

**Gender mainstreaming:
*An international analysis***

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1. Preface

1.1 Introduction

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment in the Netherlands intends to evaluate the results of gender mainstreaming policies and practices. Part of its evaluation consists of an international analysis on gender mainstreaming policies and practices within Europe. The present report describes whether and to what extent various European countries have introduced the gender perspective into their national policies and how they frame the concept of gender mainstreaming. The key question is how the gender mainstreaming approach is organised in a number of European countries. Which elements are useful and valuable enough to include in the Dutch approach to gender mainstreaming? The countries covered in this analysis are Belgium, Sweden, Finland, Germany, France and the United Kingdom. The research was carried out by VanDoorneHuiskes and partners, an expert organisation that specialises in diversity and equal opportunity policies.

Chapter 1 describes the context of gender mainstreaming and the requirements for successfully implementing this perspective in national policy. The chapter goes on to present the research questions and the relevant data sources. Chapter 2 examines the state-of-the-art of gender mainstreaming policies in the six European countries covered in this project. The results of this analysis are summarised in a “gender balance scorecard”. Chapter 3 summarises the main findings and conclusions.

One important point is that gender mainstreaming policies are not a goal in themselves. They are intended to help equalise gender relations in the social and economic spheres. Bearing this in mind, it is interesting to consider the degree of gender equality in the various countries, based on a number of relevant socio-economic indicators. This gender equality analysis can be found in Annex A.

1.2 Context and analysis framework

The Netherlands’ policy on emancipation consists of two tracks: 1) *gender mainstreaming* and 2) activities initiated by the Department for the Co-ordination of Emancipation Policy, part of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. *Gender mainstreaming* features prominently in the government’s Multi-Annual Emancipation Policy Plan 2006-2010. It is a highly relevant topic in the Netherlands, but not only there: *gender mainstreaming* is also regarded by the European Union and the United Nations as an important instrument for stimulating social equality between men and women.

The Department for the Co-ordination of Emancipation Policy intends to draft a Cabinet response on gender mainstreaming in autumn 2006, based on findings by the Emancipation Review Committee. The Emancipation Review Committee (2004-2006) is currently evaluating the extent to which the *gender perspective* has been embedded in the general policies of the various Dutch ministries. The results of an international policy analysis will be part of the Cabinet’s response.

What does gender mainstreaming mean?

Mainstreaming the *gender* perspective in general government policy means considering the implications for men and women of all intended activities (legislation, policy measures, new programmes) in every relevant field and at every relevant level. Putting on 'gender glasses' means moulding an integral dimension of the government's social and economic policy in all the various phases of the policy process: design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The aim of *gender mainstreaming* is to enable women and men to profit equally from the results of government policy and to break with the tradition of gender disparity. The final aim of *gender mainstreaming* is to achieve gender equality. An expert group set up by the Council of Europe defines *gender mainstreaming* as: *the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making* (Mainstreaming Equality; Government of Finland, 1999).

Gender mainstreaming of government policy is pre-eminently of interest within a European perspective. For example, *gender mainstreaming* plays an important role in the European Commission's Equal Opportunities Policy. The Commission's *Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006–2010* speaks of monitoring and enriching *gender mainstreaming* policy in several important areas. *Gender* is and will remain a point of interest in the guidelines for employment growth and the "open method of coordination", which concerns policy on pensions, social inclusion, health, care and other matters. Consequently, the gender dimension will also be applied in European health policy and in all national and European activities organised as part of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007) and the European Year of Combating Exclusion and Poverty (2010). European research policy is also turning its attention to *gender mainstreaming*, for example as expressed in the Seventh Framework Programme. Developments related to the new European Research Council will also be evaluated in terms of *gender*. The European Commission has several informal groups investigating advising on gender mainstreaming (for example the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming and the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming in the Structural Funds).

Conditions for an effective gender mainstreaming policy

All the attention going to *gender mainstreaming* does not necessarily mean that it will become everyday practice when it comes to policy making. An interesting study analysing the success and limitations of gender mainstreaming policy in international institutions, Moser and Moser¹ (2003) suggest that certain requirements must be met before *gender mainstreaming* becomes manifest in a political organisation.

Based on their empirical analysis, Moser and Moser conclude that for a gender mainstreaming policy to succeed, responsibility for its success must be clearly stated. It is all too often the case that the attention given to *gender mainstreaming* depends on only a few dedicated individuals. When these individuals leave the organisation or change jobs, *gender mainstreaming* disappears from the agenda without being noticed or without this being perceived as a problem. The success of gender mainstreaming policy also depends on the prevailing organisational culture. If it is dominated by men, or – more generally – if it can be defined as a 'masculine' culture, then it lacks a good breeding ground for gender mainstreaming policy. A masculine organisational culture can be described as one that

¹ Moser, C. and A. Moser (2003). *Gender mainstreaming since Beijing: a review of success and limitations in international institutions*.

focuses on competition, personal achievement and long hours; in other words, it is a culture in which working evenings and weekends is considered a sign of dedication and commitment. A third condition is that any resistance to gender mainstreaming policy is recognised, discussed and if possible dealt with in 'gender sensitivity' training for policy officers. Finally, *gender mainstreaming* requires well-defined responsibilities and – most importantly – gender-related expertise inside the organisation.

Requirements for successful gender mainstreaming policy are also mentioned in *Gender Mainstreaming: een strategie voor kwaliteitsverbetering* (June 2001), an advisory report issued by an inter-ministerial working party set up by the then State Secretary for Employment and Social Security in the Netherlands. These requirements were based on research carried out by the Temporary Expert Committee on Equal Rights in the New Advisory System (1998-2001), which considered the conditions needed for the enduring integration of emancipation objectives into government policy. In its report, the inter-ministerial working party discusses the commitment to *gender mainstreaming* at the most senior levels, outlines the various responsibilities, and reviews the availability of gender expertise as well as means and instruments.

Besides the expertise required prior to actually implementing of *gender mainstreaming*, success also depends on developing indicators to measure and monitor the progress made on achieving equality between men and women. Such indicators are often, but not always, based on quantitative data. It is crucial to have adequate data collection systems and methods in the areas relevant to *gender mainstreaming* (Plantenga, 2001²).

Analysis framework

Researching the requirements for a successful implementation of *gender mainstreaming* not only offers analytical insights, but – as mentioned earlier – also provides a framework for international policy analysis.

² Plantenga, J. (2002). *De kunst van het gendermainstreamen*. Over emancipatiebeleid, Europese richtsnoeren en het Nationaal Actieplan Werkgelegenheid 2001. In: *Tijdschrift voor Arbeidsvraagstukken*. Jaargang 18. Nummer 1. pp. 70 – 82.

Based on the preceding, the following criteria can be formulated.
The successful implementation of *gender mainstreaming* requires:

- the political will at the top of an organisation to make *gender mainstreaming* a success;
- a structure in which *gender mainstreaming* can be shaped, meaning that there are clearly defined responsibilities and clearly defined procedures when it comes to the results of gender mainstreaming policy (accountability), for example reporting to Parliament;
- the presence of gender expertise inside the organisation;
- the availability of financial and possibly other means;
- the availability of relevant data to measure and monitor the progress of the *gender mainstreaming* process.

The present analysis of international *gender mainstreaming* policy has – as much as possible – been carried out within this framework. The general hypothesis is that the more a process of *gender mainstreaming* meets the criteria listed above, the more the country concerned will succeed in developing and applying the principle of *gender mainstreaming*. As stated earlier, *gender mainstreaming* is not a goal in itself, but a means to arrive at more equality between the sexes. Accordingly, Annex A will review the degree of gender equality in the various countries involved in this study.

1.3 The research questions

Based on the analysis framework describing the criteria for the successful implementation of gender mainstreaming policies, this report on the state-of-the-art of gender mainstreaming in six European countries addresses the following questions:

1. Is gender mainstreaming a perspective (or approach) that is explicitly expressed in the country's policy and in its legislation?
2. To what extent is there real political commitment to the gender mainstreaming perspective at national level?
3. Are there mechanisms (*institutions, implementation structures*) that support gender mainstreaming at policy level? Is there a *national machinery*, so to speak, for gender mainstreaming? In other words:
 - Is it clear who is responsible and accountable within the government for the success of the gender mainstreaming process?
 - Are the results of the gender mainstreaming process discussed in parliament?
 - Is parliament interested in the results of gender mainstreaming?

4. Are specific tasks appointed with respect to gender mainstreaming? For example:
 - Is it clear who is responsible and accountable within the government for the success of the gender mainstreaming process (a minister, another official)?
 - Do the ministries cooperate on the issue of gender mainstreaming?
 - How about cooperation between local authorities?
 - Do government organisations at national level and at local level cooperate with one another on the issue of gender mainstreaming?
5. To what extent does the country have expertise on gender issues within government and among senior civil servants?
6. Is there a financial commitment to gender mainstreaming? Are budgets set aside to pursue and achieve gender mainstreaming policy at national level? What about at local level?
7. Are there instruments/tools for implementing gender mainstreaming?
8. To what extent is relevant data available, and have indicators been developed to measure and monitor social and economic equality between men and women on a regular basis?
 - Are facts and figures concerning the outcomes of gender mainstreaming available?
 - Are results of the gender mainstreaming process measured and evaluated against targets?
 - Are the results of gender mainstreaming measured and published on a regular basis?
9. Considering the various requirements for the success of gender mainstreaming, how should one evaluate the situation in the country and what future action on gender mainstreaming has been planned?
10. How equal (or unequal) is the position of men and women in the various countries, based on a number of socio-economic indicators?

1.4 Procedure and methods of data collection

Various different data sources have been used to answer the research questions. To begin with, a questionnaire was drafted, based on a recent review of the literature on gender mainstreaming published in the Netherlands and abroad. The questionnaire covered the research questions set out in section 1.3.

Information on gender issues was collected for each country. In the meantime, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment sent a letter to a contact person in each of the countries concerned (based on the list of members of the European High Level Committee on Gender Mainstreaming) informing them of the research project and asking for their cooperation. Next, the questionnaire (see Annex B) was sent by e-mail to gender mainstreaming experts in the relevant countries, accompanied by an explanation of the data collection procedure. The respondents were asked to send back any relevant information or to answer the questions (briefly) and return their responses by mail. The extra information was incorporated and an interview was then conducted by telephone, in order to broaden the information already sent.

The data collection procedure described above entails that our information is based largely on existing, authorised written sources, except when our respondents were asked to give a general evaluation of the state-of-the-art of the gender mainstreaming process in their countries. Then, of course, their answers were based on their own perceptions, assessments, and opinions. Needless to say, our respondents are all experts in the field of gender mainstreaming in their respective countries.

To summarise the different approaches to gender mainstreaming policies, we developed gender balance scorecard that reviews how countries have shaped their gender mainstreaming policies in terms of the different requirements outlined in our analysis framework. To indicate the degree of gender equality in the various countries, as described in Annex A, we used quantitative indicators based on Eurostat statistics.

As mentioned before, the countries involved in this policy analysis were the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom, as suggested by the Ministry. Finland was added to the list because of its tradition of gender mainstreaming policies. In 1999, the Finnish government published a report entitled *Mainstreaming Equality: The State of Gender Equality on the Eve of the 21st Century*³, surveying the extent to which gender mainstreaming has developed in the different policy areas covered by the departments.

³ Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (1999). *Mainstreaming Equality. The State of Gender Equality on the Eve of the 21st Century*. Final Report on the Plan of Action for the Promotion of Gender Equality of the Government of Finland.

2. The Gender Mainstreaming process in six different countries

2.1 Introduction

The present chapter presents the results of research into the process of gender mainstreaming in six different countries (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, France, Germany, United Kingdom). The results are based on both secondary analysis of the data collected and additional information gained during telephone interviews with national experts (as described in section 1.4).

This chapter discusses the state-of-the-art in the above countries, specifically with respect to the following issues:

- how explicitly the gender mainstreaming perspective/ approach is expressed;
- commitment to gender mainstreaming;
- underlying mechanisms for implementation: the national machinery;
- degree of knowledge and gender expertise;
- self-evaluation of the relevant countries.

In addition to the state-of-the-art, section 2.7 describes the process of gender mainstreaming in the Netherlands.

Not all of the countries define *gender mainstreaming* in the same way or agree on the extent to which it should be implemented in order to achieve greater equality between men and women. However, all of the countries involved have clear ideas about how the underlying problem should be tackled and the role of *gender mainstreaming* in their plans. This 'perception gap' on *gender mainstreaming* sometimes makes it difficult to compare countries. Nuances are required. An example will help to clarify this point: the UK is very active in the area of gender equality, but the term *gender mainstreaming* is hardly used there. The UK has focused on implementing measures that promote and support gender equality rather than focusing on a strict interpretation of *gender mainstreaming*. Ultimately, the aim of these measures is to mainstream gender, of course. Although the term 'mainstreaming' is not used in the UK, this does not mean that its policies are not explicit, that people are not committed to the issue, or it has no supportive underlying national machinery.

This chapter summarises for each country whether or not the criteria for gender mainstreaming are being met and describes the relevant context. The degree to which the criteria are met can, of course, vary. This issue is addressed in section 2.8. For example, it is possible that two different countries both have clear objectives, but that those objectives are much more extensive in one country than in the other. This chapter would then describe both as 'having clear objectives' and explain the context. Section 2.8, which covers the balance score card, describes subtle distinctions that make it possible to compare the countries on the degree to which the requirements have been met.

2.2 *Explicitness*

A country is perceived to have an explicit gender perspective when it has a clearly defined plan for *gender mainstreaming* that has been adopted by its government, when it has a framework for implementation, when it has set clear objectives, when it measures progress by indicators, and when it monitors and evaluates outcomes. When the country's mainstreaming policy meets these requirements, it is regarded as having an explicit gender perspective.

In all six countries involved in this study, the *gender mainstreaming* perspective (or approach) is expressed explicitly in the country's policy. The countries that express this perspective explicitly are Belgium, Finland, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. The principle of *gender mainstreaming* is enshrined in law in five countries (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, Germany, United Kingdom). Six countries (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) set clear targets for the process of gender mainstreaming, and five countries (Finland, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) measure and evaluate the results of the gender mainstreaming process against targets. *Gender mainstreaming* is, however, rarely a topic of public debate; only two of the six countries (Finland and Germany) confirm that public debates do take place. Gender mainstreaming is seemingly a concept used by experts, while *gender equality* is more likely to be discussed by the public.

The gender mainstreaming perspective is explicit in *Belgium*, mainly because it is set out in a Strategic Plan as the key promoter of equal opportunities (2005) and in a draft bill on gender mainstreaming (2006), which will go into effect on 1 January 2007. The aim of the new law is to institutionalise the gender mainstreaming process, or to introduce various effective mechanisms and instruments to achieve an integrated approach to gender equality across all policy lines and government actions. The bill applies to all federal government services and covers both federal policy units (the ministers' and state secretaries' cabinets) and the federal administrations. The new law makes Belgium one of the first countries in the world with far-reaching legislation on gender mainstreaming, because it makes the integration of the gender dimension mandatory at all levels of decision-making (for more in-depth information, see box 1). The Institute for the Equality of Women and Men has far-reaching authority to assess compliance with the law. Objectives have been set, but have not yet been as SMART targets. In line with the new Law, each ministry will be given a plan describing how to include the gender perspective into its policies; the plans will include specific targets. The new law also involves measurement and evaluation. Gender mainstreaming as such is not a topic of public debate, but gender equality is an oft-discussed issue.

As a legal approach to gender mainstreaming may be interesting for the Netherlands as well, information on the Belgian gender mainstreaming bill is given in Box 1.

BOX 1: BELGIUM AND ITS PARLIAMENTARY BILL ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING

“On 5 May 2006 the Council of Ministers, at a second reading, approved a bill to amend the law of 6 March 1996 aimed at checking enforcement of the resolutions of the World Conference on Women held in Beijing from 4 to 14 September 1995.

The text was amended on the advice of the Council of State. It was the first legislation to ratify the principle of 'gender mainstreaming', or the evaluation of policy lines on equality between women and men. The gender issue must be taken into account from now on in the complete process from decision-making to execution. If the chambers pass the bill, the gender issue will have to be considered in the full cycle from federal policy decision-making to execution.

All measures and all actions by the Government will be assessed from now on before being executed, in order to study the impact that they may have on equality between women and men and to avoid or rectify possible adverse effects.

Belgium is one of the first countries in the world to approve such far-reaching legislation in the area, given that it integrates the gender dimension from now on in all decision-making levels – from the development of policy lines, through budget preparation to the compilation of statistics.

In practice the bill stipulates:

1) 'gender mainstreaming' of measures/actions adopted by the Government: an assessment report will have to be drawn up for each legislative and regulatory project to quantify the project's impact on the respective situations of women and men.

This step is essential, because it ratifies the principle of 'gender mainstreaming' during the approval of each measure. Over time its aim is to create a reflex among all policymakers of foreseeing the impact that each project could have on equality between men and women.

The conditions for the execution of this impact report must be determined to avoid a superfluous administrative burden. More specifically, an assessment must be made as to whether this report is needed for each regulation.

2) 'gender mainstreaming' of the budget: a gender memorandum must be added to each draft expenditure estimate, establishing the credits allocated to actions for equality between the sexes for each department.

3) 'gender mainstreaming' of statistics: the government services must ensure that all the relevant statistics that they produce, collect and order in their area of action are split according to gender and that gender indicators are compiled.

Over time this measure should make it possible to identify and study the differences between men and women in the area of wages, housing, healthcare, etc. This is naturally the prerequisite for being able to develop reliable statistics that permit progress to be measured and make it possible to meet commitments adopted at European Union level.

4) the establishment of strategic goals that contribute to the equality of men and women in each minister's policy declaration and general policy memorandums: at the start of the legislative period, the Government will set out its goals in the area in its declaration to parliament, and each minister will incorporate these in his or her general policy memorandum. These goals will be supplemented by indicators permitting measurement of their realisation.

5) improvement in the reporting system to parliament, stipulated in law by virtue of international obligations: rather than providing an annual document to be submitted without a specific content, a proposal has been made to take account of the legislative period cycle: following the commitments arising from the formation of the government, a synthesis of the actions undertaken and a new update of the goals will be stated in an interim report half-way through the legislative period. A report at the end of the legislative period will draw up a genuine balance of the actions undertaken during this period.

The text also stipulates that the gender dimension must be incorporated into the management plans, management contracts and in all instruments for the policy planning of all government services.

Finally, the Institute for the equality of women and men has the assignment of accompanying and supporting the integration process of the gender dimension in public policy, measures and actions.”

Source: Voorontwerp van wet 'gender mainstreaming': de gelijkheid vrouwen/mannen waarborgen in elke fase, Ministerraad van 5 mei 2006

The gender mainstreaming perspective is explicitly expressed in the policy of *Finland*. The Finnish Government has adopted an Action Plan for Gender Equality (2004-2007) that includes a detailed plan for gender mainstreaming. All the ministries have committed themselves to gender mainstreaming and have delegated a representative to the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality Working Group. The task of this group is to monitor the extent to which the measures contained in the Action Plan are being achieved, to develop mainstreaming and to expand it to the entire government sector. In addition, each ministry has its own working party. Since 2004, a coordinated training and gender impact assessment programme was started in all ministries. The principle of gender mainstreaming is also established by law in the country, in the Act governing Equality between Women and Men. The aim is to include gender mainstreaming and projects promoting equality in performance agreements by 2007. Targets have been set for the process of gender mainstreaming, although they have not been formulated as SMART targets. A working party monitors the gender mainstreaming process on an ongoing basis, the government budget is analysed and an evaluation was carried out in 2006 (the report will be published and discussed at the beginning of 2007). Because gender mainstreaming is a fairly new item, it is a topic of considerable debate in politics, at local level and within women's organisations.

Sweden is a clear example of a country where the process of *gender mainstreaming* has become very explicit. The government adopted a plan for *gender mainstreaming* in 2004 which provides an implementation framework for the 2004-2009 period and which sets clear objectives regarding gender mainstreaming. The overall objective for all government departments is defined as follows: '*Government departments must offer the best possible conditions for integrating the gender perspective into the government's policy*'. In addition to this overall objective, interim goals and clear indicators have been set (for more in-depth information, see Box 2). In 2006, the Swedish parliament reconfirmed gender mainstreaming as its strategy for implementing a gender equality policy, and it adopted a bill ("Power to shape society and your life – towards new gender equality objectives") setting new gender equality objectives and identifying gender mainstreaming as the strategy to be used to achieve those objectives. The new, overall national objective (2006) for gender equality is "*that woman and men shall have equal power to shape society and their own lives*", whereby interim objectives have also been set. Indicators are measured, monitored and evaluated. Although *gender mainstreaming* is not a topic of public debate, gender equality is and it is a topic often raised for discussion in newspapers and on television.

As the explicit approach to gender mainstreaming as practised in Sweden may well set a valuable example for gender mainstreaming policies in the Netherlands, a systematic outline is given in Box 2.

BOX 2: CLEAR OBJECTIVES & INDICATORS IN SWEDEN

Objectives are set by the 2004 Government's Plan for Gender Mainstreaming in the Government Offices. The overall objective is: "The Government Offices offer the best possible preconditions for the gender perspective to be an integrated part of the government's policy." The interim goals and indicators are:

1. The gender equality perspective is, in a concrete and consequent way, integrated in the decision making process leading to gender equality having an impact on the decision-making processes.

Indicators:

- Number and share of policy areas that have gender equality objectives,
- Number and share of tables/diagrams containing statistics desegregated by sex in the budgetary bill,
- Number and share of indicators that are based on statistics desegregated by sex,
- Number and share of appropriation directions that contain directions of gender equality,
- Number and share of committee's terms of reference containing a gender equality perspective.

2. Civil servants are well informed of gender equality, the gender equality objectives and the central gender equality issues within his or her area of responsibility.

Indicators:

- Share of courses arranged by the Office for Administrative Affairs that contain a gender equality perspective,
- Number and share of civil servants per ministry that has attended courses arranged by the Office for Administrative Affairs that to the fullest or to a degree contain a gender equality perspective,
- Number and share of directors per ministry that has attended courses arranged by the Office for Administrative Affairs that to the fullest or to a degree contain a gender equality perspective,
- Number of courses in gender equality arranged for civil servants in individual ministries,
- Number and share of civil servants in charge of budget issues that has attended courses arranged by the Office for Administrative Affairs that to the fullest or to a degree contain a gender equality perspective,
- Number of civil servants that have attended courses in gender equality analyses,
- Degree of knowledge that civil servants possess.

3. Gender equality analyses based on, inter alia, sex desegregated statistics and the gender equality objectives, are a part of the briefing material produced as a basis for decisions by the government.

Indicators:

- Number and share of legal proposals and governmental bills containing a gender equality analysis,
- Number and share of ministry publications and government official reports containing a gender equality analysis,
- Number of hits on the intranets method page,
- Degree to which analysis methods for gender equality are being used,
- Knowledge of methods of gender equality analysis that can be used in work.

4. There is a well-functioning coordination of the gender equality policy within the Cabinet Offices, including support for the civil servants and development of gender mainstreaming within the ministries.

Indicators:

- Number of planned activities carried through,
- Estimation of the cooperation in inter-ministerial working groups,
- Estimated degree of cooperation between the gender mainstreaming coordination and budget coordination in the different phases of the budgetary process,
- Number and share of civil servants who feel they receive support in gender equality mainstreaming.

The new national objectives for gender equality in Sweden are (Bill 2006):

The overall objective is that women and men shall have equal power to shape society and their own lives.

Interim objectives are:

1. An equal distribution of power and influence. Women and men shall have the same rights and opportunities to be active citizens and to shape the conditions of decision-making.
2. Economic equality between women and men. Women and men shall have the same opportunities and conditions with regards to education and paid work that provide life long economic independence.
3. An equal distribution of unpaid care and household work. Women and men shall take the same responsibility for household work and have the same opportunities to give and receive care on equal terms.
4. Men's violence against women shall come to an end. Women and men, girls and boys, shall have equal rights and opportunities to physical integrity.

Source: Questionnaire for collecting data on initiatives of Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming at the Governmental Level in all EU States, 2006

France has expressed its approach to gender mainstreaming in the Charter for Gender Equality (*La Charte d'égalité*), which sets the agenda and guidelines for all signatories. In this document, the partners have formulated proposals for actions to which they commit themselves in the 2004-2007 period. The principle of gender mainstreaming is enshrined in law in France, but the Charter for Gender Equality sets objectives for the process of gender mainstreaming. There are five major objectives, broken down into 280 commitments and further into 413 issues, although they have not been formulated as SMART targets. Because the targets are difficult to measure, it is hard to evaluate them in any meaningful way. The French respondent reports a positive balance after two years of progress (2006).

In 1999, the Federal German Government recognised the equality of women and men as a principle underpinning its actions and decided to promote this objective by means of gender mainstreaming. By 2000, all ministries were obliged to observe the goal of gender equality in all political, legislative and administrative measures. An inter-ministerial working party on gender mainstreaming (IMA), headed by the Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), has been working on implementation since 2000. The principle of gender mainstreaming is enshrined in law in Germany; however, gender impact assessments are often not carried out when laws are being prepared, and sanctions are generally not imposed as a result. The BMFSFJ makes efforts to convince departments that the gender perspective should be taken into account, but much depends on their willingness. Experience has shown that those ministries that have created structures to implement gender mainstreaming internally (such as working parties spanning various directorates-general) are most successful when it comes to introducing the policy throughout their institutions, and they are able to guarantee the most sustainable results. The process is measured and evaluated, although not as often as before; this is a 'work in progress'. The GenderKompetenzZentrum is an important example of the explicit attention being paid to gender mainstreaming (www.gender-mainstreamin.net). Gender mainstreaming is a topic of public debate in Germany; it is frequently raised in letters to the editor and articles in newspapers and magazines, although the tone is not always a positive one.

As mentioned before, the *United Kingdom* focuses more on implementing measures that promote and support gender equality than on a strict interpretation of *gender mainstreaming* (however, the aim of such measures is ultimately to mainstream gender). The UK therefore takes a somewhat different approach, but it certainly has an explicit perspective on gender. Of fundamental significance is the Equality Act (2006), which establishes a new Commission on Equality and Human Rights. It also introduces a Gender Duty, which will become effective in April 2007. The Act ensures that a statutory back-up to promoting gender equality and it also addresses discrimination. The UK furthermore has a Gender Equality Public Service Agreement, which means that all departments must bring about measurable improvements in gender

equality across a range of indicators. The UK sets clear objectives and the results are measured and evaluated against targets. It is perhaps superfluous to say that gender mainstreaming is not a topic of public debate in the UK, although gender equality very much is.

2.3 Commitment

Besides an explicit perspective on *gender mainstreaming*, commitment to the process is also key. The political will to facilitate and implement gender mainstreaming is a necessary requirement for success.

All six countries (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) show real political commitment to *gender mainstreaming*. All six (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) also make a financial commitment by setting aside a budget to pursue and achieve *gender mainstreaming*. There is no financial commitment – or at least not an explicit one – at local level in any of the countries. This does not mean that no action is taken at all on gender mainstreaming at local level, but such action is more project-driven than structural. Box 3 gives an example of gender mainstreaming at local level. According to our respondents, the level of commitment by civil servants appears to be a topic of concern in most countries. Only in Belgium are civil servants perceived to be sufficiently committed to gender mainstreaming.

BOX 3: GENDER MAINSTREAMING AT THE LOCAL LEVEL
<p>“... the European Union and the European Commission have a very significant role to play in showing the way forward for European gender policy. Support from Europe is of vital importance, especially in overcoming the forces of inertia at national, regional and local level, and a decisive instrument for achieving this is the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the countries of the European Union at national, regional and local level.</p> <p>The European <i>Sister Cities Going Gender</i> network has the task of supporting the implementation of gender mainstreaming in Europe. Through their co-operation with associated partners in the north of Europe (Stockholm, Helsinki) and the <i>Council of European Municipalities and Regions</i> (CEMR), Cities with a European flair from the south (Rome, Venice, Turin), the east (Vienna), the west (Rotterdam), and the centre (Frankfurt), are to help the principle of gender mainstreaming achieve a break-through at municipal level throughout Europe.</p> <p>When it comes to the implementation of gender mainstreaming in European cities, there is a clear North-South divide:</p> <p>Almost all larger cities in Sweden have been actively addressing this issue since the late 1990s and all cities have officers responsible for gender mainstreaming, as well as a wealth of experience in its implementation. The principle is still largely unknown in Finnish cities. However, towns and cities in Finland do have detailed equality plans which will be of great importance for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the future.</p> <p>In contrast, cities in the countries of central Europe have only just begun implementing gender policies and the gender mainstreaming principle: In <i>Frankfurt am Main</i> (Germany) for instance, there was an unequivocal City Council Assembly resolution in 2002 to implement gender mainstreaming and the initial steps in this process have already been taken. Some <i>cities in Austria</i> and <i>the Netherlands</i> have been involved in the process of introducing gender budgeting at municipal level for some time now and have already gained useful experience in this field.</p> <p>It is in the <i>cities of southern Europe</i> in particular that gender mainstreaming as an accepted task of municipal government has not yet entered the awareness of the majority of political decision-makers. The main task here is to make the principle and methods of gender mainstreaming known to people at the political level of municipal administration.</p> <p>The <i>European Commission's Community Programme on Gender Equality (2001-2005)</i> has enabled the <i>Sister Cities Going Gender</i> network to carry out gender mainstreaming pilot projects in the cities involved...”</p> <p>Source: ‘The Final Results of the European Network ‘Sister Cities Going Gender’ (2005), Downloadable on: http://www.sister-cities-going-gender.org/final_results.htm</p>

Mainstreaming also contains paragraphs about government commitment. Particular conditions can help to further this process. For example, Belgium seems to have benefited from having a powerful minister of Equal Opportunities who has accomplished a great deal in this area. Civil servants are said to be committed to gender mainstreaming. The Institute for the Equality of Women and Men is putting together a gender mainstreaming handbook which is being tested in the departments. Contact persons have been appointed who, according to the Belgian respondent, are very enthusiastic, but their enthusiasm could, of course, also have been triggered by the existence of a law that 'forces' them to be interested in gender mainstreaming. Whatever the underlying reason might be, civil servants are reported to be committed. The financial commitment consists of an annual budget for the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men. There is no specific structural commitment at local level, but gender mainstreaming is sometimes promoted by means of individual projects.

The government of *Finland* shows its commitment to gender mainstreaming in its Government Programme, which states that it is the task of all the ministries to promote gender equality and that gender mainstreaming must be integrated throughout the state administration. The level of commitment varies greatly from one department to the next, however. A budget is set aside to pursue and achieve gender mainstreaming at national policy level, but it is regarded as rather limited. The aim is to perform a gender budget analysis in order to clarify how much money is spent on gender, and to prepare the Government budget for 2008 in accordance with the new guidelines that take gender considerations into account. What happens at local level depends upon the municipalities, which act independently; the Equality Unit can only advise them. Civil servants within the various ministries vary greatly in their level of commitment to the gender mainstreaming issue. Civil servants are basically trained in gender mainstreaming, including gender impact analysis when drafting legislation, and the ministries further promote mainstreaming. The Finnish respondent believes that it is important to raise awareness however, and that more training is required. Civil servants need to see the benefits because they do not regard gender mainstreaming as mandatory.

There is a strong commitment to the gender mainstreaming process in *Sweden*, with a clear political will to mainstream gender, as expressed by the Plan and Bill adopted by the government. Sweden has a Minister for Gender Equality who coordinates the work and is responsible for implementing *gender mainstreaming*. The importance of making the process visible was highlighted in 2004, for example, when the State Secretary of Gender Equality and a senior public servant visited the ministries to remind them of their responsibilities. There is also a financial commitment to pursuing and achieving *gender mainstreaming* at national policy level, but not at the level of local authorities – at least not explicitly. The main problem in terms of commitment is at the administrative level, where the gender mainstreaming strategy and activities are actually carried out. If the administrators were not required to implement *gender mainstreaming*, according to the Swedish respondent, they would not do so, largely because of competing interests ('large workload', 'lack of time' and 'too difficult' are the arguments given).

In *France*, political commitment is expressed explicitly in the Charter for Gender Equality. Financial commitment is outlined in programme 137, which concerns "the equality between men and women"; this programme is presented annually in parliament. Civil servants in the different ministries participate in several activities related to this issue, for example in projects and committees. That does not, however, say much about their level of commitment; there is no supporting law in France, nor has there been any strict evaluation of the objectives so far. All in all it is hard to say whether or not civil servants are committed.

In *Germany* political commitment is expressed explicitly in the Coalition Treaty of the Merkel Government; there is also a financial commitment to gender mainstreaming at the national level. Civil

servants within the different ministries are formally committed in section 2 of the Joint Rules of Procedure for the Federal Ministries. Beyond this formal commitment, the IMA (the inter-ministerial working party on gender mainstreaming) has agreed that each department should itself be responsible for implementing the gender mainstreaming measures agreed upon. Gender mainstreaming is not mentioned in job descriptions, nor is it an issue in job performance appraisals. How far the commitment actually extends is therefore difficult to say and depends on the will of the ministerial employees; some are very active in gender mainstreaming and equality issues, whereas others are less interested or not at all.

The *United Kingdom* has a strong commitment to the underlying issue of gender mainstreaming. The parliamentary system within the UK enables all members to table questions to ministers at set times. There is a specific slot for the two Ministers for Women, during which questions can be raised related to women's issues (health, equal pay, etc.) and government policy/programmes and funding. In this way, ministers are publicly called to account. The Women and Equality Unit (WEU) organises fairly frequent meetings with civil servants in charge of gender equality issues from different departments. The UK is financially committed; funding is made available for the WEU and for gender mainstreaming and gender equality per department. At local level, it is the local authorities who decide the level of commitment; they will have to comply with the new Gender Duty when it comes into force, but the Women and Equality Unit has no direct authority over them.

2.4 The national machinery

The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) describes the national machinery for the advancement of women as “*the central policy-coordinating unit inside government. Its main task is to support government-wide mainstreaming of a gender-equality perspective in all policy areas*” (paragraph 201).⁴ Are there mechanisms (institutions, implementation structure) that support *gender mainstreaming* in policy in the various countries? Is it clear who is responsible and accountable for the success of the process? And do the different institutions cooperate with one another? These questions are addressed in this section.

All six countries (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) have mechanisms in place to support *gender mainstreaming*. Moreover, in all six countries it is clear who is responsible and accountable for the success of the gender mainstreaming process. The results of the gender mainstreaming process are discussed in parliament in five of the countries (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, Germany and the United Kingdom) and, what is more, in three of the countries (Belgium, Sweden, United Kingdom) the members of parliament – or at least most of them – are reported to be interested in the results of *gender mainstreaming*; in Finland (and this may well be the case in other countries), the members of parliament are not interested in gender mainstreaming as such, but they are interested in gender equality. There is cooperation between ministries on the issue of *gender mainstreaming* in five countries (Finland, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom), between local authorities in three countries (Sweden, France and Germany, to a certain extent), and between government organisations at national and local level in only one country (France).

In *Belgium*, the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men is assigned to monitor the implementation of gender mainstreaming as set out by law. It offers training and advice in this area and issues instructions and instruments for implementing gender mainstreaming. The Minister of Equal

⁴ Beijing declaration and platform for action: fourth world conference on women (15 September 1995), downloadable at: http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/pdf/BEIJIN_E.PDF

Opportunities is responsible and accountable for the success of the gender mainstreaming process within the Belgian government. The Institute reports to the minister about the performance of the ministries. A high-level group, consisting of senior or mid-level civil servants, supervises policy implementation, for which it is responsible and accountable. The process of gender mainstreaming is discussed in parliament. According to the Belgian respondent, there is a strong political lobby and on average five parliamentary questions each year concerning gender mainstreaming; members of parliament are interested in the results. There is no cooperation between ministries, between local authorities or between the two levels on gender mainstreaming issues; the high level group and the institute, however, monitor progress at ministerial level.

The most important institution supporting gender mainstreaming at policy level in *Finland* is the Gender Equality Unit, which acts as a coordinator. In addition, the Act on Equality between Women and Men and its amendments provide an important basis, and the process is monitored and developed by the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality working party. The responsibility borne by the whole government for gender mainstreaming is emphasised in the Government Programme; gender equality matters fall within the scope of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The Gender Equality Unit, the Ombudsperson for Equality, and the Council for Equality are responsible for the practical implementation of equality principles. In parliament, the Employment and Equality Committee deals with equality issues. According to the Programme, the heads of the ministries, i.e. the permanent secretaries, are responsible for the senior civil servants. According to the Finnish respondent, however, Finland must work on the issues of responsibility and accountability. The results of the gender mainstreaming process are discussed in parliament, but, as mentioned earlier, the procedure is unsatisfactory: the results are discussed in the subcommittee for employment and gender equality and parliamentarians can ask questions, which they do. The Council for Equality – a body attached to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, consisting of representatives from the political parties – encourages discussion of gender equality, but it is not part of parliament. Members of parliament are not interested in the results of gender mainstreaming as such, but they are interested in gender equality. The ministries co-operate on the issue of gender mainstreaming thanks to the coordination of the Equality Unit and the inter-ministerial working party; according to the Finnish evaluation report, however, the latter network does not function ideally (mainly due to limited resources available for coordination and flaws in the ministries' internal implementation). There is no cooperation at or with other levels, or at least no structured cooperation.

In *Sweden*, the Government Plan for *gender mainstreaming* has provided a strong framework for implementing gender mainstreaming during the 2004-2009 period. The plan sets objectives and explicitly outlines the coordination structure (see Box 2). The Minister for Gender Equality is responsible for coordinating and following up the government's gender equality policy and for implementing the Plan. In 2004, a committee was appointed to develop gender mainstreaming methods and to train civil servants. Three members of staff have been assigned to produce the training programme. It is less clear who among the senior civil servants is responsible and accountable for the success of the gender mainstreaming process. On the one hand, the 2004 Plan specifically identifies the relevant tasks and responsibilities; on the other, our Swedish respondent reports that the lack of commitment among civil servants is regarded as a serious obstacle (see section 2.3: Commitment). An annual report addressed to parliament assesses the objectives set out in the Plan for Gender Mainstreaming in Government Offices every spring. The plans and actions taken by parliament reflect how interested members of parliament are in the results of gender mainstreaming. The ministries co-operate on the issue of gender mainstreaming in an inter-ministerial group (consisting of a representative of each ministry and representatives of the Gender Equality Unit), which meets once a month, and the Gender Equality Unit also coordinates their actions (training, instruction, evaluation). At local level, the authorities have their own organisations but they

do not cooperate with one another on gender mainstreaming issues. There have been many projects at local level, however. Finally, government organisations at national and local level do not cooperate, as the municipalities and county councils are highly autonomous.

In *France*, the minister for Social Cohesion and Equality, who is part of the Department of Employment, Social Cohesion and Housing, is responsible and accountable for the success of the gender mainstreaming process. The Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities Unit (SDFE) (233 civil servants) monitors the process and is responsible at the level of civil servants. It reports to parliament about trends in gender mainstreaming and accompanying actions. The results of the process of gender mainstreaming are not discussed in parliament. The ministries co-operate on the issue of gender mainstreaming and 180 civil servants are active in different regions, which enables cooperation between national and local levels.

In *Germany*, the Directorate-General for EQUALITY of the Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BFSFJ) implements gender mainstreaming for everyone within its remit. This DG has no authority, nor can it issue sanctions; it can therefore only work by influencing other departments. An inter-ministerial working party on gender mainstreaming (IMA), headed by the Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) has been working on implementation since 2000. The result is that some ministries are active in gender mainstreaming and others are less committed. Because each department is responsible for itself, this in fact sometimes means that nobody is responsible. The ministries cooperate on the issue of gender mainstreaming via the IMA, a high level group with representatives from all the ministries. At local level, there are annual meetings with the regional Länder. If there is a concrete occasion (gender-related reports, international women's day), the results of the process of gender mainstreaming will be discussed in parliament. Some of the members of parliament are interested in the results, but most are not. Women (of all parties) are more involved, generally speaking.

The most important mechanism for gender equality in the *United Kingdom* is probably the Equality Act from 2006, which established the Commission on Equality and Human Rights and the upcoming Gender Duty (April 2007); the latter will provide the statutory back-up to promote gender equality and address discrimination. There is also the Women and Equality Unit (WEU). Both Ministers for Women are responsible and accountable for the success of gender equality. One of these ministers is part of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, a rather 'general' ministry; this can be interpreted as a sign that gender is being mainstreamed in general (socio-economic) policies. The other minister is the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Minister for Women. As a civil servant, the Director of the WEU is accountable for the success of gender equality. As explained in section 2.3, the UK parliamentary system enables all members to table questions to ministers at set times and there is a specific slot for the two Ministers for Women, during which they can be asked any question related to women (health, equal pay, etc.) and government policy/programmes and funding. Most members of parliament are interested. The ministries cooperate with one another in various meetings and there are bilateral contacts between the WEU and the departments on equality issues.

2.5 Gender expertise

For a country to succeed in implementing a policy of gender mainstreaming, its government and senior civil servants must have a solid understanding of the subject. One method is to consult gender experts, for instance from universities, when evolving the instruments and tools necessary to implement gender mainstreaming, and more generally in order to keeping track of new developments in the field.

The concept of gender mainstreaming is, generally speaking, understood in only one of the six countries (Sweden). Gender experts are consulted by the governments in all six countries when it comes implementing gender mainstreaming (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) and all six countries have instruments or tools for implementing gender mainstreaming. These are made available on a website (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, Germany), or during Equality Unit visits to each department (Belgium). Five of the countries (Belgium, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) make facts and figures on the outcomes of gender mainstreaming available, while the governments of five of the countries (Belgium, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) also apply these instruments on a fairly regular basis. The results of gender mainstreaming are measured and published regularly in four of the countries (Belgium, Sweden, France and the United Kingdom).

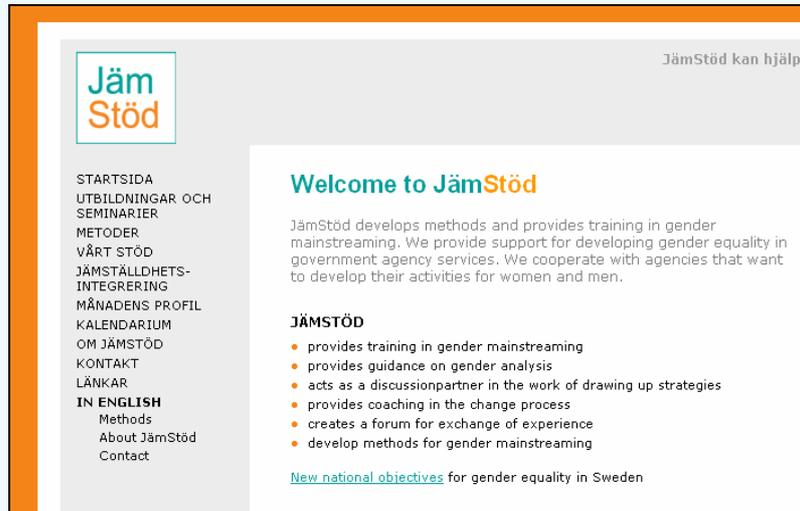
Knowledge about gender issues is negligible in *Belgium* and the concept of gender mainstreaming is not well understood. The Institute for the Equality of Women and Men is attempting to raise the level of expertise in several ways. Gender experts are consulted by the government and the Institute is putting together a database of experts in the field of gender mainstreaming. Instruments for implementing gender mainstreaming are developed and made available in publications, on a website and during Equality Unit visits to each department. A brochure of best practices has been published. Fact and figures on the outcomes of gender mainstreaming are made available and the results are measured and published.

In *Finland*, gender equality is simply the status quo; it is accepted and appears to happen naturally. Both the local and national authorities have a good knowledge of gender equality. The concept of gender mainstreaming as such is not fully understood, however. Some ministries have instructed universities to do research, and some private companies are also active in this field, but only a small pool of experts is involved. Instruments available for implementing gender mainstreaming include guidelines and a mainstreaming model, coordinated training on mainstreaming, gender impact assessment and statistics to support mainstreaming. Some of these tools are made available through a website. The instruments are not applied adequately enough by government, nor are results of gender mainstreaming measured and published in any satisfactory way. The Gender Equality Unit is, however, considering launching an information service, a portal with information on different subjects.

In *Sweden*, one of the objectives is that by 2009, all government employees should be well educated and trained in gender equality issues/gender mainstreaming (2004 Plan). So far, 10% of government staff has been trained. Practically all ministers, political appointees and senior civil servants in the Government Offices have undergone gender equality training. The concept of gender mainstreaming is understood, and training has turned out to be effective. Understanding the concept of gender mainstreaming entails knowing how to integrate a gender perspective into policy and set up a programme. The extent to which local authorities are knowledgeable about gender mainstreaming depends on their own support structures and the projects undertaken. The ministries consult experts, and the Gender Equality Unit provides expert knowledge regarding gender equality and gender mainstreaming. The Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee has developed a method for implementing gender mainstreaming and makes methods and instruments available on a website (www.jamstod.se). Facts and figures on gender mainstreaming outcomes are also available. The government applies these instruments regularly by providing training and carrying out activities as defined in the 2004 Plan. A report will be published in early 2007 advising the government on how to carry on with gender mainstreaming in order to achieve all its objectives before 2009. Box 4 illustrates the Swedish approach to training and instruction.

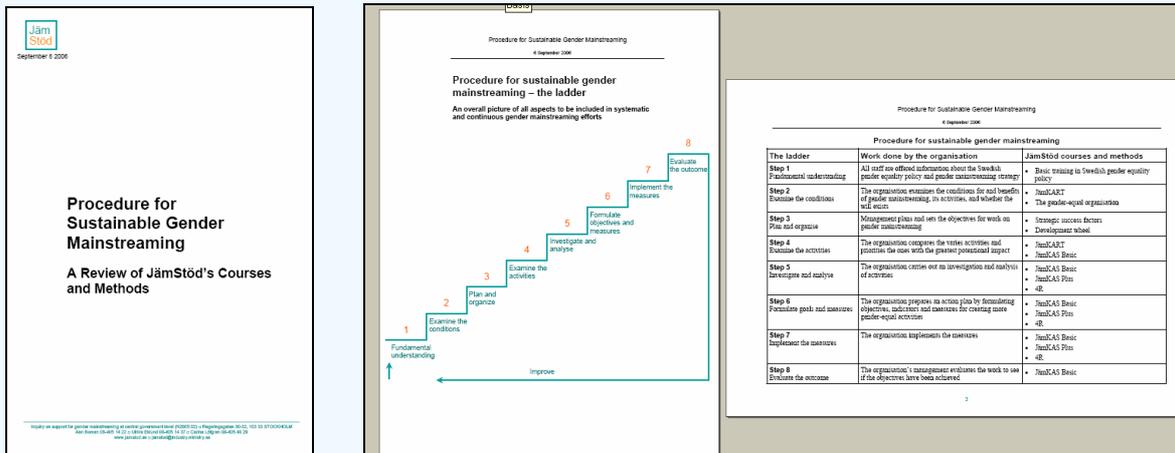
BOX 4: GOOD PRACTICE OF EXPERTISE IN SWEDEN

In Sweden methods for gender mainstreaming implementation are made available through a website: www.jamstod.se



JämStöd, Inquiry on support for gender mainstreaming at central government level, develops methods for systematic work with gender mainstreaming. They do this together with authorities and ministries. Besides the secretariat, there is a group of trained staff educating on behalf of JämStöd. There is also a group of experts affiliated to JämStöd.

The developed methods are tools to make inventories and to map out, analyse and design new objectives.



In *France*, all kind of groups (including government departments) signed the Charter for Gender Equality. It sets out instruments for implementing gender mainstreaming, which are applied by the government on a fairly regular basis. Facts and figures are made available on the outcomes of gender mainstreaming. The results of gender mainstreaming are measured and published regularly, and the results of the Charter for Gender Equality are communicated to the Council of Ministers, headed by the Minister for Social Cohesion and Equality.

In *Germany*, training in gender issues took mainly place between 2000 and 2004. Some ministries have included gender mainstreaming modules in their in-house training programmes. In principle, all civil servants in strategic positions should have had gender mainstreaming training. The concept is understood by an interested section of the public, but it is not widely understood, partly because it is an English word. The GenderKompetenzZentrum at Humboldt University in Berlin (financed by the Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, BFSFJ) is an important think-tank for anyone

interested in gender issues, and it also supports the ministries. Pilot projects have led to the development of instruments and working aids for gender mainstreaming; they are made available on a website (www.gender-mainstreaming.net). The instruments are used fairly regularly by the government, although the frequency differs from one ministry to the next, as each ministry is itself responsible for mainstreaming gender. There is not regularly scheduled assessment of the results: in the past, the various ministries filed reports, but this form of reporting is becoming less popular. Employees responsible for gender mainstreaming attempt to develop new implementation strategies. Facts and figures on the outcomes of gender mainstreaming are made available via the *Statistische Bundesamt*. Box 5 illustrates a good practice in Germany relating to gender expertise.

BOX 5: GOOD PRACTICE IN GERMANY, GENDER EXPERTISE

The GenderCompetenceCentre www.genderkompetenz.info in Germany ...

“is an application-oriented research institution at the Humboldt-Universität of Berlin for supporting public administrative institutions in implementing the Gender Mainstreaming (GM) strategy. It was founded in October 2003 as an externally-funded project within the Center for Transdisciplinary Gender Studies (ZtG). It is financed by the Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

We work with key actors from the fields of politics, public administration, industry, associations, science and academia, and with consultants. You can find links to these areas via the navigation menu on the left.

On our website you can find information on the following topics:

- **Center:** here you can for example find our range of services, the Gender Mainstreaming Expertise database, and more details on the team at the GenderCompetenceCentre
- **Gender Mainstreaming:** here you can find full information on the implementation of the Gender Mainstreaming strategy and find out more about bases, the building blocks for implementation and about tools.
- **Gender competence:** here you can find out what we mean by Gender competence and find information on specialist work, i.e. the many Gender aspects in subject areas, and on Gender mainstreaming in policy fields.
- **News:** here you can find news of events put on by the GenderCompetenceCentre, of new materials and on topics of current interest. “

The screenshot shows the website interface for GenderKompetenzZentrum. At the top, there is a logo and a navigation bar with links for 'Center', 'Gender Mainstreaming', 'Gender competence', and 'News'. Below the navigation bar, the main content area is titled 'The GenderCompetenceCenter' and contains the following text:

is an application-oriented research institution at the Humboldt-Universität of Berlin for supporting public administrative institutions in implementing the Gender Mainstreaming (GM) strategy. It was founded in October 2003 as an externally-funded project within the Center for Transdisciplinary Gender Studies (ZtG). It is financed by the Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

We work with key actors from the fields of **politics, public administration, industry, associations, science and academia**, and with **consultants**. You can find links to these areas via the navigation menu on the left.

On our website you can find information on the following topics:

- **Center:** here you can for example find our **range of services**, the **Gender Mainstreaming Expertise database**, and more details on the **team** at the GenderCompetenceCentre
- **Gender Mainstreaming:** here you can find full information on the implementation of the Gender Mainstreaming strategy and find out more about **bases**, the building blocks for **implementation** and about **tools**.
- **Gender competence:** here you can find out what we mean by **Gender competence** and find information on specialist work, i.e. the many Gender aspects in **subject areas**, and on Gender mainstreaming in **policy fields**.

On the right side of the page, there are three vertical panels:

- Veranstaltungs-Kalender** (calendar of events)
- Zentrum für transdisziplinäre Geschlechterstudien** (Center for Transdisciplinary Gender Studies)
- Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend** (Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth)

In the *United Kingdom*, most departments have diversity units whose employees are experts in gender issues. Diversity is a mandatory subject in managerial courses. Academics staff are brought in regularly to advise. Instruments used for implementation purposes are the gender impact assessment and the new Equality Act. A large number of facts and figures on the position of men and women are available and are used and published regularly in order to measure the degree of gender equality. However, as stated earlier, the term gender mainstreaming is not really understood in the UK and is still confused with specific equality policies.

2.6 Self-evaluation

Finally, every respondent in the six countries was asked to evaluate his/her country's performance with respect to gender mainstreaming. As indicated in section 1.4 and repeated here, these answers are based on the assessments, perceptions and opinions of our respondents. According to the various requirements for gender mainstreaming success, five countries evaluate their situation positively (Belgium, Finland, France, Sweden and the United Kingdom). Of the countries involved, four (Belgium, Finland, France and Sweden) consider themselves to be in a favourable position compared to other European countries. The average score (on a scale from 1 to 10) for implementing gender mainstreaming in national policy is 6.8, with Sweden, Belgium and France being positive exceptions in the view of their respondents. The respondents give the following reasons for thinking that their country is in a favourable position to make gender mainstreaming a success: good coordination structure, trends in legislation, political commitment, sufficient capacity, available methods, use of statistics, training provided, and availability of a dedicated plan. Elements that obstruct the process are: lack of good indicators, poor evaluation and lack of concrete action when evaluation proves faulty, and a lack of commitment among civil servants in many countries. Respondents are aware of examples of effective gender mainstreaming approaches in other European countries, with Sweden considered as the most useful example.

Looking to the future, most of the respondents mentioned that the current strategies would be updated or continued.

Belgium receives a favourable evaluation from its respondent when it comes to the requirements for gender mainstreaming success, mainly owing to the draft bill on gender mainstreaming. The Belgian respondent perceives the United Kingdom to be in a similar position for the same reason. Because of the new law, the Belgian respondent awards Belgium a 7 for gender mainstreaming; with out the new law, the respondent would have awarded an unsatisfactory mark. The Belgian respondent thinks that although the new gender mainstreaming law is a big step in the right direction, there is still a lot of work ahead when it comes to enforcing this legal obligation. The respondent also advises other countries to make gender mainstreaming a statutory obligation. The Belgian respondent believes that the most interesting countries are the UK (because of its legal framework), Sweden and Denmark (because of their instruments), Ireland (for its gender indicators), Switzerland (for the many different initiatives) and Canada (considered a good example in all sorts of ways). The Belgian respondent would consider an international exchange of concrete information on gender mainstreaming particularly useful for the topics of health, lifestyle, etc.

Implementation of the Gender Mainstreaming Law will naturally be the most significant issue in the future.

The Finnish respondent regards the gender mainstreaming situation in *Finland* as favourable compared with other European countries: there is a will to implement gender mainstreaming and Finland is working on improving the conditions to make this possible. The standard of gender mainstreaming is perceived to be fairly high. However, the respondent also believes that the country is struggling with 'ghosts from the past', i.e. positive action versus gender equality. Despite the favourable opinion, the respondent nevertheless gives Finland a mere '5' when asked to rank the country in terms of implementing gender mainstreaming: it is half-way there and has achieved a lot, but it is not perfect. The political will has been clearly stated, and sets a good example for other countries, but what Finland needs is close coordination/training and people in each ministry who take responsibility and work full time gender mainstreaming. Sweden is cited as a European country from which Finland has much to learn, owing to its strong coordinating unit and solid programme.

In future, Finland will pay particular attention to setting up a better coordination structure for the process of gender mainstreaming.

Sweden is given a highly favourable evaluation when it comes to gender mainstreaming. Sweden claims to be in a good position to make gender mainstreaming a success because of its solid coordination structure, effective Equality Unit, adequate capacity, clear instructions on how to integrate a gender perspective, the methods and training provided, the availability of desegregated statistics, and an outstanding plan for gender mainstreaming. The Swedish respondent believes that Sweden is leading and that Denmark is in a comparable position. The respondent awards Sweden a '10' in terms of implementing gender mainstreaming in national policy. Important indicators for this ranking are the systematic structure, mandatory approach and clear instructions. The Swedish respondent would advise other countries to draw up a separate plan for implementing gender mainstreaming and to put a sound coordination structure in place. The respondent felt that the most useful approaches in other European countries were Belgium (new law), Austria (systematic approach), and Estonia (training programmes). Lithuania, the Czech Republic and Ireland were also cited as giving many examples of gender analysis in national development planning. The respondent mentions the Netherlands for its measurable goals and comprehensive, sound evaluations. France has a comprehensive gender equality charter.

In future, Sweden intends to carry out the work as planned and focus in particular on a gender budget analysis. Sweden wants to tighten up the rules on training: gender mainstreaming training should be made mandatory for everyone entering employment within the government organisation, and it should be part of every training programme provided. According to the respondent, it is important to organise many more meetings to improve gender mainstreaming, as it is very difficult to understand what is happening in other countries. Exchanging tips and good practices would be most useful.

The French respondent believes *France* to be performing favourably with respect to gender mainstreaming because there is a real political will to achieve equality in social and economic life. According to the respondent, France is the only European state that has a Charter for Gender Equality – which they are very proud of – to which both public and private parties have committed themselves. For that reason, the respondent awards France a score of '7'.

As for the future, France is planning on continuing along the path pioneered by their Charter for Gender Equality.

The German respondent ranks *Germany* as mediocre and only awards it a '6½' with respect to gender mainstreaming. The Germans are proud on their GenderKompetenzZentrum and are very positive about their training in gender issues, websites and newsletters. On the negative side they mention a

cultural problem: it is difficult in Germany to overcome stereotypes and conservative male attitudes towards gender roles. That is one of the greatest obstacles to real gender equality. In terms of how best to implement gender mainstreaming effectively, the respondent advises good training and the identification and 'selling' of benefits/best practices (with networking). Praising people works better than pressure and a top-down approach is required. Creating competition between ministries was a good system in the beginning.

In terms of the future, Germany plans to update, reinforce and revive its gender mainstreaming strategy.

The British respondent does not evaluate gender mainstreaming in the *United Kingdom* very positively: the score awarded is a '5'; partly because the UK does not apply a strict interpretation of gender mainstreaming. The United Kingdom places more emphasis on a wider equality agenda. Strictly speaking, then, the country has not made much progress in gender mainstreaming, partly because its strategies were less effective than expected and a new law on Gender Duty (April 2007) was required to get things going. Elements of the UK approach considered useful are the upcoming Gender Duty and the Commission on Equality and Human Rights. Having two Ministers for Women is also very important and useful and raises the profile of gender issues.

In the UK, the most important issue for the future is to enforce the new law on Gender Duty (April, 2007).

2.7 Gender mainstreaming in the Netherlands

We have thus far described the process of gender mainstreaming in Belgium, Finland, Sweden, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. In this section we focus on the situation in the Netherlands and describe the situation there in terms of:

- how explicitly the gender mainstreaming perspective/ approach is expressed;
- commitment to gender mainstreaming;
- underlying mechanisms for implementation: the national machinery;
- degree of knowledge and gender expertise;
- self-evaluation.

1 Explicitness

In the Netherlands, the gender mainstreaming perspective is explicitly expressed in the 2001 Government Position on Gender Mainstreaming. The principle of gender mainstreaming is not enshrined in law. The basic principle underlying the Government's position is that emancipation targets should be integrated at all levels of policy, and that the political and official responsibility for gender mainstreaming should lie mainly with the departments themselves. By 2006, the ministries were to have met two basic requirements: 1) gender mainstreaming was to be sufficiently embedded in the ministerial and the inter-ministerial organisational structure and 2) the necessary instruments were to be made available. Ministries were asked to produce a report by the end of 2001 stating how gender mainstreaming would be carried out. The reports were to set out specific substantive targets and an agenda for meeting them. The Review Committee Emancipation, founded in 2004, has monitored the gender mainstreaming process in order to assess progress within the ministries. The tentative conclusion of the Review Committee (as published in its 2005 report) is that there are good examples of gender mainstreaming in various ministries, but that the principle of mainstreaming the

gender perspective has not yet been structurally embedded in national policy. The two yearly *Emancipatiemonitor* tracks the results of the Dutch emancipation process and measures the effects of emancipation policies and measures in education, labour, the work/life balance, income, decision making and violence against women. Gender mainstreaming is not a topic of public debate in the Netherlands.

2 Commitment

The government of the Netherlands showed its commitment to gender mainstreaming in its 2001 Government Position on Gender Mainstreaming and by establishing the Review Committee in 2004 to assess gender mainstreaming progress. However, the Review Committee concluded in its 2005 report that the commitment to gender mainstreaming is rather weak in actual practice, as long as no explicit attention is drawn to this policy. It seems that interesting initiatives taken by ministries at the start of the 21st century have gradually faded away. Nevertheless, the ministries have committed themselves to presenting the Review Committee's assessment to the Dutch parliament. A budget has been planned for the Review Committee and to finance ministerial support by E-quality, an independent knowledge and expertise centre subsidised by the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. A budget has also been earmarked for research among local authorities on gender budgeting policies and practices. Gender mainstreaming activities are not coordinated at provincial or local level. The civil servants working at the ministries are not explicitly committed to gender mainstreaming, except for those staff members assigned emancipation tasks within some ministries.

3 The national machinery

In the current Dutch government, it is the Minister for Social Affairs and Employment who bears political responsibility for emancipation policy, including gender mainstreaming. All ministers and state secretaries are explicitly responsible in their own area for gender mainstreaming. The Department for the Coordination of Emancipation Policy (DCE), which is part of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, has the task of putting emancipation issues on the political agenda, supporting the different ministries in shaping their emancipation and gender mainstreaming policies, and monitoring the progress of the emancipation process. The job of providing departments with instruments in support of gender mainstreaming has been transferred to the NGO E-quality and to the Review Committee, which advises departments on improvements. The Netherlands does not have a pyramid structure with respect to gender mainstreaming. The Department for the Coordination of Emancipation Policy (DCE) organises the exchange of gender mainstreaming expertise and best practices. The results of the Review Committee will be discussed by those members of the parliament who have specific responsibility for the Emancipation dossier.

4 Gender expertise

The concept of gender mainstreaming is not very widespread and difficult for many civil servants to understand. There are, however, recent examples of ministries that have consulted gender experts about gender mainstreaming. Plans have been developed to train civil servants in gender mainstreaming and to offer gender mainstreaming modules on the ministries' intranet. A detailed programme of gender mainstreaming instructions does not yet exist, however.

The NGO E-quality was assigned the task of offering ministries expertise and information on gender equality and gender mainstreaming by giving workshops and offering advice. Gender mainstreaming Instruments, for example a guide to gender mainstreaming and gender impact analysis, have been

developed and made available in publications that can be downloaded from a Ministry of Social Affairs website <http://www.emancipatieweb.nl/>. Facts and figures on the effects of Dutch emancipation policies and measures are reported in the biennial *Emancipatiemonitor*, as reported above.

5 Evaluation

The Netherlands does not advocate a tightly managed gender mainstreaming process; it would rather increase the level of interest in this policy by giving appealing examples and describing best practices for integrating the gender perspective into policy. In the current gender mainstreaming approach, the focus is primarily on the responsibility borne by the ministries themselves for this policy. The Review Committee will shortly publish its evaluation of the gender mainstreaming process at the ministries and the way the gender mainstreaming structure has been set up so far.

2.8 Summarising the findings: a gender balance scorecard on gender mainstreaming

The gender balance scorecard surveys how countries have shaped their gender mainstreaming policies in terms of the various requirements. The requirements were described in the analysis framework in the first chapter. They are:

- the political will at the top of an organisation to make *gender mainstreaming* a success;
- a structure in which *gender mainstreaming* can be shaped, meaning that there are clearly defined responsibilities and clearly defined procedures when it comes to the results of gender mainstreaming policy (accountability), for example reporting to Parliament;
- the presence of gender expertise inside the organisation;
- the availability of financial and possibly other means;
- the availability of relevant data to measure and monitor the progress of the *gender mainstreaming* process.

The data presented in chapter 2 will provide the input for calculating the scores and the prevailing situation of each country, as well as its performance on gender mainstreaming. Each country's situation is presented on a three-point scale: '0' if a certain criterion has not been met; '1' if a certain criterion has been met to some extent or there are concrete plans to meet it in the near future; and '2' if a certain criterion is met in an exemplary manner.

The political will

Gender mainstreaming depends on the will of employees at several levels to make it a success, so the political will at the top of the organisation must influence the will at the national level, the will of civil servants and the will at local level. All the countries concerned have attained some degree of commitment at all three levels. Sweden is a positive exception at the national level, as expressed by the Plan and Bill to which it has committed itself; this provides a solid framework for working with gender mainstreaming in order to achieve greater equality.

In Belgium, the situation of the civil servants appears to differ from that in other countries. All of the countries seem to find it difficult to foster commitment among their civil servants. While they have often been trained, competing interests and a failure to actually experience the benefits have made them wary of process. According to the Belgian respondent, the level of commitment among civil servants

depends on having an enthusiastic contact in each department; the contact persons are appointed by the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men and they are developing a 'book of tools' to be tested in the departments. They may well be enthusiastic, but their enthusiasm could also be triggered by the fact that there is a law that 'forces' the contacts to be interested in the topic of gender mainstreaming.

All countries have local activities related to gender mainstreaming, but these depend mainly on individual local initiatives and are seldom organised in any structured way. France seems to be the only country where local activities are part of the process of gender mainstreaming. Cooperation with the local level is organised through the Unit for Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities (SDFE) and 180 civil servants active in different regions.

A supportive structure

Coordination of the gender mainstreaming process is determined by the way the relevant structure facilitates gender mainstreaming. Interesting supportive structures seem to have been set up in Sweden and Belgium, each country for its own reasons. In Sweden, the gender mainstreaming is explicitly expressed and so a very systematic procedure has been put in place, with clearly defined objectives and a transparent coordinating structure. This is also the case in Belgium, except that the structure is not organised according to achieving clearly defined objectives, but more according to the authority charged with ensuring that gender mainstreaming is incorporated in policy. The United Kingdom has a very strong supportive structure for gender equality, although it does not really follow the gender mainstreaming route. France is the only country that does not have legislation on gender mainstreaming. Nevertheless, the principle of gender mainstreaming is politically accepted and supported.

Gender expertise

There is a great deal of gender expertise in Sweden, mainly because of the country's extensive education programme. In contrast, Belgium is said to have little knowledge about gender issues. Most countries have some knowledge about gender issues, with expertise being spread about within the government and among senior civil servants. Most countries have also developed instruments and tools for implementing gender mainstreaming.

Financial means

All of the countries have set aside a budget for pursuing and implementing gender mainstreaming; in some (Sweden, Belgium and the United Kingdom), the budget seems to cover more fundamental bodies, projects and persons than in others.

Relevant data

Relevant data and a coordinating structure are important tools for monitoring the progress of gender mainstreaming and to clarify which steps need to be taken. Sweden, Germany and the United Kingdom seem to have organised this in an interesting way. Measuring and evaluating the gender mainstreaming process can point out the things that have gone well as well as any obstacles that need to be tackled in the near or distant future.

A table summarising the findings

	SE	BE	FI	DE	UK	FR	NL
The political will at the top of an organisation to make gender mainstreaming a success							
- To what extent is there a real political commitment to the gender mainstreaming perspective	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
- To what extent are civil servants committed to gender mainstreaming	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
- To what extent are local authorities committed to gender mainstreaming	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
	4	4	3	3	3	4	3
A structure in which gender mainstreaming can be shaped, meaning that there are clearly defined responsibilities and clearly defined procedures when it comes to the results of gender mainstreaming policy (accountability)							
- Is the gender mainstreaming perspective explicitly expressed: is a systematic procedure in place	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
- Is gender mainstreaming enshrined in law	1	2	1	1	2	0	0
- Are clear objectives set for the process	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
- Are there mechanisms that support gender mainstreaming at policy level	2	2	1	1	2	1	1
- Is it clear who is responsible and accountable for the success of the process	2	2	1	1	2	2	2
	9	9	6	5	8	5	5
The presence of gender expertise inside the organisation							
- To what extent is there knowledge within government and among senior civil servants about gender issues	2	0	1	1	1	1	1
- Are there instruments/ tools for implementing gender mainstreaming	2	2	2	2	1	1	2
	4	2	3	3	2	2	3
The availability of financial means							
- Is there budget set aside for pursuing and implementing gender mainstreaming	2	2	1	1	2	1	2
	2	2	1	1	2	1	2
The availability of relevant data to measure and monitor the progress of the gender mainstreaming process							
- Are desegregated data collected	2	1	1	2	2	1	1
- Are the results of the gender mainstreaming process measured and evaluated against targets	2	1	2	1	1	1	2
- Are the results of gender mainstreaming measured and published on a regular basis	2	1	1	1	2	2	2
	6	3	4	4	5	4	5

3. Conclusions

3.1 *The process of gender mainstreaming*

In order to summarise the results of our study on gender mainstreaming, we use the five perspectives presented in Chapter 2: explicitness; commitment; the national machinery; gender expertise; and self evaluation

Explicitness

In all six countries, the *gender mainstreaming* perspective is explicitly expressed in national policy. The principle of *gender mainstreaming* is enshrined in law in five countries (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, Germany, United Kingdom), but the most far-reaching legislation can be found in Belgium. All six countries set objectives for the process of gender mainstreaming, although they are more clearly defined in one country than in another, and five countries (Finland, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) measure and evaluate the results of the gender mainstreaming process against targets. *Gender mainstreaming* is rarely a topic of public debate, however; two of the six countries, namely Finland and Germany, say that such debate do (sometimes) take place. Gender mainstreaming appears to be more a concept used by experts, while *gender equality* is the term more likely to be used in public debates. This means that the concept of gender mainstreaming remains somewhat vague to many civil servants and difficult for them to 'handle', implying a need to make the principle of gender mainstreaming as concrete as possible in the various policy dossiers. It is likely that civil servants who are no gender experts themselves will only understand the principle of gender mainstreaming if they are given clear and specific examples. These could be examples that clarify the relevance of the gender perspective in environmental planning, in agricultural policies or – more obviously – in tax and social security policies.

Commitment

The results suggest that there is political commitment to the *gender mainstreaming* perspective in all six countries. All six have also made a financial commitment, in the form of a budget set aside for pursuing and implementing *gender mainstreaming*, although its size differs from one country to the next. There is no financial commitment at local level in any of the six countries, or at least not an explicit one. This does not mean that there are no gender mainstreaming activities at all at local level, but such activities are generally project-based rather than structural (see Box 3). The level of commitment among civil servants seems to be a topic of concern in most countries. Only in Belgium are civil servants perceived to be sufficiently committed to gender mainstreaming, perhaps owing to the recent introduction of the gender mainstreaming bill.

The national machinery

In all six countries there are mechanisms in place that support and facilitate *gender mainstreaming*. Moreover, in all six countries it is clear who is responsible and accountable for the success of the gender mainstreaming process. The results of this process are discussed in parliament in five countries (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, Germany and the United Kingdom) and, what is more, in three countries (Belgium, Sweden, United Kingdom) the members of parliament – or at least most of them – are reported to be interested in the results of *gender mainstreaming*. According to the Finnish respondent – and this might be the case in other countries as well – the members of parliament are not primarily interested in gender mainstreaming as such, but rather in gender equality. There is cooperation on the issue of *gender mainstreaming* between ministries in five countries (Finland,

Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) cooperate, the local authorities in three countries (Sweden, France and Germany, to a certain extent), and between national and local government organisations in only one country (France).

Gender expertise

The concept of gender mainstreaming is, generally speaking, more or less understood in only one of the six countries (Sweden). In all six, the government consults gender experts when it comes to implementing gender mainstreaming, and all six also have instruments or tools for this purpose. These instruments are made available through a website (Belgium, Finland, Sweden, Germany), or through Equality Unit visits to each department (Belgium). Five countries (Belgium, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) make facts and figures on the outcomes of gender mainstreaming available, and in five of those countries (Belgium, Sweden, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) these facts and figures are used by governments on a fairly regular basis. The results of gender mainstreaming are measured and published regularly in four cases (Belgium, Sweden, France and the United Kingdom).

Self-evaluation

Five countries give their gender mainstreaming situation a positive evaluation (Belgium, Finland, France, Sweden and the United Kingdom). Of the countries involved, four (Belgium, Finland, France and Sweden) consider themselves to be in a favourable position compared to other European countries. The average score (on a scale from 1 to 10) for implementing gender mainstreaming in national policy is 6.8, with Sweden, Belgium and France being positive exceptions in the view of their respondents. The respondents give the following reasons for thinking that their country is in a favourable position to make gender mainstreaming a success: good coordination structure, trends in legislation, political commitment, sufficient capacity, available methods, use of statistics, training provided, and availability of a dedicated plan. One significant barrier to the process of gender mainstreaming is the lack of commitment and gender expertise among civil servants. Specifically, the lack of any real commitment on the part of politicians and civil servants seems to be a concern in many countries. Our respondents were aware of examples of effective approaches to gender mainstreaming in other European Countries, with Sweden being considered the most useful. Looking to the future, most of the respondents mentioned that the current strategies would be updated or continued.

Gender mainstreaming: an overall evaluation

The gender balance scorecard outlined in this report gives an overall review of the gender mainstreaming process in each country (see p. 31). The dimensions on this gender balance scorecard are related to the perspectives described above, but in a more operational form:

- the political will at the top of an organisation to make *gender mainstreaming* a success;
- a structure in which *gender mainstreaming* can be shaped, meaning that there are clearly defined responsibilities and clearly defined procedures when it comes to the results of gender mainstreaming policy (accountability), for example reporting to Parliament;
- the presence of gender expertise inside the organisation;
- the availability of financial and possibly other means;
- the availability of relevant data to measure and monitor the progress of the *gender mainstreaming* process.

Looking at the figures in the gender balance scorecard and bearing the foregoing in mind, Sweden appears to be rather successful when it comes to the process of gender mainstreaming. Sweden is doing quite well in terms of having relevant data available to monitor the gender mainstreaming process, making financial means available, and having gender expertise inside the organisation. In

terms of a supportive gender mainstreaming structure, Sweden and Belgium are both doing well. In Sweden, the gender mainstreaming perspective is explicitly expressed and there are very systematic procedures, with clearly defined objectives and a transparent coordinating structure. This means that the associated data collection, measurement and evaluation are well organised; that the Equality Unit has sufficient capacity; that clear instructions are issued on how to integrate a gender perspective in general policy; that gender mainstreaming methods and training modules are available; and – importantly – that a plan for gender mainstreaming policies has been explicitly formulated. Our Swedish respondent emphasises the relevance and necessity of having a specific gender mainstreaming plan. Such a plan clarifies the gender mainstreaming objectives; it sets up a systematic gender mainstreaming structure; it provides for clear instructions and training to all civil servants; it makes gender mainstreaming compulsory; and it ensures that the results of gender mainstreaming policies are evaluated in a specific way and on a regular basis.

3.2 Useful practices of mainstreaming policies for the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the gender mainstreaming perspective is explicitly expressed in the 2001 Government Position on Gender Mainstreaming. The principle of gender mainstreaming is not enshrined in law, however. By 2006, the ministries should have met two basic criteria: gender mainstreaming should be sufficiently embedded in the ministerial and the inter-ministerial organisation, and the necessary instruments should be available.

By the end of 2005, the Review Committee on Emancipation, established to evaluate the process of gender mainstreaming in the Netherlands, tentatively concluded that the process of gender mainstreaming could be improved in terms of both commitment and organisational structure. One salient point is there is no embedded organisational structure for gender mainstreaming within the ministries, meaning that there are, generally speaking, no clearly defined procedures and responsibilities with respect to the results of gender mainstreaming policy. Nobody feels accountable for this dossier, so to speak. This does not mean, however, that the ministries have little interest in gender equality issues. On the contrary, there is – generally speaking – a sense of urgency when it comes to having more women among the senior ranks of civil servants and achieving a better balance between men and women in the upper echelons of the ministries. However, there is no explicit definition of gender mainstreaming or how the gender perspective should be integrated into the general policies of ministries.

The Netherlands does not, however, lack figures and indicators, nor do gender equality issues fail to attract plenty of attention. The *Emancipatiemonitor*, published every other year, monitors all sorts of gender issues: labour market positions; representation of women in decision making positions; distinction between paid and unpaid work; the role of women in the field of education and in academia; and so on. But the suggestion is that the issue of gender mainstreaming is too abstract, too vague for the politicians and senior civil servants. It is not clear to many of them precisely what the gender mainstreaming approach is intended to achieve.

It is important in this respect to consider the Swedish gender mainstreaming practices. Sweden's policy reflects political commitment; it makes absolutely clear that the gender perspective should be intrinsic to all relevant national policies. What is particularly important is Sweden's coherent structure in relation to gender mainstreaming, with SMART targets, clear instructions and training in integrating the gender perspective in general policy, and with an explicit gender mainstreaming plan that all the ministries are obliged to carry out. The Swedish Equality Unit has a strong coordinating position and is

sufficiently staffed to track, monitor and advise on the gender mainstreaming processes in the different ministries.

Belgium offers an example of good practice in the form of far-reaching legislation on gender mainstreaming. This example is interesting for the Netherlands to consider as a means of making gender mainstreaming work by using legal instruments. Belgium's new Law on Gender Mainstreaming, which will become effective in January 2007, is compulsory and requires gender mainstreaming of all government measures and actions. In passing this law, Belgium's parliament has explicitly stated that it considers the gender mainstreaming principle of major importance. It would make sense to evaluate the Belgium approach in a few years time.

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Annex A Indicators for Gender Equality

Introduction

As gender mainstreaming policies are meant to help achieve equality in gender relations in social and economic life, it is interesting to examine the level of gender equality in the different countries. Relevant indicators for gender equality include the employment rates of men and women; the gender division of part-time employment; the earnings of men and women; the educational level of men and women; the presence of men and women in science and engineering; the participation of men and women in lifelong learning; the position of men and women in companies; and the numbers of seats in parliament held by women and men. These types of indicators, representing the degree to which women and men participate in society and the benefits derived from the human capital of both sexes, are often used in European Union and national publications to assess the level of gender equality in countries. The indicators will be described in more detail in this Annex.

It is tempting to suggest a possible relationship between the level of gender mainstreaming in a country and the level of gender equality. A sample consisting of seven countries is rather small to test such an assumption, however. Moreover, this sample appears to refute this assumption in part. For this reason, we only look at the level of equality in the different countries.

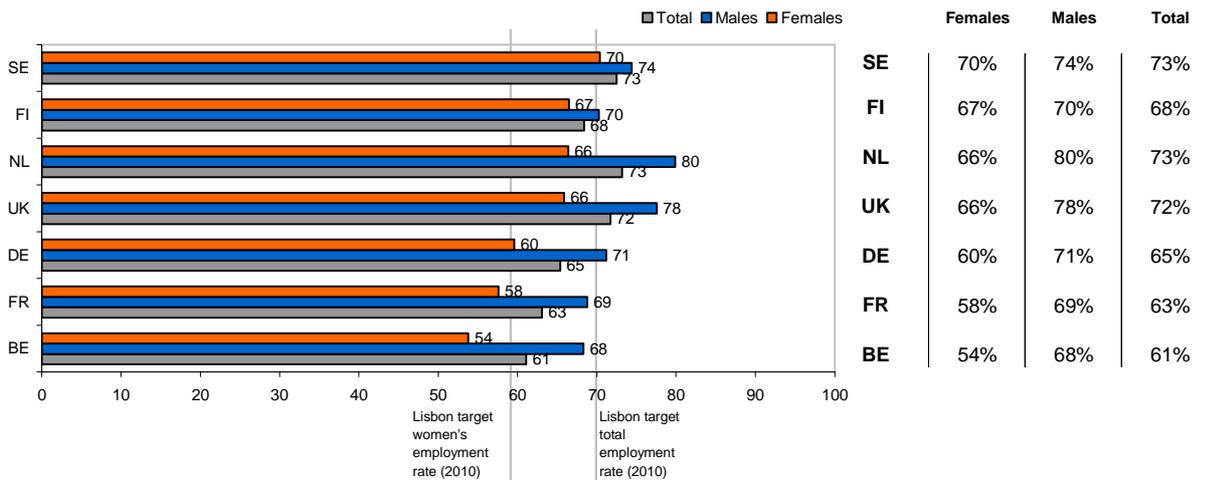
Indicators of gender equality

In this section, we review various indicators that give an impression of the relative position of women and men in some key domains, namely the labour market, education and research, and presence in decision making positions. The analysis has been performed for the countries Belgium, Finland, Sweden, France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

Employment rates

Employment rates have been rising in recent years, mainly because of a rise in the female participation rate combined with stagnation in men's employment rates. The Lisbon target (60% employment rate for women by 2010) has already been achieved in all of the countries surveyed but France and Belgium (see figure A.1).

Figure A.1 Employment rates (% of population aged 15-64) by gender and Total, 2005

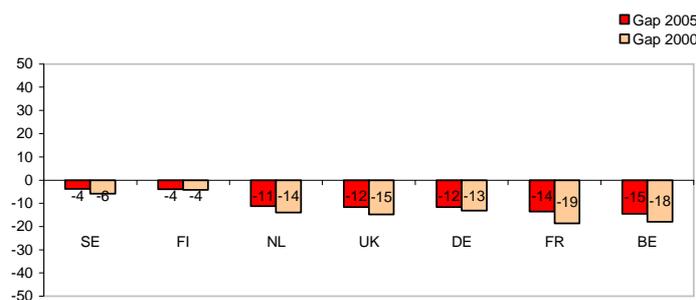


Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

This same underlying mechanism of stagnation in men's employment rates, together with an increase in women's employment rates, has narrowed the gender gap, as can be seen in figure A.2. Together with figure A.1 it shows a high employment rate for women combined with a narrow gender gap in Sweden and Finland. The Netherlands and the UK have high female employment rates with a larger gap. France and Belgium have relatively low employment rates for women combined with larger gender gaps.

If we look at the employment participation rates of men and women across the countries covered in this research project, we find the highest employment rates among women in Sweden and the lowest in Belgium. There are small differences in men's and women's participation rates in Sweden and Finland and larger differences in all other countries.

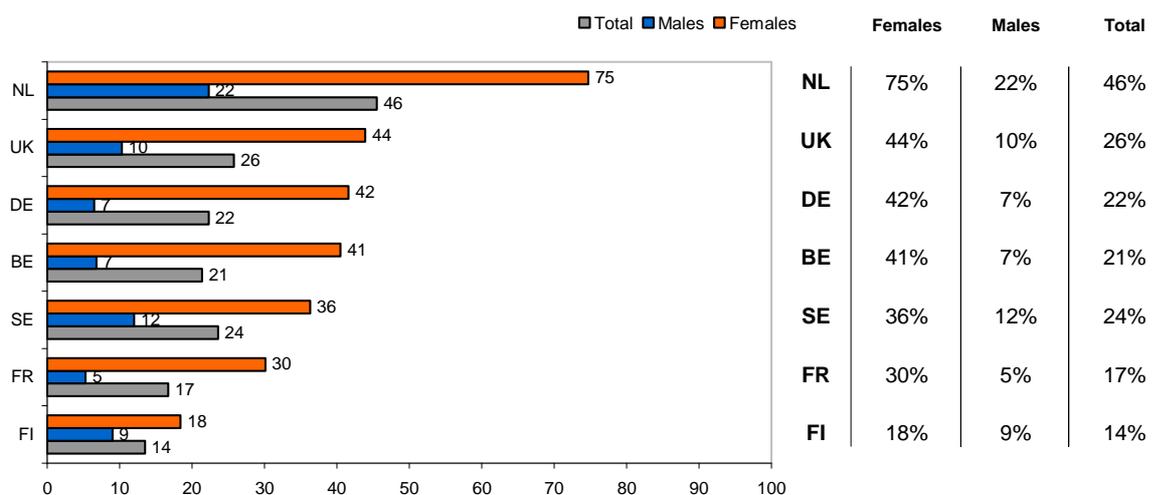
Figure A.2 Absolute gender gap in employment rates (women and men aged 15-64), 2000 and 2005



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

Part-time employment rates and gender gaps in part-time employment vary considerably from one country to the next: Finland has a relatively low part-time employment rate and a narrow gap between men and women, while the Netherlands has an enormous part-time employment rate – especially for women – as well as a huge gender gap. Although personal preferences play a role, these figures may also be a sign of considerable gender role differences in the Netherlands. These differences in gender roles are also expressed -- albeit to a lesser extent -- in the United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium and France.

Figure A.3 Part-time employment (% of total employment) by gender, 2004

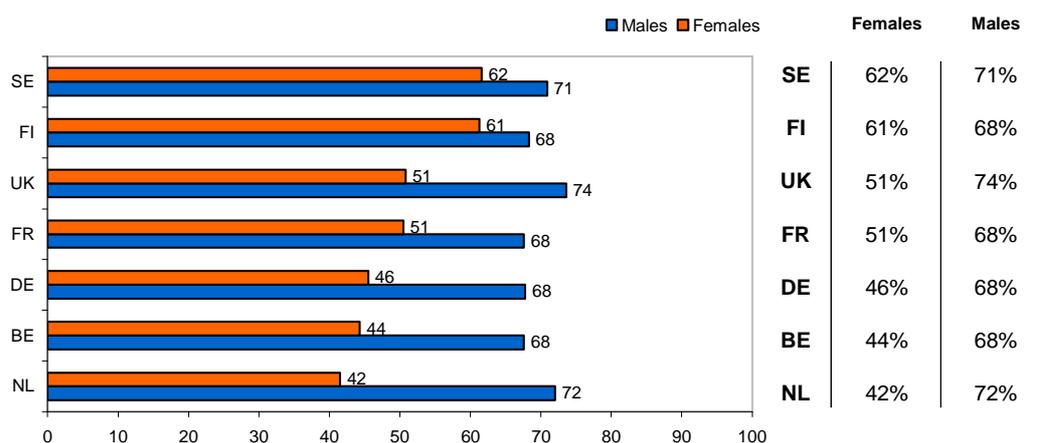


Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

Figure A.4 shows that in most countries, gender inequality in the labour market participation rate increases when part-time workers are taken into account. If we first look at the Nordic countries, for instance Sweden, gender inequality in the labour market participation rate increases from 1.5 per cent to nine per cent, and in Finland from four per cent to seven per cent. The increase in gender inequality is most significant in the Netherlands, where the employment activity rate of women is relatively high (66 per cent). However, when Dutch female participation in the labour market is expressed in full-time equivalents, the activity rate falls to 42 per cent and the gender differences increase to 30 per cent.

In conclusion, Finland and Sweden show the least inequality between women and men when it comes to employment rates.

Figure A.4 FTE employment rates (% of population aged 15-64) by gender, 2004



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

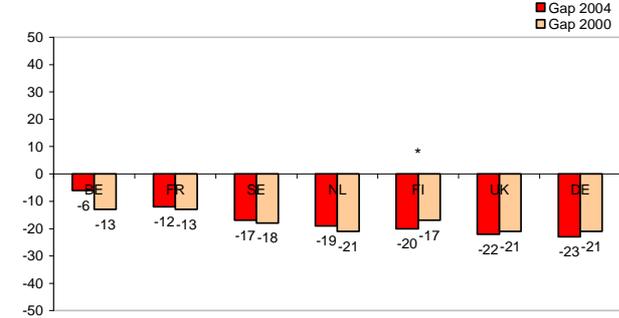
Gender pay gap

Figure A.5 shows the gender pay gap between men and women, which reflects a multitude of different gender inequalities in the labour market. The gender pay gap has been diminishing in recent decades, but the average gross hourly earnings of women are still lower than those of men in all the European

countries. All over Europe, women’s hourly earnings are about 15 to 20 per cent lower than those of men (Den Dulk and Van Doorne-Huiskes, 2006). This is partly owing to non-compliance with equal pay laws, but even more so to structural differences in the positions of men and women in the labour market, for example job segregation and differences in working time patterns.

The diversity of sources used means that caution must be exercised when comparing countries in figure A.5. However, Belgium does appear to be doing relatively well and the United Kingdom and Germany quite the opposite. Remarkably, Sweden gives a somewhat mediocre performance when it comes to equal wages for women and men, probably owing to its rather sharply segregated labour market. While women tend to work mainly in the public sector, men are overrepresented in private firms. Generally speaking, earnings in the public sector are lower than in the private sector.

Figure A.5 Gender pay gap in unadjusted form - Difference between men's and women's average gross hourly earnings as a percentage of men's average gross hourly earnings, 2000 and 2004



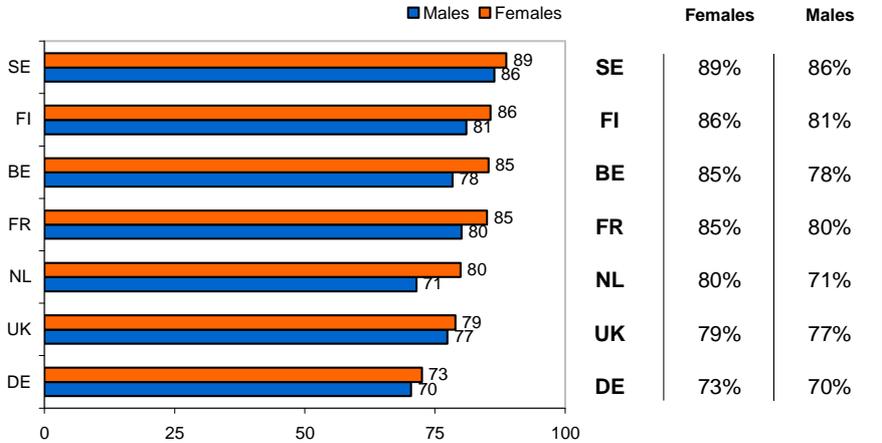
* Finland: 2003 instead of 2004

Source: Eurostat, different sources

Education and research

In 2005, almost 9 out of 10 Swedish females had completed at least upper secondary education; in Germany it was a little more than 7 out of 10. In all of the countries, more women than men had completed this educational level (see figure A.6).

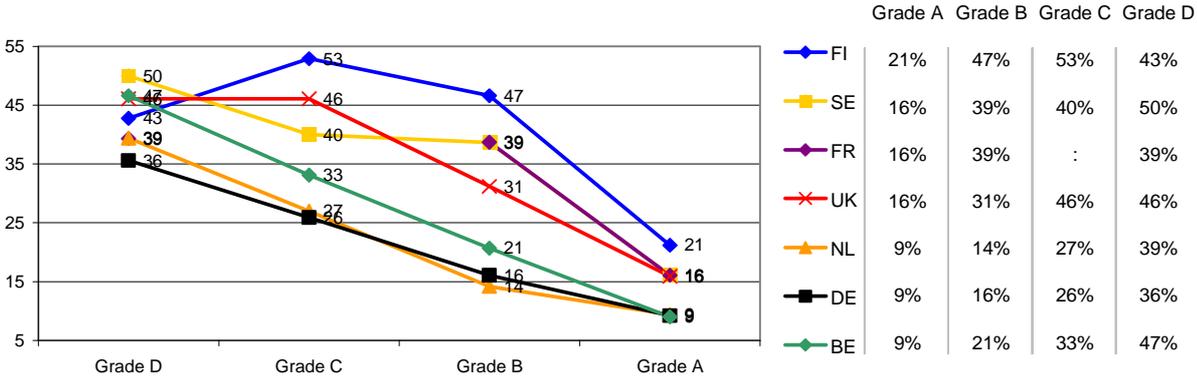
Figure A.6 Youth education attainment level - Percentage of the population aged 20 to 24 having completed at least upper secondary education – by gender, 2005



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

A typical academic career evolves from grade D to grade A (full professors). As can be seen in figure A.7, the proportion of female grade D academics is (almost) 50-50 in a couple of countries, for example in Sweden, Belgium, and the United Kingdom. But this picture changes dramatically in the upper grades. In Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands, only 9 percent eventually reaches grade A (full professor). Finland has the highest share of female full professors; followed by Sweden, France and the UK having equal scores in this respect.

Figure A.7 Proportion of female academic staff by grade, 2004

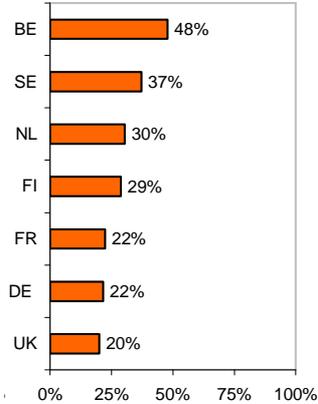


Exceptions to the reference year: FR: 2001
 FTE instead of HC: NL (2001)
 Grade C unavailable: FR
 BE-sum of BE-FL + BE-FR
 Data are not necessarily comparable between countries due to differences in coverage and definitions

Source: Women and Science, Statistics and Indicators, She Figures 2006

The presence of women in science and engineering is low on average, although very diverse, with an almost 50-50 division in Belgium, while only one out of five scientists and engineers are female in the United Kingdom (figure A.8).

Figure A.8 Female scientists and engineers (% of total), 2006

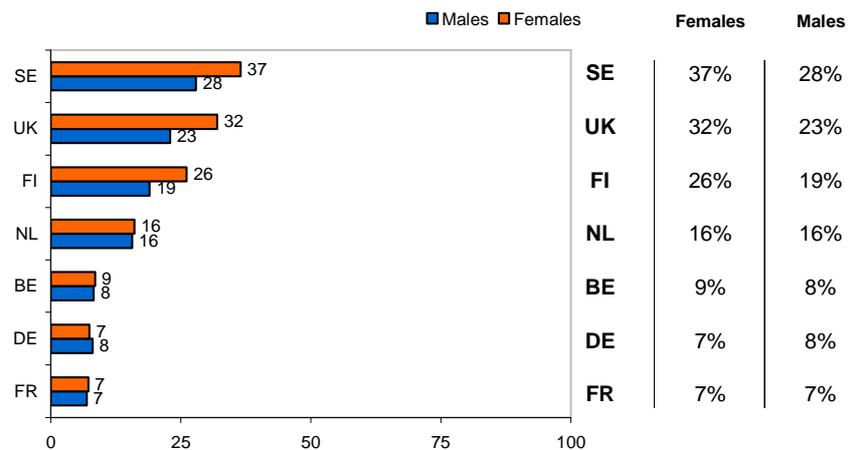


Source: Eurostat

Belgium has the highest percentage of female scientists and engineers. Sweden follows in second place.

Around a third of the females aged 25-64 had been involved in an educational or training programme four weeks prior to the 2005 survey in Sweden (37%) and the United Kingdom (32%), which is much more than the percentage of males (around a quarter). In Belgium, France and Germany, this was less than 10 percent, with scarcely any difference between female and male participation in lifelong learning in these countries. Figure A.9 summarises the results for all seven countries.

Figure A.9 Lifelong learning (adult participation in education and training) Percentage of the population aged 25-64 enrolled in an education or training programme in the four weeks prior to the survey - by gender, 2005



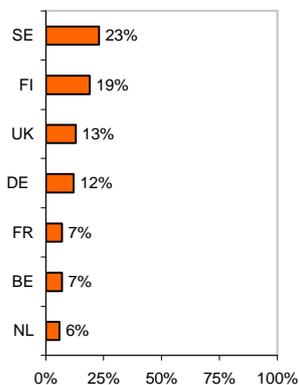
Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

Sweden is at the top of female lifelong learning rankings, followed by the UK.

Presence in decision making positions

In line with the figures for female presence in grade A academic positions is the female presence in decision making positions. Figure A.10 is rather sad. It represents the female members of the highest decision making bodies in the top 50 publicly quoted companies in 2005. Even in Sweden, this is only 23 percent; in the Netherlands, Belgium and France, it does not even reach 10 per cent.

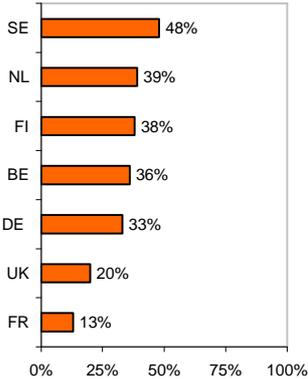
Figure A.10 Female members of highest decision making bodies in the top 50 publicly quoted companies (% of total), 2005



Source: European Commission, DG EMPL, Database on Women and Men in Decision-making

Compared with managerial / executive positions, political life shows far more gender equality in most countries (see figure A.11). Sweden is doing extremely well in this respect, followed by the Netherlands, Finland and then Belgium and Germany. Figures for the UK and France show that females are not well represented in their parliaments. This may have more to do with the nature of the voting systems in these countries – a constituency voting system instead of a system of proportional representation – than the state of gender mainstreaming.

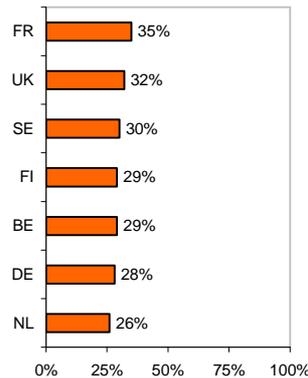
Figure A.11 Women in single/lower houses of national parliaments (% of total), 2006



Source: European Commission, DG EMPL, Database on Women and Men in Decision-making

The presence of women in managerial positions ranges from 26 per cent in the Netherlands to 35 per cent in France (see figure A.12).

Figure A.12 Women in managerial positions (% of total), 2004



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

Table of findings

	SE	BE	FI	DE	UK	FR	NL
Employment							
Employment rates	1	7	2	5	4	6	3
Absolute gender gap	1	7	2	5	4	6	3
FTE employment rates	1	6	2	5	3	4	7
	3	20	6	15	11	16	13
Gender pay gap							
Gender pay gap	3	1	5	7	6	2	4
	3	1	5	7	6	2	4
Education and research							
Youth education attainment level	1	3	2	7	6	4	5
Grade D academic staff	1	2	4	7	3	6	5
Grade A academic staff	2	7	1	6	4	3	5
Female scientists and engineers	2	1	4	6	7	5	3
Lifelong learning	1	5	3	6	2	7	4
	7	18	14	32	22	25	22
Decision making positions							
Highest decision making bodies	1	6	2	4	3	5	7
Single/lower houses of national parliaments	1	4	3	5	6	7	2
Managerial positions	3	5	4	6	2	1	7
	5	15	9	15	11	13	16

Table A.1 Ranking gender equality in key domains

Overall, Sweden is clearly the country that performs best in the key domains of gender equality. In every key domain except the *gender pay gap*, Sweden holds the highest position of the seven countries. Finland ranks second. The UK, Belgium, the Netherlands and France have mediocre scores. Bringing up in the rear is Germany, mainly due to low scores in the key domain *Education and research*.

The difference between Sweden and the other countries is greatest in the key domain *Employment*; Sweden is number 1 in all the sub-domains (*Employment rates*, *Absolute gender gap* and *FTW employment rates*), while Finland holds the number 2 position. Belgium has the lowest scores in *Employment*. Although the Netherlands ranks third in the sub-domains *Employment rates* and *Absolute gender gap*, it has the lowest score in *FTE employment rates*.

In the key domain *Education and research*, Sweden and Finland again hold the top two positions, in that order. Remarkably, Belgium has different scores in every sub-domain of the key domain *Education and research*; it has the highest score in female scientists and engineers, but the lowest in Grade A academic staff.

Sweden and Finland also hold the highest positions in the key domain *Decision making positions*. Note that France is number 1 and the UK number 2 in sub-domain *Managerial positions*, and that the Netherlands has a relatively high score in terms of the female representation in national parliament.

Annex B Questionnaire



Questionnaire on gender mainstreaming

Introduction

Below are a number of questions. We would like to discuss these with you on the phone to find out your impartial view on the process of gender mainstreaming in your country. Perhaps you will have time to go through the questions and make a few notes beforehand. Or you may prefer to answer the questions briefly and return them by mail before we discuss them on the phone. Either way, you can use the statements in italics to start off your answers. We will contact you for make an appointment In week 38 (September 18 - September 22).

Thanks very much in advance!

Questions

Theme I Explicitness

- 1 Is gender mainstreaming a perspective (or approach) that is explicitly expressed in your country's policy ?
> *yes it is explicitly expressed, because:*
> *no it isn't (see my answer to question 7 below)*

- 2 Is the principle of gender mainstreaming enshrined in law in your country?
> *yes, in the form of:*
> *no, it isn't, see question 7 below*

- 3 If gender mainstreaming is an explicit approach in your country: could you give *examples* as to how this explicit attention for gender mainstreaming is expressed?
> *yes, examples would be:*
> *no, not applicable as it isn't, see question 7 below*

- 4 Are clear objectives set for the process of gender mainstreaming?
> *yes, clear objectives are set, the most important are:*
> *no clear objectives are set, see question 7 below*

- 5 Are results of the gender mainstreaming process measured and evaluated against targets?
> *yes, they are, the most important quantitative indicators we use are:*
> *yes, they are, the most important qualitative indicators we use are:*
> *no, we don't measure, see question 7 below*

- 6 Is gender mainstreaming a topic of public debate in your country (*and who initiates these debates*)?
> *yes, it is, for example in the following debates:*
> *no, it isn't, see question 7 below*

- 7 If there is no explicit approach to gender mainstreaming in your country, can you explain why?

Theme II Commitment to the process of gender mainstreaming

- 1 Is there a real political commitment to the gender mainstreaming perspective in your country?
> *yes, there is, examples are:*
> *no, there isn't, see question 5 below*

- 2 Is there a financial commitment to gender mainstreaming in your country? In other words, is a budget set aside to pursue and implement gender mainstreaming at the national policy level?
> *yes, there is, and it covers:*
> *no, there isn't, see question 5 below*

How about at local level?

- > *yes, there is, an example is:*
> *no, there isn't, see question 5 below*

- 3 If not, is any money spent on the process of gender mainstreaming at national level?
> *yes, it is spent mainly on (training, development tools, evaluation etc.):*
> *no, it isn't, see question 5 below*

How about at local level?

- > *yes, it is spent mainly on (training, development tools, evaluation etc.):*
> *no, it isn't, see question 5 below*

- 4 Concerning the civil servants working within the different ministries in your country: are they committed to gender mainstreaming?
> *yes, they are, examples are:*
> *no, they aren't, see question 5 below*

- 5 If your country lacks a commitment to the issue of gender mainstreaming: why is that the case?

Theme III The national machinery

- 1 Are there mechanisms (*institutions, implementation structure*) that support gender mainstreaming at policy level in your country? In other words, is there a *national machinery*, so to speak, for gender mainstreaming?
> *yes, there are, and they consist of:*
> *no, there aren't, see question 8 below*

- 2 Is it clear who is responsible and accountable for the success of the gender mainstreaming process within your government (*a minister, other official*)?
> *yes, the responsible person/party is:*
> *no one is responsible, see question 8 below*

- 3 Is it clear which senior civil servants are responsible and accountable for the success of the gender mainstreaming process?
> *yes, responsible at this level are:*

> no one is responsible, see question 8 below

4 Are the results of the process of gender mainstreaming discussed in parliament?

> yes, they are (how often? in what circumstances?):

> no they aren't, see question 8 below

5 Are the members of parliament interested in the results of gender mainstreaming?

> yes, they are, because (please explain. Is there a difference in this respect between political parties?)

> no they aren't, see question 8 below

6 Do the various ministries cooperate on the issue of gender mainstreaming?

> yes, they do, as follows:

> no, they don't, see question 8 below

How about cooperation between local authorities?

> yes, they do, as follows:

> no, they don't, see question 8 below

7 Do government organisations at national level cooperate with local organisations on the issue of gender mainstreaming?

> yes, they do, as follows:

> no, they don't, see question 8 below

8 If your country lacks a commitment to the issue of gender mainstreaming: why is that the case?

Theme IV Gender expertise

1 To what extent are your country's government and senior civil servants knowledgeable about gender issues?

> they are knowledgeable about:

> they are not knowledgeable, see question 8 below

How about the local authorities?

> they are knowledgeable about:

> they are not knowledgeable, see question 8 below

2 Is the concept of gender mainstreaming understood in your country?

> yes, the concept is understood by:

> no, the concept isn't understood, see question 8 below

If the concept is widely understood, how has this been achieved?

3 Are gender experts (for instance at universities) consulted by the government when it comes to implementing gender mainstreaming? What use is made of NGOs?

> yes, the government consults mainly on

> no consultation takes place, see question 8 below

- 4 Are there instruments/tools for implementing gender mainstreaming in your country?
 > *yes, the most effective instruments are:*
 > *no, there aren't, see question 8 below*
- 5 How are instruments/tools for implementing gender mainstreaming and/or best practices made available in your country?
 - Are there, for instance, examples of best practices available?
 > *yes, there are (can you provide us with examples?)*
 > *no, there aren't, see question 8 below*
 - Are facts and figures concerning the outcomes of gender mainstreaming available (*position of men and women in society*)?
 > *yes, there are (can you provide us with examples?)*
 > *no, there aren't, see question 8 below*
- 6 Are these instruments applied by government on a more or less regular basis?
 > *yes, in the following way:*
 > *no, they aren't, see question 8 below*
- 7 *Are the results of gender mainstreaming measured and published on a regular basis?*
 > *yes, in the following way:*
 > *no, they aren't, see question 8 below*
- 8 If your country does not make knowledge about gender mainstreaming available, why is this so?

Theme V Overall evaluation

- 1 Considering the different criteria for the success of gender mainstreaming: how would you evaluate the situation in your country?
 > *positively because:*
 > *negatively, because:*
- 2 How do you consider the situation in your country compared to other European countries?
 > *positive because:*
 > *negative, because:*
- 3 If you were asked to rank your country on a scale from 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent) in terms of implementing gender mainstreaming in national policies, which score would you give your country?
 > *I would give my country the following score:*
- a What indicators have you chosen to rank your country?
 > *To rank my country, important indicators are:*
- b Which elements in your approach do you consider the most useful? What obstructs the process?
 > *The following elements in our approach are the most useful:*
 > *The following elements in our approach obstruct the process:*

- 4 If your score is high, what would you advise other countries and national governments as to the most effective way of obtaining good results when implementing gender mainstreaming?
> *My advice would be:*
- 5 Are you aware of examples of effective gender mainstreaming approaches in other European countries? Which one do you consider the most useful?
> *I consider the most useful:*
- 6 How about the future of gender mainstreaming in your country? What steps will be taken next?
> *the next steps we have planned are:*
Why? Are these steps meant to improve gender mainstreaming or are there other reasons?
> *yes, we would like to improve:*
> *no, we have to deal with:*
- 7 Would you consider it useful to exchange of information on gender mainstreaming (at international level)? (If so, on what topics?)
> *yes, it would be useful to exchange information on the following topics:*
> *no, I don't think this would be useful because:*

Can you give an example of a useful (international) exchange of information that you have experienced?

Thank you for answering these questions. We very much appreciate your taking the time and trouble.