Gender mainstreaming in surveys: Finland

This is the Finnish contribution to the comparative analytical report on gender mainstreaming in surveys, coordinated via questionnaire by Anne-Marie Nicot from ANACT, France, and Irene Houtman from TNO, the Netherlands, for the European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO). This report has not been subjected to the standard Foundation editorial procedures.

Q1. Who is responsible for administering national surveys in your country?

Is there a special unit in this institute dealing with gender statistics?

Please expand on the types of topics covered by this questionnaire/these questionnaires, and mention the year it started as a national survey, and whether this survey is a yearly exercise, every second year or has another periodicity.

The Quality of Work Life Survey, carried out by Statistics Finland, is the main national survey on working conditions in Finland. At the time of writing, there have been five surveys, involving each time between 3,000 and 6,000 employees: in 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003. The response rate of the 2003 survey was 78%. The surveys have been conducted as personal, face-to-face interviews. The interview includes questions on the physical, mental and social work environment and the employees’ experiences relating to it, as well as questions on work experience, position in the labour market, conditions of employment, occurrence of physical and psychological symptoms, work motivation, job satisfaction, work orientation, and experiences relating to gender equality and fair treatment. There is also an Equality Statistics Unit at Statistics Finland but the Work Research Unit is responsible for the QWLS.

Since 1992, Working Life Barometers have been carried out by the Ministry of Labour. They are annual telephone interviews, involving each year about 1,000 to 1,300 employees, with response rates between 87% and 90%. These barometers cover partly the same topics as the QWLS, but are far more limited both in sample size and in content. They concentrate on illustrating rapid changes in employees’ assessments of their working conditions rather than the levels of certain factors.

Work and Health Surveys have been carried out by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health in 1994–1995, 1997, 2000 and 2003. The sample size of these telephone interviews is about 5,000 Finnish-speaking persons, the response rate being 67% in 2003. The number of working people in the data (both employees and self-employed) was 2,300 in 2003. The survey content emphasises occupational safety and health issues.

In this national contribution to the comparative analytical report, only the Quality of Work Life Surveys will be considered. They are the most exhaustive surveys with the best response rates in this field in Finland.

Q2. In what way has the national survey(s) or questionnaire(s) on quality of working life (and health or employment) changed over the last decade(s)?

Which questions have been added, and which have been deleted in order to make the surveys more gender sensitive, and have any questions or topics changed (if so, in what way)?

Do you think that the survey(s) or questionnaire(s) have become more gender sensitive due to these changes?

Gender equality and gender sensitiveness have played major roles in the QWLS since 1984. This is mainly thanks to the lead researcher, Anna-Maija Lehto, who has been responsible for these surveys since then. The principle of gender sensitiveness is involved in every step of the survey process from the questionnaire design to the analysis and reports of the results. This goes much further than only presenting the figures by gender. It has been and it still is about assessing what is characteristic of women’s work and orientation instead of taking the work in male-dominated sectors as a norm; questions are then designed to cover these ‘female’ aspects as well. The aim is also to take into consideration gender differences in responding. This is important while designing the
questionnaire as well as in interpreting and reporting the results. In addition to this interwoven gender sensitivity, direct questions on different aspects of gender equality are used.

Engendering the QWLS has been an ongoing, mainly conscious and purposeful process since 1984. However, parts of it have happened unconsciously too, due to the strong orientation towards gender equality of the particular researchers administering these surveys.

In 1984:

- Questions on work involving customer contact, which is typical for women, were introduced.
- Furthermore, a question was added regarding the male or female dominance of the sector: ‘Considering the tasks in your work, are your co-workers doing roughly similar tasks to yours: All women / Mostly women / Both men and women / Mostly men / All men / Nobody else does work similar to yours?’ This question is used not only as an indicator for gender segregation of sectors, but as background information when analysing working conditions: characteristics specific to work in male or female-dominated sectors are detected in a better way than merely analysing the results by the sex of the respondent.
- A question on the sex of the superior was also introduced: ‘Is your immediate superior: Male / or female / No immediate superior?’
- In addition, questions on the civil status of the respondent, labour market status of the spouse as well as the number and age of children were introduced in this survey. A few questions were also added on work–life balance, on absenteeism because of sick children and on the right to stay at home to take care of sick children with full salary.

In 1990:

- Questions on discrimination were introduced. The respondent was asked whether unequal treatment or discrimination occurred at his/her workplace and whether he/she had experienced it. Age, mother language, sex, religion, political views, activity in the trade union, having a family or being pregnant, favouritism, nationality or colour where all presented separately as possible forms of discrimination. Further, the respondent was asked whether he/she had experienced discrimination in the following situations, separately: at the time of hiring or appointment, in remuneration, in career advancement opportunities, in access to training arranged by the employer, in receiving information and in the attitudes of co-workers or superiors.
- The survey also included two questions on sexual harassment – prevalence at the workplace and whether the respondent had been subjected to it. Since it turned out to be difficult to get reliable answers for these kinds of questions, the experiment was not repeated in later surveys. Instead, questions on prevalence of psychological violence/bullying at the workplace were introduced in the 1997 survey.
- More questions on work–life balance were introduced, on issues such as absenteeism from working life because of family leave, sharing of household chores and on compromises on behalf of either work or family.

In 1997:

- Qualitative interviews of employees in different occupations, about half of them women and the other half men, preceded the questionnaire design of 1997. The aim was, firstly, to test some of the old questions, e.g. on discrimination. Secondly, the purpose was to find out the best way to design questions on special new themes, namely time pressure and fixed-term employment relationships. Indeed, gender specific characteristics of both these issues were identified and were adapted to gender sensitive questions.
- A direct question on gender equality at workplace was introduced: ‘Has equality between the sexes been accomplished at your workplace? (Very well / Fairly well / Averagely / Rather poorly / Very poorly / Not applicable)’
- The questions about discrimination were altered slightly. The general questions about discrimination based on age and sex were divided into ‘Age, especially young people’ and ‘Age, especially old people’ as well as ‘Sex, especially women’ and ‘Sex, especially men’. A new potential reason for discrimination, topical especially for women, was introduced: ‘Temporary or part-time employment relationship’.

In 2003:

- Direct questions on gender equality were added: ‘Have you noticed that any special measures have been taken at your workplace to advance gender equality? Has your workplace: A. Prepared a gender equality plan? B.
Encouraged men to take family leave? D. Promoted equal division of work between sexes? (Yes / No / Not applicable)

- New performance-based pay systems and bonuses have become increasingly popular in Finland in the 1990s. It remains doubtful how well these systems are applicable to work in the public sector, typical for women, where results cannot be easily measured or where the work organisation does not yield a profit. To contemplate this dilemma and to establish who are the beneficiaries of these pay reforms, new questions on the prevalence of different pay systems and the amount of bonuses received were added.

- The prevalence of fixed-term employment relationships among young women and possible consequences on birth rates or fertility have become topical issues in Finland in the past few years. A new question was added to the 2003 survey regarding whether the respondent had put off having children because of precariousness of employment relationship.

- The 1990 and 1997 surveys had included a question on how long the respondent estimated that it would take for a new employee with the necessary basic training to learn his/her work. The response alternatives were between a few hours and several years. Wide gender differences in answering were detected even in the same occupations: men tended to overestimate and women to underestimate the time needed. Some users did not take into account this difference when analysing results but simply concluded that the work men do is much more demanding than women’s work. To avoid this kind of misuse, the question was deleted from the 2003 survey.

- Another gender sensitive adjustment could be mentioned here. In the 1997 survey, the question ‘Could you estimate what proportion of your working hours is spent dealing with people other than your co-workers (e.g. customers, patients, passengers, pupils, etc)?’ resulted in an unusual finding. Some 25% of childminders employed by the local municipality as part of the state’s public childcare service had answered ‘about one quarter of the time’ or even ‘less’. For one reason or another, these childminders were evidently referring only to the parents of the children, not to the children themselves. In 2003, when the option of ‘children’ was added to the question (e.g. customers, patients, passengers, pupils or children’), every single childminder answered ‘Almost all the time’. Childminders are mostly women, so these results were significant in terms of gender sensitivity.

Q3. Please outline the way gender statistics are being produced and mainstreamed.

Who are the ‘users’ (e.g. policymakers or ministries, research institutions, gender issues advocates, etc)?

How are they involved in the production process of gender statistics? Are their needs collected in a systematic way?

Are there any guidelines on how to produce engendered statistics?

Are there any formal procedures to assess statistics produced with a gender perspective?

There are several users for the QWLS. Much research is done at Statistics Finland’s Work Research Unit. Data of the QWLS are also used by the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, different pension institutions, the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, the Centre for Occupational Safety, the Social Insurance Institution of Finland, the Rehabilitation Foundation, a few universities, the main trade unions and some research institutes. Furthermore, the reported results of the QWLS are widely used in the media, for example.

The needs of users are mainly collected during the questionnaire design in an advisory group consisting of the funding bodies of the survey as well as other users and specialists. It should be noted, though, that none of the main users have so far had very specific demands on the gender sensitiveness of the surveys. The increasing gender sensitiveness in the QWLS is mainly due to the strong orientation of the team responsible for the QWLS at Statistics Finland, notably Anna-Maija Lehto. It could even be argued that lack of direct demands or wishes from the users regarding the gender sensitiveness of the QWLS is thanks to the work already done by Doctor Lehto.

The government’s Plan of Action includes gender issues and emphasises the importance of mainstreaming. The Act on Equality between Women and Men was passed in 1987. However, there are no direct national regulations on dissemination of data disaggregated by sex but, in 1998, the Director General of Statistics Finland gave a decision about accentuating the equality perspective in the Official Statistics of Finland publication series.
In Statistics Finland, all statistics on individuals are collected according to sex. The majority of information is also disseminated by sex. The Gender Statistics Unit in Statistics Finland cooperates with the Gender Equality Unit, the Ombuds Office for Equality and the Council for Gender Equality (all three situated in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health). The Gender Statistics Unit organises an advisory group meetings where researchers and other equality experts evaluate gender mainstreaming in statistics. This advisory group also makes suggestions for improvement. The Gender Statistics Unit is represented in a group of researchers and experts on gender equality issues led by the Council for Gender Equality. Representatives of Statistics Finland (mainly from the Gender Statistics Unit or Work Research Unit) participate in working groups on gender issues led by ministries or other organisations when there is a need for a statistician.

Are there specific publications dealing with gender that present and interpret topical data on women and men in a form suitable for a wide range of non-technical users?

The following publications deal with gender presenting and interpreting topical data on women and men in a form suitable for a wide range of non-technical users:


In addition, information provided by Statistics Finland, Equality Statistics Unit, is available online at http://tilastokeskus.fi/tup/tasaarvo/index_en.html (in Finnish and in English).

Is there a publication on working conditions or quality of work and employment issues that takes into account gender issues?

The following publications on working conditions take account of gender issues:

Lehto, A.-M., *Työolot tutkimuskohteena. Työolotutkimusten sisällöllistä ja menetelmällistä arviointia yhteiskuntatieteellä ja naistutkimuksen näkökulmasta* [Working conditions as a research subject. The conceptual and methodological evaluation of Quality of Work Life Surveys from social and feminist research perspectives], in Finnish, Research Reports 222, Statistics Finland, 1996.


Q4. What development(s) or causes may have been responsible for these changes in national statistics on quality of work and health in employment?

You are asked to comment briefly on major driving forces related to: 1) demographic changes, ageing of the work force; 2) the economy, such as recession; 3) legislative changes (acts or regulations that came into force); or 4) technical developments that have raised awareness of gender sensitive issues in your country.

1) Women have entered the Finnish labour market very early compared with many European countries. Since 1987, the numbers of women and men in the employee population have been roughly equal. A group of employees this big simply cannot be ignored. Today, with the ageing labour force, there is a strong tendency to study how employees – women and men – could be encouraged to stay longer in working life. Lately, concerns about fertility rates have also heightened the need to learn in what way reconciliation of work and family could be improved.

2) The change in the economic structure in recent decades, mainly the shift from production and manufacturing to services, has caused a clear change in the occupational profile of the employee population. The growth of the services sector in Finland has meant the growth of the public sector, mostly employing women. In the early 1990s, Finland was gripped by a deep economic recession. Unemployment was extremely high, and cuts and restructuring were carried out in the public sector. Many of the negative features of the labour market, such as unemployment, temporary employment relationships, lack of staff and greater time pressure, particularly affected female employees in the public sector, notably women working for the municipalities. The recession was followed by an unequalled economic boom at the end of the 1990s. However, its consequences manifested themselves in different ways in the male-dominated private sector and the female-dominated public sector. Today, it could be argued that the growing demands of flexibility, as well as reforms and cutbacks in the welfare state and public services affect especially women.

3) The Act on Equality between Women and Men was passed in 1987 after which questions about discrimination were added to the 1990 survey. According to the Equality Act, an employer with staff numbering at least 30 should include measures to further equality between women and men at the workplace in a special equality plan as part of the annual personnel and training plan or in the action programme for labour protection. At the time of writing, the forthcoming reform of the Act on Equality would sanction employers with no gender equality plan. In the QWLS 2003, respondents were asked if they knew whether measures to advance gender equality, e.g. a gender equality plan, had been taken at their workplace.

According to the Contracts of Employment Act passed in 2001, fixed-term employment relationships can only be used if the employer has acceptable reasons for it. These reasons are mentioned in the act. To assess the reality on the ground, fixed-term employees were asked in the 2003 survey whether their employer had given them verbal or written reasons for their current employment relationships and, if so, what was the primary reason given. Since women form the vast majority of fixed-term employees, this can be seen as a gender question.

4) The arrival of information technology has been discussed from a gender perspective for a long time. In the early 1980s, work that was mainly carried out by women was seen as being seriously threatened by the introduction of computers. First, it was believed that office automation would radically reduce women’s office work; slightly later, the concern was more about how employees with different backgrounds might cope with the change. In Finland, the Quality of Work Life Surveys explored this topic in detail, especially in the 1980s (e.g. Lehto, 1989).

Q5. Can you provide (quantitative) information on gender sensitive indicators and their effects/outcomes?

You are asked to indicate which gender sensitive indicators are implemented in the national survey(s), and to provide this quantitative information for the workforce as a whole, as well as for both men and women.

Areas which these indicators may refer to are:

- gender specific working conditions, or gender specific ‘female’ or ‘male’ job characteristics (aesthetic, emotional demands) as identified by horizontal segregation, and/or female/health conditions, discrimination issues;
- gender pay gap;
- gender specific time preferences, working times or working time arrangements;
- care, work–family balance/work home interference, based on family information, caring responsibilities of workers and, possibly, availability of care infrastructure;
• or more generally unpaid work, and different attitudes/roles for men and women towards work and/or preferences;
• other (complex) indicators that may be present.

Comment on gaps you identify in the survey(s) concerning its gender sensitivity.

Work involving customer contact is much more typical for women than for men: 63% of women compared with 38% of men (total 51%) have contact with customers at least half of their working time. One negative aspect of this kind of work, especially in the health and social sector, is physical violence: 25% of women compared with 12% of men (total 19%) have been subjected to or threatened in this regard at work. As a positive side of work involving customer contact, 39% of women compared with 22% of men receive praise for their work from other members of the work community or customers. Thus, while 24% of women compared with 17% of men (total 21%) state that difficult customers make their job less enjoyable, at the same time 53% of women compared with 37% of men (total 45%) report the opposite: pleasant customers make their job more enjoyable.

When work seems difficult, women also seem to receive more support and encouragement from co-workers (always receives: women 34%, men 22%, total 28%) and from superiors (always receives: women 22%, men 17%, total 19%). The latter is influenced by the sex of the superior: it is more common for women (59%) than for men (11%) to have a woman as their immediate superior. As superiors, women turn out to be distinctly better than men in matters like giving support and encouragement, being inspiring, caring about employees’ feelings and, above all, in encouraging them to study and develop in their work (Lehto, 1999). Overall, the proportion of employees whose tasks involve supervision of the work of others is 29% for women and 41% for men.

On the other hand, more women (25%) than men (19%) mention that lack of appreciation makes their current job less enjoyable (total 22%). More women (18%) compared with men (13%) also feel that lack of opportunities to influence work makes their current job less enjoyable (total 16%).

The proportion of those having experienced unequal treatment or discrimination on the basis of sex is 4% for women and 0.3% for men. Young mothers (aged 20 to 34 years) have also experienced unequal treatment or discrimination on the basis of having a family much more often (8%) than fathers (2%). Pregnant women also experience such discrimination. Furthermore, women with fixed-term contracts have experienced discrimination based on their employment relationship more often (16%) than men on fixed-term contracts (5%). In fact, unequal treatment or discrimination has been experienced by women in all the situations mentioned more often than by men: in receiving information (women 20%, men 14%, total 17%), in the attitudes of co-workers or superiors (women 20%, men 10%, total 15%), in remuneration (women 15%, men 11%, total 13%), etc.

Women experience time pressure as a burden affecting their work more commonly than men do (32% vs. 27%, total 30%) and they also regard their work as psychologically demanding slightly more often than men (54% vs. 48%, total 51%). However, there is practically no difference in the proportion of those regarding their work as physically demanding (women 36%, men 35%).

The QWLS has also been used to examine gender pay differentials. The information provided by the respondents themselves about their monthly pay has been compared with the data in the taxation register and they match very well. There is still a difference of about 20% between women’s and men’s pay despite the fact that women’s educational level clearly exceeds that of men. Analyses show that the explanation for these pay differentials cannot be explained by educational level or work experience. (e.g. Lehto, 1999).

Remuneration systems based on the requirement level of work are more widely used in men’s work (40%) than in women’s work (35%), as well as remuneration systems based on appraisal of personal work performance (men 35% vs. women 23%). The payment by results system (profit sharing) is more widely used in male-dominated workplaces (38%) than in female-dominated workplaces (23%). Some 38% of men and 20% of women are covered by such a system. The gender differences are even more evident when the amounts of bonuses received are examined. Furthermore, 29% of women compared with 44% of men had proposed a pay increase for themselves in the past five years.

Several questions in the QWLS examine working time arrangements, working time flexibility and employees’ time preferences. Results have always been analysed by gender.

There seems to be a clear dilemma in the flexibility of working times viewed from a gender perspective: although working times and their flexibility seem to matter more for women than for men, women have fewer possibilities for ‘positive’ forms of flexible working hours than men do.

In relation to women, the possibilities for flexible working hours or their absence influence their satisfaction in working hours more strongly than they do for men. Women also seem to have less tolerance than men for
atypical working hours, and women doing overtime work on a weekly basis regard this as excessive more often (42%) than men do (33%). Furthermore, 30% of women compared with 22% of men who were frequently contacted on work matters outside their actual working hours did not want this (total 25%). When employees aged 45 years or more were asked how important they considered certain factors to encourage them to stay working for as long as possible, 30% of women compared with 23% of men rated more flexible working hours as very important (total 27%).

However, men have much more ‘positive’ flexibility in their working hours than women do, although ‘negative’ flexibility (such as unwanted overtime or unsocial working hours) is about as common for women as for men (see Table). This is so even after adjusting for age, occupation, socio-economic status, working time patterns and whether the employee has subordinates (Sutela, 2004a; Sutela, 2004b; Lehto and Sutela, 2004). More research on these issues should be conducted.

### Table: Flexibility of working hours

*Employees, by sex, Quality of Work Life Survey 2003*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Can take sufficiently often brief absence starting and finishing times by at least 1/2 h</th>
<th>Possibility for able to influence own working hours a lot or quite a lot</th>
<th>Can use flexible working hours sufficiently for own needs*</th>
<th>Has to be flexible in working hours dictated by tasks or superior, at least weekly</th>
<th>Can take all the earned holidays and days off*</th>
<th>Does more overtime work than would like to **</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*totally true
**totally true or true to some extent

The QWLS contains several questions on the respondent’s family situation, work–life balance, compromises in favour of work or family, etc. Here are just a few examples:

Women still do the majority of housework even when both spouses work full time: in these families, 36% of women compared with 31% of men consider that the wife does much more and 25% of women compared with 30% of men think that the wife does slightly more housework. Every third person (women 32%, men 30%) considers that the spouses do the same amount of housework and less than 10% of respondents think that the husband does much or slightly more. The responsibility for different chores is also asked separately. Among parents of children under 10 years old, mothers have been absent from work more often due to their child’s illness in the previous 12 months than fathers have (65% vs. 52%).

Female employees also more commonly (42%) have care responsibilities for relatives or others outside their own household than men do (37%). Women caring for adults (most typically parents or parents-in-law) spend an average of 14.4 hours a month for this kind of care, while men spend 11.9 hours. Women caring for children (most typically grandchildren) spend an average 23.5 hours a month on this care, while men spend 18.4 hours.

About half of the employees (women 53%, men 50%) often think about their work at home or leisure time and every fourth person (women 24%, men 23%) even feels that they are neglecting home matters because of their job. There are no gender differences in this respect. However, the feeling of being free from the family and its noise while at work is more common for women (46%) than for men (37%). The smaller the children that the respondent has, the more common this feeling is. Furthermore, 71% of mothers and 63% of fathers state that they cope better with their children when they also go to work.

Thinking back on their life, 21% of women compared with 10% of men state that they have given up work or declined a job offer for family reasons; 19% of women vs. 6% of men have given up opportunities for additional or further education for family reasons; and 19% of women compared with 2% of men have worked only part time for family reasons.

Finnish women seem to be very committed to their work. According to the QWLS, 48% of women compared with 37% of men (total 43%) regard their own work as extremely important and significant. The increased value of work since the 1990 survey is more distinct in relation to women than men. Moreover, 63% of women
compared with 51% of men (total 58%) are of the opinion that the content of work is slightly or definitely more important than pay.

With regard to gender equality at the workplace, women are slightly more critical than men about how well it is accomplished (Figure 1). Interestingly, men report that they have noticed measures taken at the workplace to advance gender equality more often than women do (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Accomplishment of gender equality at workplace
Opinions of employees by sex, Quality of Work Life Survey 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Very well</th>
<th>Fairly well</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Rather poorly</th>
<th>Very poorly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Does not include answers ‘not applicable’ (20% of men, 15% of women)

Figure 2: Measures taken at workplace to advance gender equality
‘Yes’ answers, by sex, Quality of Work Life Survey 2003

- A gender equality plan has been prepared*
- Pay differentials between sexes have been tried to decrease
- Men have been encouraged to take family leaves
- Equal division of work between sexes has been promoted

Note: * only workplaces with at least 30 staff

Q6. Can you, in a more qualitative way, reflect on the quality of employment of men and women, and the political, societal or other discussion on the degree of, or need for gender mainstreaming in general in your country.

Is it an issue at all, or maybe even a topical issue?

There are pressures from the employer side to expand local pay agreements and performance-based pay systems as well as more flexibility in general. Proposals have also been made for increasing demands for low-paid work in order to encourage people who are unemployed into employment. Furthermore, the reorganisation of work in
the public sector is under discussion. All of these trends towards greater flexibility heighten the risk of deteriorating working conditions, particularly with regard to women’s labour market position, in the form of insecure contracts, widening pay gaps compared with men, increasing pressures at work as well as working hours, especially among professional employees. These concerns are widely discussed in Finland. Moreover, it is becoming widely recognised that, as long as fathers do not increase their use of family leave, young women will continue to have difficulties in securing permanent contracts. Currently, fixed-term contracts are twice as common for women aged 25 to 44 years as for men in that age group.

The importance of mainstreaming is mentioned in the current government programme. The government’s Equality Programme 2004–2007 also gives special attention to developing legislation for family leave and adjusting the costs incurred by parental leave. It also seeks to increase the numbers of women in decision making and to reduce the pay gap between women and men. Efforts will be taken to combat violence against women and support the employment of men facing long-term unemployment. The programme integrates efforts covering all areas of government. It also urges active approaches among citizens, such as encouraging fathers to use their parental leave entitlements.

Q7. Can any lessons be learned from the gender mainstreaming in surveys within your country for European level?

A number of lessons could be learned from the QWLS with regard to gender sensitiveness, since it is involved in every step of the survey process. A few specific issues could be emphasised:

- The methodology of combining qualitative research and quantitative research has turned out to be effective in identifying specific characteristics of women’s work and men’s work. This information has been used both in the design of the questionnaire and in interpreting and reporting (Lehto, 1996, Lehto, 2002, Lehto, 2005, Pulkkinen, 2002b).
- Researching the gender pay gap, education and working experience should be taken into account in the analysis.
- Direct questions on special measures taken by employers to advance gender equality have proven to be informative.

References, in addition to those mentioned in page 4:


