

2005 report and 2006 perspective and action plan for gender equality

By Minister for Gender Equality Eva Kjer Hansen, submitted to the Danish Parliament on 28 February 2006

Preface	3
Gender equality as a global competitive parameter	4
A new view of gender roles - and a fresh approach to gender equality work.....	8
Gender equality counteracts violence and abuse	11
Diversity is golden.....	14
Activities in the period 1 March 2005 to 1 March 2006	20
Status of the Government's action plan to combat trafficking in women.....	24
Status on the Government's action plan "Employment, participation and equal opportunities for all"	25
Status on inter-ministerial gender mainstreaming project, the action plan "The new gender equality strategy" 2002-2006.....	27
Status on the Government's action plan to stop men's domestic violence against women and children 2005-2008	28
Publications and productions issued by the Minister for Gender Equality in the period 1 March 2005 to 1 March 2006	29

Preface

The Government wants to create equal opportunities for women and men. Its aim is that women and men be seen as equals and enjoy equal opportunities for choosing the lives they want. The Government wants respect for diversity and respect for the individual's personal choice.

Equal opportunities - a richer Denmark

Gender equality between women and men enriches Denmark as a society, both economically and culturally.

In terms of economy, we become richer because gender equality is a necessary element for utilising all talents and increasing growth. Documentation already shows that companies with mixed gender management record better bottom lines. We must also apply that advantage in the rest of our society. A conscious approach to gender and gender equality must play a role in various activities related to integration, health policy, geriatric service, etc. Once we know our target group, we can utilise resources more efficiently and target services better.

Culturally, we are enriched because gender equality is a basic value in Denmark - a hallmark of what makes Danish society unique. All citizens, be they women or men, of Danish or non-Danish ethnicity, old or young, have something of value to add to society. We need to break down the barriers that prevent the individual woman or man from participating actively and equally in society.

In its gender equality work, the Government will ensure concrete results in the form of legislation, action plans and debate. Our challenge lies in creating a Denmark where citizens have equal opportunities for learning, working, participating and making a difference, irrespective of their gender. In 2006, the Government will focus on:

- Gender equality as a global competitive parameter
- A new view of gender roles and a fresh approach to gender equality work
- Gender equality counteracts violence and abuse
- Diversity is golden

Eva Kjer Hansen
Minister for Gender Equality

Gender equality as a global competitive parameter

Denmark is one of the world's richest countries with the highest degree of gender equality and freedom. But this is no law of nature. It requires targeted efforts and active citizens who will, can and dare take full advantage of their opportunities. Our competitiveness depends absolutely on whether we as a society can give citizens - women and men - equal and free opportunities to do their part and share responsibility.

Gender equality is a key concept and value for Denmark. This focus also calls for actual initiatives, so women and men can develop their talents and join in ensuring Denmark's place as a competitive partner in a globalised world.

The globalisation process allows us to offer the rest of the world our ideas and development carried on the weight of our conviction that women and men have equal values and must enjoy equal opportunities. At the same time, we must turn our gaze on the world and learn from experience gained from gender equality work in other countries. This may provide inspiration and spark new thoughts, thus keeping gender equality policy dynamic.

A window on the world

For many years, gender equality activities have been a key theme in international cooperation. Gender equality and women's rights are vital to economic growth and democratic development. For this reason, Denmark grants development assistance on the basis of an adopted strategy stipulating that gender equality of women and men should be an integral part of the assistance objective and work. The goals of the gender equality strategy are to promote equal rights, equal access to and control of resources and equal opportunities for attaining political and economic influence for women and men. Women must have access to resources to make use of their rights and possibilities of influence. This is why Denmark gives high priority to multilateral cooperation with organisations that strive to eliminate violence against women and ensure women's sexual and reproductive rights as well as their access to resources. Finally, Denmark stresses the importance of promoting gender equality in the areas of peace, security, refugees and humanitarian assistance as well as in regional political dialogues and assistance.

Unquestionably, the EU has played a pivotal role as a frontrunner in the work of ensuring women and men equal opportunities through legislation, special support programmes and exchange of knowledge and experience. 2007 is designated the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. In Denmark, preparations are already well underway. Denmark wants to make ample time for dialoguing with the many diverse partners and organisations that have input to contribute. Denmark will place human diversity at the centre as it marks the Year of Equal Opportunities.

Developments in 2005

Conference on men and leave schemes

If more men are to utilise the leave scheme options, workplaces need to revise their cultures. At the same time, families need to keep in mind that the mother should not automatically be the one to take leave. And finally, information is needed on the options available. These issues emerged during a spring conference which the Minister for Gender Equality organised for the Nordic countries.

FACTS

Parents can share maternity or paternity leave totalling 52 weeks on daily cash benefit. In 2004, women took an average of 42.8 weeks, while men took 3.4 weeks. Eighty-seven percent of children aged 1-5 are in day-care institutions or family day care.

Maternity or paternity leave and "flexicurity"

One reason for Denmark's high standard of gender equality is our ability to combine flexibility, leave schemes, child care and social security on the labour market. Denmark's "flexicurity" is a cornerstone of the work to preserve high growth rates, activity rates and fertility rates.

Spurred by new technology, we are restructuring work structure and procedures. We can make positive use of the possibilities flexibility offers for increasing employment and thus also uphold the welfare level. Flexibility also entails ensuring that both women and men can plan their family life and work life more coherently, which in turn might help the individual maintain longer and more flexible contact to the labour market. The Government has established the Family and Worklife Committee, charged with in 2006 presenting proposals for better reconciliation between family life, worklife and leisure-time, a task that includes mapping women's and men's needs and desires for flexibility.

Developments in 2005

New fathers and the workplace culture

In 2005, the Minister for Gender Equality initiated a study which documented that the culture of the individual workplace impacts on whether men choose to take leave. In addition, managers are important role models, and collective agreements and family life also influence men's choice. The leaflet "Daddy on leave?" contains a summary of the study conclusions. It was distributed to relevant organisations and posted in Danish on www.lige.dk.

We should strive to create a family-friendly labour market that gives all Danes the freedom and opportunity to contribute. A survey from the Danish National Institute of Social Research on the gender-segregated labour market concludes that having children helps men achieve high positions but reduces women's probability of reaching a high position. By adopting a new leave scheme in 2002, the Government opened up some all-new possibilities for families. But the leave options are still primarily used by women.

Families should be allowed to plan leaves to fit their needs optimally. In practice, both women and men should be allowed to take leave to care for their children. If workplace cultures forestall this possibility, companies must start changing the cultures in ways that allow fathers to use the options aimed at them and that do not impede women in pursuing their career options. If this fails to happen, vast amounts of talent will go to waste, a loss that will hurt society, workplaces and citizens.

The Government has launched a new bill that will in 2006 establish an equalisation scheme for maternity/paternity contributions for all employees not covered by such a scheme in a collective agreement. This scheme is a key issue for the Government, and all parties in the parliament joined in adopting the equalisation scheme. The equalisation scheme will mean that in future employers can be refunded up to DKK 142 per hour to cover wages paid during maternity/paternity leaves, and that equalisation will occur between workplaces with many women and workplaces with many men. This will help secure families and companies alike, and thus perhaps change general attitudes to leave taking and inspire men to make better use of their leave options.

Old women and men in the future

In the coming years, the generation of 68ers are facing retirement. This is a generation where both women and men have been active in the labour market and that has been more financially and physically resourceful than previous generations. In a survey made on behalf of the Minister for Social Affairs and Gender Equality, the Danish National Institute of Social Research concludes that activity offers for elderly people today appeal more to women than men. Denmark's day centres, local authorities and evening schools should take on this challenge. Another challenge relating to the large number of vital and "young" older people lies in using their reserves and visions constructively, for instance by involving them in voluntary social or association work or by offering them flexible options for gradual retirement.

Developments in 2005

More women in research

In 2005, the Government set up a think tank with a view to bring more women into the research sector. The think tank published a report with a wide range of recommendations for universities and research institutions on how they could help increase the share of female researchers and thus become better at using the entire pool of talent available.

FACTS

***Ninety percent men and 10 percent women hold Denmark's professorships
Forty percent of economic growth in 1970-90 can be attributed to women's entry into the labour market.***

Brain magnet

Gender equality and welfare services are the keys to making Denmark an attractive country for talented developers, researchers and innovators. We must retain competent, ambitious Danes and attract foreign talents by marketing Denmark's basic values of equal opportunities for women and men, and we must also safeguard a society in which women and men alike will and can participate actively in the development and innovation on which Denmark will exist in the future's knowledge society.

Education for all and focus on research are aspects needed to guarantee Denmark a future-oriented position. Gender equality for women and men is a core area of the work to achieve a competitive economy in the global society.

As a result, this will be one of the themes that the Minister for Gender Equality will address at a conference on gender equality and globalisation in 2006.

Developments in 2005

New legislation on marital pension equalisation

Having for the last seven years worked on new models to distribute pensions between spouses in case of divorce and death, the marital pensions committee publicised its report in December 2005. The Government intends to change legislation so that the proposals in the new report can be realised. The preparations will consider women's and men's differing pensions, and will also, depending on circumstances, allow compensation to the spouse who has, for instance, stayed at home with the family for long periods of time and thus failed to attain the same high pension as the other spouse.

A new view of gender roles - and a fresh approach to gender equality work

Gender equality is a basic Danish cultural value. But in practice, both young and old people sometimes find themselves stuck in certain gender role patterns. When society, schools or neighbours set standards for how women and men, girls and boys can or should behave, they limit the individual's options and freedom of action.

Denmark needs an active debate on gender roles. Young people must take a critical stance on gender roles and pursue their own dreams and goals instead of staying on a track paved with prejudice or rigid norms. We must promote creativity and free choice by initiating a gender equality debate in the generation soon to be a force in society - the generation of people now facing choices that will influence the rest of their lives and also impact on society.

Young people in a male-sexed world

Pornographic messages and pictures pop up in streets, in music videos, in language and in the media. The pornographic universe has become a part of our daily lives and has inundated mass culture as a fashion wave. Pornography is no longer something you can select or reject. Young people view and receive e-mails, pop-ups or invitations to self-expose themselves on the Internet or mobile phones. Pornography displays gender roles in a crude and simplistic way: Women provide services and men perform! This depiction of women and men becomes a gender equality issue, if young people uncritically copy the gender roles on display.

Free debate and personal stance-taking are needed to render a multi-faceted picture of women and men. This is why the Minister for Gender Equality commissioned the discussion magazine "Ung i en herresexet verden" (Young people in a male-sexed world), which uses quotations, pictures and questions to encourage a dialogue about and between young boys and girls and addressing gender equality and pornography in the mass culture. The discussion magazine was distributed to the oldest classes of the lower secondary schools and to all youth educational institutions.

On Denmark's initiative, the Nordic Council of Ministers launched a survey among young people in the Nordic countries. The aim is to confirm or disconfirm whether pornography's entry into mass culture impacts on girls' and boys' perception of gender roles and thus also gender equality. The survey will conclude in the course of 2006, and the results will be used in, for instance, a campaign in 2007-2008 on young people and the purchase and sale of sexual services.

Developments in 2005

Conference on young people, gender and pornography

On 1 November 2005, Minister for Gender Equality Eva Kjer Hansen (Liberal Party) hosted the conference: "Young people in a male-sexed world". Its theme was the current pornographication of mass culture, and it became an educational day with speeches, films, stand-up comedy and discussions. As many as 120 young discussion enthusiasts participated in the conference, giving their opinion of how pornography in everyday settings influences them. The Minister followed up on the conference by issuing a discussion magazine containing statements from the conference participants, etc.

FACTS

***Sixty-four percent of all girls and 47 percent of all boys finish upper secondary school
Twenty-eight percent of all boys and 8 percent of all girls finish craft/technical schooling***

Between 33-37 percent of the boys of non-Danish ethnicity and 71 percent of the boys with Danish ethnicity complete a commercial education programme

Between 46-51 percent of the girls of non-Danish ethnicity and 74 percent of the girls with Danish ethnicity complete a commercial education programme

Eighty percent of the boys and 25 percent of the girls regularly watch pornography on the Internet

Straight ahead - break the gender role patterns of education and employment

Even though Denmark has free choice of education, young people primarily choose to repeat their parents' choices. Many girls pick an education similar to that of their mothers, and many boys choose their fathers' educations. This pattern upholds the distinct gender segregation characteristics of the Danish labour market today. To promote the free choice and an unprejudiced dialogue between schools, parents and young people, the Minister for Gender Equality has commissioned digital discussion material on gender equality and girls' and boys' options for education and jobs. All schools, parent spokesmen and school boards have received the material which can be used at parental meetings, in career counselling or in teaching.

Developments in 2005

Inter-generational and inter-gender dialogue

In 2006, the Minister for Gender Equality held two dialogue meetings at local schools in Copenhagen and Aarhus. The first meeting targeted mothers and daughters from ethnic

minorities, the second fathers and sons. The participants explained to the Minister the challenges and barriers they meet when they go to school and find jobs. Prejudice in society, gender roles in families and young marriages were some of the themes being debated.

Counselling new options

At a conference on counselling, gender and ethnicity, the Ministers for education and gender equality focused on counsellors' roles in enhancing girls' and boys' options and desires for education and jobs in the future.

Young people with non-Danish cultural backgrounds

Young Danes face challenges in breaking out of rigid gender roles, but young people with non-Danish cultural backgrounds undoubtedly face even stronger challenges. These arise in the charged zone between two cultures that may have contrasting expectations and demands. We must support the young people in completing an education and finding their place in the Danish labour market. This requires different approaches for girls and boys. While boys experience particular barriers in the educational system and drop out in high numbers, ethnic-minority girls often complete their educations. But this is not apparent in the labour market, where women of non-Danish cultural backgrounds have the lowest activity rates. However, the differences are clearly not solely confined to gender but are also generational, as female descendants of immigrants typically have higher participation rates than female immigrants. So young people experience differing barriers when they look to find their places in Danish society, and these barriers are closely linked to gender.

The Government has adopted an action plan to break down gender-barriers to ethnic minorities' participation in society. The action plan "Employment, participation and equal opportunities for all" sets out a wide range of actual initiatives aimed at enrolling more young girls and boys in educational programmes, in employment and in associations.

Gender equality and integration of both women and men in the educational system and labour market are pivotal to Denmark's economy, the cohesion of Danish society and the individual's free and equal opportunities.

Gender equality counteracts violence and abuse

Violence against women

It is never acceptable to use violence. It represents severe abuse of human beings, and is a punishable crime. Even so, each year 42,000 women are assaulted by their current or former partner and another 22,000 are exposed to violence from others than their partners. This is not just physical and psychological abuse, but also a sign of insufficient gender equality and respect between women and men. No one should have to live with violence, and we must break the taboo surrounding violence against women.

FACTS

Each year 29,000 children (age 0-15) witness violence against their mothers

Each year, 2,000 women and their children move into shelters

Annually, just over 3,000 cases of violence against women are reported

Each year, 64,000 women are abused, 66% of them by their current or former partners

An independent evaluation of the Government's previous action plan (2002-2004) shows an enhanced public debate on violence against women. The evaluation confirmed that political focus, information and multi-agency approaches are all necessary aspects of the efforts aimed at combating violence against women, and that the taboo on violence against women has been broken.

The results have been excellent: abused women have gained easier access to help, professionals have accumulated greater knowledge and awareness, and focus has centred on men's role in breaking the cycle of violence.

But the statistics speak for themselves, and we still need to strengthen our activities by increasing our focus on prevention. The 2005 rate adjustment pool allocated DKK 15 million annually in the period 2005-2008 to improve activities targeted at fighting men's violence against women. The agreement was translated into an action plan which the Minister for Gender Equality presented in April 2005.

FACTS

Between 2,000-2,500 foreign prostitutes live in Denmark, some as victims of human trafficking

A total of 120,000 women and children are victims of human trafficking in western Europe

Fifty-four victims of trafficking in women have obtained protection in a safe house, while 61 declined the offer

The action plan calls for far more activities in the local authorities, often the first point of contact with the abused women. Thus, many initiatives will be combined with embedding the work in the local authorities, in which connection not least the social administrations throughout Denmark will certainly play key roles. A conference for Denmark's heads of social service departments will focus on local authorities' work and on embedding the support for victims of violence.

Human trafficking

The theme of trafficking in women only appeared on the political agenda at the start of this century. It quickly turned out that most humans trafficked to Denmark were women trafficked for sexual exploitation.

Since then, the Government has strived to elucidate the problems, help the victims, prevent trafficking in women, strengthen police investigation and punish the ringleaders.

The Government's action plan for combating trafficking in women describes a range of actual initiatives. The aim is to test various models for support and prevention to determine which initiatives work. The action plan revolves around doing outreach work where the women are, while also making sure that the victims are as well prepared as possible for their repatriation.

Prostitution comes in many different shapes, but all types of prostitution typically have damaging effects on the individual prostitute. The effects can be social, mental, health and financial. The complex problems contribute to locking individuals into difficult conditions. This is true for prostitutes whether or not they are victims of trafficking in women. The action plan "Another life" presents specific ideas on how to work with the social problems related to Danish prostitutes.

Cooperation between NGO's and the police

The action plan comprises support to victims as well as prevention in the form of investigation and prosecution of ringleaders. However, the police are usually the first to have contact with victims. This makes NGOs and the police key players in the field. To promote and strengthen efficient cooperation between NGOs and the police, 56 contacts have been appointed for trafficking in women and prostitution in police districts. To optimise the work with contacts, the National Commissioner of Police has appointed a coordinator to facilitate cooperation and assist the individual police districts in cases on trafficking in women. The coordinator is attached to the national centre for investigation support.

Developments in 2005

New action plan 2005-2008

The 2005-2008 action plan for combating men's violence against women and children in the family sets up a spectrum of activities with four objectives: supporting victims, stopping the violence, strengthening authorities' multi-agency work and increasing knowledge on violence. Activities reflect the four objectives, focusing particularly on ethnic minority women, children and young people as well as treatment of the perpetrator.

Trafficking in children

The year 2005 revealed concrete cases where children were trafficked to Denmark. This is why the Government has prepared an appendix to the original action plan. The essence of the appendix is that a child victimised by trafficking is entitled to have a guardian appointed. The guardian must represent the child, develop an individual action plan for the child and make sure that the child is put into care in a suitable residential home. A child cannot be repatriated before Danish authorities are sure that the child will be received responsibly in its homeland. Since this requires a good network of international children's organisations, the appendix calls for such a network to be developed.

As an aspect of the activities, the competences of police and the legal system need upgrading so that they are better equipped to deal with cases involving children. We will also start mapping the scope of trafficking in children, as we currently lack an overview of how many children are actually victims of trafficking to, for instance, theft, illegal work or prostitution.

Campaign targeted at customers of trafficked women

In 2006, a campaign will be launched aimed at limiting the demand for buying sexual services from victims of women trafficking. The parties behind the rate adjustment pool agreement have earmarked DKK 1 million in 2006 for the campaign, the purpose being to underline the importance of informing buyers about the trafficked women and of how they can help prevent trafficking in women.

Assessing the initiatives

Through the three years the action plan has existed, various methods and initiatives have been tested in pilot projects to find efficient means for combating trafficking in women and supporting the victims. In the course of 2006, an evaluation of the action plan initiatives and its results will be launched. The evaluation is to provide input on how to organise and embed future efforts to combat trafficking of both adults and children.

Diversity is golden

The corporate sector, public-sector workplaces and the political community must enlist the most competent people to develop and make decisions. But a discrepancy exists between the hunt for qualified labour, on the one hand, and the share of women in management, the share of men in nursing and care jobs, or the share of employees with ethnic minority backgrounds, on the other. And how can we be sure to employ the best and ablest people or avoid bottlenecks and unemployment in certain sectors, if we only recruit from parts of the population? If we really want to promote innovation, creativity and development and enable the best-qualified people to utilise their resources, we need to draw from the entire pool of talent - both women and men.

The Government intends to use the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All in 2007 to focus on human diversity and opportunity at all levels and in all sectors.

Developments in 2005

Gender-mixed management pays off - financially, too

In 2005, the Minister for Gender Equality publicised together with the Aarhus School of Business a survey documenting that private companies with both women and men seated in the management record higher profits on the bottom-line.

FACTS

Ninety-six percent of Danish top executives are male, four percent are female

Eighty percent of central government top executives are male, twenty percent are female

Eighty-two percent of local government top executives are male, eighteen percent are female

The activity rate for female immigrants from third-world countries is 39% compared with 74% for women with Danish background

Six percent of child educators in kindergartens are male, ninety-four percent are female

Between 16-18% of child educator students are male, and between 82-84% are female

Women on private boards of directors and public committees

The Government monitors the composition of boards, panels and committees, and recent years have seen a better balance in the gender composition of boards and committees

established by ministers. However, the organisations nominating members often only nominate a male person.

In October 2005, the Minister for Gender Equality met with a large number of organisations to discuss how they will in future ensure that both women and men are selected for boards, panels and committees. Evidently, many organisations are interested in increasing the number of female appointees to boards, panels and committees, but, even so, they fail to nominate both women and men when the opportunity arises.

In 2006, the Government will focus on how the new local and regional councils and committee will also ensure an equal composition of women and men. Thus, the Government has proposed new legislation for the area, specifying that organisations must in future nominate both women and men, if asked to appoint members for local and regional committees, boards, etc.

In parallel, the Minister will enter into dialogue with private companies, trade and industry organisations and various networks on how they can become better at nominating women to boards. Focus will rest on sustainable strategies, and the work will focus on showing the companies that they do themselves a disservice by failing to utilise women's resources and ideas. Research will be initiated with a view to determining how people become eligible for board membership, and how this impacts on women's possibilities of being selected for such offices and duties.

FACTS

Between 10-15% of members of private Danish boards are women, and between 85-90% are men

Twenty-seven percent of local politicians are women, seventy-three percent are men

Twenty-five percent of all women educated in the 90s work in health and care jobs

Ninety percent of all Danish carpenters are men

Sixty percent of all Danes work in almost purely female or male jobs

Top executives in Denmark

Gender equality is faring poorly when it comes to executive job distribution in Denmark. This is true for all sectors of Denmark, although the public sector has more female executives than the private sector. In contrast, the recruiting base is also larger in the public sector, its having a large majority of female employees.

Several options are available to us when we want to recruit more female executives. Some major companies have already started activities to this end, setting up goals on gender-mixed management and specific initiatives aimed at ensuring the goals are reached. The Minister for Gender Equality's network for companies that want to include more women in their managements has met with so much interest that it has now come to cover all Denmark.

Developments in 2005

www.ligestillingidanmark.dk

All local and central government authorities have entered their gender equality reports into a digital tool. The results were posted on a website in autumn 2005, so that all citizens can compare their own local authority with others, and local and state authorities can inspire each other through specific initiatives. The biggest challenges lie in including more women in top management, in breaking down the extremely gender-segregated jobs and in launching concrete initiatives that include gender equality in policy areas outside human resources.

The gender-segregated labour market

A survey made by the Danish National Institute of Social Research on behalf of the Government reveals vastly differing expectations to and assumptions about women and men in workplaces. Expectations to the two genders in relation to families are very conventional: Women handle practical and emotional family care, while men are primarily breadwinners.

According to the survey, the prevailing assumptions in Denmark are that women want jobs with fixed working hours and predictability, so that men can pursue their careers with all that it includes in terms of long workdays and unpredictability. The man is still seen as the main provider and the woman as a co-provider, even though this is far from reality. The different views of women and men rub off on the distribution of work tasks and thus also on pay and career options.

The interrelation between preconceived notions about women's and men's behaviour in relation to families and work tasks contributes to gender segregating the labour market. Special efforts are needed to change this situation and allow women and men to choose jobs and plan their lives freely. And workplaces benefit from the synergy that arises when their staffs are a mixture of women and men.

The gender-segregated labour market is one of the single greatest factors influencing equal pay for women and men. Thus, the Ministry of Employment and the Department of Gender Equality have joined the social partners in preparing an equal pay guide for companies.

Developments in 2005

More choices on the labour market

The Government wants to break down the gender-segregated labour market and educational system. To this end, it asked the Danish National Institute of Social Research to perform an analysis of gender distribution on the labour market. The analysis clearly showed that the Danish labour market is widely gender segregated, and that women and men make very gender-traditional choices when they decide on education and jobs. An inter-ministerial task force will publish a report in spring 2006 with proposals for activities run by the Government, workplaces, schools, universities and organisations.

Developments in 2005

Gender-barriers to integration

In January 2005, the Minister for Gender Equality commissioned the report Gender, Ethnicity and Barriers to Integration. The report focuses on barriers to integration in relation to education, work and association work among women and men with ethnic cultural backgrounds. Available research results indicate that men run into the highest barriers in the educational system, while women encounter them in the labour market and in associations. The Government followed-up on the report with an action plan aimed at breaking down barriers.

Immigrant women - an untapped employment potential

Generally, unemployment rates for ethnic minorities are higher than unemployment rates for ethnic Danes. This fact applies especially for women where fewer than 50% of them have jobs. In contrast, both men and women with non-Danish ethnicity account for a relatively large part of Denmark's entrepreneurs. This potential for entering the labour market through entrepreneurship should and must be utilised.

Developments in 2005

Information campaign on women's civil rights

To improve immigrant women's knowledge of their rights as citizens in Denmark, the Minister for Gender Equality has launched a major campaign, including meetings at language schools all over Denmark and a brochure widely distributed in housing areas and as inserts in foreign-language newspapers. The campaign must strengthen women's positions in families and thus also motivate them to participate actively in society. The campaign started in 2005 and is continuing in 2006.

Immigrant women experience barriers to accepting jobs because they hold the main responsibility for their families. They are motivated to become entrepreneurs, since that will allow them to plan work flexibly and reconcile work and family life. What is more, Denmark gains the use of these women's resources and talents, otherwise at risk of going to waste. Women's starting their own companies increases the chances that they will help break some of the conventional gender-role patterns in families and become excellent role models for their young girls and boys.

The Government has included initiatives to promote entrepreneurship among immigrant women and men in an action plan. The plan should help break down gender-linked barriers for integration, as should a wide range of other initiatives aimed at promoting employment, training and active participation in associations among both women and men with non-Danish cultural backgrounds.

Men and care

Today, women are the primary providers of care of children and old people and other similar care tasks. Even though the social and health sector is growing, men are not employed in the new jobs to the same extent as women. There is ample reason to consider how more men can be employed in care jobs or child-educator jobs. It would increase unskilled men's employment opportunities in particular, and the sector would benefit from a fresh outlook on the work. It would also signal to girls and boys in crèches and kindergartens that men are just as qualified to give care as women.

In the coming year, the Minister for Gender Equality will give priority to channelling more men into the social and health sector and into educator disciplines. In addition, the Minister will initiate a survey on men with non-Danish cultural backgrounds as family role models and social innovators in connection with leave and care of the family. The survey may provide input for a more generalised debate on ethnic men in their roles as fathers and providers.

Through the gender looking glass

The fundamental idea of including equality and gender in all policy areas and all activities - called gender mainstreaming - forms the core of Danish gender equality work.

To date, the work has primarily focused on the central government and the ministries. In 2006, the Steering committee for the inter-ministerial mainstreaming project, encompassing all ministries, will take stock and consider future activities. Denmark has launched many new initiatives in the past year based, for instance, on the tools and instruments developed under the current action plan for gender mainstreaming. One of the latest initiatives is a major inter-ministerial project aimed at enhancing the professional gender-mainstreaming competences.

Developments in 2005

Tools for gender equality assessment of budgets

As the fourth tool for the digital toolbox at www.lige.dk/koensmainstreaming, a checklist was developed for reviewing budgets. An analysis of rate adjustment pool funds distributed on projects for elderly people showed that the funds could be used much more efficiently, if the gender division of the target group is known. At the same time, such knowledge may prove the springboard for a wide selection of services, offering new choices to both women and men, and thus promoting gender equality.

A range of local authorities have reported new, exciting gender equality initiatives to the Minister's webportal Ligestilling i Danmark (Gender equality in Denmark). Even so, local authorities need to develop their gender-equality work, not least in connection with the merger of the new local authorities. The newly elected merger committees face a major undertaking, and they must consider gender equality aspects right from the beginning. This is why the Minister for Gender Equality cooperated with the Minister for Interior Affairs and Health on preparing a checklist that a merger committee can use in planning the local authority's future. The checklist is intended to provide politicians with tools that enable them to use the local government reform actively in promoting gender equality in the new local authorities, for instance, by centring focus on women's share of management, the division of funds for women and men, and to ensure that gender-segregated data is available for use in analysing citizens' needs. As a supplement, the ministers will join representatives of the local authorities in developing a special toolbox that could be helpful in realising practical work.

Developments in 2005

Gender equality assessment of good legislative quality

The new guidelines from the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Finance on legislative quality and impact assessment underline that gender equality assessments must be performed for all relevant bills based on a preceding relevancy test. If relevant, the outcome of the assessment must appear from the comments to the bill.

Activities in the period 1 March 2005 to 1 March 2006

- March
- On the International Women's Day, the Minister met with mothers and daughters of non-Danish cultural background to discuss dreams for their futures and education
- The Minister launched an information campaign on ethnic minority women's civil rights designed as a range of speaking engagements at Denmark's language schools
- The Minister for Gender Equality headed the Danish delegation to the UN Commission on the Status of Women session in New York and gave a speech during the opening ceremony
- Adoption of joint UN declaration to mark the 10th anniversary of Platform for Action
- The competence development process for gender mainstreaming throughout the central government administration kicked off with a round of meetings in all ministries
- April
- Report and perspective and action plan for gender equality negotiated in Danish Parliament
- Mid-assessment seminar on the Government's action plan to combat trafficking in women
- Action plan to stop men's domestic violence against women and children 2005-2008
- May
- Denmark hosted joint Nordic seminar on gender equality assessment of budgets as an aspect of the Danish presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers
- Meeting in the company network "Women and Management", hosted by telecommunication company TDC
- Conference in Russia on gender mainstreaming and gender equality activities as an aspect of the Danish presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers
- Conference "Men and gender equality" on subjects such as paternity leave and family life, attended by experts from the entire Nordic region
- Presentation of "Men's Award 2005"

Meeting of Nordic ministers for gender equality during the Danish presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers

June The Minister for Gender Equality hosted dialogue meeting with fathers and sons of non-Danish cultural background on gender equality, education and work

Seminar for local authorities from all over Denmark on gender equality report and gender mainstreaming

Information meeting for women's associations on gender equality

Launch of embassy network on trafficking in women

Publishing of report and recommendations from think-tank on women in the research sector

The EU Council of Ministers decided to set up new European gender equality institute

July

August Meeting in the Nordic civil servant committee for gender equality at the Faeroe Islands during the Danish presidency

Establishment of inter-ministerial working committee on breaking down gender barriers to integration

Delegation of ministers visited China to discuss gender equality policy

The Minister for Gender Equality spoke at anniversary conference for the 4th UN World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995. The conference adopted a declaration

September Launch of appendix on trafficking in children to the Government's action plan to combat trafficking in women

Meeting of Nordic-Baltic task force to prevent trafficking in women

Conference on guidelines, gender and ethnicity as cooperation between the Minister for Education and the Minister for Gender Equality

Information meeting for women's associations on gender equality

Meeting of the EU High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming

- October The Minister met with chairmen and presidents of a range of organisations to discuss how more women can be channelled into boards and managements
- Danish delegation and speech at the conference Women and Democracy in St. Petersburg
- November Debate conference "Young people in a male-sexed world" for and on young people and pornography
- Launch of film and research report on the impact of pornography on gender roles and on boys' and girls' attitudes to pornography and gender equality
- Informal EU meeting of ministers for gender equality during the British presidency
- Danish Minister delivered speech at the EU conference What Works for Women in Birmingham
- Launch of www.ligestillingidanmark.dk with information on gender equality activities in local and regional authorities and an appeal from the Minister to voters to elect more women into the new merger committees in the local elections
- The company network "Women and Management" went nationwide at a meeting hosted by Jyske Bank
- Presentation of list of bills undergoing gender equality assessment in the legislative programme for the Danish parliamentary session 2005-2006
- Conference on men and family life in Helsinki and meeting in the Nordic working committee on men and gender equality during the Danish presidency
- Presentation of tool for gender equality assessment of budget, prepared on the basis of, for instance, an analysis of the rate adjustment pool funds distributed to projects for elderly people
- Amendment of the Equal Treatment Act to include a definition of discrimination and provisions on gender mainstreaming, etc.
- Speech delivered by Danish minister at "Policy Dialogue on Gender Equality 2005" in Tokyo
- December Information meeting for women's associations on gender equality
- Leaflet on visions for the future's elderly women and men

The Government's action plan to break down gender barriers to ethnic minorities' participation in the labour market, education and associations

January Meeting in the company network "Women and Management", hosted by Novo Nordisk

Website containing discussion material on young people's choice of education and jobs opened and presented to all schools to underpin the debate with parents on their children's choice of future

Publication of statistics on gender composition of boards, panels and committees set up by ministers

Final meeting of international steering committee for the EU project Men and Parenting chaired by Denmark

Leaflet on women's civil rights in eight languages distributed to language schools, housing areas and as inserts in newspapers

Meeting of the EU High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming

Presentation of report on men's workplace cultures and leave and summary leaflet "Daddy on leave?"

Meeting of the Nordic-Baltic Task Force to prevent Trafficking in Women with a view to discussing benchmarks for the activities

February Presentation of research report on the gender-segregated labour market

Distribution of discussion magazine on young people and pornofication to all schools and youth education programmes in Denmark

UN Commission on the Status of Women, 50th session in New York

Kick-off seminar for the European project Men at Work – Achieving Gender Equality chaired by Denmark

Publication of the ministers' gender equality reports and update of Gender Equality in Denmark to include central government information

The Minister for Gender Equality and the Minister for Interior Affairs and Health together distributed a checklist to the newly elected merger committees and local councils urging them to consider gender equality in their decisions

Status of the Government's action plan to combat trafficking in women

- Safe houses for victims of trafficking in women where the women can find help and support before returning home
- Pilot projects involving protection/residence for trafficked women at two of Denmark's shelters. The offer should be given to the women in less need of security and protection
- Nationwide information campaign involving, for instance, ads designed as sex ads
- Hotline offering nationwide, anonymous information to victims of woman trafficking, customers of prostitution, the general public and authorities
- Special provision on human trafficking with a maximum penalty of eight years, resulting in improved possibilities for investigation, in the Danish Penal Code
- Network including NGOs in victims' countries of origin, aimed at improving women's possibilities for re-integration into society on their return
- Street teams perform outreach work in prostitution environment, including counselling on social, health and legal matters to foreign prostitutes
- Nordic-Baltic task force on human trafficking sets the framework for close cooperation with representatives from authorities and associations
- Embassy network comprised of 13 different countries of origin and transit for women trafficking. First joint seminar held in 2005
- Agreements on cooperation between NGOs Reden Stop Trafficking in Women, Pro-Vejle, Prostitution and women trafficking Aarhus, and the police in connection with police raids
- Study tours to countries of origin and destination, involving Reden – Stop Trafficking in Women and the Danish Centre for Research on Social Vulnerability
- Course organised for police officers on women trafficking and the police's role in specific cases
- A working committee seating the Ministry of Justice, the police and NGOs will prepare procedures for cooperation between NGOs and the police, and also prepare information material for the police
- Appointing contacts for human trafficking in each police district (in total 54) and appointing coordinator in the national centre for investigation support of Denmark's National Commission of Police
- Special appendix on trafficking in children integrated in the overall action plan

Status on the Government's action plan "Employment, participation and equal opportunities for all"

- Support to photo project and teaching material "Immigrant women's life in Denmark" with focus on successful integration of women
- Information campaign on women's rights for women of non-Danish ethnicity
- Teams of parent-role models from ethnic minority backgrounds and children who have done well in the educational system
- Revision of leaflet on school-home partnership with examples primarily focusing on the challenges facing young girls
- Pilot project at school with focus on increased school-home partnership
- Pilot project at school with focus on parental responsibility and support of both girls' and boys' school attendance
- Role models for non-gender-specific educational and vocational choices
- Guidelines for teaching on democratic values such as gender equality, dialogue, freedom of expression, etc.
- Material for bilingual parents on the importance of school-based day-care facilities and leisure-time activities for learning Danish
- Project on gender-conscious counselling to break down the gender-segregated labour market
- Counsellor training programmes focus on gender barriers among ethnic minority youth and others
- Contact teacher training enhanced to centre on gender aspects that may impact on completion of vocational training programmes
- Mentor corps at vocational training programmes provided with enhanced knowledge about young girls' and boys' special problems
- All business colleges must prepare plans to prevent drop-out and increase perseverance in and completion of vocational training programmes focusing on gender and ethnicity
- Activities with gender-specific contents targeted at countering drop-out from short and medium-term higher educational institutions
- Diversity programme in partnership with 10-15 companies
- Pool earmarked for developing social activities in the Socially Inclusive Labour Market with focus on mothers on passive social assistance, etc.
- Improved employment activities targeted at family reunified women
- Support for enhancing the mentor network for immigrant women in or heading into employment or education
- Survey of barriers to transferring to new functions in disadvantaged non-profit housing areas, including gender barriers to starting new business
- Course in association work for women of non-Danish ethnicity
- Activities aimed at increasing the number of women in local integration councils and the Council for Ethnic Minorities

- Starting girls' clubs in disadvantaged non-profit housing areas
- Activities in disadvantaged non-profit housing areas aimed at promoting local entrepreneurship among women and men alike

Status on inter-ministerial gender mainstreaming project, the action plan “The new gender equality strategy” 2002-2006

- Establishment of cross-ministerial steering committee seating top managers from all ministries. The steering committee has held 10 meetings
- Appointment of key contacts in all ministries
- Set-up of network for staff and stakeholders on gender mainstreaming
- Compilation of examples of more than 70 specific descriptions of excellent experience in gender mainstreaming in the public sector
- Training day for a range of selected trailblazing local authorities on how to start gender mainstreaming
- A range of training days for central government employees on use of networks, gender and gender mainstreaming as strategy, data and statistics, communication and campaigns, gender equality assessment of bills, gender mainstreaming of budgets and on concrete tools for gender mainstreaming
- Top executive conference entitled “A new strategy for gender equality – quality and change in the public sector”
- The manual “Good Advice - a new strategy for gender equality”
- Gender mainstreaming of Council agendas (employment and social matters) during the Danish EU Presidency
- Publication for EU Member States “Guide – good advice on how to gender mainstream Council formations”
- Establishing www.lige.dk/koensmainstreaming containing examples of good advice, tools and literature
- Managerial conference “Three new tools - conference on development, quality and gender”
- Development of toolboxes containing concrete tools for gender equality assessment of bills, campaigns, data production and budgets. The electronic version posted at our website is regularly updated
- Conference for managers and gender equality staff in local authorities on gender mainstreaming and local gender equality reports
- Set-up of joint committee of local authorities to develop a special toolbox for gender mainstreaming in local authorities
- Posting of examples of gender mainstreaming in local authorities on www.ligestillingidanmark.dk
- Adoption of plans for competence enhancement of gender mainstreaming in all ministries
- Presentation and speech on gender mainstreaming in several ministries as an aspect of the competence enhancement

Status on the Government's action plan to stop men's domestic violence against women and children 2005-2008

- Network for abused women receives support for giving consultancy to local groups and secretarial help for the network in its initial phase
- Twenty-four-hour hotline for abused women with about 150 monthly calls and option of interpretation into languages other than Danish
- Psychological help to women and children in shelters to calm down emergency and chaotic situations, provided as a supplement to the provisions in the Act on National Health Insurance on psychological help and local authority obligations
- Legal assistance to professionals and abused women, including aspects of criminal law, security and police
- Methodology development project to create course offers for shelters housing disabled women
- Quality enhancement project at Denmark's shelters with a view to strengthening the care employees give to abused women
- Focus on determining whether the alcohol-misuse or substance-misuse treatment guarantees provide the necessary support to abused women with misuse problems
- Information campaign on children and divorce, violence and finances targeted at ethnic minority women
- Five short films on rights and the encounter with public bodies for ethnic minority women
- Expanding the network and aftercare for ethnic minority women in cooperation with the Danish Red Cross
- Information campaign targeted at young people on gender and violence designed as "theme days" at primary and secondary schools and youth educational institutions
- Perpetrator programme "Dialogue with violence" for abusive men has become nationwide
- Supplementary training of staff in local authorities in the "Austrian Model", i.e. local implementation of the act on temporary removal and powers to issue injunctions, etc.
- Survey to determine how men's domestic violence against women and children is treated as a subject in relevant educational programmes, conducted with a view to improving teaching in this particular subject
- National database on violence against women. Next update is scheduled for 2007/2008
- Compiling and communicating annual statistics on residents at shelters. In 2005, two reports on women and children, respectively, were publicised
- Survey of ethnic minority children at shelters communicated in the report "All you have to do is tell somebody"

Publications and productions issued by the Minister for Gender Equality in the period 1 March 2005 to 1 March 2006

- 2004 Report/2005 Perspective and action plan, March 2005
- Report from Minister for Gender Equality and Minister for Science – think-tank on more women in the research sector “All talents in use – more women in research”, April 2005
- Minister for Gender Equality report: Action plan to stop men’s domestic violence against women and children 2005-2008, April 2005
- Leaflet based on report from think-tank on more women in the research sector “All talents in use – more women in research”, June 2005
- Film about gender mainstreaming, July 2005
- Appendix to the Danish Government’s action plan to combat trafficking in women, September 2005
- “Employment, participation and equal opportunities for all” - Government action plan to break down gender-linked barriers to education, work and participation in associations among women and men with non-Danish ethnic backgrounds, December 2005
- Leaflet on “Women’s and men’s active old age. What the 50-60-year-old imagine spending their time doing as old people”, published by the Department of Gender Equality and the Danish National Institute of Social Research, December 2005
- Daddy on leave? - a survey on men, leave and cultures at workplaces, February 2006
- Leaflet in eight languages on “Families, gender and rights in Denmark”, February 2006
- DVD “Young people in a male-sexed world”, February 2006
- Discussion magazine “Young people in a male-sexed world”, February 2006
- Report “Young people in a male-sexed world”. Gender, mass culture and pornography”, February 2006
- Checklist for local authorities’ merger committees “On top of gender equality”, February 2006