

Denmark

Response from the Danish Government to the Questionnaire to Governments on Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcome of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000)

For preparation of regional review and appraisals in the context of the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2010

Part One: Overview of achievements and challenges in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment

Introduction:

Gender equality is a pivotal element of Denmark's democracy and a basic principle of Danish politics. It is an element based on respect for human rights and on fundamental freedoms in all areas of society - in political, economic, social, cultural and civil spheres of life. Denmark aims at securing de jure as well as de facto gender equality for women and men. Women and men have the same rights, obligations and opportunities in all fields of society.

Policy on gender equality

The Gender Equality Board handles actual complaints about discriminatory treatment of women and men. By 1 January 2009 a new general complaints board to consider complaints regarding discrimination based on gender, race, colour of the skin, religion or faith, age, disability or national, social or ethnic origin, political views or sexual orientation was established. With the set up of the new complaints board, the Gender Equality Board was closed down. The new board includes a chairman and two deputy chairmen who are judges as well as nine other members, who must be attorneys and who are to be appointed by the Minister for Employment subject to recommendation by the Minister for Gender Equality and the Minister for Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs. It is required that the nine members are independent of the nominating authority and have expert knowledge of the gender equality legislation, the legislation on equal treatment of all irrespective of race or ethnic origin, or the legislation on the prohibition of discrimination in the labour market as well as knowledge of the conditions on the labour market.

In May 2006, the Danish Parliament adopted an amendment to the Act on Gender Equality. By this amendment the provisions on an equal gender composition on councils, boards and committees etc. set up by a minister are extended so that also municipalities and regions are required to ensure that equal numbers of women and men are nominated for positions on councils, boards and committees etc. The Act came into force immediately after having been passed.

In 2007, Executive Order on initiatives to promote gender equality (*Executive Order no. 340 of 10 April 2007*) took effect. The Executive Order makes it possible to target pilot and development initiatives at one of the genders for a period of up to two years in order to attract the under-represented gender. The Executive Order is directed at state and local government authorities.

In addition to the above-mentioned legislation, Danish law applies an unwritten, but legally binding, administrative equality principle prohibiting unequal treatment because of gender and ethnic origin, etc. This principle is binding on public employers, public employment services and all other public bodies.

Implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy - Action Plans on Gender Mainstreaming

In the period 2004-2008, the overall priority for the national gender equality work in all ministries has been the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy. Gender mainstreaming as the fundamental principle for gender equality work is affirmed by law in the Act on Gender Equality. Individual ministers, regions and municipalities are responsible for promoting gender equality within their own fields, whereas the function of the Minister for Gender Equality is to coordinate and monitor with respect to the Government's overall gender equality efforts.

In the public sector, the effort to develop gender mainstreaming was initiated with an inter-ministerial action plan for 2002-2006. The action plan was evaluated in 2006. The main conclusions were predominantly positive. The project had been valuable for the ministries and had to a very high degree contributed to implementing section 4 of the Act on Gender Equality stating that public authorities are required to incorporate gender equality in all planning and administration. The evaluation recommended that the project be continued. At the same time, attention was drawn to the need for increasing focus on the management of the project in the individual ministries, and it was recommended that the project form of the action should in future strengthen the incorporation and cooperation at a high level.

The new "Action plan for the inter-ministerial gender mainstreaming project 2007-2011" follows the recommendations from the evaluation so that the future work with gender mainstreaming in the ministries will be differentiated. The new action plan for inter-ministerial collaboration therefore has a focus on implementation, embedding, differentiation and management. Another central difference from the first action plan is that, based on the principle of proportionality, every ministry required, as far as possible, to formulate mainstreaming initiatives that incorporate:

- 1) A gender equality policy in their own core area, with gender equality policy objectives,
- 2) Specific objectives for implementing and building competency in gender mainstreaming, and
- 3) Specific activities that are to be gender mainstreamed.

The first results have already emerged. In 2008 all ministries formulated gender equality policies and an e-learning course was launched. See this link: <http://lige.dk/dkmd/index.html>

All ministries, regions and municipalities are by law obliged to send in a gender equality report every second year. In the gender equality reports, they have to report on gender equality policies they have adopted and on their gender equality policy aims. A status report and a web based data overview based on the reports were published in January 2008. This allows every citizen in Denmark to consider how their local government as well as the national government deals with gender equality issues. Furthermore it gives a statistical overview of women's and men's participation in public and professional life.

Partnerships with NGOs

Denmark has a long history of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) taking active part in the work to promote gender equality between women and men, both in national policy and programs

and international development policy and cooperation. Especially Danish Women's Society and Women's Council in Denmark, which is an umbrella organisation for 52 women's societies and organisations with a total of more than one million members, strive to ensure women's rights and influence everywhere in society. The Minister for Gender Equality supports the activities of the Women's Council in Denmark with an annual allocation of DKK 1.2 million out of an annual budget of DKK 14.4 million.

The primary function of the above-mentioned NGOs is to act as a watchdog vis-à-vis public initiatives and policies, as well as to participate actively in the public debate in order to promote gender equality between women and men nationally and internationally in development cooperation and aid policies. This also involves disseminating knowledge about the CEDAW Convention.

One of the strengths of the official Danish gender equality work is that it, to a very high degree, takes place in close cooperation and dialogue with NGOs and experts in the field. NGOs and experts are often consultation parties regarding new initiatives from the Government. In this regard attention should be drawn especially to the Government's initiatives to combat violence against women and trafficking in women. NGOs and experts are often responsible for the implementation of the projects under these national action plans.

Every three months, the Department of Gender Equality holds meetings with a number of women organisations as well as all other relevant actors in the field of gender equality, like the National Organisation of Shelters for Battered Women and Children (LOKK).

The NGOs participate in the official Danish delegations to UN conferences and meetings. They also take part in major conferences and meetings under the auspices of the EU and the Nordic countries.

Men and boys

The aim of the overall strategy on gender mainstreaming is to improve the conditions for both men and women. The strategy will ensure that resources and initiatives reach the correct target groups, either men or women or both.

Specific initiatives for men have also been initiated. In January 2009 the Minister for Gender Equality supported the first official Nordic conference arranged by the Nordic Society for research on Men and Masculinities. The aim of the conference was to exchange and gather knowledge from research on men and masculinities in 'the gender equal Nordic countries'. The objective was to further strengthen the understanding and theorizing of Nordic masculinities and men's conditions and experiences.

In 2008 the Minister for Gender Equality initiated a project targeted towards both boys and girls in kindergartens and day-care. The initiative aimed at minimizing stereotypes in the kindergartens. The project addressed the kindergarten teachers through an inspirational guide that contained good advices on how to change the often stereotypic behaviour towards girls and boys. Alongside the inspirational guide a book for children was published. The book was to be used as a pedagogical tool.

In August 2007, the Minister for Gender Equality launched a nationwide campaign under the heading: "Be a man – Say no to violence against women". The key idea of the campaign was to present the typical excuses made by perpetrators of violence and in some cases also by the victims

of violence, e.g. “My wife fell on the bathroom floor again”, “My girlfriend walked into a door again” or “My wife fell down the stairs again”. The campaign included posters on public buses, advertisements, TV spots and a campaign with role models - www.voldmodkvinder.dk. A subsequent assessment of the campaign showed that men who had seen it had changed attitude and condemned violence against women to a greater extent.

Gender equality and climate change

Women and men affect the environment differently and are affected differently by climate change. The gender distribution in climate related decision-making processes is also out of balance. With this in mind the Nordic Ministers for Gender Equality, under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers, decided in May 2008 to focus on gender equality and climate changes. As a follow-up of the ministerial meeting a Nordic Summit on Gender and Climate Changes was arranged in February 2009. At the conference, participants drafted concrete recommendations on gender equality and climate change, in preparation for the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 15) to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009. Furthermore this project was presented at a side-event at CSW in March 2009 in New York. A Desk Study and short film on Gender Equality and Climate Changes have been produced under the Nordic project.

Danish initiated MDG3 Global Call to Action.

In 2008 the Danish Government launched a “MDG3 Global Call to Action”. The objectives are to ensure higher political priority of gender equality and women’s empowerment and increased financial allocations at international as well at country level.

The MDG3 Torch has been at the heart of the “MDG3 Global Call to Action”. Representatives from governments, donors, international organizations, the private sector and civil society as well as influential individuals have accepted a MDG3 Torch and thus made commitment to “do something extra” for gender equality and women’s empowerment. The idea is that everybody can make a difference within his/her sphere of influence.

The campaign has been successful. More than 100 have accepted a torch. Amongst them the President of the World Bank, Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton from the United States of America, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, The Presidents of Malawi, Tanzania and Liberia and numerous other actors. All the MDG3 torch bearers form a Global Coalition in support of MDG3 and are expected to collaborate in different formations beyond their individual commitments to ensure the implementation of MDG3 in the run-up to 2015. MDG3 is an end in its own right and an important mean by which to achieve all the other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The implementation of all the MDG3 commitments will be reported on in 2010 and by a midterm status in Sept. 2009. More information on the “MDG3 Global Call to Action” can be found on: www.mdg3action.um.dk

Part two: Progress in the implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and the further initiatives and actions identified in the twenty-third special session of the general assembly

The Danish Government is actively working towards reaching the goal of gender equality. The examples in Part II does not profess to be an exhaustive account of the Danish implementation of the Platform for Action and Beijing+5 but merely contains examples of successful policies, obstacles and new initiatives taken in the period 2005-2009, within the critical areas of concern.

A. Women and poverty

Services under the Danish Act on Social Services are gender mainstreamed. However, the provisions on refugees in the Act constitute an exemption, as they are reserved for women.

Gender mainstreamed services mean that women and men enjoy equal opportunities to obtain help and support under the provisions of the Act on Social Services. Denmark is characterised by having a comprehensive system of transfer payments and services that are available to all Danes - irrespective of their gender. Where transfer payments ensure temporary or permanent basic income support, services generally contribute to strengthening individuals' personal resources. Services improve the individual citizen's access to participating in the social community and the labour market.

The right and opportunity to apply for temporary or permanent support services are governed by legislation issued by the Ministry of Employment.

B. Education and training of women

In all legislation and the educational policy and sector the overall precondition is equality regardless i.e. gender and ethnic origin. All educational opportunities are open to all citizens. In Denmark, the proportion of girls and boys taking a higher education is equally large, and the trend is that girls enter the educational system to a higher degree than boys. See table below covering percentages for women and men by completed highest level of education.

Women and men by completed highest level of education, 2006-2008 (in percent)

	2006		2007		2008	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Basic	33,4	32,4	32,7	32,2	32,3	32,4
Secondary	9,3	7,8	9,3	7,9	9,3	7,9
Vocational	30,7	36,8	30,6	36,6	30,4	36,2
Short higher	4,1	5,7	4,2	5,8	4,2	5,8
Medium	17,5	10,3	17,9	10,3	18,2	10,4

higher						
Long higher	4,8	6,6	5,1	6,7	5,4	6,9
Research	0,2	0,4	0,2	0,5	0,3	0,5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Girls' and boys' choice of education is, however, highly gender segregated. In the recent years, the Danish Ministry of Education has focused on gender mainstreaming in the following areas:

- Guidance about youth education
- Upper secondary education (gymnasium)
- Labour market education
- Health care education
- Agricultural education

Regarding education for women and men with a non-Danish ethnic and/or cultural background, existing research suggests that there are many indications that men encounter the greatest barriers in the educational system, whereas women encounter the greatest barriers on the labour market, among others due to family duties.

Initiatives in relation to gender stereotyping

In Denmark girls and boys, women and men enjoy equal right to and equal opportunities at all level from pre-school to higher education, in all sorts of training and vocational guidance and in adult and lifelong education during leisure time. Overall legislation is in place to secure equality between the genders and thereby women from minority groups as well.

The Danish Ministry of Education has supported and is in the process of supporting several projects aimed at enhancing equality in primary and lower secondary education, including:

- Educational material covering ethnicity, gender and equality. The material will be easily accessible and will combine information with the pupil's own experiences and thoughts in order to promote the elimination of gender specific barriers and to enhance the integration of girls and boys with an ethnic minority background into the Danish society.
- A research project on why boys with an ethnic minority background perform more poorly in primary and lower secondary education than girls with an ethnic minority background and girls and boys with an ethnic Danish background.
- Homework assistance projects specifically targeting girls.
- "Cherry club" - a project aimed at helping girls in grades 5 to 7 develop a healthier lifestyle through activities introducing healthy eating and exercise habits.
- Experiments with gender segregated science teaching in order to adapt the teaching to the educational needs of girls and boys respectively.

Act on guidance

The primary legislation on guidance is the Act on guidance in relation to the choice of education, training and career (Act no 298 of April 30 2003), which came into force on August 1 2004. The act introduced the so-called guidance reform, with the purpose to create a simpler and more transparent guidance system in Denmark. The act thus resulted in fundamental changes in several parts of the guidance system. In the guidance reform there is - among other issues - focus on equality between the sexes. As a part of the guidance reform greater demands to the education in guidance has been

made. The objective has been to increase professionalism in connection with groups with special needs, among others women of minority groups.

Young people's choice of education and job

In Denmark, the proportion of girls and boys taking a higher education is large. The trend is that girls enter the educational system to a higher degree than boys. Girls' and boys' choice of education is, however, highly gender segregated.

Therefore, in 2006 the Minister for Gender Equality set up a website www.lige-frem.dk. The purpose is to draw attention to gender-based educational choices and thereby enable young people to focus to a greater extent on their competencies than on their gender when choosing an education and job. The website is targeted at parents, career counsellors and young women and men. It contains examples of young people who have chosen an untraditional career, quizzes, power point presentations for parent-teacher meetings and theme days at school etc. The website is updated on an ongoing basis, and it receives approximately 10,000 visits a year on average out of a target group of approximately 70,000. The Department of Gender Equality has distributed material to draw attention to the website in 2007 and 2008.

C. Women and health

Women and men have equal access to health care services in Denmark, including those related to family planning. The government continuously evaluates the prioritisation of gender-related health issues and prevention programmes addressing health issues specific to women, such as breast cancer. From January 1 2009 and forward 12 years old girls are offered the HPV vaccine for cervical cancer free of charge. Research related to women's health is considered essential in Denmark. Women are included as subject of research on the same basis as men.

Right to abortion

In 1973 women's right to legally induced abortions was introduced in Denmark. According to the law all women in Denmark have the right to have an induced abortion before the end of the 12th week of pregnancy. From 2002 to 2006 there has been a minor but consistent increase in the abortion-rate among young women aged 15 – 19 years. In 2006 the abortion-rate was 16.3 per 1.000 women among women aged 15 – 19 years.

From 1999 – 2003 an action plan was implemented to decrease the number of induced abortions in Denmark. A total amount of DKK 20 million was granted to this plan. The action plan was continued from 2004 – 2007 where a total amount of DKK 14 million was granted to the continuation of activities to reduce the number of induced abortions. As a follow-up to the above-mentioned plan a total amount of DKK 19.2 million has been allocated (from 2008 – 2011) to support initiatives to reduce the number of induced abortion and sexually transmitted infections.

Obesity

The prevalence of overweight (BMI ≥ 25) and obesity (BMI ≥ 30) is increasing rapidly in Denmark as in the rest of the Western world. In 2005 11 percent of Danish women and 12 percent of men were obese. Effective methods and tools to prevent and to treat obesity need to be developed. Primary prevention includes a healthy diet and physical activity. A wide number of initiatives and

projects have been initiated to prevent and treat obesity, including projects targeting certain ethnic groups, which are at special risk of developing obesity - e.g. obese pregnant women.

Health and prevention for foreign women

An increasing part of the Danish population is made up of immigrants and descendents from immigrants. In 1980 immigrants and their descendents constituted 3.0 % of the total population and in 2005 the number was 8.4 %. In the past few years disease prevention and health promotion targeted at ethnic minorities have been a prioritized area for the Danish National Board of Health. This is also the case on local levels. In many municipalities promotion of health among ethnic minorities' has received much attention. Several initiatives have been implemented. Some of the initiatives focus on ethnic minorities in general and others on specific subgroups defined either by country of origin, gender or age group. Women have been the direct target group of several initiatives.

D. Violence against women

Violence against women is an infringement of the general provisions regarding violence etc. in the Danish Criminal Code. In addition, the Government regards violence against women as a reflection of a lack of equality and respect between women and men.

For further information on the initiatives taken in Denmark on combating violence against women and trafficking in women, please refer to Denmark's 7th periodic report to the CEDAW Committee. The national action plans to combat violence against women and the national action plans to combat trafficking in women can be downloaded from www.lige.dk under the publications menu (also available in English).

Partner-related violence against women

It is estimated that approximately 70,000 women aged 16-64 are exposed to physical violence on an annual basis. In 40 per cent of the total number of violence cases, the perpetrator is a present or former partner. This means that approximately 28,000 women aged 16-64 are the victims of partner violence every year. In the period 2000-2005, there was an estimated fall of one third (from 42,000 to 28,000) in the number of women victims of partner violence. It is estimated that approximately 29,000 children aged 0-15 are the victims of domestic violence on an annual basis. Approximately 2,000 women and a similar number of children move into shelter every year.

In 2002, the Government's first action plan to combat violence against women was launched (2002-2004). The first action plan contributed to breaking the taboo surrounding domestic violence against women but there is a need for maintaining focus on the problem. Therefore, on 20 April 2005 the Minister for Gender Equality presented a new four-year "Action Plan to Combat Men's Domestic Violence against Women and Children 2005-2008". The activities of the Action Plan for 2005-2008 focused on prevention and anchoring of the efforts within the four main goals to:

- Support the victims,
- Target activities at the perpetrator,
- Target activities at professionals,
- Promote knowledge and information.

For the period 2005-2008, a total of DKK 60 million was earmarked for the action plan. Subsequently, another DKK 48 million was allocated for a project under the heading “Support and treatment aimed at women and children victims of domestic violence”, as well as a total of DKK 15 million for the years 2007-2010 to strengthen treatment for violent men. The money has been allocated to three different treatment facilities in Denmark.

The government activities involve five ministries: the Ministry of Health and Prevention; the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of the Interior and Social Affairs and the Minister for Gender Equality. As chairman of the inter-ministerial working group to combat violence against women, the Department of Gender Equality holds the steering role regarding the implementation of the action plans. The inter-ministerial working group monitors the implementation and publishes an annual situation report on the implementation. The situation report is submitted to, among others, the Parliament.

An independent evaluation has been drawn up of the Government’s first action plan to combat violence against women 2002-2004. Similarly, an independent evaluation is being conducted of the most recent action plan. This evaluation is to constitute the background for future action to combat violence against women.

In 2004 an act was passed (law no. 449 of 9 June 2004) to ensure that a violent partner may be expelled from a joint home under certain conditions.

The Director of Public Prosecutions of Denmark and the National Commission of the Danish Police have created a general strategy in August of 2007 with the aim of intensifying efforts in combating crimes of passion, specifically homicide, and other crimes related to cohabitation. In executing this general strategy the Director of Public Prosecutions has issued guidelines regarding the application of rules on expulsion and restraining orders as well as investigation and legal proceedings in cases of domestic violence.

In 2005 and 2007 two acts were passed (law no. 558 of 24 June 2005 and law no. 517 of 6 June 2007) to ensure the legal position of victims of crime, including victims of violence and rape, during the proceedings of criminal cases. The acts contain e.g. rules on legal assistance and support and information.

All parties except one, in the Danish parliament decided in 2008 to continue the efforts to combat violence in the family and hence allocate DKK 35 million for the implementation of a National Strategy 2009-2012 to combat violence in intimate relations. The objective is to reduce the number of women, men and children, that are subject to violence in intimate relations and to strengthen the support and assistance to these victims. The national strategy has a holistic approach and will cover a broad range of issues relating to intimate violence. Victims, perpetrators, professionals and the broader public are all part of the target group for the initiatives over the coming years.

Trafficking

The Danish Criminal Code contains a specific provision (section 262A) which makes it an offense, with a maximum punishment of 8 years imprisonment, to participate in trafficking of human beings.

Since 2002 Danish efforts to combat trafficking in women have been embedded in national action plans. The Government has adopted a holistic approach towards victims of human trafficking. The

objective of the first action plan from 2002 was to test various methods and models to prevent trafficking of women and to support the victims. The core of the action plan was to establish outreach work where the women were staying and working, and to ensure that the victims were prepared for repatriation, if possible. A supplement to the 2002 action plan launched in 2005 contained a number of initiatives aimed at providing a reception for children trafficked to Denmark.

In October 2006, the 2002 action plan was evaluated. The main conclusion of the evaluation of the action plan of 2002 was that the overall activities had been implemented and significant experience had been obtained. The results were satisfying considering the fact that the plan was a pilot project.

In March 2007, the Government launched a new action plan for the fight against human trafficking 2007-2010. The objective of the 2007 action plan is to ensure that all women, men and children who are identified as victims of human trafficking are to be offered the right kind of support in their present situation and to provide them with an alternative to being trafficked once again. The 2007 action plan focuses on the following four action areas:

- Strengthening investigation efforts in order to identify and bring traffickers before justice,
- Supporting the victims by improving the social services in Denmark,
- Preventing human trafficking by limiting demand and increasing the population's knowledge of these matters,
- Preventing human trafficking by improving international cooperation, including improving preventive work in the exporting countries,

A total of DKK 80 million has been earmarked for the implementation of the initiatives in the action plan. The Danish action plan involves five ministries: the Ministry of Health and Prevention; the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of the Interior and Social Affairs and the Minister for Gender Equality. As chairman of the inter-ministerial working group to combat trafficking in women, the Department of Gender Equality holds the steering role regarding the implementation of the action plan. As part of the action plan the law was changed to allow victims of trafficking to stay in Denmark for a reflection period to allow for a prepared return for up to 100 days.

As a result of the evaluation of the previous action plan, it was decided to set up the Danish Anti-Trafficking Centre for the purpose of "securing prepared and coordinated treatment for potential victims of human trafficking while they are staying in Denmark". The Anti-Trafficking Centre serves several purposes: The Centre coordinates the National Referral Mechanism which has been established as a dialogue and reference system in regard to combating trafficking. The Centre coordinates and contributes to improving social activities in this area, also in regard to cross-sectoral efforts. The Centre constitutes the backbone of knowledge collection in this area by developing methods, drawing up annual situation reports and upgrading the employees' competencies etc. The Centre has set up both a national and regional reference group to ensure knowledge sharing between actors in the area, such as the police, social organisations and authorities etc. and between the local teams throughout the country. The Centre works closely with all relevant authorities, including the police to ensure that foreign women caught in prostitution get in contact with the outreach staff members from the Centre as soon as possible.

Residence permit

The Danish immigration authorities can revoke or refuse to extend a time-limited residence permit if the basis for the permit is no longer valid. This may be the case if a foreign national has received a residence permit on the grounds of marriage and the spouses no longer live together. In decisions on revocation of residence permits and refusal of extension of residence permits it must be taken into consideration whether the revocation or refusal is particularly burdensome in regard to the applicant's personal circumstances and will suffer injury or harm in his or her country of origin.

In decisions regarding residence permits issued on the basis of spousal reunification special attention to whether the basis of residence is no longer present because of cessation of cohabitation due to the fact that the alien concerned has been exposed to outrages, abuse or other ill-treatment etc. in Denmark. The Danish immigration authorities follow this particular area very closely and are currently focusing on any need for adjustment.

Since 2002 the practise has been as follows: The applicant must substantiate the invoked abuse. The assessment of whether the abuse is substantiated is based on an individual assessment and weighted against the information given by the parties of the case and the provided documentation. All kind of documentation can be put forward and enter into the assessment, e.g. reports from the police, emergency rooms, statements from doctors and women's safe houses and court judgements etc. In cases where the Danish immigration authorities find the invoked abuse substantiated the authorities make an assessment whether or not there is a link between the abuse and the cessation of cohabitation. The Danish immigration authorities will in cases where the abuse is substantiated and is assessed to be the real cause of the cessation of cohabitation, take into consideration whether revocation or refusal must be assumed to be particularly burdensome owing to the alien's personal circumstances and whether the applicant will suffer injury or harm in his or her country of origin. This decision is based on individual assessments and the circumstances in each case.

According to administrative practice foreigners who - due to abuse, cf. above - have left their spouses before receiving a permanent residence permit, are - depending on the level of attachment to Denmark - in general allowed to stay in Denmark, after approximately two years of residence.

E. Women in armed conflict

Denmark, the first country to develop a plan of action for implementation of UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security, has revised the plan and is implementing the new, revised plan for 2008-2013.

The plan has been formulated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Ministry of Defense and the National Police in an all-of-Government approach and in close cooperation with civil society (NGOs, researchers and other relevant actors).

The new plan of action is based on experiences and emphasizes focus on women's active participation in peace negotiations and conflict resolutions, active participation of civil society and civil-military cooperation.

The Danish Armed Forces have implemented the UNSCR 1325 in international operations in a number of ways:

- By developing a policy for UNSCR 1325 in international operations with Danish participation.
- By assessing where and how UNSCR 1325 can be included in relevant management documents.
- By considering the 1325-perspective, to extent possible, in the composition of Danish contingents.
- By including women, peace and security as part of cultural competences.
- By including knowledge of UNSCR 1325 in mission specific training.
- By enhancing formal and systematic collection and analysis of UNSCR 1325 specific information.

The 1325-integration is monitored and will be revised at the latest by revision of the national action plan.

Women constitute 17.5 % of all employed in the armed forces. 6.4 % of the military staff, 40.7 % of the civilian staff. In 2004 the figures were 5.5 % and 39.8 %. In 2008 157 women participated in military operations, equivalent to 6.1 % of the posted personnel.

In 2008 469 women were employed on terms for those on compulsory military service (women are not liable for military service) and 32.4 % continued in the armed forces. In 2007 only 24.6% continued.

The armed forces have developed three overall objectives in regard to gender equality:

1. More women in the armed forces.
2. More women at decision making levels.
3. Women in international operations.

In order to improve the ability to recruit and retain women and to increase the number of women at decision-making levels a number of initiatives are implemented:

- All recruiting material is gender mainstreamed. A special website for women has been established and “inspiration days” for women to inform on training and job opportunities have been introduced.
- Gender-linked insulting behaviour is actively prevented.
- Demands on physical strengths are gender segregated.
- The competence system is gender mainstreamed.
- Networking among women in the armed forces are supported.
- A specific system to promote young female officers has been developed.
- Focus on debates on women and leadership has been strengthened.

F. Women and the economy

Women in the workforce in Denmark

Danish women have the highest employment rate among European women at 73.7 percent. In 2007, the workforce that includes all employed and unemployed persons totalled 2.82 million full-time persons. Women accounted for 1.32 million of these, which corresponds to 46.8 percent of the entire workforce. The number of persons in the workforce has been falling slightly since 2002 for

men, whereas it has remained fairly stable for women. Women's and men's extensive participation in the labour market remains an essential prerequisite of the Government's employment policy. The gender equality policy in the employment field is based on this fact and is, in particular, targeted at dismantling the gender-segregated labour market, reducing gender pay gaps and reconciling work and family life.

Gender mainstreaming is an important tool to promote gender equality. Gender impact assessments of the labour market legislation are essential in order to understand the gender perspectives within the core services of the Ministry of Employment and provide knowledge to improve the functionality of the services, including promoting gender equality.

Unemployment rate

In general, women's unemployment rate is higher than men's. The trend is that men's and women's unemployment rates follow the same pattern. Unemployment for both men and women has basically been decreasing since 2003 although the unemployment has grown for both women and men since the end of 2008. In January 2009, the unemployment rate among women was 2.2 percent, whereas 2.8 percent of men in the workforce were unemployed.

The gender-segregated labour market and the pay differentials

The gender-segregated labour market is considered the most important reason for the pay differentials between women and men. Women and men work in different sectors. Women dominate the local government sector and men are employed in the private and state sectors to a much higher degree. Furthermore few women are employed in the construction sector while the office sector remains dominated by women.

On average men earn more than women. The naked pay differentials reflect among other things differences in the trades they work in, differences in the jobs they perform, and differences in the personal characteristics such as educational level and work experience. Today discrimination is a minor problem. In 2007 there was a pay differential of 14.1 percent in the hourly earnings in the private sector. In the local government sector women's hourly earnings were 13.5 percent lower than for men. In the state sector men earn on average 8.3 percent more than women.

Concrete initiatives on the gender-segregated labour market and equal pay

In relation to the Government's gender equality strategy, the following concrete initiatives have been taken in recent years:

The Government's effort on equal pay and the gender-segregated labour market is very complex and is conducted in dialogue with companies and the social partners in recognition of the fact that promoting equal pay takes place at the workplace and during the collective bargaining.

The Equal Pay Act provides protection against discrimination and both the Gender Equality Board and industrial arbitration deal with such cases. The website www.ligelon.dk presents an overview of what cases have been settled by the European Court of Justice, the courts of law, industrial arbitration and the Gender Equality Board.

The social partners are aware of their crucial role in this field. It is therefore thoroughly debated how a change of attitude amongst companies and employees can increase women's access to well-paid male dominated jobs. The debate takes place, among others, at equal pay seminars organised

by the Ministry of Employment where researchers and experts discuss various gender equality issues.

The knowledge of the pay gap between women and men is to be used in the enterprises and to exert influence on collective agreements. As much as possible, experiences should be collected in databases and tool boxes as 'best practices' and used to inspire both enterprises and social partners.

One of the initiatives is an equal pay guide, which is to promote the enterprises' work on gender equality and equal pay. The guide offers an insight into why women and men do not earn the same. The guide gathers knowledge, points of view and presents practical advice on how enterprises, union representatives and employees can take part in the work on equal pay. In 2008, the equal pay guide has been supplemented with a corporate guide on the gender-segregated labour market. The aim of the guide is to support enterprises use of women's and men's talents in as many different work functions as possible.

As of 1 January 2007, all major enterprises are required to draw up gender-segregated pay statistics. Many enterprises are for the first time required to work on equal pay. Cooperation on equal pay in the enterprises becomes a top priority. Therefore, it is the enterprises that already have gathered experience from joint consultation committees that are to draw up gender-segregated pay statistics. It is only major enterprises that are required to do so. However, the results of the new statistics will hopefully be that the good experiences they have gained from promoting equal pay between women and men will spread to other enterprises.

Both the equal pay guide and a guide on gender-segregated pay statistics are available on the website www.ligelon.dk. On this website, all material is gathered that may assist enterprises in their efforts to ensure equal pay between women and men. On the website there are, furthermore, a number of examples from enterprises that have worked actively on equal pay and the gender-segregated labour market.

Maternity, paternity and parental leave

For children born in 2006, a total of 150.141 persons received benefits in connection with the birth of a child. Out of these, women accounted for 68.2 per cent. On average, women received maternity benefits in 34.3 weeks in the course of 2006, whereas men received paternity benefits in 3.1 weeks on average.

In 2006, a state equalisation scheme in connection with childbirth was introduced. All employers must contribute to the scheme even if they do not provide pay during maternity/paternity leave, nor have any employees who are to take a leave period in connection with the birth of a child. The objective of the scheme is to ensure that it is not only women-dominated trades that have to bear the payroll costs during the leave period.

It is expected that fathers will make use of parental leave to an increasing extent as pay during parental leave for both parents is becoming increasingly prevalent. In connection with the recently concluded collective bargaining in the public sector, parents have had their paid leave extended by six weeks.

Part-time work/reduced hours/working hours

There are more part-time employed women than men. There are more than four times as many women as men who work between 30 and 34 hours a week. For those who work between 20 and 29 hours a week, there are close to three times as many women as men. The use of part-time work has decreased during the last years. Compared with 1964, men spent more time on housework in 2001.

The gender mainstreaming strategy

The Ministry of Employment has formulated a gender policy within its area. The gender policy is a prerequisite for gender assessments of Parliamentary Bills in the Ministry of Employment. For the Ministry of Employment, the goals are very clear:

- Disaggregate the gender-segregated labour market
- Equal treatment
- Reduce the pay differentials between women and men
- Reduce women's extra unemployment
- Reconcile family life and working life

The Ministry needs profound knowledge about how gender equality influences the labour market. This knowledge is updated every year to ensure that the Ministry's work on gender equality on the labour market and the debate on gender equality takes place on an objective and informed basis. The various units in the Ministry are responsible for establishing supplementary data within their own area, to enable them to deliver the analysis necessary for Parliamentary Bills and in order to live up to the obligation of presenting supplementary memos on gender equality.

All Parliamentary Bills have been accompanied by a memo since 2005. The purpose of the memo is to uncover if there are relevant gender and equality aspects of the Parliamentary Bill. The target group of the Bill is especially important. It is necessary to know who will be influenced by the Bill.

Mainstreaming of the core services within the Ministry of Employment

The Public Employment Service (PES) system has for many years focused on promoting gender equality on the labour market. In connection with the establishment of the new employment system and the new job centres that came into force on 1 January 2007, the gender equality effort has been reorganised. The principle governing the gender equality work in the new system will be the mainstreaming strategy. It means that all job centres under the new structure are to work on gender equality and the dismantling of the gender-segregated labour market.

In order to support this work, a special function for gender equality was established. The special function is required to initiate various activities within the area and support the gender-equality promoting activities at the individual job centres. This includes advising the job centres on gender equality work and monitoring the initiatives at the job centres and throughout the country. Furthermore, at all job centres a key person is appointed to act as a link between the special function and the job centres. The special function is to draw up an activity plan every year in which it is set out what initiatives the function will launch in the course of the year ahead.

One example of gender mainstreaming has been carried out within the National Board of Industrial Injuries. The objective has been to obtain knowledge of the significance of gender with regard to the award of industrial injuries compensation at present, and of what is needed to maintain this knowledge in future. The trend in recognition percentages for men and women is monitored closely – especially after 1 January 2005 when a new industrial concept came into force.

Women Entrepreneurs

Since taking office in 2001, the Danish Government has put a lot of attention on promoting entrepreneurship. The initiatives are for women as well as men as favourable conditions are conducive for everybody. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor can be used to compare Denmark with other countries. The survey shows that in 2006 3.30% of Danish women were engaged in early stage entrepreneurial activity – whereas the figures for respectively Sweden were 2.43% and Norway 5.87%. There are a number of different reasons for the lower number of female entrepreneurs. One reason is that a large proportion of Danish women tend to take an education that leads to employment in the public sector where entrepreneurial opportunities are limited.

G. Women in power and decision making

In Denmark, women and men enjoy the same political rights. Women as well as men have a right to vote and to stand for election to local councils, the national Parliament and the European Parliament. In local politics, the proportion of women has remained unchanged at 27 per cent from the election in 2001 to 2005. After the local government elections in 2001, women accounted for 9.2 per cent of the mayoral offices.

2008 marked the 100th year since women gained the right to vote in local government elections. The Minister for Gender Equality celebrated the occasion with an awareness-raising campaign and a conference on the International Women's day 8 March 2009. The subject of the conference was how to get more women to candidate for local government elections and get elected.

The Danish electoral system

A National Election Act Committee has stated that the introduction of a system which reserves a certain number of seats in the national Parliament or local or regional government to female candidates irrespective of the actual outcome of the election is unlikely to be in accordance with the Danish Constitution. The Danish Government is of the opinion that women's representation is to be strengthened through dialogue and debate on gender equality at local level. Political party branches and women themselves are to be informed and motivated.

The Danish government is aware that there are fewer women than men in the local governments in Denmark. At the conference on the International Women's day 8 March 2009 there were debates with women who for the first time run for local government elections regarding their motivation to candidate and what barriers they had met. Furthermore there was a debate regarding what the parties, including local party associations can do to get more women to candidate for local government elections.

At the conference the Danish Minister for Gender Equality stated she would support the establishment of a network for women who are interested in local politics. The aim of the network is to inspire politically active women to candidate for local government elections. The objective is to create an environment where women meet and raise ideas on how to overcome barriers and be elected at local government elections. The Minister stated that she would like to gain more knowledge about what barriers exist in this regard.

Representation of women - on committees, on boards in the state sector, regions and municipalities

The Act on Gender Equality stipulates that public committees, commissions and similar bodies set up by a minister should consist of an equal number of women and men. The proportion of women on reported, newly established committees in the state sector was 39 percent in 2005, in 2006 it was 41 percent, in 2007 it was 42 percent and in 2008 it was 41 percent.

Authorities or organisations which are to suggest a member for a committee are required to suggest both a male and a female. Similarly state sector boards etc. should have an equal composition of women and men. In May 2006, the national parliament passed an amendment to the Act on Gender Equality which means that municipalities and regions are required to suggest an equal number of women and men for councils, boards and committees etc.

The Minister for Gender Equality's executive order to promote gender equality according to Gender Equality Act Part 2 is by 10 April 2007 permanent. The Minister for Gender Equality executive order to promote gender equality will make it less bureaucratic to work more active with gender equality.

The Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services is by 1 June 2007 implemented in the Danish The Act on Gender Equality. This means that Denmark has clear definitions for direct and indirect discrimination and for harassment, among others sexual harassment.

At the end of 2008 the Minister for Gender Equality proposed an amendment to the Act on Gender Equality. The amendment will ensure that the responsibility for nominating both a woman and a man for public committees, commissions and similar bodies set up by a minister is placed at the relevant authorities and organisations. The authorities and organisation must make sure to explore their whole organisation before their nomination instead of choosing the first and obvious choice, usually a man. This further exploration of relevant candidates should be promoted by allowing the responsible minister to leave one seat open, if the authority or the organisation cannot give a good and reasonable explanation for not nominating both a woman and a man.

Women in management

Since 2003, the Minister for Gender Equality has given focus to women in management. In the private sector, women account for a mere 5.4 per cent of senior executives in 2007. With regard to boards 18.9 percent of the directorships are held by women.

The strategy for the Minister's action in the area is based on cooperation, dialogue and knowledge sharing between the cooperation partners in the private sector. It must be made clear to the enterprises that it is good business strategy to recruit from the entire pool of talents and that woman in management mean better executive teams and better opportunities to address all the enterprise's customer segments.

In the period 2004-2009, the Minister for Gender Equality has launched the following initiatives:

- European project on women and management.
- Published an economic analysis which showed a positive correlation between the proportion of women in management and the financial results.

- The Minister for Gender Equality has launched a Charter for more women in management. Companies that are members of the charter commit themselves to take specific actions to promote more women in management. The target is 100 companies signing the charter by 2010. By 27 March 2009 a total of 66 companies have signed the charter.
- Network for private enterprises aimed at raising the proportion of women in management.
- In 2009 a number of seminars on women in management have been arranged by the network of some of the companies that have signed the charter.
- Organised a TopLederCamp (Senior Executive Camp) for opinion makers and senior executives from leading enterprises.
- Appointed ten senior executives as a corps of ambassadors who are to work towards bringing more women into management and onto boards.
- One-year mentor programme for women managers in the state sector and the private sector.

H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women (see Part III)

L. The Girl Child:

The Minister for Gender Equality has launched a project that focuses on ways to get girls and boys in kindergartens to learn about gender roles. An inspirational guide has been drawn for the social educators and a children's book has been published which is aimed at opening a dialogue about gender roles in the kindergartens.

In 2006 the Minister for Gender Equality set up a website www.lige-frem.dk. The purpose is to draw attention to gender-based educational choices, which would enable girls and boys to focus to a greater extent on their competencies than on their gender when choosing education and job. This website is re-launched and updated every year.

The Minister for Gender Equality has also focused on girls and boys with respect to:

- Self image, including well-being and the “pornofication” of mass culture (2005)
- Violence – among young people and within the family (2004)
- Dietary habits, leisure activities, including sport and exercise, alcohol, smoking and other substance abuse (2003).

Female genital mutilation - with or without consent from the victim or her parents - is a crime under 245 A of the Danish Criminal Code. The maximum penalty is 6 years' imprisonment or, in case of particular aggravating circumstances, 10 years' imprisonment. Where the perpetrators is a Danish national or resident in Denmark, female genital mutilation is subject to Danish criminal jurisdiction and punishable under 245 A of the Danish Criminal Code regardless of whether the act was committed in Denmark or abroad and regardless of whether the act was a criminal offence under the law of the State where the act was committed. In the opinion of the Danish Government, a main effort in combating FGM must be based on bringing about a change of attitude. Information campaigns directed towards groups, where women traditionally are exposed to FGM, have also been undertaken.

In January 2009, a County Court for the first time passed a sentence in a criminal case for a violation of section 245 A in the Danish Criminal Code. In the case the parents of three girls were charged with violation of section 245 A of the code and attempt hereon, partly by co-operating in bringing the two oldest girls to Sudan where an unidentified person living in Sudan performed a

female circumcision on both of the girls, and partly by planning on travelling to Sudan with their third and youngest daughter with intention of co-operating in having her circumcised as well. The plan on bringing the youngest daughter to Sudan did not succeed as both parents were arrested before departure. The father of the two girls was acquitted, but the mother was convicted of contributing to the circumcision of the two oldest girls and acquitted of the matter concerning the youngest daughter. The mother was sentenced with imprisonment for 2 years, whereof the execution of 1 year and 6 months was suspended with a period of probation on 3 years. Furthermore it was imposed on the mother to pay compensation amount to DKK 25.000 to each of her daughters.

Part Three: Institutional developments:

The Government's work to promote gender equality between women and men is vested in the Minister for Gender Equality. The position as Minister for Gender Equality is a dual ministership, and the current minister also holds the post of Minister of Employment. The first Minister for Gender Equality was appointed in July 1999.

The Minister for Gender Equality focuses on gender equality across the portfolios of the other ministries. The individual ministers are responsible for gender equality in their own portfolio, both in terms of special and general initiatives (i.e. the statutory mainstreaming principle). Therefore, a major task of the Minister for Gender Equality is to coordinate the central Government's gender equality work and set up the framework for the overall gender equality policy.

The tasks of the Minister for Gender Equality are among others to:

- Develop the Government's gender equality policy,
- Place focus on special action areas,
- Coordinate the gender equality efforts in the Government and implement the gender mainstreaming strategy,
- Perform national tasks in relation to the EU, the Nordic countries, the UN and the Council of Europe,
- Perform international tasks in relation to the Nordic countries, the EU and the UN,
- Draw up an annual report and a perspective and action plan for gender equality for the national Parliament,
- Collect gender equality reports from state institutions and the municipalities,
- Represent gender equality views on relevant committees,
- Administer the Act on Gender Equality and monitor gender composition on councils, boards and committees,
- Appoint members for the Gender Equality Board and the International Gender Equality Committee.

The Department of Gender Equality

The Department of Gender Equality performs the function of secretariat to the Minister for Gender Equality. The Department has a staff of 18. In addition to servicing the Minister, the Department of Gender Equality performs the tasks which the Minister is obliged to attend to under the Act on Gender Equality, including to:

- Launch special gender equality initiatives,
- Coordinate and develop inter-ministerial gender mainstreaming work,
- Draw up proposals for the annual report on gender equality and the perspective and action plan for the national Parliament. This sets out the Government's gender equality policy for the past year and for the year ahead,
- Provide information about the Act, in the form of general guides and in the form of specific advice to ministries, etc.,
- To monitor and provide guidance regarding the gender composition on councils, boards and committees where there ought to be an equal gender distribution, and every third year to receive the other ministers reports on gender distribution on specific state-sector boards,

- Collect the gender equality reports that all ministries are required to draw up every two years,
- Collect gender equality reports every second year from municipalities and the state sector – all reports are now submitted online,
- Provide secretarial assistance for current inter-ministerial working groups,
- Provide secretarial assistance for the Gender Equality Board.

In addition, at the level of government officials, the Department of Gender Equality monitors the international gender equality work in the Nordic countries, the EU, the Council of Europe and the UN. This includes participation in meetings, working groups and conferences.

Funding for the operation of the Department of Gender Equality is allocated in the Finance and Appropriation Act. In 2007, a total of DKK 14.4 million was allocated. 18 persons are working in the Department (2009 number). Furthermore, the Department of Gender Equality administers funds allocated for the action plan to combat trafficking in women 2007-2011 (DKK 80 million) and for the action plan to combat men's domestic violence against women and children 2005-2008 (DKK 60 million), as well as DKK 12 million allocated to promote gender equality between women and men with a non-Danish ethnic background covering the period 2006-2009. Most recently, another DKK 7 million has been allocated for the period 2008-2009 for a campaign and a survey for the dismantling of gender-based barriers among ethnic minorities.

The Gender mainstreaming strategy – 19 Ministers for Gender Equality

The mainstreaming strategy (which is part of the law) means that in principle, that there are now 19 Ministers for Gender Equality - each within their field of competence responsible of integrating the gender and equality perspective in all policies and activities.

The Minister for Gender Equality is responsible for implementing the mainstreaming strategy, not only in relation to other ministries but also other parts of the public administration. Parallel to the mainstreaming strategy, the Minister lays down rules and guidelines for the gender equality work and initiates special measures to promote gender equality and equal opportunities. It is thus a matter of a dual approach.

Each year the Minister for Gender Equality draws up a report and a perspective and action plan for gender equality for the Danish Parliament and it defines the government's priorities within the equality work in the following year. The plan launched in 2009 has 15 clear objectives that the Danish government is obliged to reach by the year 2015. Additionally, every second year local authorities and ministries are obliged to report to the minister on gender related issues as well as statistics. On the basis of this substantial reporting the minister publicly launches a general overview on the gender equality work in all public authorities.

The Gender Equality Board

1 January 2009 a new general complaints board to consider complaints regarding discrimination based on gender, race, colour of the skin, religion or faith, age, disability or national, social or ethnic origin, political views or sexual orientation was established. With the set up of the new complaints board, the Gender Equality Board was closed down. The new board includes a chairman and two deputy chairmen who are judges as well as nine other members. The nine other members

must be attorneys and are appointed by the Minister for Employment subject to recommendation by the Minister for Gender Equality and the Minister for Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs. It is required that the nine members have expert knowledge of the gender equality legislation, the legislation on equal treatment of all irrespective of race or ethnic origin, or the legislation on the prohibition of discrimination in the labour market, as well as knowledge of the conditions on the labour market. It is also required that they are independent of the nominating authority.

Other actors

In addition to the central government institutions, a wide range of other institutions and actors also focus professionally on gender equality and contribute to enhancing the national debate.

NGOs

Denmark has a long tradition for non-governmental organisations' (NGOs) active participation in the work to promote gender equality between women and men in both national policy and programs and international development policy and cooperation. In particular, Danish Women's Society and the Women's Council in Denmark, an umbrella organisation for 52 women's associations and organisations, work to ensure women's rights and influence in society as such. The Minister for Gender Equality supports the Women's Council in Denmark through an annual grant of DKK 1.2 million.

In the efforts to promote gender equality, the primary objective of the above NGOs is to function as watchdogs over public initiatives and policies and as active participants in the public debate. These efforts also include spreading awareness of the CEDAW Convention, the final document from the 4th UN World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 "Platform for Action" as well as other relevant documents. The NGOs also participate in debates on national politics.

The official Danish gender equality work benefits from the fact that these activities are widely realised in close cooperation and dialogue with NGOs and experts in the fields. The government's initiatives to combat violence against women and trafficking in women are particular examples. NGOs and experts are largely charged with implementing the projects under the national action plans for combating these problems.

Once every quarter, the Department of Gender Equality holds a meeting with the women's organisations, the National Organisation of Shelters for Battered Women and Children in Denmark and Reden (a shelter, advisory and treatment centre for women in the prostitution environment). NGOs participate in the official Danish delegations to the UN Conferences and meetings as well as in major conferences and meetings in the EU and in a Nordic setting.

Part four: Remaining challenges and actions to address them

24 February 2009 the Danish Minister for Gender Equality published the Government's Action Plan for Gender Equality 2009. The overall vision for the future work regarding gender equality is to pave the way for long-term changes with substantial effect. These changes will create a higher degree of gender equality and will ensure that women and men have equal opportunities and equal rights. The Danish government is convinced that gender equality is the basis for democracy, growth and social cohesion in Denmark.

With the action plan the Danish government has taken on a new perspective on how to overcome the future challenges. The plan contains 15 objectives and indicators for the work to promote gender equality in the run-up to 2015. The 15 objectives represent the government as a whole and cover all the ministries and beyond. The fact is that the government alone cannot create equal opportunities. The work has to include the actors on the labour market, the private sector, universities, schools, teachers, nursery teachers, families and parents. The work for a more equal society requires that both women and men contribute to the overall objective of creating equal opportunities, for themselves and society as a whole.

The Danish government will focus on these different areas of gender equality. The Government will make use of the existing momentum and direct the attention and resources to the appropriate areas. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the efforts to reduce men's violence against women have been successful. In Denmark the number of women victims of intimate violence has fallen from estimated 42,000 in 2000 to 28,000 women in 2005. But too many women are still victims of violence. Denmark will continue the efforts in this field.

On the other hand there are pitfalls in the overall gender equality picture. E.g. it has proven to be difficult to change the gender-segregated labour market and boys' and girls' choice of education. Despite specific efforts to break down gender barriers in day-care and primary schools, the girls will seldom choose educations within Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Similarly the boys are difficult to attract to the care sector. The traditional gender roles are still strong and it will require a targeted and long-term effort on many levels – from parents and kindergartens to the labour market - to change these stereotypes.

Finally the Danish government is also aware of areas where there is a risk of back-lashes. Some young immigrant men exempt from the education system and might also question societal values, such as gender equality. This is a very unfortunate tendency which must be counter-acted. It is necessary to approach the boys and the young men and it is essential that their families receive information on the values of gender equality. This will require a broad range of initiatives – policies for integration, initiatives in the residential areas and efforts to promote gender equality and basic rights among ethnic minorities.

It is important to stress that gender equality already is a fundamental value in the Danish society. But Denmark acknowledges that there are major challenges ahead and the Danish government will not just sit back. The government has greater ambitions in this area and the action plan reflects these

long-term ambitions. The objective is a more equal society and Denmark will monitor the results of the efforts in the run-up to 2015.

As mentioned above the new action plan in the area of gender equality consists of 15 specific objectives. The 15 objectives are as follows:

Objective 1: The difference between women and men's lifetime income shall be reduced

The Government will promote equal pay and by this equalize the differences between women and men's wages and pensions. Economic equality is pivotal to ensure equality between women and men and in this area the lifetime income is a central issue.

Objective 2: More fathers should take parental leave

The government ambition is that more fathers take parental leave with their children and thereby to a higher degree share the leave period with the mothers. The regulations for parental leave are very flexible and it gives mothers and fathers the possibility of keeping the contact to their workplace during parental leave.

Objective 3: Work-family balance should be the responsibility of both women and men

The objective of the Danish government is that women and men to a higher degree than today share the burden of household and childcare in order to ensure that women and men have equal opportunities for a working career, hence promoting the opportunities for equal pay and the positive consequences for women and men's pensions. By encouraging women to take full time jobs, the workforce will grow and fully benefit from the potential from all in the population. As a modern welfare state Denmark strive toward creating a high degree of equality between women and men, good possibilities for combining work and family-life and a highly developed and well-functioning day-care system for pre-school children.

Objective 4: The gender-segregated choice of education and work should be broken down

The government ambition is that Denmark becomes a leading country in regard to growth, knowledge and entrepreneurship. Traditional gender divisions in the labour market and the education system are hindering this development.

Objective 5: There should be more women in private and public management

The government's ambition is to increase the number of women in private and public management. Companies deserve the best management and therefore need qualified and ambitious women who today are an "unused bank of talents". The companies loose both revenue and growth if they only benefit from half of the existing talents.

Objective 6: Better gender balance in executive boards in stock-market companies

The government finds that an increased diversity in executive boards will create growth in the companies. A better gender balance in the boards will result in better use of talents and will therefore benefit the Danish businesses.

Objective 7: More boys from ethnic minorities should finish an education

The government ambition is that youth and especially boys with Danish as well as ethnic minority background complete an education following grammar schools. Education is a cornerstone in the Danish society. Boys from ethnic minorities have a clearly lower completion rate in the educational system than the girls.

Objective 8: More women from ethnic minorities should enter the labour market

The government's objective is to increase the labour supply in Denmark with at least 25,000 women and men before 2015. The objective is primarily to increase the number of women and men from non-western countries. It requires a special effort to get women with immigrant and non-western background into the labour market. A higher employment frequency for women with immigrant background will create a higher degree of economic equality for these women and give their children good role-models.

Objective 9: More women from ethnic minorities should be active in civil society, associations and organisations

The government finds it very important that more women from ethnic minorities participate actively in civil society, associations and organisations. This group of women as a whole participate to a lesser degree actively in society than men from ethnic minorities. Gender equality and integration of both women and men in the educational system, the labour market and in society as a whole is essential both for the Danish economy, the social cohesion in the Danish society and for the individuals free and equal opportunities.

Objective 10: Gender equality should be an integral part of Danish development policy

The government will focus on gender equality as an integral part of Danish development policy. Women and gender equality are a prioritised field and a cross-cutting consideration in Danish development policy, as gender equality strengthens the development work and helps creating growth and welfare.

Objective 11: No women or men should be trafficked to Denmark

The government's aim is that no women or men are trafficked to Denmark. Human trafficking is globally one of the most lucrative forms of crime and victims of trafficking are subject to immense cruelty. In Denmark victims of trafficking are primarily women.

Objective 12: Women and men should not be subject to violence in intimate relations

The government will not accept that women and men are victims of violence in intimate relations. The government and the political parties are behind the political agreement on the "Satspuljen". In 2009 DKK 35 million have been set aside to a National Strategy 2009-2012 to combat violence in intimate relations in order to continue the effort to combat domestic violence. The National Strategy aims at contributing to reducing the number of women, men and children who are victims of violence in intimate relations and ensure that victims receive adequate help and support.

Objective 13: Men's health should be improved and the average life expectancy for the whole population should be extended

It is the government's ambition to extend the average lifetime expectancy for the population with 3 years over the next 10 years. This ambition will contribute to longer lifetime expectancy for men. Men's lifetime expectancy is shorter than women's due to fact that men have different habits than women in regard to lifestyle, e.g. alcohol and smoking.

Objective 14: There should be more women in local politics

It is the objective of the government that more women participate in local politics. Local politics is about welfare for all citizens. From playgrounds to nursing of elderly, from recreational areas to employment and public transport – in the local parliament decisions are taken that influence the life of women and men. Hence it is very important that both women and men participate in decision-making processes.

Objective 15: Women in academia should be supported and maintained

It is the government's objective that 1 % of GDP is invested in Research and Development. This means among others that there should be a clear growth in the capacity at the Danish research institutions. In order to reach this objective, both women and men must be represented in academia. Very few talented women choose a career in academia. This is a challenge since the Danish society cannot afford the lack of unused talents.