to recommend ways to strengthen the promotion of gender equality that involves the engagement of boys as well as girls;
- i) Develop and implement strategies to educate boys and girls and men and women about tolerance, mutual respect for all individuals and the promotion of all human rights;
- j) Develop and utilize a variety of methods in public information campaigns on the role of men and boys in promoting gender equality, including through approaches specifically targeting boys and young men;
- k) Engage media, advertising and other related professionals, through the development of training and other programmes, on the importance of promoting gender equality, nonstereotypical portrayal of women and girls and men and boys and on the harms caused by portraying women and girls in a demeaning or exploitative manner, as well as on the enhanced participation of women and girls in the media;
- l) Take effective measures, to the extent consistent with freedom of expression, to combat the growing sexualization and use of pornography in media content, in terms of the rapid development of ICT, encourage men in the media to refrain from presenting women as inferior beings and exploiting them as sexual objects and commodities, combat ICT- and media-based violence against women including criminal misuse of ICT for sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and trafficking in women and girls, and support the development and use of ICT as a resource for the empowerment of women and girls, including those affected by violence, abuse and other forms of sexual exploitation;
- m) Adopt and implement legislation and/or policies to close the gap between women's and men's pay and promote reconciliation of occupational and family responsibilities, including through reduction of occupational segregation, introduction or expansion of parental leave, flexible working arrangements, such as voluntary part-time work, teleworking, and other home-based work;
- n) Encourage men, through training and education, to fully participate in the care and support of others, including older persons, persons with disabilities and sick persons, in particular children and other dependants;
- o) Encourage active involvement of men and boys through education projects and peer-based programmes in eliminating gender stereotypes as well as gender inequality in particular in relation to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, as well as their full participation in prevention, advocacy, care, treatment, support and impact evaluation programmes;
- p) Ensure men's access to and utilization of reproductive and sexual health services and programmes, including HIV/AIDS-related programmes and services, and encourage men to participate with women in programmes designed to prevent and treat all forms of HIV/AIDS transmission and other sexually transmitted infections;
- q) Design and implement programmes to encourage and enable men to adopt safe and responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour, and to use effectively methods to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS;
- r) Encourage and support men and boys to take an active part in the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence, and especially gender-based violence, including in the context of HIV/AIDS, and increase awareness of men's and boys' responsibility in ending the cycle of violence, inter alia, through the promotion of attitudinal and behavioural change, integrated education and training which prioritize the safety of women and children, prosecution and rehabilitation of perpetrators, and support for survivors, and recognizing that men and boys also experience violence;
- s) Encourage an increased understanding among men how violence, including trafficking for the purposes of commercialized sexual exploitation, forced marriages and forced labour, harms women, men and children and undermines gender equality, and consider measures aimed at eliminating the demand for trafficked women and children;
- t) Encourage and support both women and men in leadership positions, including political leaders, traditional leaders, business leaders, community and religious leaders, musicians, artists and athletes to provide positive role models on gender equality;

- u) Encourage men in leadership positions to ensure equal access for women to education, property rights and inheritance rights and to promote equal access to information technology and business and economic opportunities, including in international trade, in order to provide women with the tools that enable them to take part fully and equally in economic and political decision-making processes at all levels;
  - v) Identify and fully utilize all contexts in which a large number of men can be reached, particularly in male-dominated institutions, industries and associations, to sensitize men on their roles and responsibilities in the promotion of gender equality and the full enjoyment of all human rights by women, including in relation to HIV/AIDS and violence against women;
  - w) Develop and use statistics to support and/or carry out research, inter alia, on the cultural, social and economic conditions, which influence the attitudes and behaviours of men and boys towards women and girls, their awareness of gender inequalities and their involvement in promoting gender equality;
  - x) Carry out research on men's and boys' views of gender equality and their perceptions of their roles through which further programmes and policies can be developed and identify and widely disseminate good practices. Assess the impact of efforts undertaken to engage men and boys in achieving gender equality;
  - y) Promote and encourage the representation of men in institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women;
  - z) Encourage men and boys to support women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding;
7. The Commission urges all entities within the UN system to take into account the recommendations contained in these agreed conclusions and to disseminate these agreed conclusions widely.



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