



Ministry for Foreign
Affairs of Finland

**Twenty-fifth anniversary of the
Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)**

Comprehensive national-level review

Finland

April 2019

Executive Summary

The past five years have seen concentrated efforts to accelerate the realization of gender equality by tackling the most persistent challenges our society is facing in this field through both reviewing and changing legislation, as well as intensifying implementation.

For Finland, the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls remains a challenge. The need for decisive action to curb violence, including harassment, was highlighted by the #metoo movement, which created momentum for change in legislation and practice. The ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women has also played a key role in accelerating national action.

Key achievements seen in the past five years include reforming the Equality Act to widen the scope of the Act to include discrimination on the basis of gender identity or gender expression and expand the obligations of education providers and employees to advance equality. Action was also taken to close the gender pay gap but more action is needed on this issue, including potential reforms of the family leave system that are still under discussion.

We reaffirm our commitment to the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action and will actively advance its implementation nationally and internationally, and take part in the various events being organized by UN Women and others to mark this milestone.

Section One: Priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks

1. What have been the most important achievements, challenges and set-backs in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women over the past 5 years?

Main achievements

Reforming the Equality act

The purpose of the act on equality between women and men (609/1986, equality act) is to prevent gender-based discrimination, promote equality between women and men, and improve the status of women, particularly in working life. The act is also intended to prevent discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression. The equality act was reformed in 2014 (1329/2014) and 2016 (915/2016).

As from the beginning of 2015 bans on discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression were added to the equality act along with the responsibility to prevent this kind of discrimination. In the equality act, the phrase 'gender identity' refers to an individual's experience of their own clothing habits, behaviour, or by other means. The anti-discrimination regulations of the act apply also to discrimination based on the fact that an individual's physical gender-defining characteristics are not unambiguously female or male.

In the same reform the requirement to develop and implement a gender equality plan was extended to comprehensive schools. This regulation includes the duty of the education provider, the municipality, to provide instructions and monitor that schools and other educational institutes under its administration fulfil the regulation. The reform also added regulations regarding employer's gender equality plans and pay surveys. There is a need to increase the awareness of employers regarding these new regulations and related obligations.

Regulations regarding the independent position of the ombudsman for equality were strengthened, and the new national non-discrimination and equality tribunal was established. As from November 15th, 2016 regulations on the promotion of reconciliation were included in the equality act (sections 19 – 21). According to this reform, the ombudsman for equality may now take measures to reconcile a discrimination matter referred to in the act. The parties to the reconciliation in a discrimination matter together, or the ombudsman for equality with the consent of the parties, may apply for confirmation of reconciliation in a discrimination matter to the national non-discrimination and equality tribunal. The tribunal confirms the reconciliation between the parties in a discrimination matter referred to if the reconciliation is not contrary to law or clearly unreasonable and does not violate the right of a third party. A reconciliation confirmed by the tribunal is enforced in the same manner as a final judgment.

Intensifying efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention) entered into force in Finland in August 2015. The Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (NAPE) was established at the beginning of 2017, which is the coordinating body required under Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention. The Committee is responsible for the coordination, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the Convention.

The Action plan for the Istanbul Convention for 2018-2021 was adopted in December 2017. The plan is

implemented with the existing human and financial resources of the relevant ministries and institutions. The plan includes measures for ensuring sufficient number of shelters in the whole country, as well as establishing Sexual Assault Support Centers in several locations. From 2015 to 2019 the number of shelters for victims of domestic violence has risen from 19 to 28 and the shelters can currently accommodate 202 families as opposed to 114 in 2015. Each region has at least one shelter.

The biggest cities and some of the joint municipal authorities have developed activities to combat gender based violence. For instance in the City of Tampere, there is a network of combating family and domestic violence, which includes members are from different sectors of the City of Tampere and NGOs working with violence. In the region of Päijät-Häme, 12 municipalities work together to prevent family and domestic violence. An action plan to prevent family and domestic violence for 2017–2020 has been agreed upon and a coordination group set up in the region consisting of representatives of the municipalities and NGOs.

In 2019 the Minister of Justice founded a working group to examine the legal requirements for changing the Criminal Code to include the absence of consent as a key element of rape crimes. Women's organizations and women's rights activists have advocated for amending the Criminal Code to include the absence of consent as a key element of rape crimes (the amendment of the law is also part of the Council for Gender Equality's Government Programme Objectives for 2019–2023).

Challenges

Slow progress on closing the pay gap

In Finland, the average woman earns 84 percent of the wage of her male counterpart. The pay gap is based on several factors, and some of it can be explained by the fact that women and men work in different fields and jobs. The existing pay gap cannot be explained by individual differences between women and men such as ones related to education, age, career interruptions due to family obligations or career length. Women's careers are, on average, only a year shorter than men's, and women are more highly educated. On the other hand, men's regular weekly working hours in full-time employment are slightly longer than women's. Care and service jobs, traditionally performed by women, are not as highly valued as equally demanding jobs in technical fields. Lower wages are often paid for female-dominated jobs. The placement of women in low-income jobs at the lower rungs of the hierarchy in their professional fields and work communities and the over-representation of men in more highly compensated jobs at the higher end of the hierarchy help to explain some of the average pay discrepancy.

Fixed-term employment and long family leaves undermine career and wage development. Fixed-term employment relationships accumulate in the group comprising young, highly educated women. Women's career development is slower. Some part of the pay gap is, therefore, based on structural discrimination. The pay gap affects pensions. On average, women's pension is only 79 percent of the men's pension. Women make-up two-thirds among those receiving the lowest pensions (less than 1,250 euros), whereas men form the clear majority (two-thirds) among those with a high monthly pension (more than 3,000 euros).

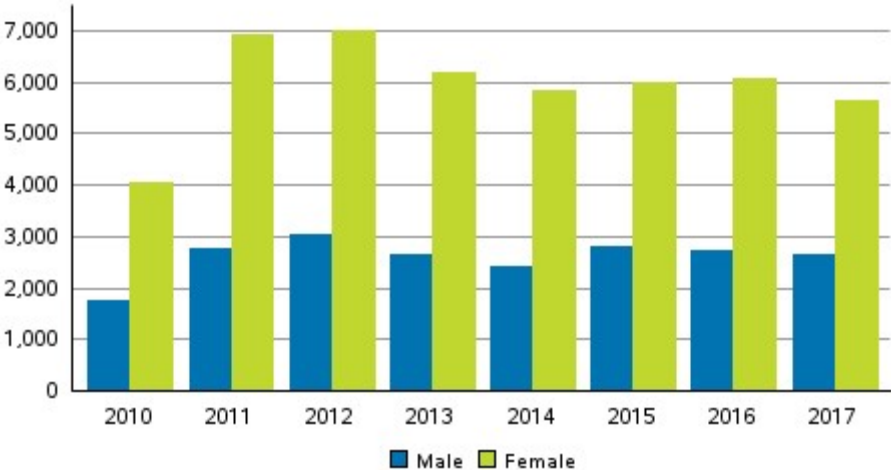
The gender pay gap is closing, but progress is slow. There was an overall evaluation of the Equal Pay Programme implemented between 2016 and 2019. The report proposes that future measures for reducing the gender pay gap should be focused on the most effective measures. Increasing pay openness and transparency may be one solution, and in April 2018 the minister responsible for gender equality appointed a rapporteur to explore pay transparency. The rapporteur, ombudsman for gender equality, Jukka Maarianvaara, handed his report to the minister in October 2018. The report contains

many concrete measures, including legislative measures, to advance pay equality. The Minister then set a tri-partite working group to consider legislative measures around pay transparency to advance pay equality.

Continued high rates of reported prevalence of violence against women and girls

In spite of the efforts to prevent violence against women and girls, prevalence remains relatively high in Finland. There were 8,300 victims of domestic violence offences recorded by the police in 2017, which is 5.4 per cent less than in the previous year. Of victims of domestic violence and intimate partner violence, 68.1 per cent were women. In all, 77.8 per cent of suspects were men. Altogether, 37.1 per cent of domestic violence and intimate partner violence was violence between married or cohabiting couples.

Victims of domestic violence and intimate partner violence by sex in 2010 to 2017



The police received 26 089 calls concerning domestic violence but only 5554 crime reports on such violence in 2017. The large difference between the numbers is partly explained by the practice of recording calls to emergency centres under the statistical category of domestic violence, whereas the police called to the site have often found that, in reality, some of the incidents underlying the calls have consisted of, for instance, other disturbance or of making noise. However, this is not the only reason for the overall difference between the numbers, and domestic violence must be identified more clearly.

The percentage of female police officers should be higher than 15 %. This need is emphasised in contacts with victims of sexual offences, where the police officer should be of the same gender as the victim. Among the students who started police studies in March 2019, an all-time high percentage, 49 %, are women. Thus, the number of female police officers in Finland will increase in future.

The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities has called for more coordinated actions and adequate funding from the central government is needed to combat gender based violence at local level where the role of the municipalities and cities is crucial in enhancing gender equality in all services. With the ratification of Istanbul convention it is essential that also local governments are provided with sufficient resources to develop and implement measures to combat gender based violence and increase the competence of the municipal personnel of different sectors. The convention is currently not well known by municipalities and cities.

Set-backs

There has been a growing demand to promote gender equality through family leave reform. Negotiations to renew the policy were initiated by the government in their budgetary process in 2017. The reform was prepared in a ministerial working group lead by the Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services, but the preparation was terminated in February 2018 due to lack of finances.

Funding for development co-operation was cut in 2016. According to the survey carried out by Global Education in Finland (Kepa) the cuts have especially affected the work on promoting the rights of women, children and people with disabilities.

The National Institute for Health and Welfare's specialized unit for sexual and reproductive health (SELI) was closed in 2016. SELI was responsible for data production, national coordination of sexual and reproductive health services and monitoring the Action plan on sexual and reproductive health 2014–2020.

2. Which of the following have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country over the past five years through laws, policies and/or programmes? (please check relevant categories)

X Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice

X Eliminating violence against women and girls

X Right to work and rights at work (e.g. gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression)

X Unpaid care and domestic work / work-family conciliation (e.g. paid maternity or parental leave, care services)

X Changing negative social norms and gender stereotypes

1. Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice

See the answer to question 1 above.

2. Eliminating violence against women and girls

See the answers to questions 13-16 below.

3. Right to work and rights at work (e.g. gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression)

Since 2006 Government and social partners have been carrying out an Equal Pay Programme in order to bridge the pay gap. The objective was to reduce the pay gap to no more than 15 percent by 2015 throughout the labour market. The aim seems modest, but it has turned out to be very challenging. During years 2006 -2015 the gap narrowed by three percentage unit from 20 percent. The Equal Pay

Programme 2016 -2019 includes the most important factors pertaining to equal pay and measures to amend these issues. The purpose of the Programme is also to implement the principle of equal pay laid down in the Equality Act. There is a need for increasing awareness among employers about the programme.

The pay and the formation of pay can be influenced by pay and agreement policies, payroll systems, company specific equality planning processes as well by carrying out pay surveys. The Programme also seeks to change the traditional gender division in education and the labour market by increasing a number of professions in which both women and men are equally represented and on the other hand, by increasing the share of women in management and leadership positions. The third theme on the agenda concerns reconciliation of work and family life.

4. Unpaid care and domestic work / work-family conciliation (e.g. paid maternity or parental leave, care services)

Starting in April 2017 the costs for parental leave for a female employee is compensated by a lump sum of € 2 500 paid to the employer. The benefit is paid to all employers who pay salaries on the basis of a contract of employment, a work contract or a collective agreement for at least one month during the maternity period. It is also a prerequisite for the compensation that the employment has lasted at least three months before the start of the maternity period and that the duration of the employment contract is at least 12 months. In addition, working hours must be at least 80% of the regular working time. Compensation supports the creation of permanent and continuous employment relationships. The amendment to the Health Insurance Act on Compensation (1342/2016) entered into force on 1 April 2017. A total of 17,500 employers applied for this in 2018.

5. Changing negative social norms

See answers to question 7, 13 and 16

3. Over the past five years, have you taken specific measures to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination? (please check relevant categories)

- Women living in remote and rural areas
- Indigenous women**
- Racial, ethnic or religious minority women**
- Women living with disabilities**
- Women living with HIV/AIDS
- Women with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities**
- Younger women
- Older women**
 - Migrant women**
 - Refugee and internally displaced women**
- Women in humanitarian settings
- Other

1. Strengthening and enforcing laws

The scope of the Non-Discrimination Act is very broad as it covers all public and private activities with the exception of private and family life and the right to practise religion. Thus, the Act covers all workplace activities, unless the activity is clearly of a private nature. The protection against discrimination is equal regardless of the reason for discrimination. The Act includes provisions on discrimination of the closely related and of presumptive discrimination. Discrimination is thus forbidden regardless of whether it concerns an assumption or a fact about a person or someone closely related to them, for example a family member.

Rejection of reasonable adjustments to ensure equal treatment of disabled people is discrimination. When assessing what is reasonable, the costs of the adjustment and the size of the company is taken into account.

The scope of application of compensation was extended. From now on, those who have been discriminated against are entitled to compensation regardless of the grounds of discrimination. Further, there are no longer maximum caps on compensation. However, the amount should be assessed in light of the severity of the discrimination.

If the number of personnel working for an employer on a regular basis is at least 30, the employer must draw up a plan of all necessary actions to promote equality as extensively as required by the nature of the work. The equality plan does not have a specified form and it can be drawn up as a separate plan or it can be incorporated into some other mandatory workplace plan, e.g. the gender equality plan (see below). The plan includes an assessment of equality in the workplace and it is designed to improve working conditions and the recruitment process. Actions that promote equality and their effectiveness should be discussed with the personnel or with their representatives. A personnel representative, who has participated in the planning of the equality actions, has the right to know what measures the employer has taken to promote equality in the workplace.

The new Non-discrimination Act includes the responsibility of public authorities to assess the situation of equality and enhance non-discrimination by equality plans and their implementation in the functions of the authority in addition to the employer policy. This concerns also local governments, municipalities and cities. The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities as a partner to the RainbowRights-project of the Ministry of Justice carried out a project in order to support the equality planning and its implementation in the municipalities and cities. This included also women with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities and discrimination on multiple grounds. The project was carried out in 2018 - 2019 and was funded by the EU REC-program.

2. National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights 2017-2019

The objective of Finland's second National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights is to promote the obligation of the public authorities to guarantee the observance of basic rights and liberties and human rights as stipulated in Section 22 of the Constitution. The measures taken under the Action Plan are designed to address identified problems in the realization of fundamental and human rights and to complement the work being carried out in different policy sectors to promote fundamental and human rights. Efforts were made to avoid overlaps with other Government Action Plans. Gender equality is addressed in a separate Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016–2019, an action plan to reduce violence against women was implemented between 2010 and 2015, and an action plan against female genital mutilation between 2012 and 2016. Some projects associated with violence against

women, such as projects related to sexual violence, were nevertheless selected for the Fundamental and Human Rights NAP, given the seriousness of the challenges around this issue. In addition, gender equality is taken into account as a cross-cutting principle in the measures of the NAP.

Equality and non-discrimination is one of the four main areas of the NAP. The Action Plan includes 43 projects which are spread across the administrative branches of all ministries, and 16 of these projects fall under the theme equality, which covers discrimination based on all discrimination grounds. The full text of the NAP, containing detailed descriptions of each project, can be found in <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-259-588-1>

3. Studies on prevalence of harassment in minorities

To form a better understanding of harassment faced by minorities a number of studies were conducted in the past years. The main finding is that harassment of young people belonging to sexual minorities, living with disabilities or who have a foreign background was very common. Five per cent of boys and eight per cent of boys aged 14-16 years have experienced sexual violence. The school-specific results are submitted to each education provider. In addition, The results of the study are available to everyone in electronic form. (Results: <https://www.thl.fi/fi/web/lapset-nuoret-ja-perheet/tutkimustuloksia>)

Other key relevant studies include:

- Discrimination in the Finnish Labor Market
<https://yhdenvertaisuus.fi/documents/5232670/5376058/Discrimination+in+the+Finnish+Labour+Market>
- the Finnish Gender Equality Barometer 2017
<https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/161485>
- Survey on work and well-being among people of foreign origin in Finland
http://tilastokeskus.fi/ajk/julkistamiskalenteri/kuvailusivu_fi.html?ID=16163

4. Has the increasing number of humanitarian crises—caused by conflict, extreme weather or other events—affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country?

NO

5. Which of the following does your country consider to be the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country for the coming five years through laws, policies and programmes? (please check relevant categories)

- Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice**
 - Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls
 - Poverty eradication, agricultural productivity and food security
- Eliminating violence against women and girls**
 - Access to affordable quality health care, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights
 - Political participation and representation
- Right to work and rights at work (e.g. gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression)**

- Women's entrepreneurship and women's enterprises
- x Unpaid care and domestic work / work-family conciliation (e.g. paid maternity or parental leave, care services)**
- Gender-responsive social protection (e.g. universal health coverage, cash transfers, pensions)
- Basic services and infrastructure (water, sanitation, hygiene, energy, transport, communication, etc.)
- Strengthening women's participation in ensuring environmental sustainability
- x Gender-responsive budgeting**
- Digital and financial inclusion for women
- Gender-responsive disaster risk prevention, reduction and resilience building
- Changing negative social norms and gender stereotypes
- Other

1. Renewal of legislation

One of the most pressing human rights issues in Finland is the situation of transgender people. Following the April 2018 decision of the European Court of Human Rights where it declared that compulsory sterilisation, as a preliminary step in gender reassignment surgery, is a serious infringement on human rights, Finland is planning to take measures to change legislation regarding transgender rights. There is also pressure to renew gender equality legislation regarding for example the pay transparency, sexual violence and sexual harassment.

2. Eliminating violence against women

The Government will continue implementing the National Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention as outlined in previous sections. The Employment and Equality Committee of the parliament has recommended that an independent body is set up for the monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan, and that a review of the implementation is submitted to the Employment and Equality Committee of the Parliament during the next four years. The Gender Equality Ombudsman and the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman have also given recommendations to the government on improving services for victims of trafficking, including through reviewing relevant legislation and strengthening the victim-centred approach in the services provided.

3. Working towards equal pay

Finland needs to find means to bridge the equal pay gap. Increasing pay openness and transparency may be one solution. Finland is seeking pay equality also through pay transparency. In April 2018 minister responsible for gender equality, Annika Saarikko appointed a rapporteur to explore pay transparency. The rapporteur, ombudsman for gender equality, Jukka Maarianvaara, handed the report to the minister in October 2018. The report contains many concrete measures, including legislative measures, to advance pay equality. The work with pay transparency continues.

4. Family leave system renewal

There is a growing demand to promote gender equality through family leave reform. All political parties have stated their intention to prepare one during the next government period. From a gender equality perspective the most important thing is to increase the earmarked period for fathers.

5. Gender mainstreaming and gender responsive budgeting

Gender mainstreaming has been promoted through the key processes of ministries and in their operational structures. All Finnish ministries have founded a gender equality working group and assigned an individual in charge of its coordination. They have annually assessed gender impact in relation to a little more than one in ten bills. Furthermore, every ministry must include a summary assessment of budget-related activities with significant gender effects in their draft budgets.

Attempts have also been made to mainstream the gender perspective in the implementation of various kinds of projects, personnel training, the compilation of statistics, and the steering of ministries' administrative sectors. This work will continue in the future as well.

A research project called Gender Equality in the Government Budget was carried out during 2017-18. The project identified best practices in gender impact assessment of the budget and in gender budgeting in other countries, developed methods to assess the gender impacts of the budget and assessed the gender impacts of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's government's policies. The project made recommendations concerning the integration of gender impact assessments and other gender budgeting tools and practices in budgetary process in Finnish government administration. Gender budgeting will be further developed during the next years.

Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work

Critical areas of concern:

- A. Women and poverty
- F. Women and the economy
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

6. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to advance gender equality in relation to women's role in paid work and employment?

- × **Strengthened / enforced laws and workplace policies and practices that prohibit discrimination in the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in the public and private sectors, and equal pay legislation.**
- × **Introduced / strengthened gender-responsive active labour market policies (e.g. education and training, skills, subsidies)**
- × **Taken measures to prevent sexual harassment, including in the workplace**
Strengthened land rights and tenure security
Improved financial inclusion and access to credit, including for self-employed women
- × **Improved access to modern technologies (incl. climate-smart technologies), infrastructure and services (incl. agricultural extension)**
Supported the transition from informal to formal work, including legal and policy measures that benefit women in informal employment
- × **Devised mechanisms for women's equal participation in economic decision-making bodies (e.g. in ministries of trade and finance, central banks, national economic commissions)**
- × **Other**

1. Monitoring discrimination in the labour market

The Government monitors discrimination in the Finnish Labor market. The latest study was published in December 2014 by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy. This study outlines existing research results and formal complaints data on labor discrimination on the grounds included in the Finnish Non-Discrimination Act and the Equality Act. In this study, an overall picture was formed of discrimination and unequal treatment in working life. The examined grounds of discrimination were determined based on the grounds prohibited by law, which are gender, age, ethnic or national origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, industrial activity, family ties, health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics.

To monitor discrimination, a model was built to enable both comprehensive description of this occurrence and following of its development in future. There are three types of data in the monitoring model. Official data describe discrimination in the labour market reported to the authorities and what has followed from reporting on discrimination. Surveys provide information about either personally experienced or observed discrimination. Register data offer background information on the position of different population groups

in the labour market.

The various grounds of discrimination gain emphasis in different data. The differences are also due to the divergences and limitations of the data. In official data, the practices of recording cases and data in part affect the reported figures. In surveys, data is not collected on all grounds of discrimination prohibited by law or by using legislative terms. In surveys covering the whole population, there is only scant information on some grounds of discrimination, such as that based on ethnic or national origin, disability or sexual orientation..

Health is the most common ground of discrimination in official data, such as communications received by occupational safety and health authorities (44%) and discrimination suspicions of the police (20 cases). As many as 12 per cent of the wage and salary earners who participated in the Quality of Work Life Survey 2013 had observed discrimination or unequal treatment based on health in their workplace.

The second most common ground of discrimination is nationality or national or ethnic origin (16%). One-third of discrimination in the labour market offences or extortion-type discrimination in the labour market offences known to the police were connected to discrimination based on national or ethnic origin.

Age is another common ground for discrimination or unequal treatment. Nearly ten per cent of wage and salary earners had observed discrimination based either on young or old age in their workplace in 2013. The Quality of Work Life Survey shows that discrimination against aged people has decreased in workplaces on the longer term.

Discrimination based on gender is clearly more often directed to women than men. Six to seven per cent of wage and salary earners had noticed discrimination against women in their workplace. Only two per cent had observed discrimination against men. According to the Quality of Work Life Survey, observations of discrimination or unequal treatment directed to women in their own work organization has declined over last 15 years, however. In occupational safety and health authorities' data, 13 per cent of discrimination communications or suspicions were related to gender or family leaves.

2. Advancing equal pay in the local government sector

A fifth of all employees in Finland work for the local government. Of the total of 419,000 local government employees, 80% (335,000) are women. Local government collective agreements for employees and public officials are based on a gender-neutral compensation system. Instead of gender, pay is determined according to individual competence and the qualifications required for the position involved.

The Equal Pay Programme collates the measures jointly agreed by the Government and the central labour market organisations that promote equal pay for women and men. The programme was prepared in a tripartite working group appointed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The KT Local Government Employers participate in the Equal Pay Programme. The tripartite Equal Pay Programme for 2016–2019 endorsed by the Government and central labour market organisations sets occupational desegregation as one of its key objectives. However, so far the efforts have failed to produce results. Only 7% of all local government employees work in “equal positions” in which the gender ratio is 40 to 60%. This situation has remained unchanged throughout the follow-up period. Women hold mostly nursing and care positions as nurses, practical nurses, child minders and kindergarten teachers. Typical male-dominated professions include fire fighters, property maintenance men and carpenters. Gender distribution is most equal among teachers and physicians.

The gender pay disparity is partially due to the fact that men and women work in different positions. When men and women of similar background (in terms of profession, education, age, etc.) are compared, the pay gap is reduced so as to be practically non-existent. According to a survey of gender equality planning in the local government sector carried out by KT Local Government Employers (2017), a total of 86% of municipalities had prepared a gender equality plan. The survey covered 83% of all local government employees. Gender equality planning has been effective in the municipal sector in that it helps identify any unjustifiable pay differences and provides tools for taking corrective action.

The purpose of the current Competitiveness Pact is to reduce the sustainability gap in public finances. The Pact cut holiday bonuses by 30% in 2017–2019 for a limited period of time. Since most of the local government employees are women, they were the hardest hit by the cut. While the Competitiveness Pact extended working hours in the public sector, average annual leaves are still longer than in the private sector.

3. Increasing labour market access for migrant women

The employment rate of women with a migrant background is clearly lower than that of men with a migrant background: in 2014 it was 56 %, whereas for men with a migrant background, the corresponding figure was 71 %. Especially women from Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia have a clearly lower employment rate than the average. Fixed-term employment relationships are more widespread among people with a migrant background.

The low employment rate of women with a migrant background is partly explained by the fact that the employment rate of mothers with a migrant background remains significantly low. Mothers, especially if they were young when having children, often do not have vocational training or previous work experience and may find it difficult to enter the labor market. 51% of young women with a migrant background outside working life and education reported that their primary activity was caring for their children. However, maternity does not fully explain the low employment rate of immigrant background women, since also women with no children living at home had a lower employment rate. In addition, there were significant differences in employment among immigrant groups: for example, the employment rate of women from the former Soviet Union and the OECD countries is already higher at the beginning and rises with the duration of residence.

The project “ Manifold more - leverage to the professional careers of immigrant background women# aims to advance the employment and expertise of highly educated immigrant background women. The project (2019-2022) is led by the THL and partnered by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (TTL). The project produces new and needed knowledge on the career development of migrant women and the skills and positioning of women in working life. The project is funded by the European Social Fund.

4. Monitoring and promoting participation of women on company boards

The Government of Finland aims to increase equal representation of women and men on listed company boards. It monitors the achievement of this target and the actions of companies in accordance with the Government Resolution (19 February 2015). Listed companies are expected to decide their own objectives and actions as well as to report on their progress. The Government monitored the progress and evaluated the need for legislation in autumn 2018. The Government’s goal is to achieve equal representation in accordance with the recommendations of the Finnish Corporate Governance Code formulated by the Securities Market Association and through listed companies’ own actions. Despite the positive development government’s target for having at least 40 % for both sexes in the listed companies’ boards

by 2020 has not been achieved.

The Government continues pursuing its programme aiming to increase women's representation on the boards and management groups in state-owned companies in keeping with its earlier goals and the Government Resolution on state ownership policy. All ministries report on the number of women and men on the boards and management groups of state-owned companies in the Annual Report of the Finnish Government. The possible expansion of the programme from state-owned companies to the municipal sector and other companies that are under public control will be considered.

5. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and promote work-family conciliation?

- × **Included unpaid care and domestic work in national statistics and accounting (e.g. time-use surveys, vation exercises, satellite accounts)**
- × **Expanded childcare services or made existing services more affordable**
- × **Expanded support for frail elderly persons and others needing intense forms of care**
- × **Introduced or strengthened maternity/paternity/parental leave or other types of family leave**
- × **Invested in time- and labour-saving infrastructure, such as public transport, electricity, water and sanitation, to reduce the burden of unpaid care and domestic work on women**
Promoted decent work for paid care workers, including migrant workers
- × **Conducted campaigns or awareness raising activities to encourage the participation of men and boys in unpaid care and domestic work**
Introduced legal changes regarding the division of marital assets or pension entitlements after divorce that acknowledge women's unpaid contribution to the family during marriage
Other

1. Introduced or strengthened maternity/paternity/parental leave or other types of family leave

During 2016-2018, leave policy has been the focus of political debates, and models to reform the leave schemes have been launched by political parties and central labour market organizations. A reform was planned by the government in 2017-2018 but preparations of the reform were interrupted. The Sipilä government restricted families' subjective right to child day care. In spite of this many municipalities and cities have decided not to restrict the right for full hours day care also in the cases when one of the parents is at home in order to facilitate entering the labour market of the parent and guaranteeing the right of the child to high quality early childhood education. The subjective right to day care generally has been found to improve gender equality and promote the equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women. The cost of daycare is means tested in all municipalities in Finland.

2. Expanded support for frail elderly persons and others needing intense forms of care

The Finnish government launched a key project *Improved home care for older persons and enhanced informal care in a/1 age groups (2016-2018)* with the objective to find solutions for services for elderly persons. In 2016 a new chapter was added to the Law on Informal Care stating that carers are entitled to health inspections, services and education in order to be able to fulfill their tasks.

3. Conducted campaigns or awareness raising activities to encourage the participation of men and boys in unpaid care and domestic work

The institute for social health and welfare has carried out two national studies (*Family leaves, economic crisis and gender equality 2013-2017* and *Daddy takes care - or does he? 2016-2018*) where mothers' and fathers' use of different types of family leave were examined based on population surveys. Moreover, in both studies the practices of and obstacles to fathers' uptake of leave were investigated based on interviews at workplaces. The latter study was part of THL headed project *Visible Fathers: recognizing fathers' care responsibilities at workplaces (2016-2018)* which also included an awareness raising media campaign to promote father's uptake of family leave; the project was funded by the European Commission's Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) programme.

'It's Daddy Time', a campaign of the Minister of Social Affairs and Health, encouraged fathers to take full use of their family leave rights in 2017. The campaign was intended to increase the take up of family leaves by men and emphasized the importance of the time a father and a child spend together. The aim was also to enhance father friendliness in male dominated industries and sectors. The campaign was visible on various social media channels and the radio, among others. The campaign's website, www.isaaikaa.fi provides information about family leaves for fathers as well as employers, along with eight fathers' personal stories about the joys of family leaves. The website is also available in English.

In 2016, fathers only used about ten per cent of all reimbursed family leave days. Almost one in five did not take any family leave at all. The family leave scheme was revised last in 2013. The 'It's Daddy Time' campaign was launched at a time when reform of the scheme was topical again. The most recent reform made family leaves available also to separated fathers. The Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Commission financial part of the 'It's Daddy Time' campaign.

6. Has your country introduced austerity/fiscal consolidation measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public sector downsizing, over the past five years?

YES

If YES, have assessments on their impact on women and men, respectively, been conducted?

- Yes, their impact on women/men was estimated before measures were put in place.
- x **Yes, the impact was assessed after measures were put in place.**
- No, the impact on women/men has not been assessed.

If YES, please describe the findings (1-2 pages).

The Sipilä government programme included consolidation measures affecting expenditure across the public sector. In the *Gender Equality in the Government Budget*-project, which was finalized in September 2018, the gender impact of the policies of Juha Sipilä's government was analyzed for policy changes in taxes and social benefits. Impacts were assessed at three different levels: cumulative effects of the 2016–2018 reforms, the overall impact of the 2016, 2017 and 2018 budgets and the impact of five individual reforms. The project report reveals that the government's tax and social benefit changes in 2016–2018 have on average benefited both women and men, but men have benefited from these reforms more than women. Over a three year period, men's personalized available income increased by 0.60 percent as a result of the reforms, while women's income increased 0.51 percent. The corresponding income for men in euros increased by an average of EUR 450 and for women by EUR 306.

The tax and benefit reforms made by the government during 2016-2018 (i.e. both the consolidation measures included in the government programme as well as tax reforms decided upon by the government during the government term) were assessed by a group of researchers. In nominal terms, the changes increased disposable income of men by roughly 450 euros (0,6%), and of women by 306 euros (0,51%). Thus, the measures on aggregate increased the disposable income of men by 0,09 % more than they did the disposable income of women. The result is affected by both tax and benefit cuts. The consolidation measures of the government programme have not separately been assessed on the basis of their impact on men and women.

The Finnish State Grant System for municipalities is designed to be gender-neutral. The cuts made in Finnish State Grant System for municipalities have not affected the position of women. In the State Grant system, there are some elements, which take special note on gender – for example in the sickness index, used in State Grant calculations, some diseases and health problems typical to women of different age, are noted. The cuts in State grants did not have any effect on the base of those calculations.

Poverty eradication, social protection and social services

Critical areas of concern:

- A. Women and poverty
- B. Education and training of women
- C. Women and health
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

7. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?

- × **Promoted poor women's access to decent work through active labour market policies (e.g. job training skills, employment subsidies, etc.) and targeted measures**
Broadened access to land, housing, finance, technology and/or agricultural extension services
- × **Supported women's entrepreneurship and business development activities**
- × **Introduced or strengthened social protection programmes for women and girls (e.g. cash transfers for women with children, public works/employment guarantee schemes for women of working-age, pensions for older women)**
Introduced/strengthened low-cost legal services for women living in poverty
Other

The National Institute for Health and Welfare has carried out population-based research on experiences of making a living and well-being/welfare in families with children, where mothers' and fathers' differences in experiencing difficulties and in well-being/welfare outcomes have been examined such as the Children's Health, Well-being and Services survey {LTH} and CHILDCARE-study. Findings of the pilot LTH-study among families with babies in 2017 and CHILDCARE-study have been disseminated to decision makers, NGOs and the public media debate. The data on LTH-study among families with a four-year-old child in 2018 is currently being analyzed.

8. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve access to social protection for women and girls?

- Introduced or strengthened social protection for unemployed women (e.g. unemployment benefits, public works programmes, social assistance)
- Introduced or strengthened conditional cash transfers**
Introduced or strengthened unconditional cash transfers
Introduced or strengthened non-contributory social pensions
- × **Reformed contributory social protection schemes to strengthen women's access and benefit levels**
Improved access to the above for specific populations (e.g. women in informal employment, including

domestic workers; migrant and refugee women; women in humanitarian settings)

× **Other**

1. Flexible care allowance

The flexible care allowance was introduced in 2014. The basic idea of the allowance is that if a parent of a child under age of three is working part-time, he or she is paid a graduated care allowance according to weekly working hours. The aim of the benefit was to promote the gradual return to the labour market after family leave, and, in this way, improve equality in the as labour market and in households.

A parent for under a three-year-old child, that does not attend to day-care, has a right to receive home care allowance. If there are several children, a parent that takes care of the older siblings of a child at home instead of taking them to day care, may, in practice, stay at home five to six years. About 96 percent of parents who are taking care of their children at home full-time and receiving home care allowance, are women. There has been no significant change in this percentage since the benefits were introduced decades ago.

2. Extension of parental allowance for single mothers

Since 2019 single mothers have been eligible for an additional 54 working days of parental allowance. The extension is available only if no one is entitled to a paternity allowance in respect of the child. The extension also applies to women adopting a child alone. The possibility to extend the parental allowance period gives single mothers an equally long parental period as what families with two parents or single fathers have.

9. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?

- × **Promoted women's access to health services through expansion of universal health coverage or public health services**
 - × **Expanded specific health services for women and girls, including sexual and reproductive health services, mental, maternal health and HIV services**
 - × **Undertaken gender-specific public awareness/health promotion campaigns**
 - × **Provided gender-responsiveness training for health service providers**
 - × **Strengthened comprehensive sexuality education in schools or through community programmes**
 - × **Provided refugee women and girls as well as women and girls in humanitarian settings with access to sexual and reproductive health services**
- Other

1. Provided gender-responsiveness training for health service providers

A manual for Gender equality when working with clients in maternity and child welfare clinics, *How to support parents and children from a gender equality perspective?* was published in 2016. The purpose of the guide is to support public health nurses in maternity and child welfare clinics as well as other workers in the social and health sector to implement gender equality principles on the practical level when working with families with children. The guide offers information on the topics of gender equality, gender diversity and family diversity.

The promotion and realisation of equality are central principles in the activities of maternity and child welfare clinics. In order to support the implementation of these principles, the guide provides information about legislation, engaging with different kinds of families, equal sharing of child care, equal parenting and gender and sexual diversity. At the clinics, the equal treatment of family members is realised, for example, in the way workers speak to parents and children as well as in the actions they are encouraged to take. For example, workers may unintentionally perceive parents of different genders in different ways or speak to children in different ways depending on whether they are assumed to be girls or boys. The guide aims to guide workers in the clinics to take these habitual practices into account and give tips and tools for developing new, equitable approaches.

The guide also seeks to broaden traditional concepts of the family. Alongside the roles of mother and father, this wider definition includes partners, other parents, primary parents, the extended family and other types of families different from the nuclear family. Workers in maternity and child welfare clinics and workers in other social and health care services encounter different kinds of families and children daily, and therefore they have a good opportunity to increase families' knowledge of equality in childcare and parenting and play their part in dismantling rigid gender norms. A family environment that strives for equality provides a good basis for the child's growth and development.

The guide has been prepared through cooperation between the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Council for Gender Equality, and the National Institute for Health and Welfare. The goal of the guide is to provide information and tools for professionals working with families with children so that they can provide equitable treatment to all families and children. The guide contains practical questions and reflection tasks which are grouped under different topics. These questions and tasks help the workers to raise questions of equality with their client families and to increase their own knowledge on equality in childcare and parenting.

THL has prepared, along with multi-sectoral collaboration, *National Programme for Promoting Breastfeeding 2018-2022*. The targets are to increase breastfeeding rates and improve quality of breastfeeding counseling, decrease socio-economical differences and promote breastfeeding information and multi-sectoral collaboration in order to promote women's and infants' health. THL has also nominated a national breastfeeding coordinator. National recommendations for maternity clinics in 2013, recommendations for the extensive health examinations in 2012 and national recommendations for breastfeeding in 2017 have been issued

2. Promoting, protecting and fulfilling sexual and reproductive health and rights

The Action Programme (2014-2020) for promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights aims to improve sexual and reproductive health to reduce health and social inequalities. Sexual and reproductive health is promoted by providing more information, enhancing co-operation, and developing related services. Priorities include comprehensive sexuality education, good care at birth, multiculturalism, as well as male sexual and reproductive health. Some cities and municipalities, such as Helsinki, Tampere and Vantaa, are already providing free contraception to adolescents.

3. Health of migrants, refugees and the Finnish Roma minority

The Finnish Migrant Health and Wellbeing Study (Maamu) specifically focused on collecting information on the health, wellbeing, service use and living conditions of Russian, Somali and Kurdish origin adults in Finland. The study was carried out in 2010-2012. In 2014 Statistics Finland and THL carried out a Survey on work and well-being among persons of foreign origin (UTH-survey), collecting information about the health, wellbeing, living conditions and service needs among people of foreign origin. There have been several publications based on the two surveys. *The development programme mobiTARMO* aims to support early-phase integration measures and promote the identification of immigrants' service needs in Finland. The programme has produced a culturally sensitive method for describing functional ability in Arabic, Kurdish and Somali. In 2019 the method will be translated and developed also in Russian. The method can be easily used by the client and the professional on a mobile device. The project is led by THL and funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). *Survey on well-being among foreign born population (FinMONIK)* collects reliable information about the wellbeing and health, working ability and functional capacity, service use and experiences of foreign population in Finland. Information is also collected about employment. *Developing the health examination protocol for asylum seekers in Finland: A national development project (TERTTU)* aims to develop the current health examination protocol for initial health assessment of asylum seekers offered upon arrival to Finland. Particular focus is given to improving identification of vulnerable populations (including victims of human trafficking, torture and severe trauma) as well as for identifying service and care needs of asylum seekers. A population-based health examination survey including over 1000 newly arrived asylum seekers was conducted among in 2018 to formulate the base for this development work. Sexual and reproductive health is among the key components that were examined in the survey. The TERTTU project is implemented by THL in collaboration with the Finnish Immigration Service and funded by The European Union, the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

The PALOMA project (Developing National Mental Health Policies for Refugees) (2016-2018) has developed the refugees' mental health work in Finland. As a result of the PALOMA project "Supporting refugees' mental health in Finland - PALOMA -handbook" was published. The book offers an extensive information package about refugees' resources and risk factors relevant to mental health. The handbook also includes recommendations targeted at different fields as well as methods and tools for decision-makers, supervisors and professionals for promoting refugees' mental health and preventing,

identifying and treating problems. Instructions are provided for supporting the mental health of refugees in a particularly vulnerable position, including children or victims of torture or trafficking in human beings.

The PALOMA project also produced free web-based training package, which gives basic information about encountering people with refugee background and fostering their mental health and wellbeing. Available at: <https://thl.fi/fi/web/maahanmuuttajat-ja-monikulttuurisuus/tyon-tueksi/paloma-koulutus/in-english>. The new project: *National support*

In Finland the National Policy on Roma has been implemented since 2009 to advance the Finnish Roma minority inclusion and equal treatment. *The Roma Wellbeing Study (ROOSA)* was a study of the Finnish Roma population, and it produced knowledge for the implementation of the Roma policies. The aim of the study was to improve wellbeing, inclusion, health and functional ability of the Finnish Roma. The study was led by the THL in years 2016-2018, and funded by the European Social Fund. The study was planned and conducted in cooperation with the Finnish Roma and it included a health examination and a questionnaire. From the total 365 participants 142 were men and 223 were women. The results showed that the participants had several strengths which promote inclusion in society. These strengths include community support such as substantial economical and psychological help between the next of kin, as well as supporting each other in practical matters. Key challenges were difficulties in access to a livelihood. Key challenges in health and wellbeing were difficulties in physical functional ability among women as well as the high prevalence of self-reported chronic diseases and their risk factors. Both women and men had several negative health behaviors, such as lack of physical exercise and high prevalence of smoking. Experiences of discrimination were also prevalent. These results will be used in the actions to improve Roma women's health and well-being in Finland

10. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls?

Taken measures to increase girls' access to, retention in and completion of education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and skills development programmes

- × **Strengthened educational curricula to increase gender-responsiveness and eliminate bias, at all levels of education**
 - × **Provided gender equality and human rights training for teachers and other education professionals**
 - × **Promoted safe, harassment-free and inclusive educational environments for women and girls**
 - × **Increased access to skills and training in new and emerging fields, especially STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and digital fluency and literacy**
- Ensured access to safe water and sanitation services and facilitated menstrual hygiene

- management especially in schools and other education/training settings
- × **Strengthened measures to prevent adolescent pregnancies and to enable adolescent girls to continue their education in the case of pregnancy and/or motherhood**
- Other

1. Strengthened educational curricula to increase gender-responsiveness and eliminate bias, at all levels of education

The national core curriculum for basic education was renewed in 2014, and the new curriculum has been implemented in schools from August 2016. The Equality Act obliges all educational institutions to ensure that people have the same opportunities for education regardless of gender. Teaching and teaching materials must support the implementation of the Equality Act. The revised Equality Act added the obligation to draw up a functional equality plan also in comprehensive schools and underlined the responsibility of the education provider, municipalities and cities, to provide guidance and monitor the fulfilment of the regulation. This includes also minorities of sexual identity. The basics of the curriculum were revised in 2016 and this obligation was included in the basics of the curriculum.

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) is part of the Finnish education system and an important stage on the child's path of growing and learning. The mission of ECEC is to promote children's holistic growth, development and learning in collaboration with their guardians. Early childhood education in Finland is based on respect for life, a sustainable lifestyle and human rights, as well as the integrity of human dignity. Early childhood education promotes the democratic values of Finnish society, such as anti-discrimination, gender equality and diversity. Children should have the opportunity to develop their skills and make choices regardless of gender, origin, cultural background or other personal reasons. Professional, open and respectful attitudes towards diverse families and different languages of families, cultures, viewpoints and religions, traditions and educational perspectives create the conditions for good education and co-operation. The child's family identity and family relationships are supported so that each child can feel that their families are valuable.

The starting point for the preparation of the ECEC core curriculum reform is the current changes in the environment where children grow up and develop as well as the operating environment for early childhood education and care. The core curriculum has been prepared in cooperation with stakeholders, utilizing the findings of latest research and development efforts. Some of the biggest cities like Helsinki are promoting gender impact assessment and avoiding of gender stereotypes in early childhood education.

National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care is a national regulation issued by the Finnish National Agency for Education. It is used as the basis for preparing local curricula for early childhood education and care. The purpose of the core curriculum is to provide a common basis for local curricula. The core curriculum document steers the provision, implementation and development of early childhood education and care as well as promotes the implementation of high-quality and equal early childhood education and care in the entire country. The core curriculum contains references to the legislation governing early childhood education and care as well as instructions for preparing and developing local curricula

2. Provided gender equality and human rights training for teachers and other education professionals

The guide to promoting gender equality in primary education (in Finnish: *Tasa-arvotyö on taitolaji*) was published in 2015. The guide highlights the challenges of gender equality, encourages greater understanding of gender diversity, as well as provides information on gender-based and sexual harassment. The guide contains suggestions and practical examples of how gender equality work should be carried out in a structured way and how a functional gender equality plan should be drawn up.

3. Reducing gender segregation in education and at work

Education outcomes and skills of women and girls have been improved in many projects co-financed by European Union (European Structural Funds) during 2014-20. One of the 13 special objectives in the 'Sustainable growth and jobs 2014 - 2020 - Finland's structural funds programme' aims to reduce gender segregation in education and work. There are activities in areas such as labour market participation, career development and entrepreneurship, including in new and emerging sectors. Many of the projects focus on promotion and development of women's entrepreneurship, digital skills and leadership positions. Gender equality is promoted through mainstreaming the gender perspective at all stages of the structural fund activities (preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and assessment of the development themes and measures).

Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

Critical areas of concern:

- D. Violence against women
- I. Human rights of women
- J. Women and the media
- L. The girl child

11. In the last five years, which forms of violence against women and girls, and in which specific contexts or settings, have you prioritized for action?

- × **Intimate partner violence/domestic violence, including sexual violence and marital rape**
- × **Sexual harassment and violence in public places, educational settings and in employment**
- × **Violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (e.g. cyber violence, online stalking)**
- × **Femicide/Feminicide**
- × **Violence against women in politics**
- × **Child, early and forced marriages**
- × **Female genital mutilation**
Other harmful practices
- x **Trafficking in women and girls**
Other

Finland's national action plan on implementing the Istanbul convention is the main tool for addressing violence against women (see question 11).

1. Child, early and forced marriage

When the Istanbul convention was ratified the government's proposal (155/2014) explicitly stated that forced marriage can fill the criteria of trafficking in human beings. This view was also endorsed in government proposal 103/2014. In this proposal, the definition of control over a person in trafficking in human beings was extended in order to better comply with the international standards of trafficking in human beings. In Finland the preparatory works, such as government proposals, are a source of law that the courts are obliged to take into account in adjudication. These proposals are thus enforcing the criminalisation of child and forced marriage.

In 2018 the Ministry of Justice published a memorandum that compiled up-to-date information on preventing and combating forced marriages as well as follow-up actions planned by the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Education and Culture. The memorandum was based on a study commissioned by the Ministry of Justice from the Institute of Criminology and Legal Policy of the University of Helsinki on forced marriages in Finland. The follow-up measures include improving the identification of risk factors related to honor related violence, which also has an impact on the prevention of female genital mutilation. As for the criminal code, the memorandum notes that the current legislation is sufficient but there is a need to increase awareness about forced marriage as a criminal offence. The Ministry of Justice and the National Council

for Crime Prevention will prepare an information package for the human trafficking information website, ihmiskauppa.fi, maintained by the national assistance system for victims of human trafficking. In addition, the Ministry of Justice will prepare a legislative needs assessment relating to the annulment or dissolution of forced marriages.

The Government's Proposal abolishing the possibility of minors to enter into marriage in Finland was approved by the Parliament in February 2019 (rp 211/2018 vp). Consequently, the minimum age to enter into marriage in Finland will be 18 years. Previously it was possible for persons under the age of 18 to obtain permission to marry.

2. Female Genital Mutilation

The Institute of Health and Welfare, together with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, has updated *the Action plan for the prevention of female genital mutilation* (2019). The aim of the Action Plan is to increase knowledge and competence of professionals who encounter clients from countries where FGM is widely practiced, especially in healthcare and social welfare, by ensuring that they are provided with training on how to talk about FGM. Another objective is to ensure the effective dissemination of information to groups at risk of being subjected to FGM.

3. Sexual harassment (see also question 16)

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland (AKAVA), Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK), Commission for Church Employers, KT Local Government Employers, Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK), Federation of Finnish Enterprises, Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees (STTK) and the Office for the Government as Employer (VTML) prepared a guide for intervention and prevention of sexual harassment at work.

Many of the mayors or chief executive officers of the cities have promoted the elimination of sexual harassment among their personnel and action has been taken to address sexual harassment of local politicians. For instance the city of Espoo, the second biggest city in Finland, has produced guidelines on harassment for councilors and other local politicians.

12. What actions has your country prioritized in the last five years to address violence against women and girls?

- × **Introduced or strengthened violence against women laws, and their enforcement and implementation**
- × **Introduced, updated or expanded national action plans on ending violence against women and girls**
- × **Introduced or strengthened measures to increase women's access to justice (e.g. establishment of specialist courts, training for the judiciary and police, protection orders, redress and reparations, including for femicide cases)**
- × **Introduced or strengthened services for survivors of violence (e.g. shelters, help lines, dedicated health services, legal, justice service, counselling, housing)**
- × **Introduced or strengthened strategies to prevent violence against women and girls**

(e.g. in the education sector, in the media, community mobilization, work with men and boys)

- × **Monitoring and evaluation of impact, including evidence generation and data collection, including regarding particular groups of women and girls**
Introduced or strengthened measures for improving the understanding of causes and consequences of violence against women among those responsible for implementing measures on ending violence against women and girls
Other

1. Introduced national action plans on ending violence against women and girls

Finland has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and the Convention entered into force on 1 August 2015 in respect of Finland. The Istanbul Convention covers all forms of violence against women. The Convention encourages the Parties to apply the Convention to all victims of domestic violence, paying particular attention to women and girls as victims of gender-based violence. In Finland, the Convention is also applicable to men and boys experiencing *domestic* violence.

The Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (NAPE) was established at the beginning of 2017. Cooperation with NGOs is promoted to counter violence against women and domestic violence. A division with NGO representation was set up for the Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, tasked with outlining and supporting NGO measures geared towards implementing the Istanbul Convention, etc.

The Istanbul Convention Action plan 2018-2021 was drawn up by the Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (NAPE), which is the coordinating body required under Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention and was established 2017.

The Action plan contains a total number of 46 measures. The implementation of the measures started in 2018, with NGOs involved in the implementation of several Articles. The Action plan is drawn up for a four-year period, but the Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence will monitor its progress on an annual basis, supplementing it as required [18_2017_Istanbulin sopimuksen tps 2018-21 englanti.pdf \(249.7Kt\)](#).

2. Introduced or strengthened violence against women laws, and their enforcement and implementation

During the past five years, Finland has made several changes to legislation concerning rape and sexual abuse. In 2014 several changes were made to chapter 20 of the criminal code, which includes provisions on sex related crimes. One of these changes was that crimes that could be considered as ‘petty rapes’ would also be convicted and titled as ‘rape’ – only the sentencing would differ. Furthermore, any act that involves violence could no longer be sentenced by using the lower scale used in previous ‘petty rapes’. Any rape where the victim is less than 18 years old would also be considered as aggravated rape. Simultaneously, a new provision of sexual harassment was added. This provision criminalized all acts where sexual integrity is violated by a sexual act. Definition of intercourse was also broadened so that penetrating one’s anus by using any other object or body part than a man’s penis was also titled as intercourse. Similarly taking another person’s sexual organ into one’s body was also titled intercourse.

These changes clarified that also oral sex could be considered rape, and they enhanced the rights of sexual minorities. Changes were made to the right to prosecute: in case of all sexual crimes, except sexual harassment of a person who is over 18 years old, a public prosecutor may bring charges without the consent of the victim.

In 2019, new legislation was introduced according to which sexual abuse of a child will be punishable by maximum of 6 years instead of 4 years of prison, and a new provision is added to the criminal code concerning aggravated rape of a child. Aggravated rape of a child was previously criminalized as aggravated sexual abuse of a child and aggravated rape. The new scale of punishment is imprisonment for 4-12 years, which means that the minimum punishment is elevated. The aim of these changes is to enhance protection of sexual autonomy of, and prevent sexual crimes towards children.

The Ministry of Justice will also set up a working group in 2019 to evaluate and renew the provisions of the criminal code related to rape. The aim is to strengthen the role of consent by, at minimum, clarifying the definition of rape so that intercourse that is performed against the expressed will of the victim, would be considered rape. The working group will consider whether lack of consent ought to be the defining element in the definition of rape. The provisions regarding rape when the victim is in a helpless state or incapacitated will also be re-evaluated and the title of intercourse with young children will be changed to rape instead of aggravated sexual abuse of a child, and the sentencing will be hardened. The aim of this work is to ameliorate sexual and bodily integrity and sexual rights.

Overall the changes in legislation in the past five years reflect an aim to strengthen the protection of sexual rights and bodily integrity, and an aim to better protect vulnerable groups, such as women, children and sexual minorities from sexual violence. The fact that rights to prosecute have been strengthened, signals raising awareness of the importance of freedom from violence as a human right on one hand, and on the other hand, knowledge about how sexual violence is typically gendered, and the victims are often in more vulnerable position than the perpetrators. The upcoming working group is a signal that Finland is continuing this work to ensure freedom from sexual violence for everyone – while paying particular attention to rights of vulnerable groups.

The Group of Experts on Action against violence against women and domestic violence (GREVIO) visited Finland from 29 September to 5 October 2018. The draft report and recommendations from the visit is currently being prepared.

3. Access to justice

The prosecution service of Finland has four well trained prosecutors, who are specialized in sexual and violent crimes against women and children. The prosecution service has eleven prosecutors, who are also specialized to deal with and prosecute these kind of criminal matters. The duty of the prosecutors in question is to train, consult and help other prosecutors in order to achieve and maintain legal, uniform and justice practice of prosecuting. The system is under development and the number of the highly specialized prosecutors has already been increased from four to nine.

The Office of the Prosecutor General provides training in sexual and violent crimes against women and children to prosecutors annually. The Office provides training also in trafficking in human beings) Crime inspectors and judges may also participate in the courses. The topics of the courses are criminal investigation, deliberation of charges, prosecuting and sensitive meetings. Courses are practical focusing on legal praxis, real cases and the problems related to them. In 2014 – 2018 there were altogether 27 training days for prosecutors on the topic and in all 176 person attended to courses.

Additionally, prosecutors specialized in sexual and violent crimes against women and children and the specialists in forensic psychology from the five University Hospitals in Finland meet every year. The aim of these conferences (meetings) is partly professional training.

A web-based training program (*Luo luottamusta - Puutu väkivaltaan = Create trust - Stop the violence*) for social and health care professionals and police on domestic violence (DV) and violence against women (VAW) has been developed. In Finland most of the professionals' degree programs do not include domestic violence topics in the curriculums and studies indicate professionals' needs for training on DV and VAW. Therefore this effective tool to train multi-agency professionals was developed. The training programme increases professionals' competence to identify and intervene in DV and it increases the general understanding of the phenomenon. The training program and spreading it to professionals is part of the Finland's action plan to implement the Istanbul Convention.

The Finnish Immigration Service has provided special inputs to improve the introduction of new employees to questions of gender-based violence. For instance, all new senior advisers who started to work in the Asylum Unit in 2018–2019 have been introduced to the theme. During 2018, the Asylum Unit trained all senior advisers responsible for interviews and decision-making on the themes of FGM and forced marriage, and on how to take the themes into consideration in the asylum procedure. The Asylum Unit is also finishing instructions on how to take domestic violence into account during the asylum process. The senior advisers of the Unit will be trained on the content of the instructions during the spring and summer of this year.

In May 2018, the Finnish Immigration Service launched a project entitled ONE, intended for general legal counselling for asylum seekers at reception centres. The target group of the project includes not only asylum seekers but also the staff of the reception centres. The training material of the project also includes information to support and identify vulnerable asylum seekers. The project will go on until the year 2020.

4. Services for survivors

The Act on State Compensation to Producers of Shelter Services (1354/2014) entered into force 1 January 2015. According to the Act, the responsibility for financing the services provided in the shelters lies with the State. Until January 2016 the financing was based on community budgeting. The purpose of the new law is to guarantee qualitative and comprehensive shelter services all over the country. The new legislation also defines competence requirements for the shelter personnel. The provided services include high-quality services for immediate help for a crisis situation, 24/7 living and psychosocial support, counselling and guidance for every person in need regardless of residence and free of charge.

For the year 2019, a total of 19,5 million euros have been allocated to 28 shelters that accommodate altogether 202 family places. The funding of the shelters has been increased in few years (2017-2019) by 45 per cent. The shelters are open for anyone – women, men and children of all ages – who have experienced or have been threatened of domestic violence. Children usually stay in the shelter with a parent. The above-mentioned law enabled also adults with no children to enter a shelter while previously shelters accepted only women accompanied with children

The shelters cover geographically different parts of Finland and include places for the Swedish-speaking minority, as well as migrant women and children. The majority of the shelters are also

accessible for persons with disabilities. In 2016, the National Institute for Health and Welfare piloted a so-called remote shelter project for sparsely populated areas which involved establishing a 24/7 remote shelter in connection with a social and health care unit. Psychosocial support for shelter customers was provided from a central shelter via remote access. The operation of the remote shelter in the pilot area has been made permanent from 2017 onwards with the help of Government funding. The aim is to have similar remote shelters in other sparsely populated areas in the future. A shelter is meant to be a short-term refuge during a crisis. The length of the stay is always based on individual needs. A shelter has staff available 24 hours a day and victims can go there either on their own initiative or on referral. It is possible to go to a shelter anonymously. Staying in a shelter is cost-free to the client.

The shelters are financed and overseen by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health while the National Institute for Health and Welfare is responsible for the national coordination and development of the shelters. Whilst in the coming years, the number of shelter places will grow with the increased funding by the state, the expansion process and quality of the services is under controlled scrutiny by the National Institute <https://thl.fi/en/web/thlfi-en/services/special-government-services-in-social-welfare-and-health-care/shelters-for-victims-of-domestic-violence>, www.nollalinja.fi/shelters-for-victims-of-domestic-violence

A nationwide free of charge 24/7 helpline service to all victims of violence started operating in December 2016. <https://thl.fi/en/web/thlfi-en/-/nollalinja-and-domestic-violence-shelters-operate-throughout-the-winter-holidays>

In May 2017, a rape crisis centre as stipulated by the Istanbul Convention was established at the Helsinki University hospital (HUS). In 2019, three more crisis centres will start operating in different parts of Finland. The aim is to have a similar crisis centre in each of the five university hospitals until 2020. A national model guideline according to the HUS crisis centre was published in 2018 <https://www.julkari.fi/handle/10024/137274>

A national guideline for helping victims of sexual violence was published in the spring of 2016 and district hospitals have received directions on creating a local treatment chain for helping victims of rape and other forms of sexual abuse. The treatment chain is aimed at creating a seamless continuum of care for rape victims, as well as generating more consistent and uniform nationwide services. The care path includes the examination of the rape victim, as well as the provision of both physical and mental health and support services. Furthermore, victims are supported to access legal aid. All 20 hospital districts have been informed on the guidelines and have been provided training for the launch of local treatment chains.

Nollalinja 080 005 005 helpline for domestic violence and violence against women was opened on the 19th December 2016. Nollalinja is available for people who suffer from domestic violence or violence against women, or who are threatened by it, and for family members of victims of violence as well as professionals and officials who require advice in their work with customers. The helpline is open 24/7 and free of charge. The professionals listen to, support and give advises in Finnish, Swedish or English.

The Domestic Violence MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) method has been in use for many years in Finland and its functionality have been assessed from 2010 until 2015, and the results have been very positive. MARAC working groups are established in 36 areas in Finland

and there is MARAC activity in 17 counties. The plan is increase the number of working groups.

The act on victim surcharge entered into force in December 2016 (Grand Committee 669-672/2015; Reply of Parliament 347/2014 ps; Legal Affairs Committee Report 32/2014 ps; Constitutional Law Committee Report 61/2014 ps). The purpose is that the charge collected from offenders increases the state funds to be channelled to victim support organisations. Of these funds, the Ministry of Justice granted Victim Support Finland EUR 4 million as state transfers in 2018. There has been a significant increase in the appropriation of Victim Support, which results from the entry into force of the Victims' Directive. In addition, the Ministry of Justice granted the National Institute for Health and Welfare EUR 694,000 in 2018 for Nollalinja, the 24/7 helpline for victims of domestic violence. In the spring of 2017, the Ministry of Justice granted approximately EUR 1 million as a one-off Government transfer to organisations providing specialist support services for victims of crime.

13. What strategies has your country used in the last five years to prevent violence against women and girls?

- × **Public awareness raising and changing of attitudes and behaviours**
- × **Work in primary and secondary education, including comprehensive sexuality education**
- × **Grassroots and community-level mobilization**
- × **Shifting the representation of women and girls in the media**
- × **Working with men and boys**
- × **Perpetrator programmes**
- × **Other**

1. Work in primary and secondary education, including comprehensive sexuality education

In Finland comprehensive sexuality education is part of obligatory education. For seven to eight year old children it is included in environmental and natural studies. In primary schools comprehensive sexuality education is integrated into several school subjects. Upper comprehensive schools have sexuality education classes approximately 1-3 hours each year.

14. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?

- × **Introduced or strengthened legislation and regulatory provisions**
- × **Implemented awareness raising initiatives targeting the general public and young women and men in educational settings**
- × **Worked with technology providers to set and adhere to good business practices**
- × **Other**

1. Awareness raising

During Norway's presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2017 a guide on gender-based hate speech, intended for young people aged between 13 and 18, was issued. On the commission from the Ministry for Social Affairs and Health, THL's Centre for Gender Equality Information carried out a Finnish version of the guide: *"Emme vaikene. Mitä on vihapuhe ja miten se liittyy sukupuoleen?"*. Publication

and dissemination of the guide was made in cooperation with a Finnish NGO, Allianssi ry. SAllianssi ry carried out a social media campaign #EMMEVAIKENE aimed at young people (31.10-10.12.2017). The campaign was carried out mainly in Instagram and to some extents in other social media channels. The permanent address of the publication (in Finnish is): <http://www.julkari.fi/handle/10024/135444>.

The Gender Equality Barometer provides up-to-date information on online hate speech against women. The Ministry of Justice has launched an EU funded project called Against Hate, which is implemented between 1.12.2017 and 30.11.2019. The project is supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The objective of the Against Hate project is to develop the work against hate crime and hate speech. The project focuses on the development of hate crime reporting, on the enhancement of the capacity of the police, prosecutors and judges to act against hate crime and hate speech, and on the development of support services for victims of hate crime. Information on *Against-hate project* (2018-2019): (https://api.hankeikkuna.fi/asiakirjat/80ac0a59-5434-4983-b89e-e2ab0013ba21/2bc22362-57af-452e-b3da-3ef61bb10838/KIRJE_20181005075747.pdf),

As part of the Against Hate –project, a national network to coordinate actions on hate crime and hate speech has been established, and it includes expertise on gender. A communications campaign aiming to combat hate speech was launched on 4 February 2019. The campaign aimed to increase internet users’ awareness of what kind of content constitute punishable hate speech. The campaign also seeks to encourage people to report punishable hate speech to the police.

2. Strengthening legislation on hate speech

In November 2018 the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Education and Culture together established a project to prepare proposals for more efficient prevention of hate speech punishable under the Criminal Code of Finland and harassment prohibited by law, including gender-based harassment and sexual harassment. In addition, the project promotes a positive discussion culture. The working group is chaired by archbishop emeritus Kari Mäkinen and it has representatives from the Office of the Prosecutor General, the Council for Mass Media, Helsinki Police Department, the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations and the Union of Local Youth Councils, among others.

15. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media?

- Enacted, strengthened and enforced legal reforms to combat discrimination and/or gender bias in the media
- Introduced binding regulation for the media, including for advertising
- × **Supported the media industry to develop voluntary codes of conduct**
- × **Provided training to media professionals to encourage the creation and use of non-stereotypical, balanced and diverse images of women and girls in the media**
- Promoted the participation and leadership of women in the media
- Established or strengthened consumer protection services to receive and review complaints about media content or gender-based discrimination/bias in the media
- × **Other**

1. Provided training to media professionals to encourage the creation and use of non-

stereotypical, balanced and diverse images of women and girls in the media

Finland participated in the Global Media Monitoring Survey 2015 analyzing men's and women's roles and visibility in the news. The survey has been done every fifth year from the year 1995 and Finland has participated every time. The results from Finland show that development is not necessarily positive or linear: the share of women in the news in Finland in 2005 was 32 % and year 2010 29 %. The data is, however, useful in further development of cooperation and actions to promote gender equality and women's position in the news media.

The 100 Acts for Gender Equality program, organized by The National Council of Women of Finland and the Council for Gender Equality, celebrated the centenary of Finland's independence by increasing gender equality with new and concrete measures. From 2016 to 2017 different organizations all over Finland completed hundreds of gender equality acts in total. The project created a completely new network and way of working around gender equality. The project had 38 partner organizations and an honorary committee, led by president Tarja Halonen and consisting of influencers of different fields.

The ongoing Making an Impact with Equality Acts (2018-2019) program is based on the results and networks gathered during the 100 Acts for Gender Equality project. The aim for this project is to deepen and multiply the equality acts already made, and thus, in cooperation with different organizations, promote women's rights and gender equality in the Finnish society. The project is coordinated by the National Council of Women of Finland and the Council for Gender Equality. Project is funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The project has gathered some of the largest media outlets in Finland to promote gender equality. The national public broadcasting company Yle developed methods for following and promoting equal representation of male and female athletes in sports news. Aamulehti, the biggest Finnish newspaper outside Helsinki, introduced gender-neutral versions for gendered job titles in their news language. In June 2018 the equality acts project also organized a panel discussion on the topic for heads of major media outlets Yle, Helsingin Sanomat (the biggest newspaper in Finland), Huvudstadsbladet (the biggest Swedish-language newspaper) and Aamulehti.

The National Institute for Health and Welfare has recently started a two-year project on strengthening the equal participation of women and men in media, politics and leadership. The project facilitates gender equality training for news journalists. The project is carried out in co-operation with Yle, the Union of Journalists in Finland, Women Journalists in Finland and the Institute for the Languages of Finland. The project is funded by the European Commission Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020.

In 2016, Finland, as the chair of the Nordic Council of Ministers, prepared two Nordic reports on gender issues related to news media and advertising. The surveys have been published as electronic publications in the Nordic Council of Ministers publication series (TemaNord) and are in English.

1) Women and Men in the News. A report on Gender representation in Nordic News Content and in the Nordic Media Industry (TemaNord 2017:527): According to the report traditional news media and journalism still have a notable impact on society despite the development of new media and technologies. The survey examines how women and men are represented in the news media in the Nordic countries and how the media convey and reinforce gender stereotypes. The report is based on three

cross-national studies: the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), Women and Media Industries in Europe and the IWMF Global Report on the Status of Women. The report further presents some examples of good practices for promoting more gender-equal media. <http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1092200&dswid=-2231>.

2) Regulation of Gender-Discriminatory Advertising in the Nordic Countries (TemaNord 2017:534): The report surveys how gender-discriminatory advertising is regulated in the Nordic countries. In the Nordic countries gender discriminatory advertising has been on the public agenda since the 1970s and 1980s, the time when gender equality legislation was adopted. However, the Nordic countries have chosen different ways of regulating gender discriminatory advertising. The report surveys the differences and similarities in regulation and in the media environment in the Nordic countries and discusses the potential of self-regulation compared to the regulation in law. The report notes that gender equality in relation to advertising is intrinsically related to conversations about freedom of expression. Link to the publication: <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1108955&dswid=-8524>.

The analysis of the situation, regulation and good practices described in the reports are useful in further developing actions to promote gender equality and the position and portrayal of women and girls in the news and other media.

16. Has your country taken any action in the last five years specifically tailored to address violence against specific groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination?

YES

Finland takes measures to enhance the gender equality content and gender perspective in reception services for individuals seeking international protection and in the services and support measures promoting the integration of individuals granted international protection and other immigrants. Many of the women and girls arriving in Finland as refugees or asylum seekers have experienced sexual violence in their country of origin or during their flight. For this reason, reception centers provide women and girls with a comprehensive range of services intended for victims of sexual violence. In this context, consideration should be given to their background and any cultural obstacles that affect their willingness to seek help. This prevents them from becoming victims again. In reception centers, services for refugees and asylum seekers are developed to guarantee the security of women and girls (accommodation arrangements, security training). Efforts are also made to ensure that the special needs of asylum-seeking women and girls can be better identified and considered, especially during the early stages of reception services (such as initial health checks and guidelines on how to deal with victims of human trafficking). At the same time, refugee women and female asylum seekers are provided with opportunities for empowerment, active engagement and influencing decisions concerning their lives. All domestic violence shelters are open to immigrants who have experienced intimate partner violence and the residents have the right to use interpreters. The integration process includes measures to ensure that the special needs of women and girls are considered in the fields of education, training, civic participation, employment and the promotion of health. The Government Integration Programme contains a range of measures that aim to provide migrant women with education and training paths to working life.

The EU Home Affairs Fund AMIF (the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund) was established for the programming period 2014–2020. The Ministry of Interior coordinates the preparation of the national programmes and detailed implementation plans through which the funds are implemented. AMIF funded a project called HAPKE 3. The target group of the project, carried out in 2016 – 2017, was women asylum-seekers who were unaccompanied and who had experienced violence. The project provided training to personnel at reception centers received training in recognizing risk factors. In addition, remedial tools were established to support and assist traumatized women. An information package on recognizing violence against women was also produced.

Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions

Critical areas of concern:

- G. Women in power and decision-making
- H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- I. Human rights of women
- J. Women and the media
- L. The girl child

17. What actions and measures has your country taken in the last five years to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?

Reformed constitution, laws and regulations that promote women's participation in politics, especially at decision-making level, including electoral system reform, adoption of temporary special measures, such as quotas, reserved seats, benchmarks and targets

- × **Implemented capacity building, skills development and other measures Encouraged the participation of minority and young women, including through sensitization and mentorship programmes**
- × **Provided opportunities for mentorship, training in leadership, decision-making, public speaking, self-assertion, political campaigning**
- × **Taken measures to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish violence against women in politics**
- × **Collected and analyzed data on women's political participation, including in appointed and elected positions**
- × **Other**

1. Promoting gender equality in parliament

The female members of Parliament form a network that acts as a forum in which they can discuss political issues that affect women in particular irrespective of party lines. The network is coordinated by the Employment and Equality Committee. The network acts to realize equality between men and women, promotes women's rights and introduces a female perspective to legislative work. In addition, it organises seminars and meetings, sends representatives to attend international conferences dealing with equality and women's rights as well as engages in cooperation with female MPs from other countries.

In 2018, the Finnish parliament conducted a review of how gender equality is realized in the work of the parliament. The study found that in general, parliamentarians do not feel that their gender has an impact on their work as parliamentarians. However, the informal networks in parliament were seen as being somewhat segregated by gender, and there were fewer women chairing various committees than men. Men act as experts in the fields of economy and defence and women in the fields of education, gender equality and healthcare and social welfare.

The parliamentarians told that they had not experienced discrimination based on the gender, but that women and men had to an equal extent experienced sexual harassment, with 15% of our parliamentarians having experienced sexual harassment directly. Almost half of the parliamentarians reported having heard sexist jokes at the parliament. Most worryingly, 72% of the parliamentarians had received direct threats,

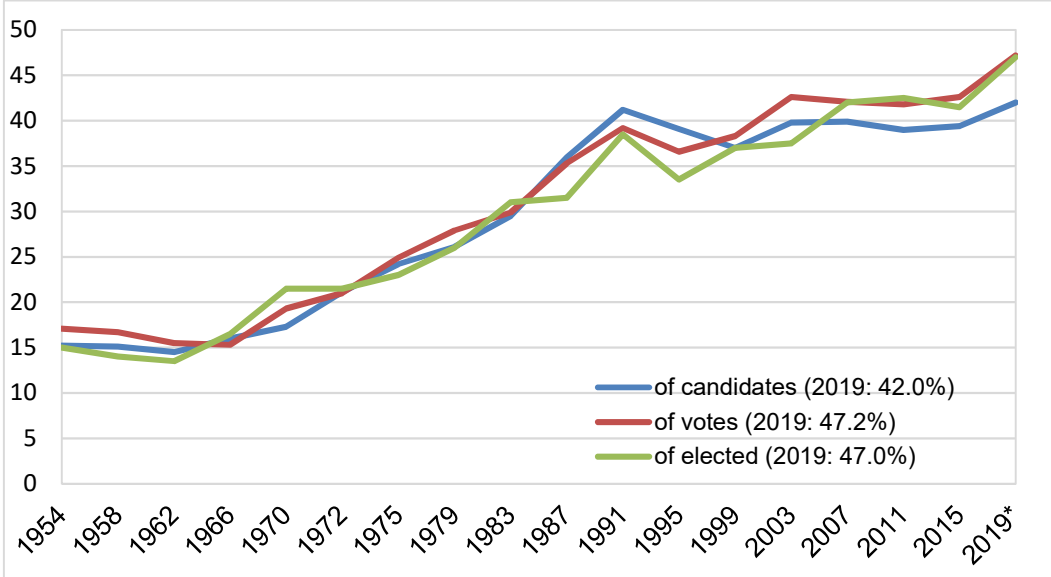
and female parliamentarians were more likely than their male colleagues to receive threats and comments of a sexual nature, particularly online. Following the report, the parliament has taken a number of concrete steps to address the problem. The findings of the report were debated by the parliament, and the Parliament has issued new guidelines on preventing and addressing sexual harassment. The Finnish parliament has joined the #NotInMyParliament movement to take decisive action to eliminate all forms of harassment.

One aim of the THL’s project Gender Matters? (2019–2020) is to promote gender equality in the Parliament. There will be a study made to further map gender equality measures and situation in the Finnish Parliament, focusing especially on expert consultations in the standing committees. The project will also prepare tools for the Parliament to promote gender equality.

2. Parliamentary and municipal elections

Women’s share of votes, candidates and elected representatives both in parliamentary and municipal elections has grown, as a rule, in the past few decades but progress has not been linear. In the parliamentary elections in 2019, the share of women in the Finnish parliament increased to a historical high of 46% following the parliamentary elections in April 2019, with 92 female parliamentarians being elected of a total of 200.

Percentage of female candidates, votes cast for women and women elected in Parliamentary elections, 1954 to 2019, %

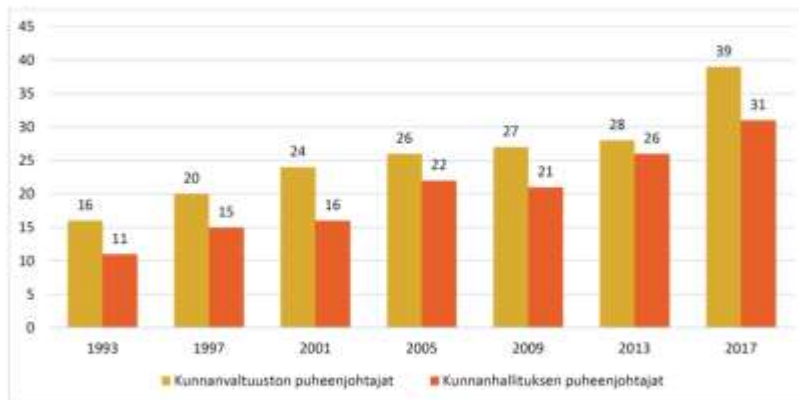


*Voting turnout, Finnish citizens living in Finland, women 73.5% and men 70.6%

After the municipal elections in April 2017 the average share of women in the municipal councils rose considerably to 39 %. There are big differences between small and big municipalities. In big cities the percentage is around 50 % and e.g. in small municipalities of 5500 inhabitants, 34 %. Quota does not apply to the councils.

The share of the female chairpersons of the councils in this municipal electoral period also increased considerably from 28 % to 39 % on the average. The increase of female chairpersons of the municipal boards was less but also very positive, before 26 % and now 31 %. There are also some municipalities and cities where all the leading political posts are held by women. However, the political and highest power at local level is still very male oriented. In addition to the lower share of the female chairpersons, 25 % of the municipal executive offices are women.

Share of female chairs of the councils (yellow) and the municipal boards (orange)



The quota regulation of the Equality Act affects representation in the political councils of the Regional Councils which are municipal joint authorities. The share of women in the political councils of these regional organizations is 47 %. Among the chairpersons of the councils 22 % are women, and 17 % of the managing boards.

3. Promoting gender equality at the local level

During the 100 Acts for Gender Equality the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities (AFLRA) renewed its recommendation for the municipalities and cities and the regional councils to sign The European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. The reason for adopting the charter is to promote the implementation of legislation and international conventions on gender equality really into practice. The idea is that the municipality as a democratic actor closest to citizens is the best to put the gender equality into practice and have an influence on the daily life of the citizens. Starting from the democratic responsibility the charter covers gender equality in all the tasks of the municipality and the city. AFLRA has promoted the charter and its implementation. AFLRA has translated the charter into Finnish and adapted the Swedish translation into the Finnish context. These are available in the web shop of AFLRA:

http://shop.kuntaliitto.fi/product_details.php?p=2988

In the year 2017 as a part of the celebration of centenary of Finland's independence AFLRA produced a short guide to the charter, Time for Gender Equality. This was part of 100 gender equality actions - campaign.

http://shop.kuntaliitto.fi/product_details.php?p=3320

18. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to increase women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?

- × **Strengthened the provision of formal and technical vocational education and training (TVET) in media and ICTs, including in areas of management and leadership**
Taken measures to enhance access, affordability and use of ICTs for women and girls (e.g. free wifi hubs, community technology centers)
- × **Introduced regulations to advance equal pay, retention and career advancement of women within the media and ICT field**
- × **Collaborated with employers in the media and ICT field to improve internal policies and hiring practices on a voluntary basis**
Provided support to women's media networks and organizations
Other

The Gender Matters? Promoting equal gender representation in the media, politics and leadership positions –project aims to make the plurality of expertise seen and heard in the media and in public debates. The project is exploring how the gender norms and stereotypes affect how expertise and competence are portrayed in the public sphere. The project is also raising awareness on how media imagery can affect gender norms and stereotypes and by that even individual career choices. In addition, the project is making the gender gap in leadership positions more visible and widely known by developing visual materials of key indicators of gender equality in the corporate sector. The project provides tools to address the main arguments that are commonly used to explain or legitimize the existence of the gap. The project (2019-2020) is carried out by the Centre for Gender Equality Information operating under THL and funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020).

19. Do you track the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?

NO

20. As a donor country, does your country track the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?

YES

If YES, please provide further information on the methodology, the scope of tracking, past trends and current proportion of investments.

All Finnish development assistance projects are screened against the Gender equality policy marker, that has been defined in the OECD/DAC (Development Assistance Committee). The marker indicates for each project whether it targets gender equality as a policy objective according to a three-point scoring system (0=Not targeted/1=Significant objective/2=Principal objective). The gender marker is based on donor intentions at the design stage. Generally the projects marked as significant and principal (score

1 and 2) are counted as gender equality focused aid. The share of Finland's bilateral allocable aid focusing on gender equality has been on the rise in the last few years: from 41 % in 2013 to 53 % in 2016 and further to 61 % in 2017.

21. Does your country have a valid national strategy or action plan for gender equality?

NO

The previous Gender Action Plan ended when the term of the previous government came to an end in April 2019. The Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-2019 collated the objectives and measures by which Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's Government promoted equality between women and men. The Action Plan is an instrument for coordinating gender equality policy in the Government. It incorporated measures that all ministries bear responsibility for in their respective administrative branches. The measures included support the attainment of the objectives of the Government Programme. The Action Plan consisted of approximately thirty measures concerning working life, equal pay, economic decision-making, immigrant reception and integration services, reconciliation of work and family, parenthood, gender segregation in education and labour market, education, sports resources and library services, violence against women and intimate partner violence, and men's health and wellbeing.

The Action Plan also included other measures to ensure that all ministries assess the gender impacts of their activities and take them into account in their decision-making. The preparation of the Action Plan for Gender Equality was based on, among other things, the results of a hearing of the key stakeholders and on negotiations between ministries. The definitions of policy outlined in the Government Report on Gender Equality, and on the other hand, responding to international obligations both informed the preparation. The implementation of the Action Plan requires extensive inter-ministerial cooperation and commitment. The Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016–2019 was adopted as a Government resolution on 4 May 2016. A working group was appointed to support and monitor the implementation of the measures of the Action Plan and to report to the Government. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health coordinated the work in relation to the Action Plan and its follow-up.

22. Does your country have an action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women?

YES

The National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights for 2017–2019 aims at consistency in fundamental and human rights policies both nationally and internationally. In preparing the Action Plan the Government examined the recent recommendations given to Finland by international and regional treaty monitoring bodies and other human rights mechanisms, including the CEDAW committee and the UPR process, as well as international case law concerning Finland. The Action Plan includes a total of 43 projects which are spread across the administrative branches of all ministries. Each project description includes a reference to relevant international human rights treaties as well as corresponding

recommendations received from Treaty Bodies, including CEDAW. The full text of the NAP, containing descriptions of each project, can be found in <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-259-588-1>

23. Is there a national human rights institution in your country?

YES

If YES, does it have a specific mandate to focus on gender equality or discrimination based on sex/gender?

NO

Critical areas of concern:

- E. Women and armed conflict
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

24. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?

- × **Adopted and/or implemented a National Action Plan on women, peace and security**
- × **Integrated women, peace and security commitments into key national and inter-ministerial policy, planning and monitoring frameworks**

Used communication strategies, including social media, to increase awareness of the women, peace and security agenda

Increased budgetary allocations for the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda

Taken steps to reduce excessive military expenditures and/or control the availability of armaments

Re-allocated funds from military spending to social and economic development, including for gender equality and the empowerment of women

Supported inclusive and gender-sensitive conflict analysis, early warning and prevention mechanisms

1. Implementation of the National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security

In 2008, Finland presented its first National Action Plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. In order to ensure a more effective implementation of the Resolution, a new result-oriented Action Plan was prepared for the period 2012-2016. It was drafted through cross-administrative cooperation involving ministries, representatives of civil society organizations and research institutions. The follow-up group reviewing the realization of the plan and the implementation of its objectives met at regular basis. The reports of the Action Plan submitted to Parliament were based on the indicators outlined in the document.

During the period covered by the Action plan, Finland maintained a high international profile, with Presidents Tarja Halonen and Sauli Niinistö, as well as Ministers for Foreign Affairs Erkki Tuomioja and Timo Soini, raising 1325 topics in different forums. Minister Elisabeth Rehn was a member of the High Level Consultative Group appointed by the Secretary-General of the UN in the preparations for the 15th anniversary of Resolution. MP Pekka Haavisto, as the Foreign Minister's Special Representative on Mediation, advanced the agenda in 2015–2017.

In international cooperation, Finland has consistently attached great importance to the inclusion of the 1325 theme in joint statements and documents and has worked to engage new countries in the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Through EU coordination and Nordic cooperation, Finland has actively aimed to ensure that the 1325 perspective is considered in the work of the UN Security Council. Finland has also continued cooperation with its partner countries in the preparation of National Action Plans on 1325. The National Action Plans for Afghanistan (2015) and Kenya (2016) were adopted, and implementation of the National Action Plan for Nepal (2011–2016) was supported during the period. New collaborative efforts were undertaken in 2016 through the support of UN Women, for

National Action Plans in Jordan and Tunisia and to implement the National Action Plan in Iraq.

Promotion of the status of women in fragile situations has been a cross-cutting theme in Finnish development cooperation. Finland supported the establishment of UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, in 2010 and is one of its most important providers of funding. Finland has continued to play an active role in the work against impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious international crimes and has provided financial support for the Trust Fund for Victims operating in conjunction with the International Criminal Court.

Finland has made substantial inputs to the implementation of Resolution 1325 in crisis management. Women accounted for about 40 per cent of the experts sent by Finland to civilian crisis management tasks in 2016, while the average for EU Member States was about 20 per cent. In election monitoring operations, Finland has achieved parity between women and men. Efforts have been made to increase the number of women in military crisis management with the help of recruitment campaigns carried out by the Finnish Defence Forces. At the end of 2016, Finland had a total of 366 persons serving in military crisis management tasks and 21 (5.7%) of these persons were women. Finland has sent human rights and gender advisers to both civilian and military operations. Since spring 2014, a seconded Finnish expert has been serving in the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate of the EU External Action Service. The tasks of the expert include the promotion of human rights and gender equality issues (including the 1325 agenda) in the crisis management activities of the Union. The Finnish Defence Administration has drafted its own guidelines on the implementation of the Action Plan. The Women, Peace and Security theme has been addressed in all crisis management training.

There has been some challenges in the implementation of the second Action Plan. An external evaluation report on the implementation of the plan was prepared in spring 2016. Even though there has been substantial progress in the implementation of many of the objectives, the results achieved to date are inadequate. In the coming years, emphasis must be on ensuring a clearer focus, coordinating measures and defining responsibilities. The long-term development and impacts of activities supported by Finland must be monitored.

25. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings?

× **Promoted and supported women’s meaningful participation in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements**

Promoted equal participation of women in humanitarian and crisis response activities at all levels, particularly at the decision-making level

× **Integrated a gender perspective in the prevention and resolution of armed or other conflict**

× **Integrated a gender perspective in humanitarian action and crisis response**

× **Protected civil society spaces and women’s human rights defenders**

Other

1. Women’s participation in peace processes

In the promotion of international mediation, Finland has strongly addressed the role of women in peace processes. Under the guidance of the Group of Friends of Mediation, led by Finland and Turkey, the UN General Assembly has unanimously adopted four resolutions on mediation emphasizing the importance of women's participation. Finland also actively contributed to the establishment of the Nordic Women Mediators' Network in 2015.

Finland contributed actively to the establishment of the Nordic Women Mediators network in 2015 together with the other Nordic countries. At the moment there are sixteen Finnish members in the Nordic Women Mediators network. The Nordic Women Mediators' (NWM) mission is to enable Nordic women mediators and peacebuilders to advance the inclusion and meaningful participation of women in all phases of peace processes, in order to contribute to achieving and sustaining peace. *Its main objectives are to strengthen women's participation in peace processes at all levels and to strengthen Nordic women actively involved in international peace-making efforts.*

The Nordic Women Mediators' Network cooperates with other regional women mediators' networks: African Union Women Mediators' Network FEMWISE, Mediterranean Women Mediators' Network and Women Mediators Across the Commonwealth - with similar objectives.

Gender equality and promoting women's participation in peace processes is one of the main objectives of the peace mediation projects financed by Finland. Examples of present Finnish support to women's participation in peace processes are: contribution to UN Women for supporting the Women's Advisory Board of Syrian women in UN peace talks (800.000€ in 2018-19), contribution through UN Women to assist Libyan women in participating in the peace process (264.000€ in 2019). Women carry out a part of the dialogues in the Syria Initiative programme of local mediation.

Norway and Finland are supporting Gender and Inclusive Mediation Processes – training programme. It is targeted to UN peace mediators, other high-level peace mediators and experts. UN also drew up a guidance based on the experiences of the training programme (<https://dppa.un.org/en/guidance-gender-and-inclusive-mediation-strategies>)

Gender equality and promoting women's participation is the main objective of the peace mediation projects financed by Finland. Norway and Finland are supporting Gender and Inclusive Mediation Processes – training project. It is targeted to UN peace mediators, other high-level peace mediators and experts. Empowerment of women are priority objectives also in other projects, such as in the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers and in the project that is aiming at strengthening the mediation capacity of the African Union.

Collaboration between Networks is important. Women's participation and recruitment to high-level positions requires close cooperation and collaboration with civil society and women peace mediators, including women's organizations. Securing funding to these actors through UN and its member states is of utmost importance.

2. Support for civil society and human rights defenders

Human rights defenders also play an important role in conflict prevention. They report on inequality, discrimination and serious violations of human rights, which are often the reasons behind conflicts. Human rights defenders may also face multiple challenges when addressing matters that are considered sensitive, such as violence against women, sexual and reproductive health and rights, as well as the rights of sexual and gender minorities. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has prepared public guidelines for the Finnish Foreign Service for the implementation of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders.

Finland's policy and guidelines for humanitarian assistance and financing include the gender perspective and support the rights of women and girls during crises. Finland contributes to the efforts by UN specialized agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and civil society organizations to further strengthen gender equality and the principle of equality in their operating policies and strategies. In humanitarian forums, Finland actively highlights the needs of women and girls (including the rights of persons with disabilities and sexual and gender minorities) and works to remove obstacles to assistance.

Finland promotes implementation of guidelines and policies aimed at preventing discrimination of women employees working in humanitarian crises and works to strengthen coordination on gender equality issues and the role of UN Women in humanitarian crises.

Answering the call for the operational translation of the UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) combines two complementary strategies to support and facilitate women's meaningful participation in peace and transition processes. First, it works with national actors in conflict-affected countries (mainly South Sudan, Libya and Yemen) to strengthen women's political influence in peace and security through prioritized geographic engagements. Second, it builds capacity among mediation and peace support actors (e.g. OSCE, ECOWAS and women mediators' networks including the Nordic Women Mediators network and FemWise Africa) on gender-sensitive conflict resolution processes.

The MFA-supported KIOS Foundation's programme includes funding for the organization WOREC in Nepal and its network on women human rights defenders. Because of the project, more than 7000 people have received information on women's rights, and related media campaigns have reached thousands of people. The network's advocacy work led to the insertion of an article on women's rights in Nepal's constitution, and women human rights defenders have contributed to improvements in laws on violence against women and rape.

26. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?

Implemented legal and policy reform to redress and prevent violations of the rights of women and girls

Strengthened institutional capacities, including of the justice system and transitional justice mechanisms as applicable, during conflict and crisis response

- × **Strengthened capacity of security sector institutions on human rights and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse**
- × **Increased access of conflict-affected, refugee or displaced women to violence prevention and protection services**
- × **Taken measures to combat illicit arms trafficking**
Taken measures to combat the production, use of and trafficking in illicit drugs
- × **Taken measures to combat trafficking in women and children**
- Other

1. Human Trafficking

Victims of human trafficking are entitled to receive assistance and protection. In Finland, victims of human trafficking can receive assistance from the National assistance system for victims of trafficking, coordinated by the Joutseno reception center, operating under the Ministry of the Interior. Law regulates the functions of the assistance system. The Assistance system for victims of human trafficking can help potential victims of human trafficking, and their underage children who are in Finland. People who are witnesses to a human trafficking crime may also receive help. All services are free and accepting them is voluntary. A customer of the assistance system is entitled to different services: Safe housing, health care, social services, reception allowance or social assistance, legal aid and legal advice, support person and interpretation. If trafficking victims are staying in Finland illegally, the Assistance system can offer them a reflection period. The legislation concerning victim assistance was amended in July 2015. After the amendment, the assistance system can now act as one of the official bodies capable of formally identifying a victim of trafficking.

In September 2017, the assistance system started the IHME project, which will last until May 2019. The Internal Security Fund (ISF) of the EU has granted funding for the project. The aim of the project is to strengthen efforts to prevent human trafficking, and enhance expertise in identifying and helping victims in the pre-trial investigation of human trafficking in Finland, while promoting the equal treatment of victims by public authorities.

The first national Action Plan on Human Trafficking was adopted in 2005, and revised in 2008. The revised Action Plan paid particular attention to identifying the victims of human trafficking and comprehensively evaluated legislation combating human trafficking. The starting point of the Action Plan 2016–2017 was that human trafficking is a serious crime and a violation of human dignity and integrity where victims are subjugated usually for the purpose of commercial exploitation. The measures required by the Action Plan were implemented within the framework of available financial resources. The Action Plan includes four areas, namely, the prevention of human trafficking, protection of victims, measures related to bringing offenders to justice and collaboration with various actors. The permanent link for the Action Plan is as follows: <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-324-134-3>. A national Anti-Trafficking Coordinator started on June 2014 in the Ministry of the Interior and the coordination structure for actions against human trafficking began operating in 2015. All key ministries engaged in anti-trafficking efforts are members in the Secretariat Coordinating Government Action. Key experts in anti-trafficking activities, i.e. various authorities and organizations, were invited to join the Government anti-trafficking network.

The first report on the effectiveness of co-ordination and reporting arrangements for Government matters concerning human trafficking was issued in June 2018. After localising the developmental needs, the report presents developmental recommendations, which first and foremost aim to establish functional principles for application in the co-ordination structure. The permanent link for the report is as follows: <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-324-229-6>.

2. Strengthened institutional capacities, including of the justice system and transitional justice mechanisms as applicable, during conflict and crisis response

Armed conflicts are often accompanied by an increase in gender-based violence, including sexual violence. Finland actively works towards eliminating violence and emphasizes the importance of justice and accountability for crimes of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) occurring in conflict situations. Finland supports the International Criminal Court (ICC) in its work in the fight against impunity for crimes under its jurisdiction. Finland works to strengthen the status of victims and provide funds for the ICC Trust Fund for Victims so that the victims of SGBV crimes can receive assistance. In 2017 Finland made a new multi-year financing decision of 800.000 euros, covering the years 2017-

2020, to supporting SGBV victims in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Finland is supporting the Justice Rapid Response Mechanism, which trains experts in investigating, for example, SGBV crimes and maintains a list of experts that are prepared, at short notice, to assist countries and international organizations by their request in the investigation of these crimes. In 2017 total funding for JRR and other judicial and civil society actors was 500.000 euros

27. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child?

- × **Taken measures to combat negative social norms and practices and increased awareness of the needs and potential of girl children**
- × **Strengthened girls' access to quality education, skills development and training**
Tackled disadvantages in health outcomes due to malnutrition, early childbearing (e.g. anemia) and exposure to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases
- × **Implemented policies and programmes to reduce and eradicate child, early and forced marriage**
- × **Implemented policies and programmes to eliminate violence against girls, including physical and sexual violence and harmful practices**
Implemented policies and programmes to eradicate child labour and excessive levels of unpaid care and domestic work undertaken by girl children
- × **Promoted girls' awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life**
Other

1. Violence against girls

According to section 10 of the Act on Child Custody and Right of Access (361/1983), a matter concerning child custody and right of access must be decided first and foremost in accordance with the best interests of the child. When a case involving the custody of a child is being processed, the ability of the parent to act as guardian has to be assessed. Violent behaviour of a parent is of importance in making this assessment. The Act has recently been amended (HE 88/2018 vp), and the amendments will enter into force on 1 December 2019. The amendments include a revision of section 10, containing a specific reference to the obligation to take domestic violence into account when deciding on child custody and right of access. In addition, the amendments include provisions on right of access under supervision. The Children's Health, Well-being and Services surveys (LTH), both the pilot study among families with babies in 2017 and the nation-wide study among families with a four-year-old child in 2018 have produced and will produce data on violence among women and girls. The national *School Health Promotion* study, carried out every other year, usually covers the physical, psychological and sexual forms of violence. The sample size is approximately 235 000. According to the results of 2017, 33 per cent of the girls and 18 per cent of the boys aged 14-16 years had experienced psychological violence by parents. Physical violence by parents was experienced by 6 per cent of the girls and boys aged 14-16 years. In accordance with the School Health Promotion study of 2017, 30 per cent of the girls and 12 per cent of the boys in the 8th to 9th grades have experienced sexual harassment during the past year. An action plan to combat corporal punishment has been drawn up as part of a broad programme to promote the safety of children and young people (http://www.julkari.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/136205/URN_ISBN_978-952-343-082-2.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

Critical areas of concern:

- I. Human rights of women
- K. Women and the environment
- L. The girl child

28. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies?

- × **Supported women’s participation and leadership in environmental and natural resource management and governance**
- × **Strengthened evidence and/or raised awareness about gender-specific environmental and health hazards (e.g. consumer products, technologies, industrial pollution)**
Increased women’s access to and control over land, water, energy, and other natural resources
- × **Promoted the education of women and girls in science, engineering, technology and other disciplines relating to the natural environment**
Enhanced women’s access to sustainable time- and labour-saving infrastructure (e.g. access to clean water and energy) and climate-smart agricultural technology
Taken measures to protect and preserve the knowledge and practices of women in indigenous and local communities related to traditional medicines, biodiversity and conservation techniques
- × **Taken steps to ensure that women benefit equally from decent jobs in the green economy**
- × **Monitored and evaluated the impact of environmental policies and sustainable infrastructure projects on women and girls**
Other

The Ministry of the Environment adopted an equality plan for the period 2018-2021. The plan contains the general objectives, measures and responsibilities for promoting equality in the Ministry’s key functions and services. Core measures in the plan include increased assessments of the impacts on equality in law-drafting projects, mainstreaming of the equality perspective in all major strategies, plans and projects, as well as in the international activities of the Ministry, including in the implementation of the Agenda 2030 goals. The Ministry assessed the state of play with regards to equality interfaces and challenges in the core functions of the Ministry and identified several areas of relevance to be monitored. These include the action program for prevention of homelessness, the Government’s Midterm Climate Policy Plan, as well as a general need to increase and deepen equality impact assessments in law-drafting and other projects.

Finland also joined the Equal by 30 campaign that aims to promote gender equality in the energy sector by working towards equal pay, equal leadership, and equal educational and career opportunities for women in the energy sector by 2030. Men still represent 75 per cent of the energy workforce in Finland and women only 25 per cent. There is clearly room for improvement here. The Equal by 30 campaign is part of the International Energy Agency IEA’s Technology Collaboration Programme that aims to promote the clean energy sector as an equal opportunities’ work environment and highlight the potential available to the energy sector if it employed more women in all positions, including the top management.

29. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation?

- × **Supported women’s participation and leadership, including those affected by disasters, in disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation policies, programmes and projects**
Strengthened the evidence base and raised awareness about the disproportionate vulnerability of women and girls to the impact of environmental degradation and disasters
Promoted access of women in situations of disaster to services such as relief payments, disaster insurance and compensation
- × **Introduced or strengthened and implemented gender-responsive laws and policies related to disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation (e.g. disaster laws addressing vulnerability of women in disaster)**

1. Integrating a gender perspective in Climate Policy

The Government of Finland approved its Midterm Climate Policy Plan with a view to the year 2030 (hereinafter 2030 Plan) on 14.9.2017. The Ministry of the Environment included the 2030 Plan in an equality impact assessment, which included organizing a workshop for a broad range of stakeholders with an external consultant. The Ministry also organized equality impact assessment training, with one part focusing specifically on the 2030 Plan.

A guide on equality impact assessment of measures to reduce pollution was developed for use in city climate work planning. The guide will be put into practice in an upcoming equality impact assessment project involving municipalities and cities of different sizes engaged in traffic planning.

Section Three: National institutions and processes

30. What is your country’s current national machinery for gender equality and the empowerment of women? Please name it and describe its location within

Government.

The Gender Equality Unit is located in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

The Ombudsman for Equality is an independent authority whose main duty is to supervise compliance with the Act on Equality between Women and Men. The Ombudsman has powers on matters related to gender and gender minorities. The powers of the Ombudsman consist of both combating discrimination and promoting equality. The Ombudsman carries out her tasks primarily by providing guidance and advice.

The Ombudsman for Equality is located under the administrative branch of the Ministry of Justice.

The Council for Gender Equality (TANE) works to promote gender equality in society. TANE drafts proposals and provides statements to develop legislation and other measures that affect gender equality. The Council also promotes research on gender equality and supports utilization and implementation of relevant findings.

TANE is a parliamentary council and it is appointed by the Government of Finland for the same term of office as the Finnish Parliament. The members for the Council for Gender Equality are nominated by parliamentary parties. In addition, advisory members represent the following organisations: The Central Association for Men's Organisations in Finland, The National Council of Women of Finland, The Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations - NYTKIS and Seta - LGBTI Rights in Finland. TANE operates within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

31. Is the head of the national machinery a member of the institutional process for SDG implementation (e.g. inter-ministerial coordinating office, commission or committees)?

NO

The national 2030 Agenda Coordination Secretariat is located within the Prime Minister's Office. The coordination task is supported by an Inter-Ministerial Network Secretariat, consisting of sustainable development Focal Points from all 11 line ministries.

Finland also has a long tradition of engaging the civil society and other stakeholders in the sustainable development work. The key mechanism has been the multi-stakeholder National Commission for Sustainable Development, which has operated continuously for 25 years under Prime Minister's leadership. The General Secretariat of the National Commission is located at the Prime Minister's Office, supported by the Ministries of the Environment and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

32. Are there formal mechanisms in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

YES

If YES,

a) Which of the following stakeholders participate formally in national coordination mechanisms established to contribute to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

Beijing Declaration and PfA

- Civil society organizations**
- Women's rights organizations**
- Academia and think tanks**
- Faith-based organizations**
- Parliaments/parliamentary committees**
- Private sector**

- United Nations system
- Other actors, please specify.....

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

- Civil society organizations**
- Academia and think tanks**
- Parliaments/parliamentary committees**
- Private sector**
- Other actors, please specify: Labour Unions, local and regional authorities, churches and faith-based organizations working on the environment, development, consumption, women, health, education, sports, children, disabled, refugees**

]

b) Do you have mechanisms in place to ensure that women and girls from marginalized groups can participate and that their concerns are reflected in these processes?

YES

The key mechanism to advance sustainable development in Finland's national policies has been the multi-stakeholder National Commission on Sustainable Development. It has operated continuously for 25 years under seven different Prime Ministers. . The National Commission includes around 50 representatives from business and industry, labour unions, non-governmental organisations (including women, children, environment, indigenous peoples Saami, Somali immigrants, sports, education, consumers, disabled peoples associations and many others) as well as representatives from municipalities, regions, the church, academia and development. In addition, all Government Ministries are represented in the Commission at a high level.

Another important multi-stakeholder body to inform the Government in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is the Development Policy Committee. Its main task is to monitor and assess the implementation of Finland's international development policy commitments. It also supports decision-making in various policy sectors that have an impact on developing countries.

Gender is an integral part of the work of these participatory committees, that is to say that gender-balance has been considered already when nominating the representatives. There is a Gender Equality Act in Finland that sets a requirement of a minimum 40 % of representation of both sexes in public committees.

Progress towards sustainable development is monitored using around 50 indicators divided in 10 indicator baskets that are linked to the 8 national objectives encompassing the 17 SDGs. The indicators have been defined and chosen by a multi-stakeholder expert group with the intention to have as relevant, people-centered and timely measures as possible. One key objective is to collect disaggregated data whenever possible, gender being one of the variables. Gender-sensitive indicators in the Finnish framework are, for example; Young people excluded from work or education, experience of loneliness, voting activity, average salaries of full-time employees, and employment rate. The need to gather more gender-sensitive data is well recognized in Finland, especially when it comes to indicators related to housing, consumption and carbon-neutral society.

c) Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report.

To guide the preparation of Finland's Voluntary National Review on the implementation of the SDGs, a gap analysis was conducted in 2016. The indicator-based study assessed Finland's readiness to implement the global 2030 Agenda, as well as Finland's strengths and weaknesses. Even though Finland can be seen as one of the most equal countries in the world, we have challenges that also the analysis revealed. In particular, the gender wage gap was bigger in Finland than in OECD average. Also violence against women and the risk for men to marginalize due to lower education were higher in Finland than in many other peer countries.

The members of the National Commission on Sustainable Development and the Development Policy Committee were actively involved in preparing and outlining the first Voluntary National Review in 2016. They were asked how they intend to implement the 2030 Agenda in their work, what kinds of new implementation models they have, and what kinds of measures they expect from the Government. A high number of responses were given and some of the ideas and responses were incorporated in Finland's national report to the HLPF in 2016.

33. Is gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls included as a key priority in the national plan/strategy for SDG implementation?

YES

Finland is committed to implementing the global Agenda as a whole by 2030, but the Government decided to focus its immediate work on crosscutting themes and challenges that need urgent implementation. The two integrated and interconnected main themes for Finland are 1) Carbon-neutrality and resource-wisdom, and 2) Non-discrimination, equality and competence. They cover most of the 17 SDGs in an integrated way. They also reflect Finland's sustainability challenges that were identified in the gap analysis. The Implementation plan also promotes gender equality between women and men and strives to combat gender-based discrimination. The key objectives of the plan include diminishing the pay gap between men and women, supporting the reconciliation of work and family life, and preventing violence against women and domestic violence.

[Section Four: Data and statistics](#)

34. What are the top three areas in which your country has made most progress over the

past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?

Promulgated laws, regulations, or statistical programme/strategy setting out the development of gender statistics

Established an inter-agency coordination mechanism on gender statistics (e.g., technical working group, inter-agency committee)

Used more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects

Re-processed existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics

× **Conducted new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)**

Improved administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps

Produced knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)

× **Developed a centralized web-based database and/or dashboard on gender statistics**

× **Engaged in capacity building to strengthen the use of gender statistics (e.g., trainings, statistical appreciation seminars)**

Other

1. **Conducted new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)**

– Quality of work life survey 2018

- included questions on discrimination at work
- included question on harassment at work
- a question on harassment or hate speech experiences via email, in social media or on internet
- included a question on belonging to a minority
- The survey has previously been conducted in years 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997, 2003, 2008, 2013

– Value of household production in 2016 (published in 2018)

– Gender Equality Barometer 2017 (published in 2018)

- Published by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, conducted by Statistics Finland and coordinated by the Centre for Gender Equality Information and Statistics Finland. The barometer provides information on opinions, attitudes and experiences related to gender equality in various areas of life. The barometer is an important tool in assessing the gender equality situation in Finland. It also sheds light on failures in the achievement of gender equality, which is important for the preparation of national gender equality policy and the government's gender equality measures. The first barometer was published in 1998.
- The questions were revised occasionally to reflect topical issues and issues where additional data were required. The Gender Equality Barometer 2017 underwent a more profound revision than before to better cater for considerations such as the diversity of gender, relationships and families, the experiences of students and the inactive population in gender equality, and gender-related condescending and dismissive treatment and harassment online. Wholly new topics such as gender-related hate speech were also included in the barometer.

- In previous barometers, respondents were not asked to state their gender and it was instead determined on the basis of recorded data, resulting in binarism. The interview form was amended to allow respondents to choose from the options of male, female, other, don't know and prefer not to say. The questions on harassment were also revised to allow respondents to report the gender of their harasser as male, female or other. The question on belonging to a minority group (e.g. people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and sexual or gender minorities) made its first appearance in the current barometer.
 - The questions directed at students and school pupils were revised and the section on gender equality and policies at schools was expanded. Besides wage-earners, entrepreneurs and students, also people who were unemployed, laid off, on family leave or informal caregivers were asked questions on topics such as perception of gender-based disadvantage in job-seeking. Wholly new questions relevant to the lives of men in particular were also added to the 17 barometer, such as the question on whether men are treated as fully empowered parents in public services, such as child health clinics or day care. Another new question involved the fairness of conscription only applying to men.
 - The questions on condescending or dismissive treatment and harassment were updated to take into account for the first time also same-sex harassment, thus providing more detailed data on the harassment experiences of men in particular. Other new topics introduced in this barometer involved the sharing of household expenses and the satisfaction of the spouses in how these are shared.
- Leisure survey 2017
 - Self-employed without employees in Finland 2013 (2018)
 - Statistical report on leadership in limited companies owned by municipalities (2017)
 - Statistical report on Representation of women and men in senior corporate management (2015)
 - Survey on work and well-being among people of foreign origin in Finland 2014 (2015)
 - Report on discrimination in the Finnish labour market (2014)
 - Satellite Accounts on Household Production: Eurostat Methodology and Experiences to Apply It /Johanna Varjonen, Eeva Hamunen and Katri Soinne (2014)
 - Labour market situation of migrants and their immediate descendants (2014), LFS ad-hoc module

2. Developed a centralized web-based database and/or dashboard on gender statistics

The Gender statistics web pages at Statistics Finland have been improved since 2016. That means more data available by gender perspective, improvements in finding the data by topic, links to the sources, articles and blogs. <http://stat.fi/genderequality>

- Statistics Finland participated in the 100 Acts for gender equality program in 2016–2017, organized by The National Council of Women in Finland and the Council for Gender Equality
 - <http://www.tasaarvo100.fi/100-tasa-arvotekoa/ylavalikko/in-english/>
- Gender Equality in Finland 2018 booklet (previously Women and Men in Finland) available also online.

http://www.stat.fi/tup/julkaisut/tiedostot/julkaisuluettelo/yyti_gef_201800_2018_19723_net.pdf

3. Engaged in capacity building to strengthen the use of gender statistics (e.g., trainings, statistical appreciation seminars)

- The 6th Global Forum on Gender Statistics was organized in Finland in 2016 in cooperation with UNSD.
http://tilastokeskus.fi/ajk/tapahtumia_en.html/united-nations-global-forum-on-gender-statistics-in-finland-on-24-to-26-october-2016
- Statistics Finland has organized trainings for users (The change of work and gender equality 2018, 2016). <https://youtu.be/HkSdgD-vUYc> (video clip to advertise the training)
- Sessions on gender statistic have been organized as a part of the Gender Equality Days in 2017 and 2018.
- The expert group on gender statistics will be appointed again to a new three-year season in 2019. The expert group has worked already during four decades.
- Gender statistics network within Statistics Finland (members form different statistics)
- Presenting different themes concerning gender statistics in many seminars and conferences.
- Participating in the subcommittee on Gender, Economy and Power of the Council for Gender Equality.
- Network on leadership statistics coordinated by the Ministry of Finance.
- Participating in the network of the Centre for Gender Equality Information in Finland.
- Statistic Finland participated also to the Nordic gender statistics cooperation project in 2015–2016. The booklet Nordic Gender Equality in Figures 2015 was published as a result of the cooperation.
 - <http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A790696&dswid=8239>

35. Out of the following which are your country's top three priorities for strengthening national gender statistics over the next five years?

Design of laws, regulations, or statistical programme/strategy promoting the development of gender statistics

Establishment of an inter-agency coordination mechanism on gender statistics (e.g., technical working group, inter-agency committee)

Use more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects

- × **Re-processing of existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics**
- × **Conduct of new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)**
Greater utilization and/or improvement of administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps
- × **Production of knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)**

- 1. Re-processing of existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics**
 - taking gender diversity better into account in the future when it is possible
 - mainstreaming gender aspect also to statistic areas where gender still hasn't been taking account (e.g. trade statistics)

- 2. Conduct of new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)**
 - Statistics Finland is planning to conduct following national level surveys:
 - GBV survey (Eurostat)
 - Time use survey 2020–2021
 - Survey on work and well-being among people of foreign origin in Finland
 - Household Budget Survey 2021
 - Adult education survey 2022
 - The quality of work life survey
 - Ad hoc modules of the Labour Force Survey:
 - Work organisation and working time arrangements (2019)
 - Accidents at work and work related health problems (2020)
 - Labour market situation of migrants (2021)
 - Job skills (2022)
 - Pensions and labour market participation (2023)
 - As part of EU-SILC, three-yearly module on health will include four variables on activity limitations suggested by Washington Group to strengthen the statistics on disability.

- 3. Production of knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)**

Various compilations of gender-based statistics are regularly published and developed according to needs (booklets, articles, web pages etc.).

36. Have you defined a national set of indicators for monitoring progress on the SDGs?

Yes

There are altogether 40 national indicators. Approximately half of those are gender-specific and all those are additional country indicators. <https://kestavakehitys.fi/en/monitoring>

37. Has data collection and compilation on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other SDGs begun?

Yes

No specific indicators have been prioritized. Some indicators are not relevant in Finland and for some indicators, data can't be obtained.

http://www.stat.fi/tup/kestavan-kehityksen-yk-indikaattorit-agenda2030_en.html.

38. Which of the following disaggregations¹⁰ is routinely provided by major surveys in your country?

Geographic location

Usually, sample sizes are not big enough to produce regional data.

X Income

X sex

X Age

X Education

X Marital status

Race/ethnicity

X Migratory status

- Migratory status is measured by person's country of origin (person's or parents' country of birth).

Disability

X Other characteristics relevant in national contexts

* * *