



Finnish Institute of
Occupational Health

New concepts, diversity and equality planning in Finland

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**GED-plan kick-off meeting
Göttingen, Germany
9.-10.2.2009**

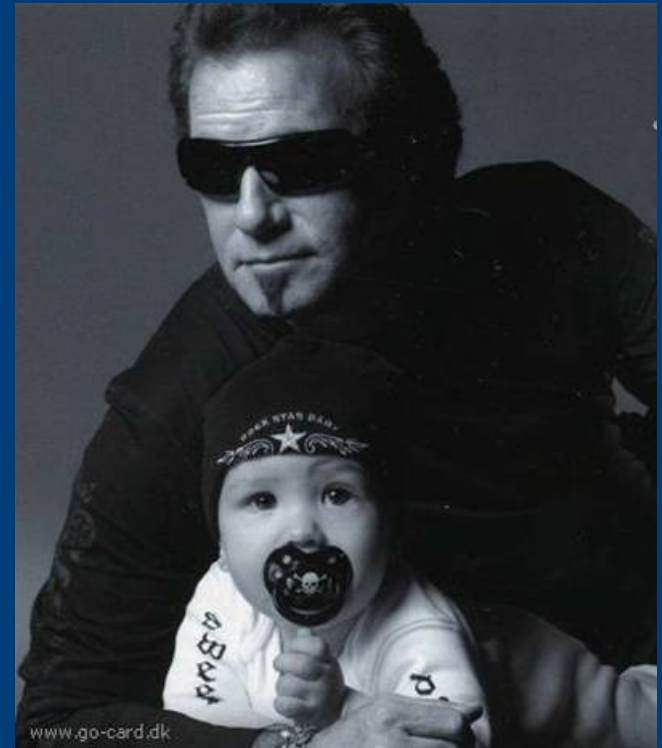
European labour market challenges



- **Demographic changes**
 - ageing population and workforce
 - decline in fertility
- **Adapting to rapid changes of working life**
 - new ways of working eg. mobile work, distant work, 'atypical' work forms and contracts
- **Financial crises, slow down?**
- **Increased diversity at work**
- **Changing position of women**
 - work-life balance

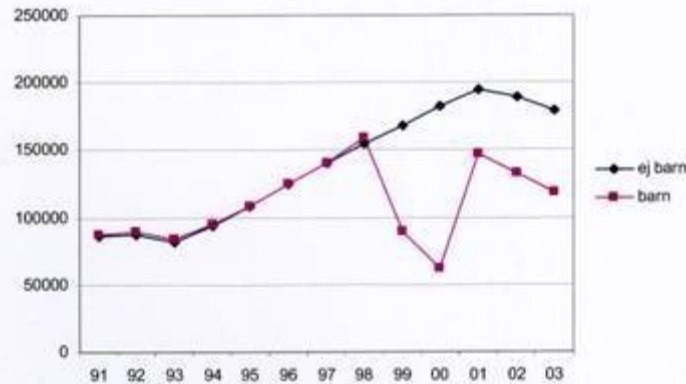
Parenthood and working hours in Finland, 2007

- **part-time work among mothers is less typical in Finland than in other European countries**
- **when the youngest child is less than 7 years of age, 20 % of mothers work part-time**
- **when the youngest child is 7-17 years of age, only 12 % of mothers work part-time**
- **of employed fathers 25 % work 45 hours/week and 10 % work 55 hours/week**
- **the longest weekly hours are among fathers whose youngest child is 3-6 years of age**



Double standard – traditional gender roles at work

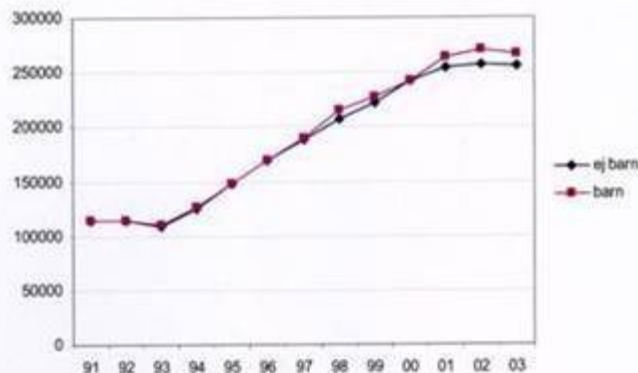
Figur 1 Inkomstutvecklingen* 1991–2003 för kvinnor som fick respektive inte fick barn 1999



Family is a “risky issue” for women

- “child penalty”
- weekly working hours by women and men vary according to the age and number of children

Figur 2 Inkomstutvecklingen* 1991–2003 för män som fick respektive inte fick barn 1999



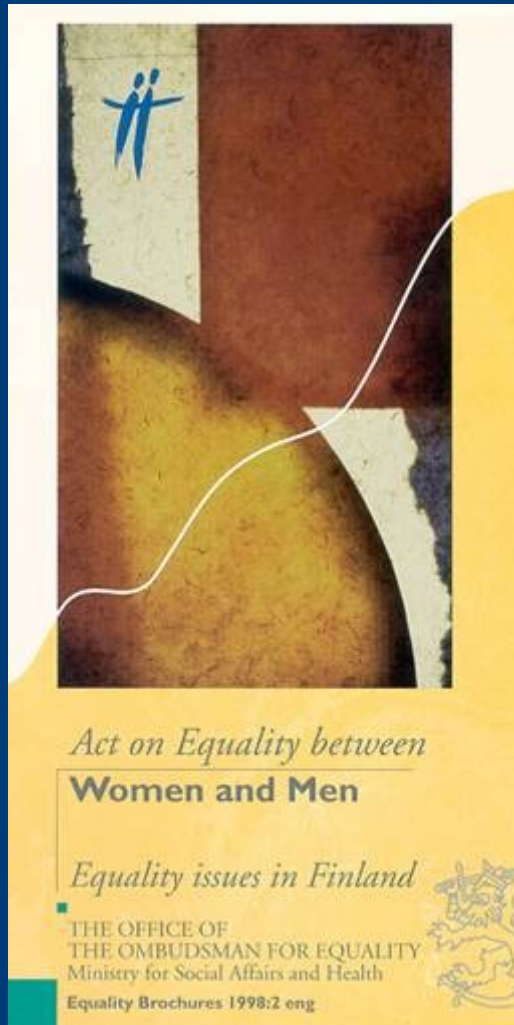
for men the working hours increase, for women decrease

- implications on women's salaries and wages and career development

From maternity leaves towards parental leaves

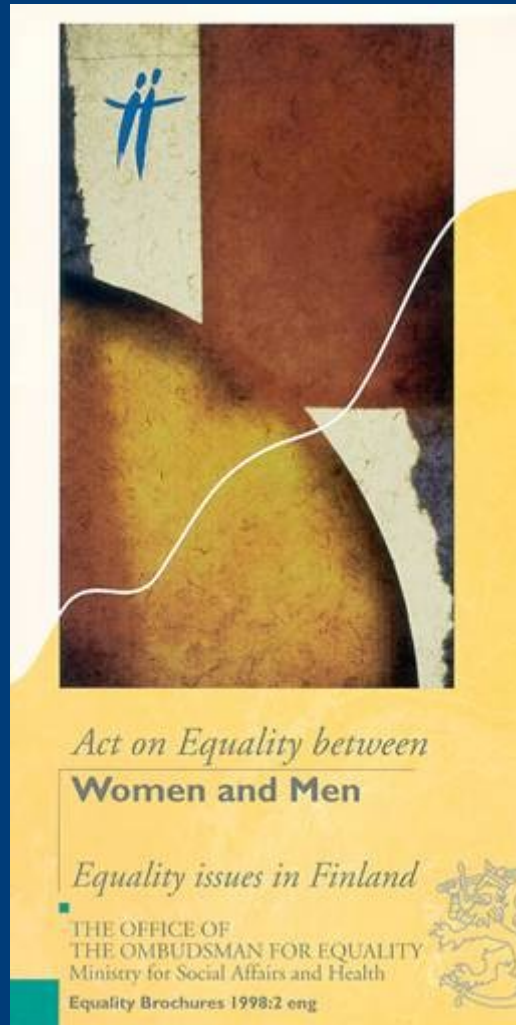
- **fosters equality development in the work life and within the family**
- **affects positively the fertility rate**
- **encourages children's attachment to both parents**
- **increases men's active role in the child development**
- **tends to decrease divorce rate**
- **enforces women's economic independence and salary development**

Legislative framework in Finland and in the EU



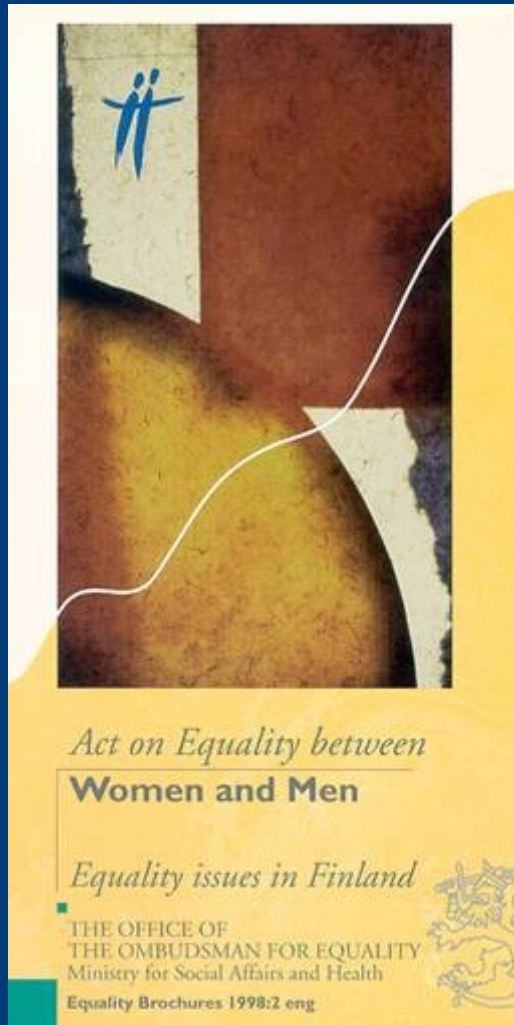
- **Constitution: prohibition of discrimination on grounds on gender**
- **Gender Equality Act (1986)**
- **Non-discrimination Act (2004)**
- **International and EU obligations**
 - **EU Treaty, directives on gender equality and *equal treatment***
 - **International treaties and agreements (eg. UN, ILO, WHO)**
 - **European social partners' joint initiatives and actions**

Finnish Gender Equality Act



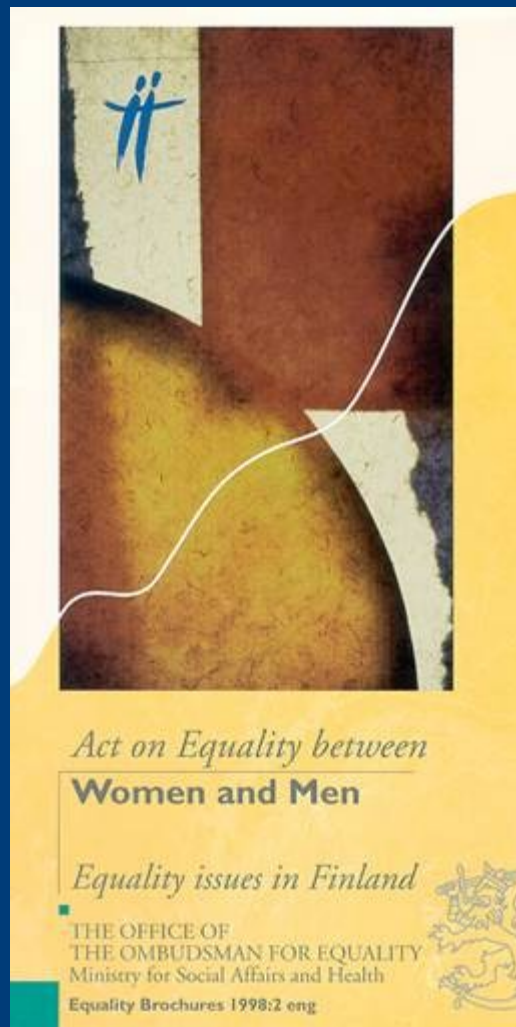
- **The Act on Equality was issued in 1987, amended 1992, 1995 and 2005**
 - to prevent direct and indirect discrimination based on gender
 - promote equality between women and men
 - to improve the status of women, particularly in working life
- **The aims of the amendment of 2005**
 - to incorporate the EU equality directives
 - to emphasize the role of workplace specific equality planning
 - to promote equal pay

Legislative measures to promote gender equality at work in Finland



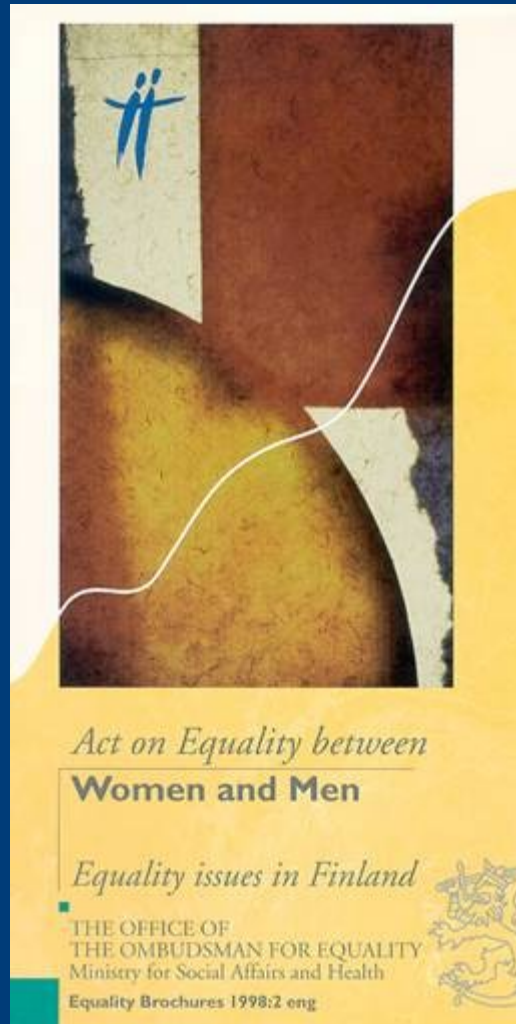
- The amended Equality Act (2005) provides more practical tools for promoting gender equality at work.
- The Act obliges employers with a regular staff of **30 or more** to draw a gender equality plan.
 - can be a separate plan or incorporated into personnel or training plan or into safety and health plan at the workplace.

Gender equality plan as a tool by which workplaces can promote gender equality (Section 6a)



- Gender equality plan must be drafted *in cooperation* with the personnel or its representatives;
- An *assessment of gender situation* in the workplace, including the pay structure must be done;
- Concrete measures for promoting gender equality must be specified;
- *Follow-up* and review of previous measures and results achieved.

Equality planning as a step by step process at the workplace



- **Appoint a working group**
- **Assess gender equality situation/climate at the workplace**
- **Select areas in need for development**
- **Set objectives, use slogans (eg. zero-tolerance of harassment)**
- **List measures how to obtain the objectives**
- **Set schedules and appoint responsible persons**
- **Give information, be open**
- **Use outside consultation.**

The term Diversity

Diversity describes social entities, like

- workplaces
- neighbourhoods
- cities
- student bodies
- symphony orchestras
- ice-hockey teams, etc.

with members who have ***identifiable differences*** in their backgrounds.



Identifiable differences

- Diversity refers to *differences* in racial or ethnic classifications, age, gender, religion (faith), physical abilities, and sexual orientation.
- Recognizing and promoting these differences at the workplace may lead to greater:
 - understanding
 - knowledge
 - creativity
 - productivity
- The equality concept can include other aspects belonging to it such as age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, if it is found necessary at the workplace
- Multi-dimensional concept of equality

Types of diversity

- **Age diversity**
 - multiple generations at work: baby boomers, generation X, generation Y
 - intergenerational solidarity
- **Gender diversity**
 - in leadership positions more women
 - in care work more men
- **Ethnic diversity**
 - employing new people
 - *'three D-jobs'* featuring dirty, dangerous and demanding tasks



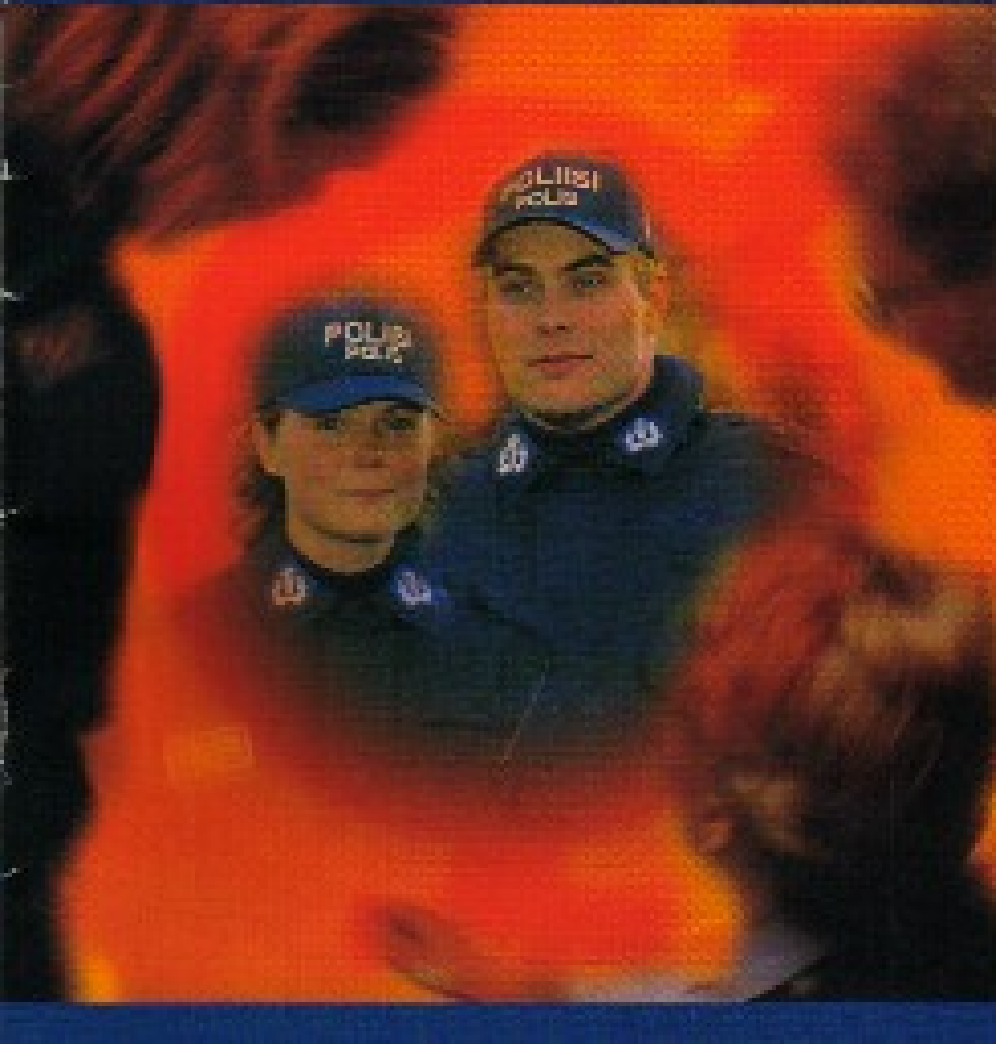
POLIISIIN
TASA-ARVO-
SUUNNITELMA

EQUALITY PLAN

OF THE POLICE FORCE IN FINLAND

Key areas for development:

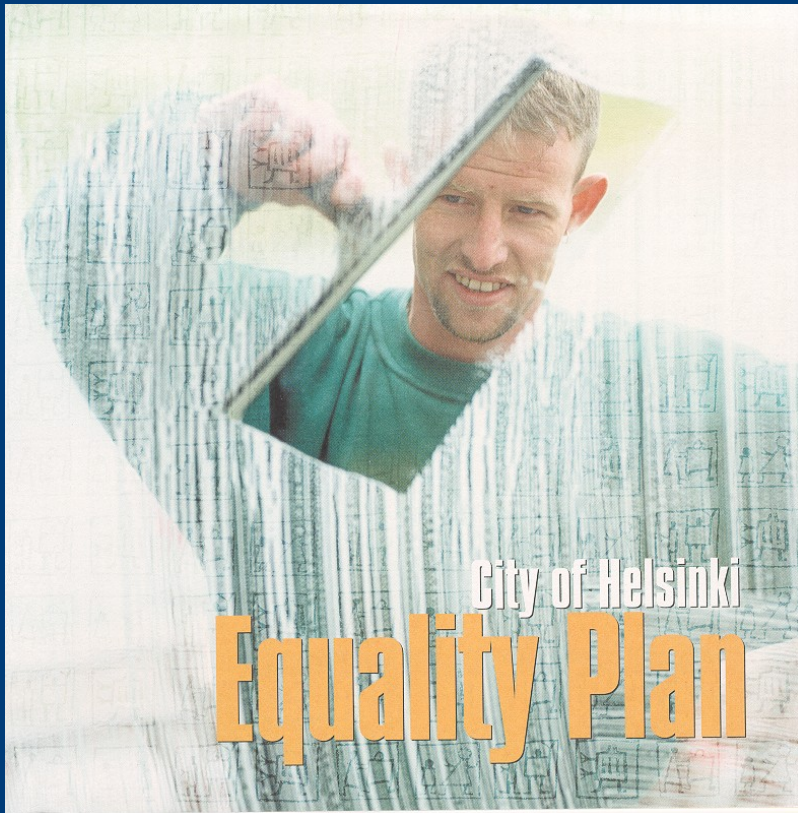
- **recruitment policy**
- **woman-friendly atmosphere**
- **zero-tolerance of sexual and gender-based harassment**
- **equal career opportunities for women with men**



City of Helsinki Equality Plan

Key areas for development:

- The rise in the average age
- Coping with stress and burnout at work
- Client-orientation
 - equal treatment of all client groups



Fiskars Brands Finland



Key areas for development:

- **Immigration policy: using common language (Finnish, Swedish, Russian)**
- **Practices of family leaves, focusing on men**
- **Creating fair and transparent wage structures**
- **The role of supervisors in promoting gender equality and awareness**

www.businessandsociety.net

The Academy of Finland Equality plan



- **Applicants for research grants must include a report on gender distribution of the research group**
- **Gender mainstreaming/gender sensitivity in planning, designing and reporting of research projects**
- **Reconciliation of work and family**
 - **use of parental leaves**

www.aka.fi

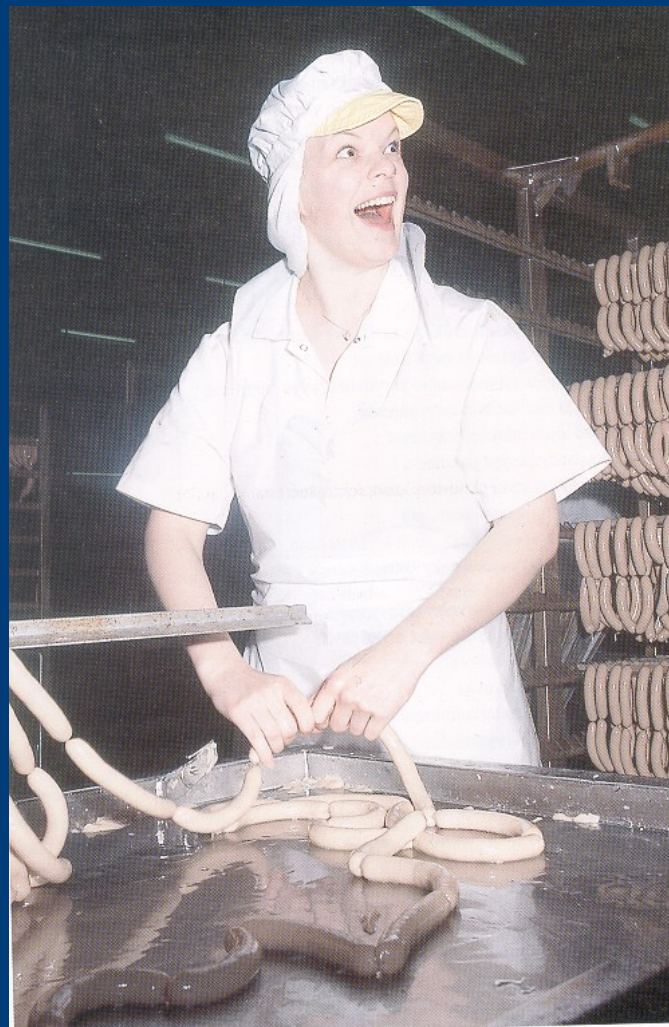
So far, the equality plans have focused on the following key areas:

- **Wage and wage structures**
 - comparability and transparency in wage surveys
- **Safety and health at work**
 - sexual harassment
 - ergonomics, workplace design
- **Family leave policy**
 - male perspective, workplace culture
- **Equal access to education, training and career development**
- **Multi-dimensional concept of equality applied in most cases**
 - age, ethnicity.

Gender equality is good for business

Both *employers* and *employees* benefit from workplace atmosphere which is based on equal treatment:

- mutual dialogue and respect
- increases well-being and work motivation
- improves employer image



Thank you!

Good links:

www.ttl.fi/perhejatyo

www.monikko.net

www.wom.fi

Mustakallio, Sinikka et al. (2008) How to succeed in equality planning.



FACT SHEET

Gender equality planning

Sinikka Mustakallio, Julia Evans and Kaisa Kauppinen

"A good equality plan is realistic, concrete and meets the needs of each enterprise and organisation."

Gender equality is profitable to business and increases wellbeing at work

- positive corporate image
- attracts skilled workforce
- better use of skills and capabilities
- gender is seen as a positive resource (gender-diversity)
- occupational gender segregation diminishes
- workplace atmosphere, motivation and communication improves

Gender equality means equal pay for equal work, equal career development, equal opportunities to reconcile work and private life and the absence of sexual harassment.

What is a gender equality plan?

A gender equality plan is an action plan to advance equality between men and women at a specific workplace. It is a practical list of actions to realise the equality of women and men. An equal workplace provides equal opportunities to both men and women and respects diversity.

Equality planning encourages in rethinking recruitment policies, access to training, task reorganisation and it supports work/life-balance.

The aim of equality planning is to prevent discrimination and promote equality of both sexes at workplaces.

Also other aspects belonging to equality such as ethnic origin, age, disability and sexual orientation can be taken into account in an equality plan even though the focus is in the equality between men and women. Multi-dimensional concept of gender should be applied.



Participants of the equality planning seminar at the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health in 2006.

A gender equality plan includes

- a gender equality assessment: gender specific statistics on average wages and task groups
- suggested targets: pay, recruitment of men and women, careers, participation in in-service training, parental leaves, family-friendly practices and work/life-balance
- measures to improve the situation
- review of the results
- it can be either a separate plan or incorporated into the enterprise's human resources development (HRD) policy

The Finnish Equality Act

- obliges employers with a regular staff of 30 or more to draw up a gender equality plan
- obliges employers to examine men and women's wages at the workplace
- demands annual review and updating of the plan

monikko

