

# How to succeed in equality planning

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UNION of SALARIED EMPLOYEES



**Metalli**  
THE COMMON FACTOR

The objective of the project entitled *Developing Equality in Technology Industries (2005–2007)* was to encourage Finnish technology enterprises towards equality and to make their culture better suited to both women and men.

The project was implemented by WoM World of Management Ltd in cooperation with the Federation of Finnish Technology Industries, the Finnish Metalworkers' Union and the Union of Salaried Employees TU.

Pilot companies participating in the project were Componenta Karkkila Ltd, Halton Ltd, Kemppi Ltd and Planar Systems Ltd.

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For further information visit: [www.monikko.net](http://www.monikko.net).

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All photographs were taken at the project pilot enterprises.

# HOW TO SUCCEED IN EQUALITY PLANNING

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## FOREWORD

This guide to enterprise equality planning was produced under a project entitled Developing Equality in Technology Industries (2005–2007). Its objective was to use equality plans as a tool to develop equal practices in Finnish technology enterprises and explore ways of gender desegregation in the division of tasks in the workplace.

Pilot companies participating in the project were Componenta Karkkila Ltd, Halton Ltd, Kemppi Ltd and Planar Systems Ltd. The project was implemented by WoM Ltd, an equality consultancy and training company whose consultants assisted the pilot companies in the creation of their equality plans in 2005–2006. This guide was written on the basis of the experiences gained in these processes, and all quotations are from these companies.

The project was implemented in cooperation with the Federation of Finnish Technology Industries, the Finnish Metalworkers' Union and the Union of Salaried Employees TU. Members of the project steering group were Ari Sipilä, Deputy Director of the Federation of Finnish Technology Industries; Anja Oksa, Equality Secretary, and Kirsti Anttila, Equality and Cultural Affairs Secretary, from the Finnish Metalworkers' Union; and Eija Niinikoski, Development Expert, Roni Jokinen, Lawyer and Collective Agreement Officer, and Martti Mäntymaa, Collective Agreement Officer, from the Union of Salaried Employees TU.

We would like to thank the pilot companies and members of the steering group for highly rewarding cooperation.

We hope this guide will provide technology industry companies with concrete help in their equality planning.

*Sinikka Mustakallio, Pia Sevelius and Inkeri Tanhua*



## WOMEN AND MEN IN TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRIES

Around 270,000 people work in technology industries in today's Finland. Of those 77% are men and 23% women. Metal industry jobs have traditionally been male-dominated, and the sector is labelled a male domain. In the electronics industry, however, the rate of women employees has been quite high, and these days all technology industry sectors are suitable for women. Therefore it is time to change the outdated preconception that metals jobs are dirty and strenuous and unsuitable for women: modern technology industry jobs are equally suited to women and men. Technology industries also need more competent women from all education levels to fill a wide variety of jobs.

Technology industry jobs differ from each other in terms of the type of production and size of company. The rate of female and male employees also varies from one technology industry to another. The electronics and electrotechnical industry (employee total 66,000) employs the highest rate of women at 33%. The biggest industry – mechanical engineering (employee total 139,000) has 17% women employees. Of those working in the metals industry (employee total 18,000), 15% are women while the rate of women in information technology jobs (employee total 49,000) is 28%.



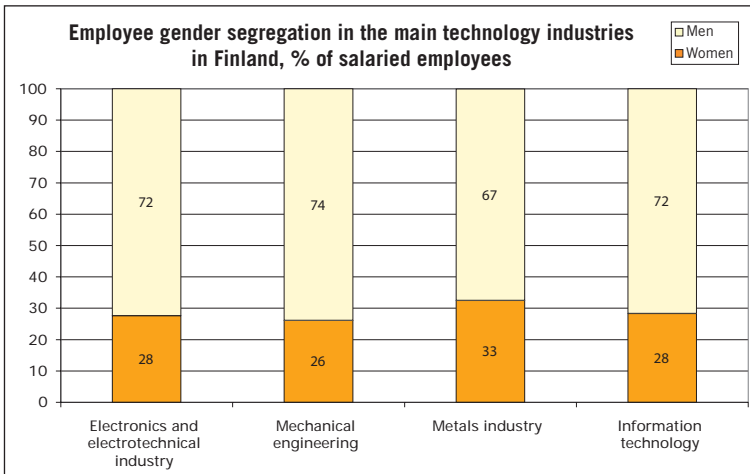
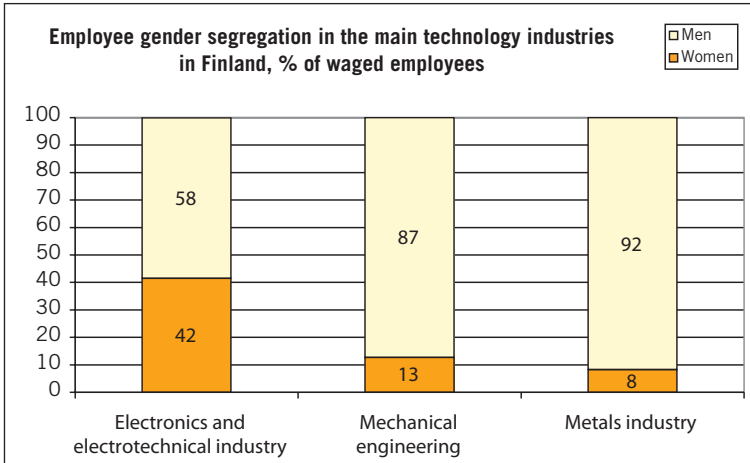
*"The coming years will see increasing competition for competent personnel, and companies will need new labour - both men and women. Women and men will continue to end up in different duties in technology industries. Girls in particular should be encouraged to enter technology education and this way access employment in the sector."*

*Martti Mäenpää, Director General, Federation of Finnish Technology Industries*

*"Young women are remarkably uninterested in the technology industries. This calls for a change in attitudes. The blame must not be laid on young people – the attitudes of families and society must also change."*

*Erkki Vuorenmaa, President, Finnish Metalworkers' Union*

The graphs below present the segregation of women and men into waged and salaried employees in the main technology industries. All employees in the information technology industry are classified as salaried employees.



A clear segregation into male- and female-dominated jobs can often be seen in technology industry companies. For example, in mechanical engineering men usually work in machining, welding, fitting and maintenance jobs while women work in assembly duties in the electronics industry. Electronics are seen as suitable for women because women are regarded as precise and deft with their fingers, unlike men. Women are often not even considered for strenuous tasks even when they apply for such jobs. To put it roughly, when a job involves being tied to the



same place and repetitive movements, it is usually done by women, while men carry out duties that are flexible and require moving around. Women often enter production duties with less occupational education in the field than men and therefore more commonly find themselves in lower-level duties than men. In salaried jobs men are more often involved in planning and design and women in financial administration. In managerial positions women can be found among personnel and financial directors but rarely as production managers or managing directors.

Such occupational gender segregation is often regarded as natural. People think women and men are naturally suited for different tasks, and expectations placed on women and men in the workplace also easily differ. In this way individual differences in skill, competence and aspiration may be ignored and consequently the company fails to fully utilise the resources of its entire personnel. The creation of an equality plan offers the opportunity to question stereotypical thinking regarding differences between women and men and improve their respective opportunities to access different duties.

*"Thinking historically, the industry is highly male-dominated. With the expansion of the metals industry into technology industries, the rate of women has increased in branches such as electronics. Work is still strongly segregated into women's and men's jobs. – If there was an easy solution, it would already have been discovered. There's been some success in turning this trend, but things have taken place far too slowly. I don't really believe in any other tools than influencing people's mindsets. With women this means encouraging them to apply for jobs traditionally done by men. And entering education in fields regarded as men's sectors. After all, education may generate change at a rate quicker than in previous generations. This way the supply of labour will increase."*

*Antti Rinne, Chair, Union of Salaried Employees*

*"Most young men access employment straight from vocational education and have better opportunities to go for certain jobs from the very beginning, while young men without vocational education, and the vast majority of women, often have to start in jobs that are at a lower level. And this puts them in an unequal position in terms of experience and especially education and training as soon as they enter a company. It's time for employers to wake up and consider whether they're always going to keep these people in a poorer position. The way to make these people's opportunities more equal is through education and training and access to diverse work experience so that they can at some point at least get closer to equality if not enter equally demanding jobs."*

*Erkki Vuorenmaa, President, Finnish Metalworkers' Union*

## HOW WILL THE COMPANY BENEFIT FROM EQUALITY?

It pays to develop equality systematically in an enterprise as the entire organisation and its employees will benefit from it. Equality planning is workplace development as a joint effort between the management and personnel. It can improve interaction, cooperation and atmosphere and create a competitive edge when recruiting competent staff.

### **An equality plan can:**

- communicate the desire to be a good employer to women and men alike;
- improve cooperation and communication in the workplace;
- help get the right people in the right places regardless of gender;
- ensure the utilisation of everyone's competence and experience;
- ensure competence and career development;
- promote equal pay regardless of gender;
- improve atmosphere and job satisfaction;
- increase motivation;
- help better compete for skilled employees;
- increase staff diversity through recruitment;
- promote acceptance of differences between people;
- reduce stereotypical segregation into women's and men's jobs;
- improve employer image;
- help implement the company's values and corporate social responsibility.



*"When a company is experienced as fair and equal, this affects employee well-being and therefore increases productivity. Fairness also improves the company's public image and attractiveness as an employer."*

*Martti Mäenpää, Director General, the Federation of Finnish Technology Industries*

*"Equality is something highly important. Employers understand financial values. If you want to make your business profitable, you need good, competent people. If a company is known for treating people equally regardless of gender and ethnic origin or other characteristic, it's highly likely to be a winner in business too. Companies should really take equality issues seriously in their recruitment practices."*

*Antti Rinne, Chair, Union of Salaried Employees*

*"In my opinion equality as a principle has always been important to the trade union movement. Providing people with the same opportunities in employment regardless of gender, age, religion or other values. All people must be treated equally and fairly. If people are treated equally in all situations, this will also improve job satisfaction and this is also directly linked to another aspect: it increases productivity and improves quality. So, it's a matter of principle and a practical issue at the same time."*

*Erkki Vuorenmaa, President, Finnish Metalworkers' Union*

## **Benefits of equality planning as experienced by the pilot companies:**

*"The process of creating our equality plan brought new perspectives and discussions about issues that we'd never discussed before. The plan acts as a good starting point for steering your activities towards greater equality. It provides supervisors and managers with a framework for their work and increases employee satisfaction. Our working group discovered things such as that some people are shy of expressing their opinion. When the equality plan emphasises the fact that everyone will be listened to, you manage to unearth previously hidden information about how you can increase the smoothness of your work processes. When you get to utilise everyone's capacities, productivity will also improve."*

*"When you get different people in the working groups it brings new ideas to light. It also improves work atmosphere. If you believe you're not treated as well as the others, it lowers your working spirit and affects your work. The impact can be quite big."*



*"When you see that there are resources all over the company, you achieve better results than if you just move your old mates forward. Allowing everyone to participate also improves motivation. People always talk about productivity, and I think it's in people's minds where we'll find unused resources, and equality work helps us gain access to them. It's also easier to work as a manager when people find your approach equal."*

*"Customers often ask us about quality and the environment and how we meet the health and safety regulations. Soon they're bound to be asking us how we've attended to equality issues."*

## WHAT IS AN EQUALITY PLAN?

An equal workplace offers everyone equal opportunities regardless of gender and values people's different qualities.

An equality plan is a concrete annual action plan that ensures and promotes the realisation of equality in the workplace. An equality plan is not a declaration or a general framework document. Instead, it details concrete actions for the promotion and realisation of equality. The implementation of the actions specified in the plan is assessed and the plan is updated every year. A good equality plan looks like the workplace and is concrete and realistic.

According to the Finnish Equality Act, companies and organisations that regularly employ more than 30 people are legally obliged to draw up an equality plan.

Under the provisions of the Act, the purpose of an equality plan is to prevent discrimination based on gender and promote equality between women and men in employment. Discrimination means less favourable treatment of women or men because of their gender. The Finnish Equality Act also forbids the discrimination of gender minorities<sup>1</sup> as gender-based discrimination. Therefore the equality plan can also cover the advancement of the equality of sexual and gender minorities. To meet the requirements set in the Act, the equality plan must deal with gender equality.

It can, however, also address equality from other perspectives, such as age equality or ethnic equality, if this is found necessary and appropriate in the workplace. Another related Finnish act – the Non-Discrimination Act – prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, ethnic or national origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, health, disability or sexual orientation. This



<sup>1</sup> Gender minorities: transsexual, transgender, transvestite, intersexual.

prohibition applies to recruitment conditions, employment and working conditions, personnel training and promotion.

Every one of the pilot companies participating in the Developing Equality in Technology Industries project wanted to base their equality plan on the wider concept of equality, basing the plans on the perspective of both the Equality Act and the Non-Discrimination Act.

An equality plan is a tool for incorporating the equality perspective into the company's day-to-day operations. It can be used to develop its methods and policies towards increased equality in a sustained, goal-oriented and systematic manner. The objective is to achieve an equal work culture in the everyday life of the company. In equality planning, the objectives of the management and the employees are put together. A key issue in the implementation of the equality plan is the attitude of executives, managers and supervisors and the way in which they adopt the equality plan and use it in their own work. It is about the employer treating employees equally, but also about the values and operating culture of the entire personnel towards each other.



*"The feeling of inequality is often related to an employee's feeling of not being appreciated enough. This is first and foremost a management problem. Decisions must be justified clearly. Our challenge is to develop our managerial work so that people feel they have equal access to decisions. The equality plan is a message and a framework regarding the way in which our company wishes our employees to be treated. It's not just a management document. It's for all our employees. For example, we have adopted zero tolerance to bullying. Even one case is one too many."*

## HOW TO CREATE AN EQUALITY PLAN

According to the Equality Act, the employer must make sure that an equality plan is prepared for the workplace. The plan must be drawn up in cooperation with staff representatives. The Equality Act also specifies the minimum content of an equality plan.

### **An equality plan must contain:**

- an assessment of the gender equality situation in the workplace;
- necessary measures planned with the purpose of promoting gender equality and achieving equality of pay;
- a review of the extent to which measures previously included in the gender equality plan have been implemented and of results achieved.

According to the Act, the plan may be produced as a separate document or incorporated into a personnel and training plan or an occupational safety and health action plan.

The formulation of an equality plan is a process where it pays to proceed one step at a time. To begin with, everyone may feel confused and find it hard to grasp what the plan is about. Step by step things become more organised and issues necessary in the workplace become clearer.

### **Steps to take when preparing an equality plan:**

1. appointing a working group;
2. assessing the gender equality situation in the workplace;
3. selecting the areas in need of development on the basis of the assessment;
4. setting concrete objectives for the different development areas;
5. deciding on concrete measures to reach the objectives;
6. setting schedules and appointing responsible persons for the measures;
7. deciding on indicators and monitoring;
8. providing information about the equality plan;
9. deploying the equality plan throughout the organisation.

### **Advice from a pilot company to other companies:**

- Focus on things that are important in your company.
- Make sure different parts of the organisation participate as extensively as possible but keep the working group small enough for things to work.
- Senior management must be up-to-date and committed and provide time and resources.
- Adopt a clear schedule for the objectives and include sub-objectives.
- Visit companies that have already completed/are using their equality plan so you can gather information for your own plan.

### **Advice from a pilot company to other companies:**

- Allow enough time.
- Study the topic in advance (literature, courses, etc.).
- Do not hesitate to ask for help.
- The equality survey will open your eyes.
- Appoint people who are interested in the working group.

## **The equality working group**



A good practice is to prepare the equality plan in an equality working group led by an HR director/manager and consisting, as appropriate, of other employer representatives such as a health and safety manager and/or quality manager/production manager and the shop stewards or local union representatives representing the different employee groups, the health and safety representative and, as appropriate for the workplace, other women and men from the different employee groups.

The health and safety committee or the employer-employee cooperation committee



can also act as the equality working group. In all cases it must be ensured that the group is diverse enough and that different views and experiences in the workplace are taken into consideration in its work. The group must consist of both men and women and of people of different ages working in different departments. Experience has shown that for many companies a good size for the group is five to eight people. The main thing is that the group should match the situation in the workplace and function well.

*“With us it helped us succeed that there were people in the working group who were genuinely interested in equality, with all of them volunteering to participate and being keen on becoming involved.”*

## **An assessment will provide the foundation for the plan**

The creation of an equality plan begins with the assessment of the equality situation in the workplace. The aim is to gain basic information about the main areas where equality is in need of development.

According to the Finnish Equality Act, an assessment of the gender equality situation in the workplace must include details of the employment of women and men in different jobs and a survey of the grade of jobs performed by women and men, the pay for those jobs and the differences in pay. Local agreements may be made for these to take place every three years instead of every year.

To facilitate the assessment, it is a good idea to also collect gender-disaggregated data on issues other than the employment of women and men in different jobs. It is also good to collect information about how the employees perceive the realisation of equality, although this is not required by the Act.

The assessment of the equality situation should comprise:

1. gender-disaggregated statistical data;
2. an equality survey among the employees on how they perceive equality (not compulsory under the Act);
3. a pay survey.

## **Statistical data**

Statistical data disaggregated by gender should be collected for use as a basis for the equality plan. Topics covered should include the employment of women and men in different jobs (compulsory under the Equality Act) as well as recruitment, fixed-term contracts, participation in training, career development and use of family leaves.

According to the Equality Act, the employer must promote as equal a distribution

of women and men as possible in different duties. To achieve this, data is needed about the current gender division of tasks in the workplace, and therefore the Act calls for a detailed specification of men and women in different positions. For this study, different types of jobs in the workplace must be grouped in an appropriate manner. Once you have obtained an overall impression of the placement of women and men in different types of jobs, you should consider whether this situation is appropriate or whether some things should be changed. Is there an obvious occupational segregation between women and men and is this justifiable? What kinds of measures could help make the employment of women and men in different jobs more equal?

*"You need to find out what level of education and competence people have and use this in systematic career-building so that they'll get work experience and training and have an opportunity to take on more demanding tasks regardless of whether they're young or old, men or women. For this you'll need a shared intent and will and you have to be serious about it. If you're just messing about, your plan won't have any significance in practice. You must look into people's opportunities at the individual level to advance into more demanding duties. When you know a person's competence and experience, you can start making plans for them for the next two years or five years or ten years."*

*Erkki Vuorenmaa, President, Finnish Metalworkers' Union*

*"Women aren't always keen on accepting more challenging duties such as team leadership. Perhaps we're more critical than men about our own competence. We can encourage our employees to make atypical choices: women taking up men's jobs and vice versa."*

## **The equality survey**

An equality survey among employees was found by all of the companies participating in the project to be a good tool in the preparation of the equality plan. The survey "opened people's eyes" and brought up issues that the company needed to include in the equality plan. According to the surveys, women were more critical about the realisation of equality in the workplaces than men.

*"I realised I was a man. At first I'd thought we didn't have any problems – and the survey showed that this is exactly how other men also see it. But women experience things differently."*

*"The equality and pay survey give you facts instead of subjective impressions about the level of equality and increases transparency in the organisation."*

*"Our staff gained a fair bit from the survey. It gave us the topics covered by our equality plan. I now regard it as even more important than I understood it to be when it was made."*

*"In my opinion the survey also resulted in a decrease in sexual harassment. I suppose some people identified aspects in their own behaviour that may be seen as unwanted and thought they'd better watch out because this was being investigated in our company."*



Questions about the realisation of equality can also be included in a general job satisfaction or atmosphere survey. In such case it is important to analyse the results by gender.

## **The pay survey**

In the Finnish Equality Act, the principle of equality in pay means that pay for the performance of the same work or work of equal value at the same performance level must be the same regardless of gender. According to the Equality Act, the equality plan must include a survey of the grades of jobs performed by women and men, the pay for those jobs and the differences in pay. The purpose of the pay survey is to make sure there are no gender-based pay differences between women and men performing the same work or work of equal value in the company.

The pay survey must also ensure there is no discrimination regarding any of the pay components. The basic pay component must be determined on the basis of the complexity of the tasks involved, regardless of gender. The grounds for any individual pay component must be free from gender discrimination, and the assessment of performance must in practice be gender neutral. If the pay survey brings up any unacceptable (ie gender-based) pay differences between women and men, the equality plan must specify the measures or scheduled plan aimed at rectifying the situation.

Companies participating in the technology industry equality project discussed the claim often expressed in public that in Finland a woman's euro is 80 cents. It turned out that it was not clear to everyone what this claim is about. It actually illustrates the difference of women and men's average pay for the entire labour market, with the 20% pay gap mainly due to the fact that women and men work

in different sectors and the pay level in female-dominated sectors is lower. It is not about the pay difference between women and men in the same sector and in the same duties.

According to a study on large enterprises by the Confederation of Finnish Industries, in 2006 the technology industry-wide average pay of women accounted for 84% of men's average pay, and in the same duties the rate was 98% to 109%.

Pay surveys conducted in the project pilot companies showed that there was no gender-based difference in pay between women and men in jobs classified under the same job grade. Women, however, were more commonly working in jobs classified under the lower grades. This segregation explains the difference between women and men's average pay both in individual companies and in the technology industries as a whole.

The pay survey can be used a basis for launching a variety of pay-related measures even if the survey does not reveal any pay differences between women and men that are unacceptable under the Equality Act. For example, women often enter waged jobs in the technology industries without relevant vocational education or with lower vocational education than men and are therefore employed more commonly than men in lower job grades. Consequently, a key task is to train women and encourage them to access more demanding duties. Equality planning can involve a decision to carry out development discussions every year and in this context review the job evaluation and performance appraisal so these are kept up-to-date regarding the development of each employee's duties and personal competence. Supervisors and other managers can also be provided with training in the application of pay systems and explain the bases of pay to the entire personnel.

The purpose of the pay survey included in the equality plan is to make sure employees receive equal pay for equally demanding jobs regardless of their gender. A prerequisite for the pay survey is that the company has an appropriate and up-to-date job grading system. Any flaws in this should be corrected first.

## Selecting areas in need of development

The assessment of the equality situation should be used as a guideline when selecting areas in need of development for the equality plan. There is no need to try and include everything possible in the equality plan in one go. It is a good idea to put things in the order of importance and adopt four to six development objectives for each plan. This is the best way to ensure that concrete results will be achieved.

Section 6 of the Equality Act specifies how the employer must promote gender equality. On the basis of these instructions, the equality plan can cover the following areas:

- recruitment;
- occupational gender desegregation (equal division of tasks between women and men);
- equal access to training;
- career advancement and diversification of tasks;
- equal pay regardless of gender;
- equal terms of employment (e.g. fixed-term employment of women and men);
- management and division of tasks;
- development of working conditions to ensure they are suitable for both women and men;
- prevention and eradication of sexual and gender-based harassment;
- reconciliation of work and family/non-working life;
- prevention of gender discrimination.



This list can be employed when selecting areas to be included in the plan, but other issues can also be included as appropriate for the situation in the workplace and as necessary on the basis of the assessment. These could include equal management, equal work culture that is respectful to all, and respect for different gender expressions<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Gender expression: Everyone expresses their gender (femininity and masculinity) in some way such as behaviour or clothes. The community may also interpret an individual's gender in a manner different from the person's own view. Everyone can work as themselves in a workplace that respects different gender expressions.

## Objectives and measures

Clear objectives should be set and concrete measures specified for each area in need of development selected for the equality plan.

A problem with many of the first equality plans has been that they have been too general and therefore difficult to implement and monitor. A concrete plan that also specifies responsible bodies/persons for each measure is easier to implement.

When preparing the plan, it pays to be realistic and consider what can actually be achieved in one year. Measures included in the plan can also be scheduled over a longer period, such as three years, but under the Act they must be designed and their implementation evaluated every year.



## **EXAMPLES:**

### **MORE EQUAL RECRUITMENT PRACTICES AND POLICIES**

#### **Objectives:**

- Making job vacancies interesting to both genders.
- Ensuring that managers responsible for recruitment are able to take equality into consideration in recruitment and openly providing information about selection criteria.
- Achieving occupational desegregation.
- Ensuring equal opportunities to apply for new and open positions for the company's own staff as well as outsiders interested in them, regardless of the person's gender, age or ethnic origin.

#### **Measures:**

- Including the phrase "The position is suitable for women and men" in job advertisements.
- Reducing the use of gender-specific job titles.
- Communicating on the company website that applications from both women and men are invited for all vacancies and that the company respects people's different gender expressions.
- Creating clear guidelines for the recruitment process (e.g. using women and men as interviewers)
- Informing employees about open positions, encouraging women to apply for male-dominated jobs and vice versa.
- Informing all applicants about the candidate selected and the criteria on which the decision was based.

#### **Responsible persons:**

- HR management, managers, supervisors, executives

#### **Schedule:**

- Recruitment guidelines to be created by 30 January 2008
- Statistical data collected since 2006

#### **Monitoring:**

- Collecting recruitment statistics specifying the number of women and men applying, interviewed and selected

## **OCCUPATIONAL GENDER DESEGREGATION**

### **Objectives:**

- Achieving occupational gender desegregation.
- Enabling supervisors and other managers to take the objective of equality and gender desegregation into account in all managerial work, development discussions and recruitment.
- Providing women and men with equal opportunities for occupational development.

### **Measures:**

- Informing employees about open positions, encouraging women to apply for male-dominated jobs and vice versa.
- Expressing appreciation of women who work in male-dominated jobs and men who work in female-dominated jobs
- Providing managerial training about occupational gender segregation and methods of desegregation available in managerial work
- Holding regular development discussions, ensuring mutually open and honest discussion and feedback between employees and their managers

### **Responsible persons:**

- HR management, managers, executives, employees

### **Schedule:**

- Managers will be provided with training in gender desegregation methods and development discussions in spring 2008.
- These measures are hoped to result in visible impacts by the end of 2010.

### **Monitoring:**

- Collecting statistical data about the employment of women and men in different jobs.



## **EQUALITY IN OCCUPATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS TO TRAINING**

### **Objectives:**

- Creating equal opportunities for occupational development, access to training and career advancement regardless of gender.
- Encouraging those who entered the company with lower level of education to develop in their work through staff rotation or training and to apply for more demanding duties.

### **Measures:**

- Ensuring the provision of training, particularly to those who did not have vocational education when they started with the company.
- Informing employees that, for example, a further or specialist vocational qualification can also be taken as a competence-based qualification.
- Allowing equal opportunities for competence development through in-house staff rotation.
- Regularly assessing competence development and drawing up development plans at the individual level in connection with development discussions.
- Allowing the opportunity to announce one's willingness to change duties in connection with department meetings.

### **Responsible persons:**

- HR management, managers, executives, employees

### **Schedule:**

- Development discussions are held every year.

### **Seuranta:**

- Collecting statistical data about the participation of women and men in training.
- Collecting statistical data about changes in the job grades of women and men.

## **PREVENTING SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT**

### **Objectives:**

- Our workplace will not tolerate sexual or gender-based harassment.
- We must learn to accept differences in people so that we can all work together on an equal footing regardless of whether we are women or men and regardless of the way in which we express our gender.
- Our workplace will have clear guidelines on how to respond to harassment.
- No-one will find material in common areas as harassing.

### **Measures:**

- As the employer's representative, supervisors and other managers must immediately address any harassment they observe or are informed of.
- The equality working group will draw up guidelines regarding the prevention of sexual and gender-based harassment.
- The issue will be dealt with in connection with the presentation of the results of the equality survey and the content of the equality plan.
- Sexually explicit calendars will be removed from common areas.

### **Responsible persons:**

- Supervisors and managers, executives, equality working group, members of the health and safety organisation, employees

### **Schedule:**

- Guidelines will be drawn up and printed by 15 January 2008.

### **Information provision:**

- The guidelines will be distributed to all employees, and a related information event will be held in February 2008.

### **Monitoring:**

- Conducted every other year, the equality survey will include questions about sexual and gender-based harassment.

## WHAT IS SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT?

- One-sided, unwanted, continues even when asked not to
- The victim's experience is decisive.
- Sexual harassment = sexually determined behaviour:
  - such as gestures, facial expressions, sexually coloured remarks, offensive images, touching, suggestions regarding sex
- Gender-based harassment = unwanted behaviour that is based on gender but not sexual in nature:
  - an individual can be harassed because of their gender or because they violate gender roles
  - such as belittling and derogatory language (calling women 'girls' or men 'boys')
- In the workplace harassers may include co-workers, managers or customers.
- Employers are obliged to address harassment as soon as they are informed of it.

## Schedules and monitoring

Schedules and deadlines must be set for all measures included in the equality plan. If possible, the plan should also specify the indicators on the basis of which the implementation will be monitored. One way of monitoring the effectiveness of the plan is to repeat the equality survey at suitable intervals.

It is also a good idea to specify who will perform the annual evaluation of the implementation of the plan and update the plan.

## Information provision

It is essential that the entire personnel are informed about the equality plan as well as possible. The plan will not be effective if people do not know about it. Tools available include the



intranet, notice boards and information events. The topic can also be addressed at other events such as department meetings.

## **THE RESULTS WILL BECOME VISIBLE LITTLE BY LITTLE**

Equality planning is a sustained development process that takes place over the long term. Both the joint process and the completed plan are important in this. An equality plan is a tool whose results become visible over time when the plan is being implemented. Putting effort into equality planning can help develop a better workplace for all.

## FURTHER READING

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The Non-Discrimination Act (2004):

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Gender Equality in Finland. Authorities of Gender Equality.

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Annu Kotiranta, Anne Kovalainen, Petri Rouvinen (2007): Female Leadership and Firm Profitability. EVA Analysis.

[http://www.eva.fi/files/2133\\_Analyysi\\_no\\_003\\_eng\\_FemaleLeadership.pdf](http://www.eva.fi/files/2133_Analyysi_no_003_eng_FemaleLeadership.pdf)

Jukka Lehtonen and Kati Mustola (2004): "Straight people don't tell, do they...?" Negotiating the boundaries of sexuality and gender at work. Ministry of Labour. Research Reports 2b/04.

[http://www.mol.fi/esr/fi/\\_\\_\\_yleiset/researchreport2b04.pdf](http://www.mol.fi/esr/fi/___yleiset/researchreport2b04.pdf)

For more information and links about equality also visit <http://www.wom.fi>

### Further reading in Finnish:

Elina Ikävalko, Sinikka Mustakallio, Milja Saari, Pia Sevelius (2005): Toimihenkilöt ja tasa-arvo – Opas tasa-arvosuunnitteluun. Unionmedia Oy.

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Marja Erkkilä (2005): Luottamushenkilön tasa-arvo-opas – Tasa-arvolaki ja yhdenvertaisuuslaki työpaikalla. Kalevaprint.

<http://www.sak.fi/suomi/ServiceServlet?type=attachment&source=SAKAttachments&id=75>

Irene Kajo (2007): Transihmiset työelämässä – Opas työnantajalle, työntekijälle ja työyhteisölle. <http://www.transtukipiste.fi/esite/transihmiset%202.pdf>

Karoliina Ahtela, Niklas Bruun, Pirkko K. Koskinen, Anja Nummijärvi, Jorma Saloheimo (2006): Tasa-arvo ja yhdenvertaisuus. Talentum.

## APPENDICES:

### APPENDIX 1:

#### SECTIONS REGARDING EQUALITY PLANS OF THE FINNISH EQUALITY ACT

##### *Section 1*

##### *Objectives*

The objectives of this Act are to prevent discrimination based on gender, to promote equality between women and men, and thus to improve the status of women, particularly in working life.

##### *Section 6 (15 April 2005/232)*

##### *Employer's duty to promote gender equality*

Every employer must promote equality between women and men within working life in a purposeful and systematic manner.

In order to promote gender equality in working life, the employer must, with due regard to the resources available and any other relevant factors,

- 1) act in such a way that job vacancies attract applications from both women and men;
- 2) promote the equitable recruitment of women and men in the various jobs and create for them equal opportunities for career advancement;
- 3) promote equality between women and men in the terms of employment, especially in pay;
- 4) develop working conditions to ensure they are suitable for both women and men;
- 5) facilitate the reconciliation of working life and family life for women and men by paying attention especially to working arrangements; and
- 6) act to prevent the occurrence of discrimination based on gender.

##### *Section 6 a (15 April 2005/232)*

##### *Measures to promote gender equality*

If an employer regularly has a personnel of at least 30 employees working in employment relationships, the employer shall implement measures that promote gender equality as set out in a gender equality plan to be produced annually that deals particularly with pay and other terms of employment. The gender equality plan may be incorporated into a personnel and training plan or an occupational safety and health action plan.

The gender equality plan shall be prepared in cooperation with personnel representatives and must include:

- 1) an assessment of the gender equality situation in the workplace, including details of the employment of women and men in different jobs and a survey of the

grade of jobs performed by women and men, the pay for those jobs and the differences in pay;

2) necessary measures planned for introduction or implementation with the purpose of promoting gender equality and achieving equality in pay; and

3) a review of the extent to which measures previously included in the gender equality plan have been implemented and of the results achieved.

Instead of the annual review referred to in subsection 1 above, agreement may be made locally allowing the measures referred to in subsection 2(1) to be undertaken no less than once every three years.

### *Section 7 (15 April 2005/232)*

#### *Prohibition of discrimination*

Direct and indirect discrimination based on gender is prohibited.

In this Act, direct discrimination means:

- 1) treating women and men differently on the basis of gender; or
- 2) treating someone differently for reasons of pregnancy or childbirth.

In this Act, indirect discrimination means:

- 1) treating someone differently by virtue of a provision, justification or practice that appears to be gender-neutral but where the effect of the action is such that the person may actually find herself/himself in a less favourable position on the basis of gender; or
- 2) treating someone differently on the basis of parenthood or family responsibilities.

The action referred to in subsection 3(1–2) above shall not, however, be deemed to constitute discrimination if it is aimed at achieving an acceptable objective and if the chosen means must be deemed appropriate and necessary in view of this objective.

Sexual harassment, gender-based harassment and any order or instruction to engage in discrimination based on gender shall be deemed to constitute discrimination under this Act.

### *Section 8 (15 April 2005/232)*

#### *Discrimination in working life*

The action of an employer shall be deemed to constitute discrimination prohibited under this Act if the employer:

- 1) upon employing a person or selecting someone for a particular task or training, bypasses a more qualified person of the opposite sex in favour of the person chosen, unless the employer's action was for an acceptable reason and not due to gender, or unless the action was based on weighty and acceptable grounds related to the nature of the job or the task;
- 2) upon employing a person, selecting someone for a particular task or training, or deciding on the duration or continuation of an employment relationship or the

pay or other terms of employment, acts in such a way that the person finds herself/himself in a less favourable position on the basis of pregnancy or childbirth or for some other gender-related reason;

3) applies the pay or other terms of employment in such a way that one or more employees find themselves in a less favourable position than one or more other employees in the employer's service performing the same work or work of equal value;

4) manages the work, distributes tasks or otherwise arranges the working conditions in such a way that one or more employees find themselves in a less favourable position than other employees on the basis of gender;

5) gives notice on, terminates or otherwise discontinues an employment relationship, or transfers or lays off one or more employees on the basis of gender.

An employer shall not, however, be deemed to have violated the discrimination prohibition referred to in subsection 1(2–5) if the matter concerns a situation referred to in section 7(4) and there is an acceptable reason under that provision.

*Section 8 a (15 April 2005/232)*

*Countermeasures by the employer*

The action of an employer shall be deemed to constitute discrimination prohibited under this Act if a person is given notice or otherwise treated less favourably after she/he has appealed to a right or obligation laid down in this Act or taken part in investigating a matter concerning gender discrimination.

*Section 8 d (15 April 2005/232)*

*Harassment in the workplace*

The action of an employer shall be deemed to constitute discrimination prohibited under this Act if, upon receiving information that an employee has been a victim of sexual or other gender-based harassment in the workplace, the employer neglects to take the steps available to eliminate the harassment.

*Section 9 (15 April 2005/232)*

*Action that shall not be deemed to constitute discrimination*

In this Act, the following shall not be deemed to constitute discrimination based on gender:

1) special protection of women because of pregnancy or childbirth;

2) enacting legal provisions on compulsory military service for men only;

3) admittance of either women or men only as members of an association other than an actual labour market organization if this is based on an express provision in the rules of the association; if the association is another type of organization representing labour market interests, a further condition is that the organization must strive to implement the objectives of this Act; and

4) temporary, special actions based on a plan and which are for the purpose of promoting effective gender equality and are aimed at implementing the objectives of this Act.



### *Section 10 (15 April 2005/232)*

#### *Obligation of employers to report on their actions*

Upon request, the employer shall, without delay, provide any person who considers that she/ he has been discriminated against in the manner referred to in section 8(1)(1) with a written report on its actions. The report must indicate the grounds for the employer's choice, the education, training, work and other experience of the person chosen, and any other clearly demonstrable merits and considerations that have influenced the choice.

Likewise, the employer shall, without delay, provide a job applicant or an employee who considers that she/he has been the victim of discrimination as referred to in section 8(1)(2) with a written report on the grounds for its actions.

Likewise, the employer shall, without delay, provide a job applicant or an employee who considers that she/he has been the victim of discrimination as referred to in section 8(1)(2) with a written report on the grounds for its actions.

A local union representative elected on the basis of a collective agreement or an elected representative referred to in Chapter 13, section 3 of the Employment Contracts Act, or some other employee representative in accordance with what has been agreed upon at the workplace in question, shall have independent right of access to information on the pay and terms of employment of an individual employee with the latter's consent, or of a group of employees, or as agreed in the collective agreement for the sector, if there is reason to suspect pay discrimination based on gender. If the information concerns the pay of only one individual, the person concerned shall be informed that the information has been disclosed. The local union representative, elected representative or other employee representative may not disclose information on pay or terms of employment to others.

Information on someone's state of health or other personal circumstances may not be entered in the report without the consent of the person concerned.

### *Section 11 (15 April 2005/232)*

#### *Compensation*

Anyone who has violated the discrimination prohibition referred to in section 8 or sections 8a–8d will be liable to pay compensation to the affected person.

The compensation payable shall amount to no less than EUR 3,000. In cases concerning employee recruitment, the compensation payable shall not exceed EUR 15,000. When the amount of compensation is being determined, the nature and the extent and duration of the discrimination shall be taken into account, as well as any financial penalty imposed or ordered for payment based on an offence against the person arising from the same action by virtue of other legislation.

The compensation may be reduced beyond the minimum amount prescribed above, or the liability to pay compensation may be waived completely, if this is deemed reasonable in view of the offender's financial situation and attempts to prevent or eliminate the effects of the action, and other circumstances of the case. If the severity and other circumstances of the discrimination provide grounds

for so doing, the maximum amount of compensation may be exceeded.

Payment of compensation does not prevent the injured party from further claiming compensation for financial loss under the Tort Liability Act (412/1974) or any other legislation.

#### *Section 14*

##### *Prohibition of discriminatory vacancy announcements*

Announcements of job vacancies or education or training places may not invite exclusively applications from either women or men, unless there is a weighty and acceptable reason for doing so related to the nature of the job or task, or unless it is based on implementation of a plan referred to in section 9(2)(4). (8 July 1992/624)

#### *Section 17 (15 April 2005/232)*

##### *Provision of information to the gender equality authorities*

Notwithstanding the provisions and regulations concerning public disclosure of matters or documents, the Ombudsman for Equality and the Equality Board have the right to receive from the authorities, free of charge, all information necessary for the supervision of compliance with this Act.

Within a reasonable period specified by the Ombudsman for Equality, the latter shall have the right to receive from any person information needed in order to supervise compliance with this Act and to demand that any document in the person's possession be submitted, unless the person has a legal right or obligation to refuse to give evidence or to present a document.

Upon the request of an employee who suspects that pay discrimination has occurred, her/his representative referred to in section 10(4) has the right to obtain information from the Ombudsman for Equality on the pay and terms of employment of individual employees if there are justified grounds for the suspicion. The Ombudsman for Equality must supply the information to the representative without delay and no later than two months after receipt of the request. If the Ombudsman for Equality refuses to provide the information requested, the employee's representative may place the matter before the Equality Board.

Separate provisions have been made on the public disclosure of church and parish documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.

#### *Section 19 (15 April 2005/232)*

##### *Provision of guidance and advice*

Anyone who suspects that she/he has become the victim of discrimination referred to in this Act may request guidance and advice in the matter from the Ombudsman for Equality.

Upon finding that the obligations laid down in this Act are not being complied with or that the provisions of the Act are otherwise being violated, the Ombudsman for Equality shall provide guidance and advice so as to prevent the continuation or recurrence of such unlawful practice.

Upon finding that the employer or educational institution is neglecting its obligation to prepare a gender equality plan under section 6a or 6b despite the guidance and advice referred to in subsection 2, the Ombudsman for Equality may impose a reasonable time limit within which the obligation must be met.

*Section 20 (15 April 2005/232)*

*Placing a matter before the Equality Board*

The Ombudsman for Equality or a central organization of employers' associations or of trade unions may place a matter involving an action contrary to the provisions of sections 7, 8, 8a–8d or 14 before the Equality Board for the purposes of the procedure referred to in section 21.

The Ombudsman for Equality may place a matter involving an action contrary to sections 6a and 6b before the Equality Board for the purposes of the procedure referred to in section 21(4).

Matters relating to the activities of Parliament or its organs, the President of the Republic, the Government, a ministry, the Prime Minister's Office, the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Chancellor of Justice, the Supreme Court or the Supreme Administrative Court may not, however, be placed before the Equality Board.

Provisions on the handling of matters by the Equality Board are laid down in the Act on the Ombudsman for Equality and the Equality Board. (610/1986)

*Section 21 (15 April 2005/232)*

*Authority of the Equality Board in regard to unlawful action*

The Equality Board may prohibit anyone who has acted contrary to the provisions of sections 7, 8, 8a–8d or 14 from continuing or repeating the practice, under threat of a penalty if necessary.

The threat of a penalty may be imposed on the party to whom the prohibition applies, or on the party's representative, or both.

When issuing a prohibition, it may at the same time be decided that the prohibition shall be complied with only from a date specified in the decision if it is justified that the party under obligation be reserved a reasonable period to change the circumstances or practice giving rise to the prohibition.

On the proposal of the Ombudsman for Equality, the Equality Board may, under threat of a penalty if necessary, impose an obligation on the employer or educational institution that has neglected the obligation under section 6a or 6b to prepare a gender equality plan within a defined period.

The order to pay a penalty payment is a decision taken by the Equality Board.

## APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE EQUALITY PLAN

### SAMPLE EQUALITY PLAN FOR COMPANY X

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Company X has drawn up this Equality Plan in accordance with its obligations under the Finnish Act on Equality Between Women and Men (the Equality Act). The objectives of the Act are to prevent discrimination based on gender and promote equality between women and men, and thus to improve the status of women, particularly in working life.

Company X has drawn up an Equality Plan, specifying the measures to be taken to promote equality between women and men and their implementation and the related responsible persons, resources, information provision and monitoring. The Human Resources Strategy of Company X specifies that a separate Equality Plan is implemented within X. The Equality Plan is an essential component of X's Human Resources Strategy.

The Equality Plan will remain valid for the period from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, after which the Equality Working Group will evaluate its implementation and update the plan by \_\_\_\_\_.

#### 2. MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT TO THE PROMOTION OF EQUALITY

The management of Company X has approved of the Equality Plan and undertakes to contribute to its implementation.

#### 3. RESOURCES FOR THE PREPARATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE EQUALITY PLAN

The following resources have been allocated for the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the Equality Plan:

1. Equality training
2. An Equality Working Group that will meet regularly during working hours and inform the rest of the personnel of its activities
3. Gender-disaggregated statistical data about the personnel
4. A survey on how the equality situation is perceived by the employees
5. Budget

#### 4. OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

*1) Recruitment will be performed in such a way that job vacancies attract applications from both women and men*

- Workplace-specific objective:
- Measures:
- Responsible person(s):
- Schedule:
- Monitoring:

*2) Equal division of jobs between women and men (achieving occupational gender desegregation); the rate of women and men in different jobs will be equal*

- Workplace-specific objective:
- Measures:
- Responsible person(s):
- Schedule:
- Monitoring:

*3) Training: women and men will have equal access to training*

- Workplace-specific objective:
- Measures:
- Responsible person(s):
- Schedule:
- Monitoring:

*4) Career advancement and diversification of tasks*

- Workplace-specific objective:
- Measures:
- Responsible person(s):
- Schedule:
- Monitoring:

*5) Equal pay: equal pay for equal work and work of equal value*

- Workplace-specific objective:
- Measures:
- Responsible person(s):
- Schedule:
- Monitoring:

*6) Terms of employment: women and men will have equal terms of employment*

- Workplace-specific objective:
- Measures:
- Responsible person(s):
- Schedule:
- Monitoring:

*7) Management and division of tasks: an equal management culture*

- Workplace-specific objective:
- Measures:
- Responsible person(s):
- Schedule:
- Monitoring:

*8) Prevention and eradication of sexual and gender-based harassment*

- Workplace-specific objective:
- Measures:
- Responsible person(s):
- Schedule:
- Monitoring:

*9) Working conditions: working conditions will be developed to ensure they are suitable for both women and men*

- Workplace-specific objective:
- Measures:
- Responsible person(s):
- Schedule:
- Monitoring:

*10) Reconciliation of work and family/non-working life: the reconciliation of work and family/non-working life for women and men will be facilitated*

- Workplace-specific objective:
- Measures:
- Responsible person(s):
- Schedule:
- Monitoring:

*11) Other:*

- Workplace-specific objective:
- Measures:
- Responsible person(s):
- Schedule:
- Monitoring:

## 5. MONITORING

The measures specified in the Equality Plan will be monitored and evaluated by the Equality Working Group. The Group will also be responsible for updates to the Equality Plan.

## APPENDIX 3:

### TEMPLATE FOR A STATISTICAL SURVEY (example)

#### ASSESSMENT OF THE EQUALITY SITUATION FOR THE EQUALITY PLAN

##### 1. PERSONNEL STRUCTURE

1.1. An outline of the employment of women and men in different jobs (occupational gender desegregation)

Employee group	Women		Men		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	
Waged employees					
Salaried employees					
Professional and managerial					
TOTAL					

1.2. A more detailed company-specific presentation of the employment of women and men in different jobs (occupational gender desegregation)

- Different types of jobs must be grouped workplace-specifically.  
The below is an example from one workplace.

Employee group	Women		Men		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	
<b>Management Team</b>					
<b>Salaried employees</b>					
– technical					
– commercial					
– financial management and administration					
<b>Production work</b>					
– glass process					
– clean room					
– final inspection					
– assembly					
– equipment and facilities maintenance					
TOTAL					



### 1.3. Employees by age group and gender (background information)

Employee group	20–30-yos		31–40-yos		41–50-yos		51–60-yos		61+s		Total
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
Waged employees											
Salaried employees											
Professional and managerial											
TOTAL											

### 1.4. Education and training (background information, survey of training needs)

Training	Women		Men		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	
Post-secondary					
Polytechnic/university of applied sciences					
University					
Other					

## 2. RECRUITMENT AND ADVANCEMENT TO MORE DEMANDING TASKS

### 2.1. Applicants and those selected for positions vacant during the past year (recruitment)

	Waged employees	Salaried employees	Professional and managerial	Total
Positions vacant				
<b>Women</b>				
Applicants				
Those selected				
% of applicants				
<b>Men</b>				
Applicants				
Those selected				
% of applicants				

### 2.2. Those who advanced to more demanding tasks (career advancement)

	Number	%
Women		
Men		

2.3. Career advancement can also be measured by monitoring how women and men move from one job to another.

### 3. TRAINING

#### 3.1. Participation in training

	Number/year	% of women/men	Training days/year	% of training days
Women				
Men				

3.2. Specification by gender on the content of training participated in by women and men respectively.

#### 4. USE OF FAMILY LEAVES

	Months taken			Number	
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men
Maternity leave					
Paternity leave					
Parental leave					
Childcare leave					
Part-time childcare leave					
Temporary childcare leave when a child is taken ill					



The Developing Equality in Technology Industries (2005–2007) project was implemented by WoM World of Management Ltd, an equality consultancy and training company that specialises in tools for promoting equality at work.

WoM has provided training and consultancy in the design and implementation of equality plans for private and public sector organisations since 2000.

For further information visit [www.wom.fi](http://www.wom.fi)

