



# Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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## Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

### Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

#### Seventh periodic reports of States parties

**Finland\*** \*\*

[11 May 2012]

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\* In accordance with the information transmitted to the States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not formally edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.

\*\* Annexes can be consulted in the files of the Secretariat.

## Preface

The United Nations Convention on the elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted in 1979. Finland has been a Party to the Convention since 1986 (SopS 67-68/1986).

The present document is the Seventh Periodic Report of the Government of Finland on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women pursuant to Article 18 of the Convention. This Report covers the period from October 2007 to September 2011. The previous Report was submitted in November 2007.

This Report has been prepared by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Unit for Human Rights Courts and Conventions, in cooperation with several other Ministries and public authorities. NGOs and researchers were given a possibility to give statements during the preparation of the Report. In November 2011, a hearing was also organised in order to offer public authorities, trade unions, advisory boards and NGOs an opportunity to present their comments and views on the draft report.

This Report was submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in May 2012. In July 2010, Finland also responded to the Committee's request for detailed information on the implementation of the recommendations issued in paragraph 16 of the concluding observations to the Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports (CEDAW/C/FIN/CO/6). The recommendation concerned violence against women.

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## Articles 1 and 2

### 1 Legislation

#### 1.1 Equality legislation

1. The Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1986, hereinafter the Act on Equality) was reformed in 2005. During the period under review, the Equality Act was amended twice.

2. The Equality Act was revised in order to implement Council Directive 2004/113/EC concerning access to and supply of goods and services. The amended Equality Act (1023/2008) entered into force at the beginning of 2009. The scope of application of the provisions in the Equality Act on prohibition of countermeasures and compensation was broadened to also cover suppliers of generally available goods and services. Efficient sanction can now be imposed on suppliers of goods and services that are guilty of discrimination prohibited in the Equality Act, in the last resort by instituting proceedings for compensation. Also legal remedies were extended to cover prohibited discrimination. The reform also broadened the obligation of employers to provide clarifications on procedures considered discriminatory pursuant to section 10 of the Equality Act. The obligation to provide clarifications now concerns all situations pursuant to Section 8(1) of the Equality Act as well as the prohibition on countermeasures and harassment at working places.

3. Definitions of sexual harassment and gender harassment were added to the Equality Act when the Equality Act (369/2009) was amended in June 2009 and the general maximum compensation paid in recruitment situations was removed. The applicability of the earlier maximum compensation paid in recruitment situations was limited to persons who would not have become appointed to the job, even if non-discriminatory grounds had been applied.

4. According to a study by the Finnish League for Human Rights, a total of 101 cases relating to the Equality Act were tried at the lower courts during the years 2005 to 2008. The cases concerned discrimination cases related to appointment to a public service, wages and pregnancy. The compensation paid to the plaintiffs varied between 3 500 and 12 500 euro. In court confirmed mediation cases the compensation was between 5 000 and 11 000 euro. Sentences were passed in a total of 18 gender discrimination cases at the lower courts during the years 2005 to 2008. Almost all cases concerned discrimination of employees on the basis of pregnancy.

5. The observance of the Equality Act in private activities as well as in public administration and business is monitored by the Ombudsman for Equality and the Equality Board. Their activities have been described in earlier reports. After the 2005 reform of the Equality Act, the Equality Board has exclusively concentrated on the processing of requests for opinions by courts. The Equality Report of 2010 contains measures to develop and intensify the monitoring system of the Equality Act.

#### 1.2 Equality legislation

6. The Finnish Constitution (731/1999) prohibits gender-based discrimination and requires that the public authorities safeguard the equal rights of women. Equal treatment of women and men is one of the basic values of the EU, confirmed in the Treaty of Lisbon. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union lays down that equality between men and women must be ensured in all areas, including employment, work and pay. Also,

the principle of equality must not prevent the maintenance or adoption of measures providing for specific advantages in favour of the under-represented sex.

7. The Commission preparing the reform of the non-discrimination legislation submitted its Report on Measures to Combat Discrimination in December 2009. The Commission proposed that the non-discrimination legislation be amended in such a way that the prohibition of discrimination would cover all public and private activities, with the exception of private life and family life. The legal protection against discrimination would be uniform for all discrimination grounds covered in the legislation. The report contains a proposal that the obligation to promote non-discrimination also would cover providers of education and training as well as employers. The Commission proposed that an Ombudsman for Equal Treatment would replace the Ombudsman for Minorities and monitor all forms of discrimination. However, in the case of working life, the industrial safety authorities would monitor the prohibition of discrimination. The observance of the legislation regarding equality between women and men would still be monitored by the Ombudsman for Equality. The Discrimination Tribunal and the Equality Board, both having had few cases before them, would be merged. The purpose of merging the two bodies is to gain benefits from synergy, while making it possible to address multiple discrimination.

8. The reform of the non-discrimination legislation does not change the provisions on gender-based discrimination. The provisions on gender-based discrimination would still be laid down in the Act on Equality. (Concluding observations, para. 10.)

9. During the drafting of the report, the Commission also discussed the inclusion of transgenderism, gender identity and gender expression among the discrimination grounds. According to the view of the majority of the Commission, these discrimination grounds can best be taken into account by amending the Equality Act. Several NGOs have demanded that the equality legislation be revised because it does not contain provisions on multiple discrimination, especially in working life.

10. The objective of the Government is to prepare a proposal for new legislation on non-discrimination. In accordance with the Government Programme, the Equality Act remains an independent piece of legislation.

### **1.3 The Discrimination Monitoring Group**

11. The three-year term of the Discrimination Monitoring Group that operates in connection with the Ministry of the Interior was renewed in 2008. The task of the Monitoring Group is to collect information for the Government on the realisation of fundamental rights, in order to facilitate the improvement of the anti-discrimination policy in various areas of life. The Monitoring Group has elaborated a Plan of Action for the years 2010 - 2013 and has continued to develop its follow-up system set up during its previous term. The purpose of the follow-up system is to raise awareness of multiple discrimination and to monitor gender-based discrimination from the point of view of multiple discrimination.

12. In 2008, the report "Discrimination in Finland" was elaborated as part of the follow-up system for discrimination. Also gender-based discrimination is covered in the report as well as multiple discrimination. The report encompasses, *inter alia*, studies on possibilities for conciliation in cases of the Roma avoiding obligation, on discrimination cases in working life before the industrial safety districts as well as a study on discrimination in education and leisure time. The study on discrimination in working life highlighted discrimination against women in working life. The report on discrimination in education and leisure time covered, *inter alia*, experiences of young persons belonging to sexual and

gender minorities in secondary education. A study on discrimination faced by immigrant women in recruitment is under way and will be finalised early in 2012.

## **2 Minority groups**

### **2.1 Roma women (Concluding observations, para. 32)**

13. In December 2010, the Government adopted a decision-in-principle on policy guidelines for a policy on Roma. The decision-in-principle is based on the first National Policy on Roma in Finland, published in December 2009. According to the decision-in-principle, the Ministries shall implement the measures defined as their responsibility in the Plan within their existing resources. The implementation of the National Policy on Roma is included in the Government Programme.

14. The objective of the National Policy on Roma is to promote the equality and participation of Roma in different areas of life by simultaneous cross-sectoral measures. The objective is for Finland to be a forerunner in promoting Roma participation in Europe. The starting point of the programme is the current legislation and service system, which create a good basis for the promotion of the equality of the Roma population. In some situations, in order to implement equality in practice, special measures for Roma are needed.

15. The programme focuses, *inter alia*, on strengthening the participation in education of Roma children and young persons, strengthening the education of adult Roma and promoting integration into the labour market, promoting equal treatment and access to services of the Roma population by regularising Roma sensitive practices, supporting the conservation and development of the Roma language and culture as well as developing the policy on Roma and strengthening the possibilities to participate of the Roma population. The programme contains 147 measures and the responsibility for implementing them has been distributed between several administrative branches. The programme also responds to recommendations of international organisations to develop the Roma policy in member states. The basic principle in the realisation of the programme is a gender sensitive approach taking into account the conditions and starting points of women and men. Age and gender are central determinants of social status in Roma communities. The programme stresses that the special features of the life-style situations and circumstances within the Roma population and between different age groups must be identified.

16. In connection with the adoption of the decision-in-principle, the Government also decided to initiate six new cross-sectoral measures by 31 March 2011. These measures concern the participation of Roma and cooperation structures on the local level, revival of the Romani language and strengthening of its status, opportunities for participation and leisure activities for Roma children and youth, housing of Roma, international Roma policy and implementation and monitoring of the National Roma Policy.

17. In the strengthening of the participation in education of Roma children and youth, cooperation with Roma parents has been stressed. Young Roma often start a family at an early age. Therefore, student welfare services at schools should, *inter alia*, pay attention to issues related to adulthood and balanced couples.

18. Especially Roma women are actively seeking training and employment. One of the objectives of the National Policy on Roma is to strengthen and develop adult vocational training and means to support employment of the Roma population.

19. A central purpose for the National Policy on Roma is to develop family work in social welfare and counselling activities. Also a large study will be carried out on the living circumstances, health and well-being of the Roma population as well as on their housing situation and service needs.

20. The municipalities take a central role in the implementation of cross-sectoral measures on the local level. Especially the realisation of practices that promote equality and supplement the basic services for the Roma population require sufficient funds. The National Policy on Roma proposes a special subsidy for municipalities in order to achieve the objectives laid down in the Policy.

21. Comprehensive research data is not available on discrimination of Roma women, violence against them or on Roma women as, for instance, customers of social welfare and health services, because persons are not registered on ethnic grounds.

22. According to the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs, many of the measures in the National Policy on Roma promote, when realised, non-discrimination of Roma girls and women, increase their equality and improves their socio-economic status, even though the programme does not have guidelines especially designed for Roma women.

23. Representatives of Roma organisations have expressed their concerns regarding violence in close relationships encountered by Roma women and the need for measures to prevent it. The realisation of a study on domestic and intimate partner violence against Roma women is included in the current implementation programme of the National Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women 2010 to 2015. The objective is also to provide training for persons working with ethnic minorities and immigrants for the identification of violence and ways to intervene. An adequate number of shelters is also needed, with personnel experienced in addressing the situation of Roma women, in order to take into account their special circumstances as members of their community.

24. The status of women belonging to the Roma population has also been supported within the framework of the national information campaign against discrimination, the YES project. Within the framework of the campaign, an empowerment programme for Roma organisations is being carried out. The programme supports the preparedness of the Roma community to develop projects and other activities to combat discrimination. A media campaign is also being prepared within the framework of the project to undo stereotypes towards the Roma population.

## **2.2 Sami women (Concluding observations, para. 34)**

25. The status of Sami women and the multiple discrimination they face has been exposed in the national anti-discrimination campaign YES. In 2007 to 2009, three Arctic seminars were organised for the authorities of the Sami region on ways to take non-discrimination into account in different administrative branches. The situation of Sami women was covered in each of the seminars.

26. The Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities has commissioned a study on the availability of Sami language services outside the Sami Homeland. The Ministry of Education and Culture has initiated a special revitalisation programme for the Sami language, which endeavours to improve the realisation of the linguistic rights of Sami speaking persons.

27. According to the Sami Parliament, the separate yearly appropriation of 600 000 euro allocated to secure social welfare and health services in Sami language has promoted the safeguarding of the linguistic and cultural basic rights of the Sami indigenous people in the Sami homeland. By means of the appropriation, the Sami may have an influence on the realisation of the services that are provided for them, as well as on their contents and the ways of how they are organised and thus direct the maintenance and development of their language and culture. It is mainly the municipalities that are responsible for the production of services in Sami languages. Some services are also produced by organisations providing outsourced services. The appropriation has been used, *inter alia*, to arrange daycare, employ home care, primary nurses as well as family workers of child welfare, village

workers, care workers, an activities instructor and a nurse. However, the social welfare and health care services in Sami are not sufficient and bilingual specialists are not always available. There is a lack of material in Inari and Skolt Sami.

28. Representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Sami Parliament negotiated in December 2009, *inter alia*, on the funding of social welfare and health care services in the Sami language, the funding of Sami projects, publishing activities, occupational health services for reindeer herders and on the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee to decrease violence against Sami women. The Sami Parliament stressed the traditional difficulties of the Sami to speak with others about issues belonging to the realm of the family. Speaking to outsiders is easily seen as bringing shame on the whole family. Non-violence training should start at the earliest stage possible.

29. Sami women have experienced discrimination, why they seldom seek leading positions within their communities. The studies that have been carried out on the social life, politics, organisational life and work life of the Sami population do not pay attention to gender.

30. A three-year project is currently being realised in the Sami region with the aim of improving the general availability and quality of services through cross-border cooperation between Finland and Norway. The project especially emphasises services provided in the Sami language. The most important measures of the project are related to specialised health care and basic (preventive) health care, day care for children and child welfare as well as services for elderly persons and persons with disabilities. The project analyses in particular the norms guiding the services as well as the knowledge of the procedures for guidance and decision-making in both countries.

31. The Ministry of Education allocates a yearly appropriation of 250 000 euro to support Sami culture and activities of Sami organisations. In accordance with the principles of Sami autonomy, it is the Sami Parliament that decides on the distribution of the subsidies. The appropriation is distributed as subsidies for the activities of organisations, for cultural projects and as personal grants for artistic activities related to Sami culture. In recent years, the overwhelming majority of applicants for and recipients of grants have been women. The Ministry of Education provides separate support to an art event of Sami youth, as part of the nationwide Young Culture art event. Both Sami girls and Sami boys participate actively in art events.

### **2.3 Women with disabilities (Concluding observations, para. 36)**

32. A disability policy programme was adopted in 2010 for the years 2010 to 2015. The objective of the programme is to secure a fair position for persons with disabilities in society by addressing the problems they experience through concrete corrective and development measures. The programme contains measures covering all policy fields, divided into 14 substance areas relevant for disability policy. The programme contains 122 concrete measures to correct existing difficulties.

33. The disability policy programme also contains studies to be carried out on special education provided on the basis of disability in 2014 and 2015. The number of students in vocational special training has increased considerably in recent years. In 2010, approximately 20 900 of the students in basic education were in special education. Access to education for the most severely handicapped has been promoted clearly in recent years by developing the network of providers of vocational special education as well as by increasing the number of admission places. The increase in the total volume of vocational training (a total of 11 700 new study places in 2008 to 2010) has also promoted access to training by persons whose need for assistance is smaller than that of persons with the most severe disabilities. For reasons of privacy protection, adequate statistical data on special

students is not available, for instance, for the evaluation of multiple education. The lack of adequate statistical data compounds the assessment of the real educational needs.

34. The data compilation by Statistics Finland only covers students who study in degree programmes. Students in preparatory and rehabilitation training and instruction for persons with disabilities are not included in the statistics. In 2009, there were 2 536 students in degree programmes in special vocational schools, 906 women and 1630 men. In other vocational schools there were 15 725 special students in degree programmes, 6 459 women and 9 266 men. In vocational upper secondary education and training there were 18 261 special students in degree programmes, 7 365 women and 10 896 men.

35. Since there is a great risk that women with disabilities are completely excluded from working life, or they receive a small salary, efforts are made to advance their employment through measures of several authorities, *inter alia*, by subsidised pay work, traineeships, working life training and work testing. No studies on the employment of women with disabilities have been carried out in Finland. The employment of persons with disabilities could be facilitated further by subsidies to employers for modifications of working conditions.

36. When monitoring institutions for persons with disabilities, increased attention must be attached to the existence of violence and exploitation. According to a study published by Väestöliitto (The Family Federation of Finland) in August 2011, a third of persons with mental disabilities have been harassed sexually. According to the study, the risk to face sexual exploitation is 4 to 10 times bigger among women with mental disabilities in comparison to women without disabilities, and among children with mental disabilities the risk is double.

37. The Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women for the years 2010-2015 contains measures especially tailored to improve the conditions for and facilitating the provision of assistance to women with disabilities having faced violence. The measures include a guidebook with examples to facilitate identification of violence against women with disabilities. In 2014 to 2015, two studies will also be realised on the need of women with disabilities for assistance to cope after violence. The purpose is to analyse the prevalence and forms of violence experienced by women with disabilities as well as, based on the experience of women with disabilities, the type of help they need.

38. Through the YES Project, coordinated by the Ministry of the Interior, various measures for the promotion of equality of persons with disabilities have been realised. Examples of realised measures include an empowerment programme aimed at disability organisations as well as a guidebook for employers on the employment of persons with disabilities or persons with partial ability to work.

#### **2.4 Women with an immigrant background (Concluding observations, para. 30)**

39. The Immigration Policy Programme of the Government Programmes 2003-2010 aimed at zero tolerance for racism. The status of women with an immigrant background is in many ways still weak in regard to language, education and labour market integration. The weak status of women with an immigrant background may partly be explained by existing internal norms of the minority communities regarding the status of women. The Ombudsman for Minorities has deemed it necessary to analyse the status of women with an immigrant background more systematically.

40. The new Act on the Promotion of Integration (1386/2010, hereinafter the Integration Act) entered into force on 1 September 2011. In the drafting of the Act, special attention was attached to the ways in which the status of immigrant women could be improved in society and working life. The scope of application of the Act was broadened compared to the earlier act. The Act also contains measures for the improvement of the integration, both

into the society and into working life, of immigrant women who are outside of working life. The integration of immigrant women who have faced violence and their children is supported through the Act by special measures. As a consequence of the Act, increased and more diverse information on Finnish society, working life, the service system as well as the rights and duties of citizens are distributed actively and in various languages to immigrants.

41. The Integration Act contains provisions on individual integration plans. Integration plans are elaborated for job seekers registered at an Employment and Economic Development Office and for persons receiving municipal income support as well as to other persons in need of an integration plan. In certain cases, an integration plan may also be elaborated for families. In those cases, the plans must take into account the contents of the individual integration plans. According to the Act, the integration programmes elaborated on the local level jointly by various authorities and organisations should cover, as a separate item, violence against women and its prevention.

42. The new Act on the Reception of Persons Seeking International Protection (746/2011) entered into force on 1 September 2011. The act strives to take into account, better than before, the situation of persons who are in the most vulnerable situation. The Act requires that the special needs of persons seeking international protection, persons receiving temporary protection and victims of trafficking are specifically taken into account. Special needs are assessed by social care and health professionals as soon as possible after the initiation of a case. In practice, the work is generally initiated within a week from the arrival of the person at a reception centre. Also the personnel of reception centres are obliged to inform the authorities if they notice possible special needs among the clients. Accommodation and other services at reception centres shall be organised in such a way that persons that are in a particularly vulnerable situation feel as safe as possible.

43. By means of the monitoring system of integration and ethnic relations developed at the Ministry of the Interior, data is collected regularly on the state of integration, for instance on the living conditions, employment, training and participation of immigrants. Data is also collected by gender. The National Institute for Health and Welfare also has an ongoing research project gathering information on the health, well-being and service experiences of immigrants, and on factors that influence these. In addition, statistical data is also collected according to the mother tongue of persons in vocational training. In all vocational training forms, the share of women with another mother tongue than Finnish, Swedish or Sami is bigger than that of men. Annex 1.

44. In Finland, the municipalities are responsible for the integration of immigrants. Projects related to social welfare and health care services for immigrants have been carried out and good practices have been developed in the municipalities. In 2010, a project was initiated to analyse and monitor the health and functioning of working aged immigrants, both employed persons and persons outside the labour market, as well as to identify the needs for and impact of development activities that maintain and promote employment. The target group of the project is 3000 adults with a Russian, Somali or Kurd background in six cities. The project ends on 31 December 2012, after which results will be available.

45. In the Internal Security Programme, attention has been attached to increasing the security of immigrants and other vulnerable groups. For instance, several measures are being prepared for the identification of honour violence, intervention in it and its prevention, such as training programmes for authorities. The report of the cross-sectoral working group appointed by the Ministry of the Interior on the development of training for authorities to identify honour related violence was presented in the spring of 2011. The report contains a proposal for organising training in two stages. The basic training would be targeted to all authorities and the advanced training according to profession. It is proposed that the costs be covered from the state budget.

## Article 3

### 3 The Government Programme

46. The content of the paragraphs on equality of the Government Programme for 2007 to 2011 was covered in the earlier periodic report.

47. The Government adopted an Equality Programme in July 2008 to promote and coordinate measures aiming at improving gender equality. The programme focused on mainstreaming the gender perspective, bridging the gender wage gap, promoting women's career advancement, increasing equality awareness in schools and alleviating segregation, improving reconciliation of family and work responsibilities, decreasing violence against women, strengthening the resources for equality work as well as the compilation of an Equality Report. A joint ministerial monitoring group compiled the final report. It was published on 15 April 2011. The report also contains well formulated measures to promote equality.

48. The Government Programme of Prime Minister Katainen focuses, *inter alia*, on decreasing poverty, inequality and exclusion. The Government has pledged to improve the equality between women and men and to continue to mainstream the gender perspective. Gender equality as a central objective of society must be taken into account in all political decision-making. Both women and men must be guaranteed equal rights, duties and possibilities. According to the Government Programme, an Equality Programme will be elaborated in the beginning of the electoral period, taking into account the Government Report on Equality between Women and Men adopted by the Parliament in 2010 as well as the final evaluation of the previous Equality Programme. The preparation of a new Equality Programme was initiated in the autumn of 2011.

49. The Government has also endeavoured to continue shrinking the wage gap to at most 15 percent by 2015. In order to realise this goal, the Government will initiate two wide-ranging research projects. One of the projects covers the impact of the structural change and the changing needs of working life on the employment of women and men, their position on the labour market, integration into the labour market, career development, continuation at work and division of care responsibilities. The other project covers the impact of gender preconceptions and expectations on training and career choices. The Government is also committed to continuing its efforts for the reconciliation of family responsibilities and work by, *inter alia*, developing the family leave system such that the leaves earmarked for fathers are increased. The Government promotes a well functioning reconciliation of family responsibilities and work to promote new working models.

50. In accordance with the Government Programme, the elaboration of Finland's first Plan of Action on Human Rights was initiated in September 2011. The Government has also committed itself to giving the Parliament a more comprehensive human rights policy report, with follow-up of the objectives set in the first Plan of Action. According to the Government Programme, the monitoring of human rights must be strengthened in all EU countries to combat discrimination against Roma and other minorities.

### 4 The Equality Report

51. The Government issued its first Equality Report to the Parliament in October 2010. The Report outlines the equality policy of the Government until 2020. The objective of the Report is to strengthen long-term and systematic promotion of equality between women and men. The Report stresses the need to commit to the implementation of the equality policy on all levels. The report analyses the objectives and measures of the pursued equality policy and their effectiveness as well as the development of gender equality during the last ten years. The topics of the report are decision-making, education and research, working

life, reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities, men and equality, violence against women, violence in close relationships and trafficking as well as the position of the equality authority and mainstreaming of the gender perspective. The Equality Report covers the equality policies of the governments since the end of the 1990's. The report covers equality policy in a cross-sectoral manner from the point of view of immigrants and minority groups. Annex 2.

52. The next Equality Report will be given to the Parliament by the end of 2021 and an intermediary report on the progress in implementing the previous Report by the end of 2016.

## **5 The Equality Barometer**

53. The fourth Equality Barometer by Statistics Finland was published in 2008. The Barometer examines the estimations and attitudes of Finnish women and men in regard to gender equality as well as their experiences of the realisation of equality in working life, at school and in the family. The Barometer examines changes over a ten year period. In many of the aspects that are measured there has not been any change. Some change was noticed, *inter alia*, as the strengthening of the role of fathers in the family, as an increase in the disadvantage experienced at work because of their gender by highly educated women and as an increase in the sexual harassment experienced by women. The preparation of a new Equality Barometer 2012 has started.

## **6 Mainstreaming gender equality into the state and municipal administration**

54. In the autumn of 2009, the Government started gender mainstreaming and strengthening of the structures for its management. (Concluding observations, para. 12.) The issue was made the object for regular discussion in the Ministerial working group on public administration and regional development. At the same time, it was decided that the realisation of mainstreaming of the gender perspective in ministries be discussed regularly in the meetings of the highest officials of the Ministries. In addition to the strengthening of the management structure, also the coordination of mainstreaming has improved in the Ministries. The equality working groups of the Ministries have a key role. The purpose of these working groups is to support the mainstreaming work performed by civil servants of the Ministries. Special areas of focus are law drafting, elaboration of the state budget as well as other projects of importance to equality. However, gender impact assessment is still not very common in the drafting of bills in Ministries.

55. During the years 2008-2009, a total of 200 000 euro in EU funds was available for mainstreaming education and training. In 2011, a project supporting the mainstreaming work performed by various Ministries was initiated with national budget funds for 80 000 euro.

56. The Government's Equality Programme 2008-2011 stipulated that the resources allocated to authorities and women's organisations working with equality issues be strengthened. However, especially organisations working with equality issues continue to criticize the inadequacy of resources.

57. Paying attention to the gender perspective is important also on the municipal level, especially when planning and realising important social reforms. The Government has strengthened its support to the equality work of the municipalities. With partial financing from the European Social Fund, two projects have been initiated with the aim to concretise and build a model for the work to promote equality in the activities of municipalities and the regional and local State Administration. The projects end in 2012 and their budget is 850 000 euro in total.

58. It is important to monitor the realisation of mainstreaming of the gender perspective on the municipal level, since the mergers of municipalities have meant, in practice, that services move further away than before. Since the majority of the users of these services are women, one must be conscious of the equality aspects. In connection with the structural reforms of municipalities, the realisation of the provisions on quotas must be monitored on all levels of administration.

59. The Defence Forces have estimated that they are using about 12 person-years on a yearly basis for equality work. This equals to approximately 600 000 euro a year. In connection with the administrative reform of 2008, a new main area of responsibility was established for equality issues at the Ministry of the Interior. It supports and monitors the implementation system of the monitoring of discrimination. In 2008–2010, a working group of the Ministry of the Interior carried out a survey on the state of equality planning in municipalities and endeavoured to harmonise equality planning in various ways through training and information in different parts of Finland.

60. A nationwide center for equality information called Minna was established at the end of 2009. Minna collects, transfers and promotes information that in an important way is related to equality between women and men.

61. The Human Rights Centre, which will be established in Finland in 2012, will enable the strengthening of the gender perspective as well as mainstreaming.

## **Article 4**

### **7 The quota provision of the Equality Act**

62. The quota provision of the Equality Act (609/1986) has been effective. In 2009, the share of women among the regular members of all projects appointed by the Prime Minister's Office and different ministries was 45 percent. The share of women and men in municipal executive boards and municipal committees correspond to the quota provision: in the beginning of the municipal council period 2009 to 2012, the share of women was 46 percent of the members of the municipal executive boards and 48 percent of the members of the committees. Efforts have been made to increase the share of women in the boards of State owned companies and in listed State majority-owned companies through the objectives laid down in the Equality Programme of the Government. State-owned companies and exchange-listed State majority-owned companies have managed to increase the share of women to 40 percent.

63. The Council for Gender Equality published a study on gender in expert hearings at the Parliament in 2009. According to the study, one third of the persons heard in 2005 as experts were women (33.9 percent) and two thirds (66.1 percent) were men. The share of female and male experts varied from committee to committee. Female experts were most often heard in those committees, which had the largest share of women among its members. The share of women was largest among experts within the public sector (38 percent) and the smallest in the fields of science and arts (17 percent). Representatives of different minority groups were seldom heard in the committees. The share of labour market organisations among all hearings of the third sector was 47.5 percent.

## **Article 5**

### **8 Violence against women**

64. In the nationwide victim study of 2009, women communicated that they had experienced violence most often at their work places (5.2 percent of the women).

According to the study, the violence experienced by women has been somewhat constant during the 2000s and women still experience domestic violence more often than men (1.7 percent of the women). In approximately half of the cases of domestic violence against women the perpetrator was the current spouse and in a quarter of the cases a former spouse or partner. Two victim studies only on women have been carried out in Finland. They produced higher numbers on violence against women than the nationwide victim surveys, especially on violence in close relationships. The differences may be explained by differences in the questions and in the data collection methods.

65. In June 2010, the extended Ministerial Working Group on Internal Security adopted a National Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women for the years 2010 to 2015. The Action Plan contains 66 measures. No budget is attached to the Action Plan. Implementation plans have already been elaborated for approximately half of the measures of the Action Plan. The measures focus on preventing recurrence of domestic violence, decreasing sexual violence and protecting women in a vulnerable situation. The Action Plan has also been translated into English (Annex 3). The international obligations of Finland, such as the Convention and the Concluding observations of the Committee as well as the issues raised in the negotiations on a Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence were taken into account in the drafting of the Action Plan.

66. In its Programme, the Government endeavours to safeguard the implementation of the National Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women, to secure an unbroken chain of care for victims of sexual violence and to pay attention to a more even regional distribution of shelters.

67. The National Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women was launched through a large campaign. In addition, various authorities and non-governmental organisations have jointly and separately organised several events on violence against women. Distributing fact-based information and raising awareness hold a key position in intensifying measures against violence against women and in molding attitudes.

68. An inter-ministerial cross-sectoral working group composed of civil servants was appointed to intensify the coordination of prevention of domestic violence and violence in close relationships. The task of the working group was, *inter alia*, to coordinate the cooperation between different administrative branches and to strengthen expert resources in the work to combat violence against women. The term of the working group was extended until the end of 2011. The working group reported to the extended ministerial group on national security.

69. On the municipal level, coordination of prevention of domestic violence and violence in close relationships will be improved by updating the network of municipal contact persons.

70. The National Institute for Health and Welfare realises a pilot project to decrease serious violence in relationships and to support victims (MARAK). Also the Police have a central role in the project. The project ended at the end of September 2011 and the assessment of the project will be finalised in the spring of 2012. The Ministry of Justice has granted state subsidies to numerous local crime prevention projects with the aim or with the partial aim to prevent violence against women or domestic violence. (Annex 4). In addition, the Ministry of Justice supported, in 2011, six crime prevention projects that promote the reduction of violence against women with a total of 72 000 euro.

## **8.1 Legislative measures**

71. The Government programme contains provisions on the reform of the sexual crime legislation in such a way that it better secures the right to sexual self-determination. An

evaluation report is being prepared at the Ministry of Justice on needs for amendments to the legislation on rape crimes. The intention is to revise the provisions on rape crimes and persecution by presenting a Government Bill to the Parliament on these issues in 2012. According to the 2008 equality barometer and irrespective of their gender, the respondents were of the opinion that the verdicts in rape cases are too lenient. The National Research Institute of Legal Policy finalises a study on sanctions practices in cases of rape crimes.

72. Forced marriages will be examined in conjunction with the implementation of the Directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting victims.

73. Petty assault crimes against minors, persons in a close relationship to the perpetrator or against persons who are performing their duties was amended on 1 January 2011 by amendment 1082/2010 from complainant offences to offences under public prosecution.

74. On 1 June 2011, an amendment to Chapter 20 of the Criminal Code (495/2011) entered into force. Through the amendment, all acts where the perpetrator has sexual relations with the victim by taking advantage of the defencelessness of the victim are defined as rape. Also situations where the victim himself or herself has caused his or her defencelessness are considered rape. The purpose of the amendment is to improve the status of rape victims. Especially women's organisations have criticized the amendment as insufficient and have pointed out that the essential elements of rape crimes are still assessed on the basis of the intention of the perpetrator, rather than on the lack of consent of the victim.

75. Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse entered into force in Finland on 1 October 2011. The act contains an important number of amendments to existing legislation, which strengthen the rights of children. Information on this is included in Finland's periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child CRC/C/FIN/4.

## **8.2 Genital mutilation**

76. Preparations for the establishment of a Plan of Action on Female Genital Mutilation of Girls were initiated in Finland in 2009. Identification of the issue has been seen as particularly problematic.

## **8.3 Violence against elderly persons**

77. A working group of the National Council for Crime Prevention has in a study published in September 2011 attached attention to the prevalence of violence and other crimes against elderly persons and to measures for their prevention. The study analyses the issues from the point of view of both elderly women and elderly men. Increasing the security of elderly persons was included as one of the prioritised fields of State subsidies for crime prevention in 2011. The Ministry of Justice allocated 22 000 euro to a helpline project (Suvantolinja) of the Finnish Association of the Shelters for the Aged. It is a nationwide telephone service free of charge, which provides help, information and guidance for elderly persons having faced ill-treatment, exploitation and violence or threats thereof.

## **8.4 Disciplinary violence and sexual harassment of girls**

78. The working group that elaborated an action plan against disciplinary violence submitted its report to the Minister of Health and Social Services in October 2010. The working group recommended, *inter alia*, that families with children be offered support and help in the earliest possible stage, in order to prevent burnout and mental health problems of the parents. One risk group in regard to disciplinary violence is immigrant families, where disciplinary violence may have been accepted in their countries of origin. It is also possible to prevent forms of violence that are especially targeted towards girls, such as

honour violence and genital mutilation, through the provision of information on the rights of the child.

79. According to the 2008 study on child victims, children have less sexual experiences with adults than 20 years ago. On the other hand, they nowadays have more negative sexual experiences than before. Especially online sexual harassment and "propositions" experienced by girls are common, but seldom lead to real contact.

80. The number of crimes related to sexual exploitation of children that have come to the attention of the Police increased between the years 2000 and 2008, but decreased in 2009. It has been estimated that the share of sexual crimes committed against children that comes to the attention of the authorities has grown because of the increase in the general awareness. New technology also makes exploitation easier than before.

#### **8.5 Restraining order**

81. A large study on intra-family restraining orders was published in 2009. According to the study, the violence in these restraining order cases had been serious and had gone on for a long time. Temporary intra-family restraining orders often expire because the applicant of the order does not continue the proceedings in the lower courts. According to the study, persons on who a restraining order is imposed had often not received criminal sanctions for the violence in near relationships, even though the violence had gone on for a long time.

82. The updated instruction of the Police on restraining orders entered into force on 1 July 2010. The purpose of the instruction is to unify and clarify the activities of police stations. In practice, monitoring of restraining orders is difficult and the reporting of non-compliance with a restraining order hinges in general upon the victim. The Ministry of Justice is analysing possibilities for electronic surveillance in the monitoring of restraining orders.

#### **8.6 Conciliation**

83. The Government's Programme stipulates that the use of conciliation must be restricted in regard to crimes related to violence in close relationships. There are contradictory views and research results on conciliation and its results, especially for the decrease of violence against women and the respect of women's human rights. However, nowadays the special features of violence against women are more widely understood. It is understood that in conciliation of violence against women there are two unequal parties - the victim of the violence is often in a weaker and subordinate position in relation to the perpetrator. Even though there are also positive results from conciliation, the starting point cannot be seen as favourable for the achievement of sustainable results.

84. According to the Act on Conciliation in Criminal and Certain Civil Cases (1015/2005), only the Police and public prosecutor have the right to refer a case to conciliation. Sexual violence cannot be subject to conciliation. The law also prohibits conciliation if the perpetrator has been found guilty of violence earlier in the European Union.

85. According to the recommendations of the Council of Europe, violence in close relationships should not be subject to conciliation. According to the instructions of the Prosecutor General of 2007, conciliation should be used primarily in complainant offences. The Ministry of Justice has also stated that custody disputes should not be settled through conciliation in cases involving violence. Good practices for unified nationwide application were elaborated in 2011 on the basis of the practical experience gained from conciliation of violence in close relationships.

86. Annex 5 includes statistics on mediation. The compilation of statistics on conciliation will be developed in such a way that in 2012 statistics on the parties of cases in conciliation will be available differentiated by gender and the position in the proceedings (perpetrator or injured party).

#### **8.7 Service network**

87. In order to develop services for victims of violence, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Association of Finnish Municipalities created recommendations for the municipal social welfare and health services in 2008. The recommendations contain guidelines violence prevention and give instructions on both the organisation and on the provision of services.

88. The funding of organisations producing violence prevention services is largely based on project funding. Shelters for victims of partner and domestic violence have a central role in providing assistance services.

89. Crisis telephone counselling constitutes part of the municipal social services. Also several organisations maintain crisis telephone services. Thus far, no free-of-charge 24 hour telephone helplines for victims of violence are in use in Finland. The number of rape crisis centres is lower than the Council of Europe recommendation of one per 200 000 inhabitants.

90. Thus far, the supply of services for immigrants having faced violence is scarce. Immigrant women seek help from shelters nine times more often than women belonging to the main population. The identification of special features of violence against immigrant women must be systematically developed as well as the assistance provided to such women.

91. In the recommendations on domestic and intimate partner violence to the social welfare and health services, local governments are requested to pay attention to the service needs of elderly persons, persons with disabilities as well as children and young persons. The Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women pays attention to the service needs of groups that are in particularly vulnerable situations. The working group for the reform of the social services legislation discusses proposals regarding an obligation for municipalities to organise emergency and special services for victims of violence. The term of the working group has been extended to 30 June 2012.

#### **8.8 Shelters**

92. There are 21 shelters in Finland, the majority of them are run by organisations. The financing of shelters is largely based on municipal promissory notes and contracts on purchase of services. There are 123 family places for victims of violence in close relationships and domestic violence in Finland.

93. There are no secret shelters in Finland. Clients may remain anonymous only while contacting the shelters by phone or in the open services, not while staying at the shelter. The safety of children and their parent may be compromised in a shelter, because a violent guardian of a child has a legal right to know the whereabouts of the child and to meet the child. In 2011, a project was initiated to develop a model for a network of shelters with secret addresses for persons who have experienced serious violence or threats thereof.

94. Unified quality recommendations for shelters are being elaborated. There are still no nationwide quality recommendations on shelter services. There has not been an increase in shelter services to fulfil international recommendations and shelters are not geographically evenly distributed. Financing of one non-governmental organisation offering shelter services has been secured to a more permanent basis through equalisation payments.

Especially the financial challenges faced by municipalities in the coming years will contribute to making it more difficult to expand the network of shelters sufficiently and diversely.

95. The objective of the Internal Security Programme is to make shelter services available throughout the country by 2015. The intention is to include a specification of shelter services in the project to reform the social security legislation. The specification of shelter services must take into account the different needs of women in particularly vulnerable situations as well as the provision of shelter services for special groups.

#### **8.9 Other measures**

96. Finland was among the first countries to sign the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. The preparatory work for the ratification of the convention was initiated in the spring of 2011.

97. In August 2011, a so called Slut Walk was organised in three municipalities simultaneously. Thousands of persons participated in the march. The media reported on the event by stressing women's rights.

#### **9 Stereotypes in media and advertising**

98. Equality issues related to advertising and the media and means to tackle the sexualisation of media and advertising were studied as part of the realisation of the Equality Programme 2008 to 2011. (Concluding observations, para. 20.) Advertising is regulated on the basis of the Consumer Protection Act both through monitoring by authorities and through self-regulation by business life. The Council of Ethics in Advertising issues expert opinions on request. An advertisement is contrary to good marketing according to the Principles on Good Marketing of the Council of Ethics in Advertising, if a woman or a man is used as an eye-catcher or a sex object and the gender is used in a degrading, patronising or derogatory way or if a woman or man is used as a sex object or unjustifiably as an eye-catcher without having anything to do with the product or service that is being advertised. According to the Principles, an advertisement is not contrary to good marketing practice only because it shows scantily clad or naked persons, if they have not been depicted in a degrading, patronising or derogatory way. The Council issues recommendations, but cannot ban an advertisement. However, most advertisers comply with the statements issued by the Council. The adequacy of the regulation of advertising has been criticised and some of its features have been seen as inadequate, such as the lack of sanctions and that the initiation of cases solely depends on the activity of the citizens. The Council of Ethics in Advertising has found several advertisements to be contrary to good marketing practice.

99. Stereotyped gender attitudes are present in many ways in the Finnish edited media. Even though the gender distribution among journalists is quite even, women are under-represented in, *inter alia*, news contents and as experts. In order to improve the situation, teaching of the gender perspective will be intensified in the training of journalists and in media education. Universities are urged to realize gender sensitive journalism training among journalists and other media professionals, in order to raise consciousness of the practices that maintain gender inequality within media and advertising. The gender perspective will be taken into account in various media education projects. The participation of Finland in the international Global Media Monitoring Project will be regularized. It is an international study which maps the representation and portrayal of women and men in the news media, and how they change. Its aim is to elucidate, through a quantitative analysis, the representation and portrayal of women in the news, the importance of journalism for the concept of human being as well as the visibility of themes related to equality and gender roles.

100. In the spring of 2011, the Parliament adopted new legislation on audiovisual programmes. Through the reform, a Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Programmes is established, which shall monitor audiovisual programmes and coordinate media education. The objective of the reform of the legislation is to diminish exposure of children and young persons to, *inter alia*, pornography.

## **10 Media literacy**

101. In recent years media education has become an increasingly important cultural policy issue. The Ministry of Education has launched several initiatives, especially media education projects, in order to create a safer media environment. In the near future, media education will be one of the cultural policy priorities, measures will be taken to foster the role of the public sector with better financing and coordination of media education activities carried out in collaboration with other actors, especially non-governmental organisations.

# **Article 6**

## **11 Preventing commercial exploitation of women**

### **11.1 Legislation and sentencing practice**

102. In 2006, when debating the criminalisation of sexual services, Parliament criminalised only the purchase of sexual services from victims of trafficking and procurement. In connection with the enactment of the law, Parliament required follow-up of the effectiveness of the new law. (Concluding observations, para. 18.)

103. In September 2009, the Ministry of Justice submitted the report requested by Parliament. According to the study, there seems to be a link between the demand for sexual services and trafficking in human beings related to sexual exploitation, even though the prevalence of trafficking also is influenced by factors related to economic and political instability. It is important to analyse prostitution, the demand for sexual services, pandering and trafficking also from a broader point of view.

104. According to the study, 17 actual or attempted exploitation crimes were registered in the information system of the Police in 2007, 179 in 2008 and 19 in the first half of 2009. In 2008, the prosecuting authorities received 7 criminal cases (43 incidents) and in the first half of 2009, 18 criminal cases (80 incidents). In 2008, the prosecuting authorities made decisions on 3 criminal cases (14 incidents) and in the first half of 2009, on 20 criminal cases (82 incidents). In 2007, one fine was imposed in summary penal proceedings and one case was tried in court. The first sentence for an exploitation crime was passed on 28 November 2008 in connection with sentencing in a pandering case. Two persons were convicted for an exploitation crime; the person who had committed the crime during two days was sentenced to 50 day fines and the person who had committed the crime during one day was sentenced to 30 day fines. According to the study, 37 persons were convicted of exploitation of victims of sex trade.

105. According to the study, the number of exploitation crimes is substantially influenced by the degree to which pandering and trafficking crimes are detected and how they are investigated. The report found that a period of three years is short when assessing the functioning of a new penal provision and was of the view that no direct conclusions on the felicity of the regulation can be made on the basis of the number of cases it has been applied on, since the extent of application does not indicate how the provision has influenced behaviour and attitudes. In the expert opinions acquired for the study a suspicion is expressed that investigation of procurement and trafficking crimes has become more difficult after the enactment of the exploitation crimes, because the suspected buyers are not

as willing to participate in the investigation of these crimes. On the other hand, it was also estimated in the expert opinions that the long term impact of the law may be positive as it endeavours to strengthen attitudes against sex trade and pre-empt the behaviour of persons who contemplate the buying of sexual services.

106. On 22 February 2011, when reading the report, the Committee on Legal Affairs stated that it considered it very important to assess the penal provision on exploitation of victims of sex trafficking, but that it did not have any possibilities to start addressing the issue to a larger extent at that moment. The Committee wished that the discussion on the topic would continue after the Parliamentary elections of the spring of 2011.

#### **11.2 On statistics**

107. The statistics of the Ministry of the Interior on prostitution and trafficking cases that have come to the attention of the Police are provided in Annex 6. (Concluding observations, para. 18.)

#### **11.3 Massage parlours**

108. The situation of Thai massage parlours has been studied in Finland. According to a study commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior, there were 131 Thai massage parlours in Finland in 2006. In each massage parlour, there are one to three women working, some of which are working in several parlours. There is an estimated total of 200 to 300 Thai women working in the Thai massage parlours.

109. The “Saphaan” project, initiated in the Metropolitan area in 2009, has reached nearly all of the persons working in the massage parlours in the Metropolitan area. The project has reached approximately 200 persons also outside the Metropolitan area. The persons reached by the project have also been admitted to the realm of support measures.

#### **11.4 Support services**

110. There are two organisations in Finland working with prostitution. A non-governmental organisation that provides support services in two municipalities reports that it has reached, according to its own estimate, approximately half of the persons working in prostitution, i.e. approximately two thousand persons. A majority of the persons working in prostitution are estimated to be foreigners who either live permanently in Finland, or who travel from country to country under cover of a tourist visa.

### **12 Trafficking in human beings**

#### **12.1 The National Plan of Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the Steering Group**

111. The Government adopted on 25 June 2008 the second, Revised Plan of Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. It covers the identification of victims of trafficking, prevention of trafficking, assistance to victims of trafficking, granting resident permits and a period for reflection to the victim of trafficking, bringing the perpetrator of trafficking to justice as well as increasing information and awareness of trafficking. The Plan of Action is built on a human-rights-based and victim-oriented approach. It also takes the gender and child aspects into account. Particular attention is paid to the identification of victims. The objective is to keep the threshold for identification low, in order to be able to involve all victims of trafficking crimes within the sphere of the assistance structure. The statutory assistance system for victims of trafficking also supports persons who have fallen victim of prostitution-related trafficking by offering, for instance, rehabilitation and information about alternative means to earn a living.

112. In connection with the adoption of the Revised Plan of Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, the Ministry of the Interior appointed a broad cross-sectoral Steering Group to elaborate recommendations for measures to further develop the anti-trafficking legislation and measures. The Steering Group proposed, *inter alia*, that special legislation be drafted on the assistance structure for victims of trafficking. The National trafficking rapporteur issued the same recommendation in her own report. The Steering Group further required that specialists be trained in the identification of and assistance to victims of trafficking.

### **12.2 Sexual exploitation of women in trafficking**

113. The decision-in-principle on the Internal Security Programme of the Government contains cross-sectoral objectives as well as measures to prevent trafficking and analogous crime.

114. Within the framework of the National Plan of Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, authorities have been given both national and targeted training in the identification of victims of trafficking. The Equality Report emphasizes training of authorities to improve the identification of victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation as well as the need of unified practices and guidelines for the authorities. Also non-governmental organisations have attached attention to the issue.

115. The Ombudsman for Minorities has acted as the national trafficking rapporteur since 2009. The Ombudsman for Minorities as national trafficking rapporteur monitors phenomena related to trafficking and the implementation of international obligations as well as the functioning of the national legislation in this regard. The Ombudsman for Minorities issued her first trafficking report to the Parliament in June 2010. In her report, the Ombudsman for Minorities assesses the state of anti-trafficking activities and the realisation of the rights of the victims. The report contains 30 recommendations on measures related to the development of the legislation and the practices of authorities in order to make the activities against trafficking more effective and to improve the status of the victim. The point of view of protection of human rights and the victim as well as gender equality are emphasized in the activities against trafficking. According to the report, Finland is both a country of destination and a transit country for trafficking. The report estimates that there are hundreds of trafficking victims yearly. The services to the victims are subject to a residence permit.

### **12.3 Trafficking and pandering crimes**

116. The restricted application of the essential elements of the provisions on trafficking crimes is considered the biggest obstacle to the eradication of trafficking. The vague dividing line between pandering and trafficking makes it more difficult to define sexual exploitation as trafficking.

117. Only relatively few trafficking crimes have come to the attention of the pre-trial investigation authorities after the entry into force of the criminal provisions on trafficking. The courts have tried only a few trafficking cases. The first trafficking verdict was passed in 2006. However, the number of trafficking-like crimes (aggravated arrangement of illegal immigration, aggravated pandering, extortionate work discrimination) has been somewhat higher.

118. In December 2009, the Helsinki Court of Appeal, departing from the decision of the District Court, passed the verdict for a trafficking crime (R09/385). The verdict broadened the interpretation of earlier verdicts. For the first time, the state of the victim was taken into account, such as the dependent status and feeling of insecurity.

119. In Finland, the trafficking phenomenon is especially related to exploitation of the workforce as well as to sexual exploitation of women. Three trafficking crimes involving sexual exploitation have been tried in Finland. The small number of cases reaching the courts is generally related to the difficulty to find and identify trafficking cases. Identification of trafficking related to sexual exploitation is seen as very challenging. According to the national trafficking rapporteur, the threshold for considering a crime to be trafficking is set too high.

120. However, the number of pandering cases tried in the courts is higher. A total of 32 verdicts on pandering were issued by district courts in 2004 to 2009.

#### **12.4 Admission to the assistance system**

121. The amendment of the Aliens Act (301/2004) that entered into force in 2006 contains provisions on a reflection period as well as residence permits for victims of trafficking. Victims of trafficking have, when needed, the possibility to obtain a reflection period according to the Aliens Act and/or a residence permit on the grounds of their status as victims of trafficking.

122. The Act on the Reception of Persons Seeking International Protection (746/2011) contains provisions on assistance to victims of trafficking. State reception centres coordinate the assistance system. One of the reception centres is responsible for adult trafficking victims and another is responsible for trafficking victims under the age of 18 years. The decision on admission to the assistance system is made by the director of the reception centre. The director of the reception centre is supported by a cross-sectoral evaluation group with at least one expert from social welfare services and one from health care services as well as representatives from the Police and the Border Guards authority. The services are also available to trafficking victims with domicile in Finland.

123. Identification of victims both in transit cases as in cases within the borders of the country has shown to be one of the biggest challenges in trafficking. The number of persons admitted to the assistance system has been fairly small. Among adult victims of trafficking admitted to the assistance system during the years 2007 to 2010, the exploitation was labour related for 42 and sexual for 33. The total cumulative number of persons admitted to the assistance system is 86, out of which 10 minors.

#### **12.5 Trafficking for prostitution purposes and the identification of victims**

124. When investigating trafficking crimes, the identification of victims of trafficking for prostitution purposes is often very problematic. The authorities use in their activities the term "trafficking-like crimes". The term makes reference to criminal activity with features of trafficking, but that does not, however, fulfil the essential elements of a trafficking crime in criminal law. During the pre-trial investigation and in the court proceedings, much attention is attached to the consent given in the recruitment phase of the pandering, according to the national trafficking rapporteur. However, it is important to take into account that also foreign women engaging voluntarily in prostitution may be victims of trafficking, when analysing the conditions of pandering, the violence against the women and the threat of exploitation and their real possibilities to distance themselves from prostitution. Giving their consent to activities in prostitution should not be seen as giving the right to sexual or other violence in prostitution and other violations of rights, for instance restriction of freedom of movement and extortion.

125. Whether the legal system sees a person who is a victim of exploitation as an object of pandering or as a victim of trafficking is significant for the person in question. Presumed trafficking victims should, according to the law, be admitted to the assistance system for trafficking victims. In pandering crimes, the object of pandering usually has the status of a

witness, and thus has no special rights as an injured party. Also the possibility to seek help from the assistance system for trafficking victims remains unclear in those cases. The difference is significant also for persons exploited for labour purposes who are victims of extortionate work discrimination, and always have the status of the injured party in criminal proceedings.

### **13 International activity**

126. The National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 "Women, Peace and Security" contains provisions on objectives for the prevention of trafficking and for support to crime victims in international cooperation. The Action Plan covers the years 2008 to 2011. A new Action Plan is currently being drafted.

127. The Government's bill for the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings will be submitted to the Parliament in November 2011. Non-governmental organisations have strongly emphasised the importance of the primary nature of protection of the human rights of trafficking victims.

128. In addition, preparations are under way within the Government for the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

## **Article 7**

### **14 Elections**

#### **14.1 Municipal elections in 2008**

129. In the elections of 2008, there were a total of 38 509 candidates in 332 municipalities, out of which 22 935 were men and 15 574 women. The share of women candidates increased somewhat, 0.5 percent, and was 40.4 percent. Women candidates received 42 percent of the votes cast. The share of women candidates in various elections has only once been higher than this, 42.2 percent, in the Parliamentary elections of 1991. The age structure of the candidates did not differ from the age structure in earlier municipal elections. The majority, 72 percent of the candidates had reached the age of 40 years or were older. The share of young persons, younger than 30 years, was 10.7 percent. The share of women elected to municipal councils was 36.7 percent, which was 0.3 percent more than in the previous elections in 2004. The increase in the share of women slowed down in comparison to the 1990s and the beginning of 2000s. The voting activity of women in municipal elections was 63.0 percent and that of men 59.3 percent. The gap decreased somewhat in comparison with the elections in 2004.

130. A total of 10 412 municipal counsellors were elected in municipal elections, 6 590 men and 3 822 women.

131. At the beginning of the electoral period 2009-2012, the percentage of women of all members of municipal boards was 46 percent. Of all chairs of municipal boards, women accounted for 21 percent, and of all vice-chairs of municipal boards they accounted for 35 percent. The percentage of women among the chairs of municipal councils is 26.5 percent, and 25 percent among the vice-chairs.

#### **14.2 The Parliamentary elections in 2011**

132. In the Parliamentary elections of 2011, 42.5 percent of persons elected to Parliament were women, which is slightly more than in the elections of 2007. The share of women in the Parliament is now higher than ever before. The majority of the candidates in

Parliamentary elections have always been men. In the Parliamentary elections of 2011, 1 412 of the candidates were men and 903 were women. The share of women of the candidates was 39 percent (39.9 percent in 2007). Compared to the previous Parliamentary elections, the share of women candidates among the candidates of the parties decreased in four parties of the Parliament. 51.6 percent of the persons entitled to vote were women. The share of persons with a foreign background entitled to vote was 1.3 percent, out of which 0.6 percent was men and 0.7 percent was women. The share of candidates with a foreign background was 2.9 percent, 0.9 women and 1.9 men. The share of women of the candidates with a foreign background was 33.8 percent. One Member of Parliament with a foreign background was elected to Parliament, as in earlier elections.

133. Among the candidates, 1 514 had reached the age of 40 years, or were older. There were 12 candidates over the age of 75. There were a total of 158 candidates under the age of 25, seven were 18 years old. The average age of the candidates was 45.4 years, 46.2 for men and 44.3 for women, Annex 7.

134. In the Parliamentary elections of 2011, 85 of the 200 elected Members of Parliament were women, one less than in the previous elections 2007, Annexes 8, 9 and 10.

## **15 The composition of the Government**

135. The Second Government of Matti Vanhanen was formed in April 2007. This Government had 11 women out of 20 ministers, which was the biggest share (60 percent) in Finnish history. For the first time, there were more women than men in the Government. This Government had the highest share of women in the whole world.

136. After the resignation of Prime Minister Vanhanen from the post as Prime Minister, the Government of Kiviniemi was formed in June 2010. The composition of the Government stayed the same, except that a male minister was nominated the successor of Kiviniemi as Minister of Local Government. Women held the posts of Prime Minister, Minister of Justice, Minister of Immigration and European Affairs, Minister of Transport, Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Interior, Minister of Education, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Minister of Communications, Minister of Labour and Minister of Health and Social Services. Mari Kiviniemi was the second female Prime Minister in Finnish history.

137. The Government of Prime Minister Katainen was formed on 22 June 2011. There are 19 ministers in the Government, 9 are women. The Government has Finland's first female Minister of Finance. Other woman ministers are the Minister for International Development, Minister of Justice, Minister of the Interior, Minister of Public Administration and Local Government, Minister of Transport, Minister of Social Affairs and Health, Minister of Health and Social Services as well as the Minister of Housing and Communications. The Minister responsible for equality is the Minister of Culture and Sport.

## **16 The European Union and international organisations**

138. In the European Parliament election of 2009, 13 representatives were elected from Finland. Eight of them were women, constituting 62 percent. This is the biggest share among EU countries.

139. The programme of Prime Minister Vanhanen's first Government paid attention to the equality of international decision-making organs. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has for its own part endeavoured to appoint women and men more evenly as candidates to and members of international decision-making organs.

## **17 State and municipal personnel**

140. In 2009, approximately 122 000 persons were employed by the State. The share of women was 49.6 percent. Certain State functions or occupations are still segregated by gender. For instance, within the Police and in the Defence Forces there are more men than women. The situation is the opposite in financial administration. The share of women in the highest leadership of the State Administration has increased in the 2000s. The share of women in the highest leadership was 28.2 percent and in middle management 33.8 percent (the corresponding numbers were 26.2 percent and 29.9 percent in 2007).

141. Attention has been paid to the small amount of women in the leadership of State Administration in the two most recent Equality Programmes of the Government. (Concluding observations, para. 22.) An objective of the Equality Programme for the period 2008 to 2011 was to increase the share of women in the leadership of State Administration. The Ministry of Finance collects information on the share of women in leading positions within the State Administration. In the future, the State Treasury will collect information also on applicants to state functions according to gender. The Working Group on the Promotion of the Career Advancement of Women in State Administration (2009) proposed measures by which the share of women could be increased both among applicants and among persons nominated to all managerial and leading posts within the State Administration. The recommended measures concentrated on recruitment practices of the State Administration, management training and the role of managers in supporting women's career advancement.

142. In October 2009, approximately 433 000 employees worked at the service of municipalities. In the highest leadership of municipalities, the share of women is still small. In the beginning of 2009, 14 percent of the municipal managers (mayors, town managers) were women. From 2008 to 2009, the wage gap between women and men shrank in regard to regular wages by 0.8 percent and in regard to total earnings 1.3 percent. The gender-based wage gap is largely due to the fact that occupations within the municipal sector are highly segregated by gender, i.e. women are to a large extent working in different professions than men. The gender-based wage gap between women and men working in the same tasks is negligible.

## **18 The academic community and diplomacy**

143. In accordance with the objectives of the universities' common performance agreements for the period 2010-2012, the universities shall strengthen the preconditions for high-quality scientific research, artistic activity and equal research careers as well as their position in the international research community. The strategies of the financial model 2010-2012 of the universities focus, *inter alia*, on the development of the research career and internationalisation. In 2009, as part of the steering of the universities, the Ministry of Education requested the universities and polytechnics to send their statutory equality plans to the Ministry. The universities collect personnel information by gender. The Academy of Finland collects and produces statistics on its research funding by gender. The data can be found in Annex 11.

144. According to Akava, the Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland, women's high level of education and its constant rise have not reflected sufficiently in the share of women in high-ranking posts. Women's slower career progression is directly reflected in their wages.

145. The gender distribution in the diplomatic corps is included in Annex 12.

**19 Church personnel**

146. The share of women of all employees in the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church has increased. In 2009, it was 71 percent. 38.4 percent of the parish priests were women. In 2008 to 2010, the Evangelical Lutheran Church Council realised the project "Equality and the church", which studied the realisation of equality in the work communities of the Church. According to a study from 2009, 64 percent of the church employers obliged to compile an equality plan had done so. Fifty-eight percent of the parishes that have elaborated a plan have elaborated a pay mapping in accordance with the Equality Act. In 2009, the Church carried out a campaign for the support of immigrants difficult to employ.

147. The Orthodox Church and its parishes have offered work and traineeships as well as a community to belong to especially for immigrant women, and they participate in the project "Equality in pay".

**20 The role of non-governmental organisations and the civil society**

148. Participation in social life through different non-governmental organisations is an important form of participation in Finnish democracy. A typical feature of Finnish organisational life is an exceptionally versatile, wide-ranging and active array of women's organisations. The realisation of equal participation requires equal possibilities for activity and equal financial support from the society.

149. In 2008, state subsidies to women organisations were regulated by law. A yearly appropriation meant for women's organisations promoting gender equality and social influence, as provided by law, is earmarked for two women's organisations in the state budget. A third women's organisation was approved into the state subsidy system in the beginning of 2011. The regularisation of the State subsidy system secures continuity and consistency better than before. The status of women's organisations can be considered to be established in the Finnish society, but the organisations are not commonly consulted.

150. In 2009, according to Statistics Finland, 13 percent of the presiding officers and 25 percent of the board members of the labour confederations were women. The share of women of the members is over 50 percent. The share of women in the councils was 46 percent. In 2009, 14 percent of the members and substitutes of the board of the Confederation of Finnish Industries representing employers were women. The chairperson of the board and all vice-chairpersons were men. In 2011, one of the board members was a woman.

151. In 2010, the Government approved a decision-in-principle on the promotion of democracy. The decision-in-principle consolidates measures on the promotion of democracy for the strengthening of the possibilities of citizens to exercise influence. According to the decision-in-principle, a democracy evaluation of Finland will be realised during the years 2012 to 2014. The objective is to compile, on the basis of the evaluation, the first Government Report to the Parliament on Democracy Policy, in 2010. The discussion paper on democracy policy adopted in connection with the decision-in-principle covers gender mainstreaming.

**21 Special groups**

152. Women with disabilities have stood as candidates and have been elected in state and local elections to positions of trust. A challenge for the increase of the participation of women with disabilities is in particular to improve the built environment as well as to make documents and information more accessible.

153. Consolidated information on the participation of Roma women is not available. Individual Roma women have been candidates in state and municipal elections, and a few

have also acted in municipal positions of trust. In practice, many representatives of the Roma population working in administrative tasks as well as in leading positions in Roma organisations are women.

154. Women with an immigrant background have stood as candidates in elections. Information targeted to immigrant women on the importance of political parties and non-governmental organisations and on possibilities to participate in their activities should be intensified.

## **Article 8**

155. Finland has intensified the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 in international crisis management. The Defence Command has established an expert roster on equality. The number of persons having participated in gender training has been increased, and the training for military crisis management has been developed in such a way that the content of the resolution and the gender activities linked thereto are taught to everyone participating in operations in advance. The management and experts receive supplementary training on the issue at the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre FINCENT. In addition, training of gender counsellors has started and a Finnish gender counsellor has been sent to a military crisis management operation. In the future, gender counsellors will be trained at the Centre for Gender in Stockholm, operated jointly by the Nordic Countries and due to open in the beginning of the year 2012. In addition to training, the Centre for Gender acts as a research and development centre for gender activities. At this stage, Finland participates in the activities of the Centre by sending students and trainers.

156. The Ministry of the Interior and the crisis management centre subordinate to it continue to develop civilian crisis management activities, including the participation of the Police in international crisis management. Its cross-sectoral 1325 steering group consists of representatives of Ministries, researchers and representatives of non-governmental organisations.

157. Before the adoption of the National 1325 Action Plan in the autumn of 2007, 19 percent of the experts funded by Finland in civilian crisis management assignments were women. The share of women has been increased purposefully. In 2011, the share of women of among posted experts has stayed at approximately 35 percent. The share is over twice as high as the average of women experts funded by EU countries. The increase of the share of women has been possible both due to training and more intensive recruitment. The action plan of the crisis management centre contains a 40 percent objective for all operations.

## **Article 9**

158. During the reporting period, no amendments were introduced to the Nationality Act on keeping the nationality and in regard to the Article, reference is made to earlier Periodic Reports.

## **Article 10**

### **22 Access to education; lifelong learning**

159. Promotion of lifelong learning is included in all education in Finland, and it is also laid down in the legislation on education, the latest being the ne Universities Act

(558/2009). According to the law, in performing their duties, the Universities shall promote lifelong learning.

160. Adult education and studying is an important part of lifelong learning. More than half of the age group 18 to 64, that is 1.7 million persons, participate yearly in adult education in Finland. According to research on adult education, women have participated more actively in adult education than men. Ageing persons, 55 to 64 year old, participated less actively than other age groups in adult education, but women were more active than men in all age groups. The next study on adult education will be carried out in 2012.

161. Statistics on persons having participated in formal training do not indicate any decrease in the share of women. For instance, the share of women and men starting training preparing for vocational complementary training have not changed considerably during the period 2005 to 2009. Women and men start the training in almost equal numbers. The share of women who have started studies for a polytechnic degree as adults has varied during the period 2005 to 2010 between 59.4 and 62.8 percent (in 2010, 62.8 percent). The share of women having started specialized polytechnic studies or higher polytechnic studies is clearly bigger than that of men. In the Seniors' University, a special form of the Open University, the share of women was 76.4 percent of the 17 258 students in total in 2009.

162. Adult education benefits were renewed for both unemployed and employed persons in 2010. Unemployed are given the possibility to study in voluntary training without losing their unemployment allowance in cases where it has been agreed as part of the job-seekers job-searching plan or employment plan. In 2010, this possibility was used and studies were initiated by 12 500 persons, 62 percent of them women. Lifelong learning is supported by lifelong guidance. The Ministry of Education and Culture as well as the Ministry of Employment and the Economy are responsible for the steering of this guidance as a public service. The progress of studies and career and training choices are supported also by various steering and support measures. In addition, the Ministry of Education and Culture has a joint working group for the period of 2010 to 2013 on Lifelong steering. The task of the joint working group is to elaborate strategic objectives for lifelong learning. One of the starting points for the work of the working group is to improve the possibilities of all citizens to obtain guidance services.

## **23 Basic education and curricula**

163. The objective of basic education has been to guarantee equal learning opportunities for all. In education, attention is paid to different learners according to their aptitude and intelligence, regardless of gender. The student and student counselling are considered important for the advancement of equality.

164. The differences in the education level of the population in different parts of the country are small. According to OECD's Pisa study, regional differences in learning results, and differences in the results due to the social background of the students are smaller in Finland than in OECD countries in general. Also differences due to the educational background and social status of the parents in participation in education are smaller than in most other European countries.

165. The legislation on education contains very few objectives to promote equality. However, several pilot and development projects to promote equality have been carried out in recent years.

166. According to evaluations of learning results, the reading skills of girls at basic education age is better than that of boys at the same age. In regard to science, mathematics and problem solving skills there are no significant differences in the learning results between girls and boys. For decades, efforts have been made through educational policy to influence the different level of participation of women and men.

167. The segregation starts immediately after the basic education. In upper secondary education, women constitute the majority. In vocational training, polytechnic training and in the universities, the gender structure is as a whole more even than in upper secondary education. In colleges women form a slight minority.

168. The working group for the alleviation of segregation, appointed by the Ministry of Education and Culture in September 2009, proposed 25 measures to alleviate segregation in education and training. The objectives concern all forms of training. The objective is for equality and non-discrimination to be promoted actively and practices preventing equality to be dismantled in the curricula, education, steering and the working culture of the schools. (Concluding observations, para. 24.) The teaching practices of schools and learning institutions are developed in such a way that they support the equal and individual learning and growth of pupils and students, taking into account the social and cultural structure of gender. All students are offered equal opportunities to acquire the information and skills needed in society and working life. Girls and boys are supported through education and student counselling in such a way that they are able to make choices of subjects, studies and career based on their individual attributes, strengths and motivational factors - not gender.

## **24 Teacher training**

169. In accordance with the Government Programme, a project on equality and gender awareness was realised in the teacher training at all universities providing such training. (Concluding observations, para. 24.) The project ended in March 2011. The project comprised different forms of activities: work with the curriculum of the teacher training, preparation of material for training purposes, preparation of online courses for the use of teacher training, organisation of supplementary education for teachers' trainers and other teachers, research on equality and gender awareness issues and information. Its activities have also been covered in international educational seminars. The project also cooperated internationally and its activities were presented in international seminars on education.

# **Article 11**

## **25 Elimination of discrimination in working life**

### **25.1 The share of women in different sectors**

170. According to the 2010 equality barometer, several of the measures of the Government to promote equality have been successful. The share of women among executives in working life has grown both in the private and in the public sector. In the programmes initiated by the Government to increase the quality of working life, the point of view of promoting equality has been included. However, discrimination cases concerning, *inter alia*, pay, pregnancy and recruitment are still emerging.

171. The share of women has grown, especially in organs of political decision-making elected in general elections (see, Article 7). The share of women has been increased in state companies and their career development has been supported in the State Administration. The representation of women in the highest leadership of the country has increased in recent years. In other public life, such increase has not occurred. The quota provision of the Equality Act (232/2005) is applied in regard to the boards and working groups of the State Administration. According to the provision, both women and men should have at least a representation of 40 percent, unless particular reasons require otherwise.

172. On the municipal level, the quota provision has promoted gender equality. However, women continue to constitute a minority in the highest leadership of municipal decision-making, especially as chairpersons of various organs and as municipal managers. On the

other hand, the share of women is good in preparatory organs that fall within the scope of application of the quota provisions.

173. Equality has advanced well in government-owned companies, because a programme for the increase of the share of women in these companies has been carried out during the term of office of the most recent Governments. But in companies where the decision power of the Government is smaller, the share of women in leading posts is still small. The share of women has grown in the boards of directors of exchange-listed companies. It was almost 17 percent in 2010 and 18.7 percent in 2011.

174. Women are clearly under-represented in the boards of trade unions. In about two thirds of the unions, the share of women in their boards is smaller than the share of women among the membership. The boards of the unions of the predominantly female social care, service and health care branches have a clear majority of women, but still smaller than the share of women among the members.

## **25.2 Gender-based wage gap**

175. According to the Equality Report, the gender-based wage gap is still a central equality issue in the Finnish society. The Governments have continued together with the labour market organisations the Equal Pay programme, initiated in 2006. The programme continues until 2015. The main objective of the programme is to shrink the gender-based wage gap from the level of 20 percent in 2006 by at least five percent until 2015. The progress has been slow. In order to specify the measures, the Government will initiate two large research projects. The average monthly earnings of women were 81.8 percent of the earnings of men in 2010, while the corresponding figure was 80.9 percent in 2007, Annex 13.

176. The gender-based wage gap increases with the age of the employee and is at its peak among persons in the age group over 60 years. At that point the average earnings of women are 75.3 percent of the earnings of men. The same downward trend concerns all sectors, but is stronger in State and municipal service than in the private sector. The relative gender wage gap grows clearly in the age group where families are started. The average age of women giving birth to their first child is 28 years. The wage gap stabilises to about 20 percent when the employees are in the age group 35 to 49 years, but starts to grow again among persons in the age group 50+. A yearly allocation of 100 000 euro has been earmarked for the equal pay programme for the years 2008 to 2015. A corresponding yearly allocation of 100 000 euro has been earmarked to hire project personnel.

177. Exact information on earnings of persons belonging to minority groups, for instance ethnic minorities, is not available, since the compilation of salary statistics based on ethnic origin is prohibited. However, a rough estimate of the situation of immigrants is possible by for instance analysing information on persons who speak another language as their mother tongue than Finnish, Swedish or Sami. The earnings of persons with these languages as their mother tongue are on average approximately 17 percent higher than the earnings of persons speaking other languages as their mother tongue. The wage gap between women with a foreign language as their mother tongue and men speaking domestic languages is estimated to be more than 38 percent. The income level of women speaking a domestic language as their mother tongue is approximately 17 percent higher than that of women speaking other languages as their mother tongue. The gender-based wage gap between foreign-language speaking women and men is approximately 25 percent. The estimate takes into account both salaries and income from entrepreneurship. The data is not directly comparable with the average monthly earnings of employed persons, which is used in the equal pay programme.

178. A new method for promoting equal pay was laid down in the Government programme, namely a commitment to support, with the means of an increased state subsidy, such pay settlements in the municipal sector, that improves the competitiveness of the wages of female dominated occupations. The amount of the increased subsidy depended on how well it was allocated to trained female dominated sectors, where the wages were not congruent with the level of demand of the work. The agreements for the municipal sector concluded in 2007 did contain an appropriation to equalise wages, where the raises were somewhat bigger for female dominated occupations than for other groups. The Government allocated 150 million euro yearly to improve the wages of the occupations in the municipal sector dominated by women. Also the municipal agreement of 2010 did allocate some higher raises to female dominated, relatively low wage professional groups.

179. Besides supporting the equal pay allocation of the municipal sector, the Government has actively strived to bridge the wage gap through an equal pay programme. The programme promotes, *inter alia*, the use of fair and encouraging pay systems and an increased use of assessment of the demands of the work, alleviation of gender segregation of labour markets, increasing the share of women in leading positions, reducing the prevalence of temporary contracts, improving the quality and quantity of equality plans for workplaces as well as encouraging an even more balanced distribution of family leaves between the parents.

180. Equality plans of workplaces constitute one instrument on the level of workplaces to shrink the gender-based wage gap. According to a study, 62 percent of the workplaces obliged to have one, had an equality plan, and 60 percent had made a wage survey. The number of plans has grown, but their comprehensiveness and quality still need to be improved. Workplaces have been encouraged and instructed actively to make equality plans and wage surveys.

### **25.3 Fixed-term, part-time and temporary work**

181. The Equality Report sets as an objective that working in temporary and part-time jobs in the future be based on the own choice of the employee and that the disadvantages of such work be minimised. Temporary contracts, clearly more common for women, decreased in the 2000s but started to increase again in 2010. In the long term, especially temporary work has increased among women of child-bearing age. The work to improve the terms of work contracts by legislative means has been continued. Part-time work has increased in recent years both among men and women. The relatively largest share of part-time work contracts are found in the state and municipal sector. In 2009, 18 percent of women and 8 percent of men were engaged in part-time work. Because of the weakened job situation, the number of temporary employees in 2009 was the smallest since 1997. In 2009, there was a total of 310 000 employees on temporary contracts. In 2009, a third of women aged 25 to 29 years and a little over a fifth of persons aged 30 to 34 years were on temporary contracts. Temporary agency work is a newer form of work. Its volume has been decreasing and in 2009 approximately 23 000 persons were engaged in it, constituting approximately one percent of the employees.

### **25.4 Collective bargaining contracts of the State**

182. The Office for the Government as Employer, which operates in conjunction with the Ministry of Finance, is responsible for the collective agreements and the monitoring of them for the Government as employer. The Office for the Government as Employer participates regularly in the joint roundtable on equality of the labour market organisations. Within the framework of the roundtable, the labour market organisations have jointly promoted equality in the Finnish labour market since the 1990s. The Office for the Government as Employer has as a member of the European Centre of Employers and

Enterprises providing Public services (CEEP) also participated in the realisation of the EU framework programme on equality in 2005 to 2009.

183. The main negotiating parties of the State sector cooperate to advance equality in State working places both in negotiations and in separate equality working groups, jointly appointed by the parties for each negotiating period. During the current agreement period, the main trade unions and employers' associations monitor and evaluate the realisation of the measures to promote gender equality in State agencies and compile statistics describing the development of equality and monitor the realisation of the equal pay programme in the state sector. The parties assess the gender consequences of the collective agreements for both public servants and employees on the central and local level. Equal pay has also been promoted by separate allocations of funds for equality and equal pay in the collective agreements as well as by attaching special attention also in other agreed raises to the improvement of pay equality between women and men. Gender equality and reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities is also taken into account when negotiating changes to the provisions of the agreements on family leaves.

#### **25.5 Career advancement of women**

184. In the equality policy, special attention has been attached to the careers of women in the State Administration. There has been a clear increase in the share of women managers in State Administration in the 2000s. The progress has been particularly fast since 2005. In 2008, there was a working group to promote the career advancement of women in the state sector. The report of the working group contains concrete proposals for the promotion of women's professional careers. The working group has also published a brochure "Manager, make sure you encourage women to get to the top!" In the future, attention should also be attached to the phase of introduction of women into the labour market, because studies indicate that this is crucial for their consequent career and pay development.

#### **25.6 Women entrepreneurship**

185. An increase of women entrepreneurship has been included both in Government Programmes and in the Equality Report. The share of women entrepreneurship is high in an EU-wide comparison, that is a third. Companies of women often operate in the service sector or retail trade. According to women entrepreneurs, there are problems associated with the family leaves. Women entrepreneurship has been supported, *inter alia*, by loans for entrepreneurs and business start-up money.

#### **25.7 The status of immigrants and other minority groups in working life**

186. In the Equality Report, the Government has committed itself to influencing attitudes in society and to making them more positive towards different minority groups and to improving the de facto possibilities for employment. This also requires the identification of special problems and active intervention in discrimination in working life.

187. In Finland, approximately 60 percent of working age persons with disabilities are employed. The number is smaller than the European average. The public sector has had a key role in employing young persons with disabilities. Adaptation of work conditions and intensification of existing support measures have a central role when removing obstacles for work.

188. Exact information on the participation of Roma women in education and working life is not available. Based on studies carried out, it can be estimated that the unemployment rate of Roma women is higher than that of the main population. According to a study carried out in 2008, obstacles for employment of the Roma are low education, lack of vocational training, scarce work experience as well as negative stereotypes and

discrimination. Employment of Roma has been promoted by, *inter alia*, employment projects. They have succeeded relatively well in finding employment for Roma, but the challenges have been that the contracts are fixed-term and short-term. Strengthening participation in programmes leading to a diploma would improve the position and employment of Roma women.

189. The unemployment rate of persons with an immigrant background is almost quadruple in comparison with that of the main population. Especially the poor education of refugee women compound their employment situation. The attitude of employers and customers to the dress of especially women with a Muslim background has become an obstacle for employment. Some of the obstacles for employment of immigrant women are also caused by internal norms of the minority communities.

## **26 Employment**

190. The increase in the employment rate continued till 2009, when the employment rate of women was 68 percent and that of men was 69 percent. Although the employment rate of women and men does not differ considerably, there are considerable differences in different age groups. In 2008, the difference in the age group 25 to 29 years was 10 percent and in the age group 30 to 34 years, 15 percent. The difference is due to the fact that mothers more often than fathers stay at home to care for small children. Unemployment of single mothers is considerably higher than that of other women and they have a lower education. In all age groups from 25 to 54 the unemployment rate of women was higher than that of men and in the age group over 55 years, the unemployment rate of men was more common than of women. Forty percent of women and 14 percent of men work in the public sector and in the municipal sector a third of all women. Women participate more actively than men in employment policy measures aiming at improving employment and decreasing unemployment.

## **27 Social security**

### **27.1 Guarantee pension**

191. In Finland, the statutory pension is composed of earnings-related pensions and national pensions. The earnings-related pension aims at maintaining, to a reasonable degree, the income level attained during employment when entering the pension system. The purpose of the national pension is to secure a minimum livelihood for such pensioners whose earnings-related pension is small due to a short working career or low income level, or who are not entitled to earnings-related pensions at all. The total pension is composed by the earnings-related pension and the national pension.

192. On 1 March 2011, a new benefit, the guarantee pension, was introduced in Finland, to secure the smallest pensions to a reasonable level. Guarantee pension is paid to a person whose total pension is below the amount of the guarantee pension. Thus, the guarantee pension secures the income level for such persons, who only receive national pension or both national pension and a small earnings-related pension. Guarantee pension is also paid to immigrants whose pension, due to a short period living in Finland or a low income level, would become so low that they would need to apply for income support. The full amount of the guarantee pension is 687.74 euro per month and it is adjusted in accordance with changes in the national pension index.

193. Persons over 62 years who receive old age pension as well as persons over 16 who receive disability pension are entitled to guarantee pension. An immigrant who is disabled within the meaning of the National Pensions Act, or who is 65 years, is qualified for guarantee pension. The amount of the guarantee pension is affected by the pensioners statutory pensions paid in Finland or other countries. In general, it is usually also required

that the pensioner has lived in Finland for at least three years after the age of 16. The guarantee pension improves the livelihood in particular of low-income women. It is estimated that approximately 65 percent of the recipients of a guarantee pension are women.

## **27.2 Reconciliation of work and family responsibilities**

194. Reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities has long been a part of the equality policy. A central goal has been a more even distribution of family leaves between the parents. The compensation paid to employers to cover costs caused by parental leaves has been increased several times. At the moment, a majority of the employer costs of these leaves have been evened out. The system of family leaves has also been altered in order to take into account the diversity of families, *inter alia*, regarding adoption families and the position of the parent not living with the child. Also persons living in a registered partnership have been granted the right to take family leaves. The solutions in regard to the reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities have been limited to parents of young children and small school children. There is a growing awareness of the needs for flexible solutions to reconcile family and work also in regard to other groups. For instance, a growing number of working age persons also take care of their ageing parents alongside with their professional responsibilities.

195. In practice, reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities is more difficult for women than for men. For this reason, efforts have been made to intervene in the imbalanced distribution of family responsibilities. An amendment to the legislation that entered into force in the beginning of 2010 increased the maximum length of the so called daddy month to six weeks. The use of the daddy month has increased by over 10 percent yearly. In particular, fathers have increased the use of the paternal leave and Daddy month right after the delivery of the baby. Despite the positive development, 93 percent of all parental leaves were used by mothers in 2009. Many fathers still feel that the attitude towards the use of family leaves is negative.

196. The minimum level of the daily allowance for parents was raised in the beginning of 2009. The reform benefited especially such women who were not entitled to per diem based on their salary, such as students. The child home care allowance and the private day-care allowance were raised in the beginning of 2009. Partial care allowance for parents who work part-time for reasons related to child care was raised in the beginning of 2010 to better compensate the loss of earnings caused by the shorter working hours. Starting in March 2011, the minimum parental allowance, child allowance and home care allowance will be tied to the basic pension index. Most of all the amendment benefits families with small children.

197. The report of the working group on parental leaves issued in March 2011, analysed the question of a more comprehensive reform of the parental leave system and the encouragement of fathers to increase the use of family leaves as well as the improvement of the compensation of the costs of parenthood to the employers. The working group presented proposals to increase the share of fathers and to achieve a more even distribution of family responsibilities. The working group also analysed alternative ways to compensate the costs caused by parental leaves to the employer. The purpose of the proposals is to promote the position of women on the labour market as well as to support the career development of women. The aim of the Government is to increase the leaves earmarked for fathers, to make the use of parental leaves more flexible for fathers and to enable the care of children at home with the support of a parental allowance for a longer time than what currently is possible.

## Article 12

### 28 Health promotion

#### 28.1 Smoking and intoxicants

198. In 2010, 20 percent of the population smoked daily. Sixteen percent of adult women and 23 percent of men smoke daily. About 6 percent of adult Finns smoke occasionally. In the age group of 15 to 24 year old men, 17 percent smoke daily and 6 percent occasionally. The corresponding rates for women in the same age group were 18 and 8 percent. In 2010, 79 percent of Finnish women aged 15 to 64 were non-smokers, whereas the corresponding figure for men was 71 percent. Smoking among women remained the same since the mid-1980s, but has decreased in recent years. One percent of the women in the age group 15 to 24 years snuffed occasionally.

199. According to a study by the National Institute for Health and Welfare, alcohol consumption among women has sextupled and alcohol consumption among men has doubled in 40 years. According to the book "Suomi juo" (Finland drinks), which is based on the study on drinking habits, the share of alcohol consumed by women has increased from 12 to 26 percent. The share of non-drinkers has decreased from 40 percent to 10 percent during the last 40 years. The age group 50 to 69 years had the largest share of non-drinking women. The share of women who consume alcohol on a weekly basis increased from 10 percent to a third. The biggest increase has occurred in regard to large quantities of alcohol, which is consumption of eight or more servings. Persons in the age group 30 to 49 years most frequently use alcohol every week or more often, and persons aged 15 to 29 least often. However, the youngest age group drinks more often larger quantities of alcohol than persons aged 30 to 49 or 50 to 69 years. The increase in alcohol consumption among women during the last four decades, may be due to, *inter alia*, the development of equality, personal relationships expanding outside of the realm of the home and family, as well as more freedom of movement in regard to money and leisure time. The change in women's consumption of alcohol has also meant a change in alcohol culture. Especially drinking alcoholic beverages at home has increased. Even though women drink more actively than before, they suffer more than men from the drinking of others. Almost half of the women recount that they have been scared of intoxicated persons on the streets during the 12 months period preceding the survey. A fourth of men recount having been scared of intoxicated persons.

#### 28.2 Mental health and substance use among young persons

200. The Child Welfare Act (417/2007), which entered into force in the beginning of 2008, obligates the municipalities to organise services of school psychologists and school counsellors as part of the preventive child welfare activities. The law obliges the municipal authorities to cooperate among themselves in the provision of early support and in promotion of the well-being of children and young persons.

201. The objective of the decree issued by the Government on child and maternity health clinics, school and student health care as well as on preventive dental care for children and youth (338/2011) is to intensify early detection of mental health disorders and substance abuse, as well as to intensify support measures and referrals to treatment. The objective of the decree is to promote a healthy lifestyle and mental health. The decree contains provision on interventions regarding nutrition and bullying and obliges the authorities to attach attention also to the mental health and substance abuse of the parents of the children and young persons.

202. The Health Care Act (1326/2010), which entered into force on 1 May 2011, obligates municipalities to organise child and maternity health clinic services as well as

school and student health care services in cooperation with other actors. Health information and examinations promoting mental health and life skills also include young persons not covered by student or occupational health care. The purpose of the medical exam is to promote mental health and coping. The Health Care Act stresses that children and young persons must gain access to mental health services without delay. According to the act, the assessment of care needs of persons under 23 years should be carried out within six weeks and care should be provided within three months.

203. Efforts have been made to improve the monitoring of mental health and substance abuse among young persons. The scope of the school health survey regularly being carried out in primary, secondary and upper secondary schools was in the beginning of 2008 broadened to also cover upper secondary vocational learning institutions. The survey contained an indicator to identify depression.

204. The national mental health and substance abuse plan of 2009 presents guidelines for the development of mental health and substance abuse work by 2015. The municipal mental health and substance abuse work is primarily carried out in the everyday living environment of children and young persons, such as in homes, daycare and schools.

205. The National programme for the development of social welfare and health care contains several projects to develop the services for children and young persons. In the results of the preliminary follow-up study carried out in 2007 to 2008, statistically significant improvements were noticed in the mood, anxiety symptoms, quality of life, functioning and psychosis risk symptoms of the young persons constituting the target group of the study.

206. Questions related to the mental health of the pupils are challenges for both school health care and student welfare services in basic education. The purpose of health education is to promote knowledge that supports the health, well-being and security of students. Health education is taught to ninth graders.

207. According to the school health survey for 8th and 9th graders, approximately 13 percent of the age group reported having suffered from severe or moderate depression during the period of 2004 to 2010. Girls still experience depression more than boys. Mental health disorders in early youth are more common among boys than among girls, but from the early youth on, girls are more frequently affected than boys.

208. Eating disorders of women are increasing, but there are considerable regional differences in the treatment of them.

209. Substance abuse among girls has been growing. The downward trend of binge drinking stopped in the age group 14 to 16 years. Binge drinking among 18 year old young women was the highest during the 30 year research period.

210. Suicide among Finnish youth under the age of 18 has decreased since the beginning of the 1990's. However, in 2005 to 2008 the number of suicides among both boys and girls increased. Especially the share of girls is large in an international comparison. According to a child victim survey published in 2008, boys experience relatively more violence outside the home and among friends, whereas girls experience more violence at home.

### **28.3 Pupil welfare**

211. The Basic Education Act has been amended in regard to student welfare and confidentiality and handling of data (642/2010). In connection with the amendments to the Basic Education Act, the working conditions of student welfare were improved. Student welfare is concerned with the basic prerequisites for learning of children and young persons as well as their physical, psychological and social well-being. The objective of the student welfare work is to create a secure school environment for learning, to protect mental health

and to prevent exclusion, to promote well-being of the school community as well as early intervention.

212. The Ministry of Education and Culture initiated measures to develop student welfare in 2007. Municipalities and regions have been granted state subsidies for the development of the quality and service structure of student welfare services. Through these development activities the Ministry specifically endeavours to promote preventive models, to strengthen cooperation between different administrative branches in order to secure the well-being of children and young persons as well as to support the realisation of the curricula in municipalities.

213. Organisers of education and training have jointly developed operating models for the improvement of the comprehensive health of pupils and students. Cooperation with the parents is considered important.

#### **28.4 Elderly and persons affected by memory disorders**

214. The gap between the expected lifespan of women and men is shrinking. In all of the oldest age groups, the majority is women. 75 percent of the clients of services for elderly persons are women. In all age categories, there are more women than men with dementia symptoms as clients of services. In the future, it is important to pay attention to gender differences in regard to persons affected by memory disorders.

#### **29 Health during pregnancy**

215. The health and well-being of expecting mothers is monitored comprehensively through the services of prenatal clinics. In Finland almost all women use the free maternity services of the public health care system. Only a small part use private services. In order to obtain the maternity grant, a visit at the maternity clinic or a doctor is required before the 16th pregnancy week. The task of the maternity clinic is to secure and promote the health and well-being of the pregnant woman, the foetus and the newborn baby, as well as the whole family that is expecting a new member. During a pregnancy that is advancing normally, the pregnant mother visits the maternity clinic 12 to 15 times and undergoes examinations by a doctor 2 to 3 times. The mother is given the opportunity to screenings of chromosome and structural abnormalities of the foetus during pregnancy in accordance with the nationwide screening programme. The national maternal health service recommendation from 1999 for health care professionals is being updated.

216. The average age of women giving birth has for a long time been 30 years in Finland (30.1 years in 2010). The share of deliveries by women over 35 years was 18 percent of all women giving birth in 2010. Every third woman giving birth is overweight (BMI over 25). The share of women smoking during pregnancy is as high as it was at the end of the 80s, that is 15 percent. In 2010, a little more than a third of women smokers giving birth announced that they had quit smoking. The corresponding figure was 11 percent in the beginning of the 1990s.

217. The perinatal death rate is low in Finland, 4.0 per one thousand children being born. The share of caesarean sections has for a long time stayed at the same level and was 16.3 percent of all deliveries in 2010.

218. The amount of terminations continued to drop in 2010. A total of 10 242 terminations were performed, i.e. 2 percent less than in the previous year. There were 8.8 terminations performed per one thousand women aged 15 to 49. The amount of terminations has dropped quite evenly in the second half of the 2000s. This is mainly due to the fact that terminations among women under 20 years has decreased. Most of the terminations are still performed on women in the age group 20 to 24 years.

**30 Sexually transmitted diseases**

219. Chlamydia is common among young persons. Since 2002, the amount of chlamydia infections among young persons has decreased. In 2010, 12 825 new infections were reported, which is less than the 13 317 infections in 2009. Among the infected persons, 59 percent were women. The majority of the cases were detected in women 15 to 24 years of age (73 percent) and in men 20 to 29 years of age (66 percent). As in previous years, the number of infections in the age group of persons younger than 20 years was considerably bigger among women (2449) than among men (719).

220. The number of gonorrhoea cases continued to grow in 2010 in comparison to earlier years. 257 cases of gonorrhoea were reported to the National Infectious Disease Register. 75 percent of the cases were men. A majority of the infections (79 percent) was found in the age group of persons 15 to 39 years. 42 percent of the infections originated abroad. The majority of the infections were from Thailand (45 cases).

221. In 2010, 209 cases of syphilis were reported, i.e. almost the same amount as in 2009. 64 percent of the cases were found in men. Most of the cases were detected in the age category 25 to 54 years, 68 percent.

222. The number of reported new HIV infections was 188 in 2010, which was 10 more than in the previous year and the same as during the peak year 2006. 70 percent of the infections were detected in men and 30 percent in women. By the end of 2010, a total of 2778 HIV cases were found in Finland. The number of confirmed HIV infections has increased: the number of infections confirmed during the 2000s is more than 60 percent of all confirmed infections in Finland. The reasons for the growth of the number of infections are the increase in infections contracted in heterosexual sex and sex between men.

**Article 13**

223. In regard to the Article, reference is made to previous periodic reports.

**Article 14****31 Rural development**

224. The skewed gender structure, and especially the migration of educated women from more remote regions, is one of the obstacles to a balanced regional development in Finland. The promotion of gender equality is linked to the competitiveness and attraction of regions through a balanced population structure, jobs, business activities and services.

225. The comprehensive rural policy programme 2009 to 2013 contains 15 strategic guidelines and measures to implement them. Municipalities have an important role in the realisation of the policies. Many of the policies directly concern activities of persons, and the measures have direct or indirect repercussions for the life, working, moving, studying, leisure time and well-being of persons. Equality is promoted by striving to remedy the situation of the gender whose situation is weaker.

226. Because the migration of women from rural areas is so strong that it threatens the vitality of rural communities, special attention has been attached to the increase of employment and entrepreneurship possibilities for women. The gender impact of the general programme has been taken into account especially in regard to housing and services, entrepreneurship and work, know-how as well as in regard to civil activity and local development. In the follow-up of the programme, particular attention is attached to the realisation of equality between women and men. For instance, several of the measures

aiming at promoting rural life, service and culture also promote the general accessibility of services and employment in the service sectors. Especially well-being services and cultural services provide employment for women.

227. Measures aiming at increasing the security of rural people are important from the point of view of all rural inhabitants. However, *inter alia*, violence is strongly gender specific in Finland. Women constitute a large majority of the victims of domestic violence, and this should be taken into account in the planning of services for the realisation of prevention and care measures in domestic violence cases. The issue is particularly important in sparsely populated areas.

228. In many families, women have a larger share of the responsibility for various care functions. The availability and proximity of day-care for children is very important for women, who still often face challenges in reconciling work and family responsibilities. A well-functioning public transportation system supports working women in families with one car and promotes the mobility especially of women. Organising services in villages promotes the welfare of the local community as a whole, especially that of women working at home and elderly women. It is important to also take exclusion into account when developing rural services.

229. The fact that women leave the countryside more actively than men has in certain places led to a very uneven gender structure. Being single is more and more common among the men staying in the countryside. Issues related to welfare must be analysed taking into account both genders and their special features.

230. Developing the possibility for telework brings flexibility to working life and thus increases enjoyment and well-being. Developing a flexible working life is especially important for women who are more comprehensively affected by the challenges of combining nurturing tasks and paid work.

231. Efforts are made to rectify the imbalanced gender distribution at work places by diversifying the business structure and by developing service branches as well as the availability of services. In Finland, the supply of basic services is a special responsibility of the municipalities. The purpose of the measures aiming at promoting know-how and education is to attach attention to the possibilities and interest in rural occupations of both girls and boys.

## **Article 15**

232. In Finland, women and men are equal according to the law, as stipulated in Article 15 of the Convention. In this regard, reference is made to previous periodic reports.

## **Article 16**

233. Annex 14 of the report contains Finland response to resolution A/RES/64/145 on the status of the girl child. Otherwise, reference is made to previous Periodic Reports.

### **Monitoring the implementation of the concluding observations, dissemination of information and promoting the visibility of the Convention**

#### **32 Raising awareness of the Convention and the Committee's concluding observations**

234. In order to promote the visibility of and the dissemination of information on the Convention and its Optional Protocol, the web pages of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs contain information in different languages on the Convention, its Optional Protocol as well

as on the General Recommendations published by the Committee during the reporting period. (Concluding observations, paras. 14 and 41.) The Ministry for Foreign Affairs had the concluding observations of the Committee translated into Finnish and Swedish. The concluding observations were distributed widely, *inter alia*, to all ministries for further distribution within their administrative branches, to the Government of Åland in Swedish as well as widely to non-governmental organisations. The texts of the concluding observations have also been made available at different seminars and other events focusing especially on the rights of women and human rights. The concluding observations are also posted on the website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

235. Issues related to women's equality have been comprehensively covered also in the human rights report compiled by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2009. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has also organised seminars within the scope of its competence on certain concerns raised in the concluding observations of the Committee. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs acknowledges the need for further information and endeavours to promote the knowledge of the international human rights conventions ratified by Finland and their contents. Other Ministries have also disseminated information on the Convention within their own administrative branches.

236. The efforts of the non-governmental organisations working with equality issues to disseminate information on the Convention have been very important. In the summer of 2010, at the Suomi Areena summer event in Pori, the Advisory Board on Equality, jointly with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the National Council of Women of Finland and the Women's Network of the Parliament, organised an event to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Finland's adoption of the UN Bill of Rights for Women.

### **33 Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action**

237. Paragraphs on gender equality and improvement of the status of women have become established in the Finnish Government Programmes since the 1990's. Gender equality is also a cross-cutting theme of the Development Policy Programme of Finland. Evaluations of the cross-cutting themes have shown that further measures are needed for the effective achievement of the objectives.

238. The first Government report in Finland on equality between women and men was completed in 2010. The report outlines the future equality policy of the Government until 2020. The report recognises the important influence of the Beijing Platform for Action for Finnish equality policy and its selection of tools. One of the objectives of the report is to pay broad attention to the Beijing Platform for Action in order to highlight, in the future equality policy more clearly than before, the substance areas covered in the Platform, such as poverty and economic policy.

239. Organisations working with equality issues have criticised that neither the Beijing declaration and the Platform for Action nor the Convention are mentioned in the paragraphs on equality of the latest Government Programmes or in the Equality Programmes.

### **34 Promotion of the UN MDGs**

240. The status of women is one of the cross-cutting themes of Finnish development policy for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The status and the role of women have been given a central theme in climate policy. Its implementation is being realised and promoted, *inter alia*, with international organisations. Finland also supports the participation of female delegates in climate negotiations. There is also an Ambassador for Gender and Equality at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to strengthen the mainstreaming of equality issues.

241. Increasing attention is paid to the impact of monitoring and implementation of cross-cutting themes in the new development policy programme. In order to strengthen mainstreaming, various measures and projects to improve the status of women have been supported. It is essential to secure adequate funding. Finland participated actively in UN Women, but the financial contribution of Finland to UN Women is more modest than that of other Nordic Countries.

242. An important mechanism for the promotion of equality is the Security Council resolution 1325 "Women, Peace and Security", which endeavours to strengthen the status and decision-making power of women in crisis management activities. The Finnish National Plan of Action for the years 2008 to 2011 was adopted in September 2009. The Plan of Action is divided into three main topics. One of the topics addresses the status and participation of women in the prevention of conflicts, in peace negotiations and in peace-building. The second topic covers training and the practical realisation of operations related to crisis management. The third addresses better realisation of human rights. The objectives of the Plan of Action are promoted on the national level as part of the Government Programme. The realisation of the Plan of Action is monitored systematically by means of a monitoring group. The Plan of Action is realised and the measures are planned in cooperation with the actors of the conflict regions, especially with women and women groups.

243. Finland has supported the promotion of gender equality in many development cooperation projects. The implementation of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action should be the focus of the development policy objectives. Finland also supports the activities of numerous non-governmental organisations with development cooperation funds. Finland participates actively in the activities of actors involved in and steering development cooperation, especially within the framework of the EU, UN, OECD and OSCE.

244. Together with Liberia, Finland organised an international women leadership conference in 2009. As a result of the conference, the resolutions "Women, peace and security" and "Women and climate change" were adopted.

### **35 Ratification of other human rights agreements**

245. Finland is currently preparing the ratification process of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

246. The ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is being prepared in a working group appointed in May 2011, whose term expires at the end of 2013. The ratification of the convention is among the objectives of the Government Programme of Prime Minister Katainen.

247. The ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families has been presented to Parliament. The convention has up till now not been ratified. The Finnish policy is in line with the policy of other EU countries.