

University of Helsinki Equality Plan 2004-2006

In its Strategic Plan for the Years 2004-2006, the University of Helsinki committed itself to promoting gender equality in all its activities. The University does not approve of discrimination based on gender. The University is actively engaged in eliminating any practices and structures that generate and maintain gender inequality. The cooperation of the whole academic community is needed to realise this goal.

This plan deals only with gender equality. The University of Helsinki *Policy Against Discrimination* deals with the measures which may be used to prevent discrimination based on other personal characteristics (ethnic or national origin, language, race, cultural background, religion, belief, opinion, disability, health, medical history, sexual orientation, age or any other corresponding factor).

1 Gender equality as a part of all decision making

The purpose of the policy and practice of the University of Helsinki regarding equal opportunities is to promote equality in the academic community and to prevent all discrimination on grounds of gender, age, ethnic or national origin, religion, belief, sexual orientation, disability or any other comparative grounds (Regulations Concerning Equality Activity, Section 1), and, in the spirit of the Act on Equality Between Women and Men, to advance the position of, in particular, women in working life. As an educator of future experts in their fields, the University must be a forerunner in these issues by creating practices that assure equality as well as a tolerant atmosphere.

This plan is the Equality Plan, as stipulated by the Act on Equality Between Women and Men, with the purpose of advancing gender equality and preventing discrimination. Other issues of discrimination are dealt with in the University of Helsinki Policy Against Discrimination, approved by the University Senate on 19 September 2001. These two programmes are part of the University strategy, which aims at the realisation of equality in actual fact in all University activities: in the recruitment of students and staff; in counselling; in working conditions; in career advancement; in administration and research; and in the distribution of resources. **The two publications may be accessed online at www.helsinki.fi/tasavaro/english.** The concepts used in the present Equality Plan are explained in the glossary provided at the end of this document (Appendix 1).

The University of Helsinki is responsible for promoting equality in its official capacity (Act on Equality Between Women and Men, Section 4), as an employer (Section 6-6a) and as an educational institution (Section 5). Direct or indirect gender discrimination is prohibited in Section 7 of the said Act. According to the EC Equal Treatment Directive (Directive No. 76/207/EEC, as amended by Directive No. 2002/73/EC), *direct discrimination* occurs when one person is treated less favourably on grounds of gender than another is. *Indirect discrimination* refers to a situation where an apparently neutral regulation, criterion or practice puts a person of one gender at a disadvantage compared with persons of the other gender. Discrimination is seldom direct and intentional. It is not only a question of a singular

case in which two individuals in the same position are treated differently without justification because of gender. Because of cultural and structural reasons, the status accorded to women and men differs in actuality, although no individual or party can be shown to be directly guilty of discriminatory practices. This, however, is considered unlawful discrimination according to both the Act on Equality Between Women and Men and European law. The Equal Treatment Directive also defines sexual harassment as unlawful discrimination. According to decisions made by the European Court of Human Rights, *the prohibition of gender discrimination* also extends to gender minorities, including transsexuals, that is, those who have undergone gender reassignment surgery. Consequently, people cannot be treated differently on grounds of gender identity.

Multiple discrimination is the term used when the same person is discriminated against on more than one ground. For example, discrimination against women with disabilities may differ markedly from discrimination against the majority of women. Anti-discrimination practices aim to take into account the special problems faced by people who study or work at the University and belong to more than one minority.

Under Section 6 of the Constitution of Finland, gender equality shall be promoted in societal activity and working life. In order to do so, *affirmative action* may be taken; such action refers to temporary measures which improve the position and conditions of a certain group of people (e.g., women) and aim at the realisation of equality in actual fact. Affirmative action also covers *positive discrimination* which means that the under-represented gender is given priority in recruitment or promotion.

Enhanced transparency and openness in the decision-making process are cornerstones of the promotion of equality. In a large and heterogeneous community such as a university, it is impossible to provide operations models that can be shared by all parties. The advancement of gender equality may demand very different actions among the various disciplines and units of the University. Thus, ever-closer cooperation is needed between the Equality Committee and the faculties, departments and other units. Active gender planning is also needed at the faculty level. The aim is to produce a simple, operational monitoring system for helping the faculties and departments to evaluate and develop suitable solutions. The

Equal Opportunities Officer and the Equality Committee meet to share information on measures that have been found to work effectively and to propose operations models for testing.

The University of Helsinki uses the method known as *mainstreaming* to promote gender equality. Mainstreaming means that administrative structures and practices are developed in a way that allows the objective of gender equality to be taken into account in the preparation and implementation of all decisions. The principle of mainstreaming was invoked in the United Nations Beijing Declaration of 1995, and both the European Union and the Government of Finland have also committed to observing this principle. According to the Government Programme approved in June 2003, the Finnish Government will put mainstreaming at the top of its equality agenda in public administration.

Gender impact assessment is a key method of mainstreaming. In practice, gender impact assessment means that when preparing and making decisions that affect students and staff, the impacts of such decisions are assessed from the perspective of both genders. Measures that appear to be gender-neutral may, in fact, have different impacts on women and men, thus reinforcing inequality. Equality is affected by decisions on admissions, curricula and degree requirements, and by post structures, salaries and financial cutbacks. Other issues that have an impact include the gender distribution of experts appointed to working groups and committees that prepare decisions and of the assessors used when filling posts.

The advancement of equality is not only the responsibility of the parties appointed to deal with equal opportunities; it is also a part of the entire decision-making process. However, mainstreaming cannot replace the separate organisation and operations devoted to promoting equality at the University.

The University of Helsinki stands out because of the firm position of the discipline of women's studies at the University. The knowledge produced by women's studies and gender studies has had a major impact on social conceptions of gender relations, women's position and discrimination. Under Section 5 of the Act on Equality Between Women and Men, educational institutions shall ensure that instruction, research and instructional material

promote fulfilment of the aim of the Act. Knowledge of women's studies must be used to develop gender-sensitive study materials and teaching methods, and to identify shortcomings. To support women's studies, the University follows a *double strategy* whereby a separate women's studies unit both provides instruction and coordinates that given elsewhere. Furthermore, the curricula of various disciplines include instruction related to women's studies. A key method of implementing mainstreaming at the University of Helsinki should be to incorporate the new knowledge produced in women's studies into all teaching and research for which such knowledge is relevant.

The University administration monitors developments in equality in the faculties and departments, as well as in other units. These developments are reported and discussed annually at performance negotiations. Departments and faculties are allocated funds as an incentive for projects that are well-founded and/or have produced results, and advance equality.

Gender discrimination violates our national legislation, EU equality regulations and human rights. Everyone employed by the University should feel that the University is a fair working environment. The difficulties associated with integration into the University because of discrimination are harmful to all of the University's activities: teaching, research and administrative success. Thus, the promotion of gender equality is not a narrow, separate issue but an essential part of internal improvements, and must be given sufficient resources.

1.1 Assessment of the Equality Plan

The current Equality Plan is the third of its kind at the University of Helsinki, which was the first Finnish university to systematically assess the implementation of its equality plan. The assessment of the University's Equality Plan 2001-2003 examined whether the measures cited in the plan had been implemented and gender equality had been achieved at the University. According to this assessment, the plan drawn up for 2001-2003 had remained remote to the University community and many of the measures included in the plan had not materialised. Moreover, the various units of the University had not given enough attention to equal

opportunity issues, and at the time of the assessment, it was difficult to obtain statistics on developments in the area of equality. Several key goals, such as the appointment of more women to senior posts, have not been achieved to date. All in all, much remains to be done if the equality perspective is to be brought into the mainstream of operations at the University of Helsinki.

A similar assessment of the Equality Plan 2004-2006 will be carried out in spring 2006.

1.2 Organisation

The promotion and monitoring of equality is the responsibility of all members of the University community: top level University management, all operational units, faculties, administrative directors and superiors. An understanding of the commitment to gender equality on all levels of the University organisation, especially in management, is extremely important.

The University **Equality Adviser** deals with issues concerning equality, disseminates information and provides training in equal opportunities, and works with the Equality Committee to jointly develop the practice of equality at the University. Anyone suspecting discrimination at the University may contact the Equality Adviser, whose duty it is to provide advice and counselling. The Equality Adviser may, if necessary, take the matter before the Equality Committee. To ensure the continuity of efforts to promote equality, the post of the Equality Adviser must be filled permanently.

The **Equality Committee** is under the leadership of the Vice Rector and consists of representatives of various staff groups, students and the groups most likely to suffer discrimination. The Equality Committee is responsible for monitoring and promoting equality in cooperation with the Equality Adviser. The Committee also puts forward proposals, reviews precedents in discriminatory practices, formulates general operational principles and disseminates information about them.

The University has a comprehensive **network of equality contact persons** who distribute information about matters relating to equality in their area of responsibility. These contact persons can refer people in need of assistance or advice to the Equality Adviser, the Labour Protection Officer or the employee representatives.

1.3 Actions and responsibilities in cases of discrimination

Each member of the University community, including all employees and students, is responsible for behaving in a non-discriminatory way. Superiors have special responsibility for the practices of their unit or department.

If an employee of the University suspects that he or she has been discriminated against on grounds of gender, he or she may contact his or her superior, the Equality Adviser, the labour protection delegates or the employee representatives. Students may contact the head of their department, the designated contact persons at the Student Union or the Equality Adviser. Superiors notified of alleged discrimination are required to investigate the matter.

Faculties are responsible for ensuring that no discrimination occurs in connection with matters that fall under the faculties' decision-making authority. For example, when filling vacancies or grading theses or dissertations, the University must see to it that no discrimination takes place. Presenting officials have a special responsibility in this respect.

Measures:

The Equality Committee will draw up guidelines on measures taken in cases of discrimination.

1.4 Responsible leadership

According to the University Regulations Concerning Equality Activity approved in 2000, the superiors of departments, units, faculties and central administration are responsible for promoting and monitoring equality at the University. Equality planning is an integral part of leadership. In an equal and encouraging work community, the know-how and input of each

person are valued fairly. An equal working atmosphere creates opportunities for open discussion and increases the well-being of the work community. The recognition and active prevention of discrimination require that the superiors are aware of how seemingly neutral everyday practices and procedures in working life or within specific organisations may, in fact, mean that women and men are treated differently. Those who occupy leadership positions will be offered training in equality matters.

Measures:

- When setting up administrative bodies, committees or working groups, the share of the less represented gender must be at least 40%, unless otherwise provided for special reasons.
- Personnel Services will ensure that training given to superiors includes information about how to recognise and deal with cases of discrimination, and about gender-related matters that have an impact on work conditions, including the appointment of women and men in different positions and at different hierarchical levels, the equal treatment of women and men in the assessment of work requirements and personal work performance, the prevention of sexual discrimination and harassment in the workplace, and sexual minorities.

2 Key areas of equality activities

During the period covered by this equality plan, i.e. 2004-2006, the main objective of equality activities will be to mainstream gender equality at the University. This will be achieved through the following sub-objectives:

1. The entire University community will be more strongly committed to the promotion of equality

- By incorporating matters relating to equality into the strategic plans of the University
- By earmarking annual appropriations for equality projects
- By further developing the activities of the equality network which covers all faculties, departments and independent institutes

2. Data on equality will be improved

- By compiling statistics and reports that will aid in making regular and long-term assessments of actual achievements in equality between women and men
- By monitoring how change in post structure and distribution of duties among employees affect the positions of men and women

3. The continuation of women's studies will be ensured, and teaching will be further developed from the perspective of equality

- By supporting women's studies at the Christina Institute for Women's Studies and various departments
- By integrating knowledge related to the concept and comprehension of gender, equality and the position of women into teaching in a manner that is appropriate for each discipline.

By approving the equality plan, the University commits itself to carrying out the activities related to these key areas.

2.1 Incorporation of the equality perspective into the strategic plans of the University

The perspective of equality must permeate all strategic planning at the University. The planning documents and the regulations and instructions that steer University operations must help to promote equality. *Gender impact assessment* is the primary means of promoting equality. In practice, when instructions and planning documents are formulated, their gender impacts should be determined in advance. The potentially different impacts on women's and men's circumstances and opportunities are assessed, if necessary, by using statistics and current data and research. If this assessment indicates that the planned measure may have a discriminatory impact, the proposal is revised and the question of which measures will prevent inequality or promote gender equality is examined.

Because the University is a large and heterogeneous community and its faculties and departments have different problems, the promotion of equality requires specially designed action in each unit. In order to ensure that the promotion of equality in each faculty is based on its needs, all faculties must formulate their own equality plans.

Measures:

- The gender impacts of planning documents, instructions and regulations will be assessed at the drafting stage.
- The faculties will formulate their own equality plans.
- A concrete action plan for promoting equality will be incorporated into the following documents:
 - Faculty strategic plans and personnel plans
 - Department strategic plans and personnel plans
 - Unit rules of procedure and personnel plans
 - University of Helsinki Personnel Policy
- University-level strategies will be submitted to the Equality Committee for a statement. If necessary, the faculties and departments may also ask the Equality Committee to comment on their strategic plans.

2.2 Appropriations for equality projects

To support activities at departments, faculties and independent institutes, special appropriations will be reserved every year for at least partially financing equality projects in the various units. These projects may be related to administration, research or teaching. It is important from the perspective of mainstreaming that appropriations will continue to be awarded for equality projects, because they produce new knowledge and operations models, as well as good practices, which may be used in mainstreaming.

Measures:

- Separate appropriations will be reserved annually for projects promoting equality in the University units. The Head of Personnel Services will approve appropriations upon the proposal of the Equality Committee on the basis of how well-founded the applications are.
- The Equality Committee will monitor the implementation and impact of the projects.
- The Equality Committee will systematically disseminate information about the projects.
- The Equality Committee will disseminate information produced in the projects about the gender-sensitivity of study materials and teaching.

2.3 Further development of the equality network

The activities of the equality network, which was established in 2001 and covers the whole University, will be further developed. Knowledge of issues related to equality will be increased at the faculty level by appointing contact persons responsible for equality affairs to the faculties. Such contact persons may also be employed by departments and other units. The faculty contact persons will monitor equality in their own faculties and will prepare the faculty equality plans. Equality activities are part of the duties of the contact persons, who work together with the Equality Adviser and help superiors in matters relating to equality. Members of the equality network act as links between the faculties, departments and other

units and the Equality Committee. The Equality Adviser coordinates the network and the heads of the departments ensure that their units appoint their own contact persons.

Measures:

- The duties of the contact persons responsible for equality affairs will be more clearly defined.
- The faculties will appoint their own contact persons for equality affairs.
- Equal opportunities activities will be taken into account in the job description of the contact persons.
- The Equality Committee will hold campus meetings where the contact persons may discuss their work.
- The contact persons will be mentioned in the departmental rules of procedure.
- The contact persons will be offered training.
- The Equality Adviser will compile basic information, including the University equality plans and the instructions for new contact persons for equality affairs, which will be annually revised and posted on the University website devoted to equality issues.
- Representatives of the University's Student Union will be included in the equality network.

2.4 Statistics and reports should take equality into account

Statistics provide the key data used for achieving equality. Developments in equality should be reflected in continuously updated statistical information compiled by the University. Without comprehensive and yearly statistical information it is not possible to monitor the state of equality. In addition, personnel accounting should be developed so that greater attention is given to issues of equality. Progress in equality in the University units will be monitored in performance negotiations.

Measures:

- The Administration Office will see to it that the information systems used for staff and study affairs enable gender specific statistics.
- The following annual statistics will be generated according to gender:

The Administration Office will compile statistics on

- applicants for and appointees to public- and private-law employment relationships

Faculties and other operational units will compile statistics on

- experts consulted in filling posts
- composition of draft committees and other working groups
- applicants for and appointees to public- and private-law employment relationships, including those invited for professorial posts

The Department for Strategic Planning and Development will compile statistics on

- theses and dissertations and the grade received
- graduates (first degrees and postgraduate degrees)
- new students
- applicants for and receivers of the University's own grants

Personnel Services will compile statistics on

- staff (by professional group)
- persons appointed to fixed-term posts and private-law employment relationships (by age group)
- persons admitted to doctoral programmes
- parental leave
- salaries (by education and occupational title)
- participants in staff training
- contacts and measures regarding sexual harassment (Equality Adviser)

General Administration will compile statistics on

- composition of administrative bodies; election candidates
- composition of working groups appointed by the Administration Office and the Senate

- The Equality Committee will propose to the Rector that the faculties be asked to produce gender-specific statistics for performance negotiations.
- The annual reports of the University and its faculties will include gender-specific statistics on applicants, admitted students and staff.
- The Equality Committee will monitor the availability of statistics and will give instructions, if necessary.

2.5 Monitoring of change in post structure and division of duties

In spring 1999, the Senate made decisions on developing the system of University teaching and research posts. It was decided to change assistantships to postgraduate posts, and so-called middle-category posts to university lectureships. The qualification requirement for university lectureships is normally a doctor's degree. The duties of a university lecturer include both research and teaching. Some of the university lectureships were filled permanently and others for a fixed term.

According to the system of total working hours, exact teaching duties are no longer specified for any teaching group. The rule of 1,600 annual working hours is applicable to everyone. The right and duty of all University teachers includes both teaching and research. It is the duty of the department heads to prevent any developments leading to a one-sided division of duties.

The duties of the assistants in the various faculties and departments are traditionally very different: in some faculties the assistants are required to teach. Even the duties of assistants in the same subject may be emphasised differently: some assistants have much better opportunities to do their own research than their colleagues, whose time is spent performing various departmental duties. In addition, the establishment of doctoral programmes and the post category of university lectureships affect and have already partly affected the position and duties of assistants.

Measures:

- The Equality Committee will monitor changes in post structure and termination of posts, particularly the establishment of university lectureships, appointments to posts, handling of and division of the duties according to gender. For monitoring purposes, the faculties and other units must provide information required by the Committee.
- When approving work plans and curricula, the faculties and departments must make sure that the teaching and research duties of the university lecturers and assistants are not distributed unevenly according to gender.

2.6 Supporting research on women's studies at departments and the Christina Institute for Women's Studies

The University of Helsinki stands out because of the firm position of the discipline of women's studies at the University. There is growing demand both in Finland and internationally for expertise in questions concerning women and equality. Because women's studies have a central role in developing this kind of expertise and in training new experts, the University must assure the continuation and wide range of women's studies.

Research on women's studies is carried out at the Christina Institute for Women's Studies and at more than 20 departments in seven faculties at the University. The Christina Institute is engaged in and promotes women's studies and coordinates teaching given in other units. The Institute employs a permanent professor of women's studies and a fixed-term university lecturer. The Institute offers the first Finnish Master's programme in women's studies. This programme enables students of different disciplines who are writing their theses to integrate their own discipline with women's studies, which has a multidisciplinary, broad approach and provides specialised expertise. The Institute is also the first Finnish women's studies institute which awards doctoral degrees in the discipline.

The Christina Institute was originally established as a unit that would coordinate courses mostly provided by the departments. However, as time passed, it became clear that this original plan was flawed. Although there is no shortage of qualified experts in women's studies, in practice some of the relevant departments do not have the staff with the required expertise. No posts in women's studies have been established at the departments. The main problems are the high turnover of the persons in charge of women's studies and the lack of permanent positions.

Measures:

- The Senate is responsible for the status and continuity of women's studies.
- The faculties must consider whether to establish permanent posts in women's studies in those fields which are associated with women's studies.
- The possibility of creating a pool of teaching and research resources in women's studies will be examined. This pool would include teachers' contact information, and it could be used for guidance.

2.7 Further development of teaching from the equality perspective

The equal treatment of students must be the cornerstone of all teaching. The gender-sensitivity of teaching means that the teacher must pay attention equally to both men and women students. The teacher must take both genders into account by being conscious of the language used and the examples given. Student feedback should also be used to monitor the achievement of equality in teaching.

In the past few decades, women's studies has produced new knowledge which has significantly changed people's perceptions of equality, women's position, the concept of gender, the intellectual, social and cultural significance of gender, the many facets of gender, and discrimination. The central objective of current equality policy is to incorporate this new knowledge into all teaching for which it is relevant. This objective is also recorded in Section 5 of the Act on Equality Between Women and Men. Experts involved in working life in the future will be increasingly required to have a thorough knowledge, not only of

their own profession, but also of gender equality issues in general as well as in their own field.

In developing curricula and choosing textbooks and other course materials, the views of both men and women as well as the critique presented by women's studies of the seeming gender neutrality of science should be taken into account as much as possible. Knowledge related to equality, the position of women and the concept and comprehension of gender must be integrated into teaching particularly in the arts and social sciences as appropriate for each field. Furthermore, the knowledge produced in women's studies and gender studies must be integrated, where applicable, into teaching given in other disciplines.

Lately it has been noted that departments have scarce resources for women's studies. Even in fields containing a great deal of women's studies, students are not well enough informed about it, either because it is not sufficiently incorporated into the degree requirements or because women's studies are most often taught in elective courses only. In the fields where women's studies has produced research, it should be treated equally with other materials in the field, both in degree requirements and in the curricula.

Measures:

- In the fields which are engaged in women's studies, departments will see to it that their curricula include special courses in women's studies and that women's studies will be integrated into compulsory basic courses as appropriate for each field.
- The achievement of equality will be adopted as one criterion in assessments of research and education at the University. The gender-sensitivity of research and teaching will be counted as a merit in such assessments.

3. Other measures

During the planning period, other efforts will also be made to promote equality at the University. Special efforts will be made to implement the following measures.

3.1 Studies and teaching

There is still an imbalance in the proportion of men and women applying to different disciplines. The image of the suitability of a discipline for either men or women affects prospective students' decisions on where to apply. The text and illustrations in information distributed to applicants, such as admissions leaflets, should be presented so as not to communicate gender-restricted images of the degree programmes. Information on studies should be designed so that all subjects are presented in a way that will be interesting to both women and men. Through support, counselling and encouragement, efforts should be made to avoid development towards so-called male and female subjects, and to promote a better balance in gender distribution in subjects that already have an overly large proportion of either men or women.

Those responsible for student admissions must make sure that entrance examination books, questions and criteria do not favour or discriminate against either gender or gender minorities.

The requirements of equal treatment must be taken into account both in teaching situations and in grading. This seemingly obvious fact is not always the case in reality. For example, in the other Nordic countries and in some Finnish universities, in order to prevent the possibility of an individual's personal characteristics or of hostile attitudes towards women or sexual minorities influencing his or her grade, the identity of a student taking an examination is not revealed.

In order to ensure that teaching promotes equality and that the teaching staff are able to recognise and rectify their own discriminatory behaviour, these topics must be incorporated into training on university-level teaching and learning. In this context, on-the-job guidance, staff training and teacher education all play a central role.

The University should also pay attention to the reasons underlying delayed graduation. One of them is the difficulty of combining parenthood and studies, which affects especially

women. Delayed graduation should be a cause for concern particularly in those fields where the phenomenon is significantly more prevalent among one of the genders.

Measures:

- Units responsible for student admissions must make sure that the information given to applicants is given equally to both women and men, and that they are encouraged to apply to fields in which their gender is in the minority. Entrance examination books, questions and criteria cannot favour or discriminate against either gender, and as far as possible, they should take into consideration the viewpoints of both men and women.
- In teaching evaluations, the content of the teaching as well as teaching procedures are evaluated from the standpoint of equality.
- The Equality Committee will implement a pilot project on anonymous assessment. The effects of such assessment will be studied and analysed from a gender perspective. The Committee will draw up guidelines for the practical implementation of anonymous assessment.
- A question concerning the achievement of equality in teaching will be systematically included in the course evaluation form given to students. The question may be open in content.
- Departments and research groups will see to it that men and women students are recruited into research groups impartially.
- The possibility of developing new forms of support to students, such as mentoring, will be investigated.
- The Equality Committee will monitor the development of the Finnish degree system from the perspective of equality in line with the principles of the European space for higher education (Bologna process).

3.2 Recruitment and career development

Open and transparent recruitment to public- and private-law employment relationships, replacement positions, research projects and research groups advances gender equality. The

University promotes the equal placement of women and men in various positions and ensures equal opportunities for career advancement at all levels. The qualifications of applicants of both genders are assessed impartially. When choosing between equally qualified men and women applicants, those of the under-represented gender may be chosen. The University has an equal salaries policy. All occupational fields must be given the opportunity to participate in training during working hours.

Pregnancy and parental leave cannot affect the recruitment or career advancement of women in a discriminatory way. The duration or continuation of employment cannot be restricted because of pregnancy. Likewise, undergoing a process of gender reassignment or gender identity must not have a discriminatory impact on recruitment or career development.

Supervisors and project leaders are in key positions in the recruitment of professional researchers. They cannot discriminate against or favour anyone on grounds of gender or sexual identity. They must recruit new research trainees as impartially as possible, taking into account the gender distribution in the field. Many investigations have shown that not all trainees receive guidance that is sufficient or that takes their special problems into consideration. Supervisors must make sure that research trainees receive fair treatment. Recruitment to postgraduate studies has become more equal at the University. In 2003 the majority, or 58% (N=355), of those graduating with a doctoral degree from the University were women, although there are differences between the disciplines. There is now a predominance of women in some fields, which has led to the problem of too few male applicants. Moreover, gender divisions often emerge within fields.

After receiving a doctorate, women's opportunities for career advancement become more difficult. The share of women appointed to professorships at the University of Helsinki has not increased at all from 1999 to 2002, but has stayed at the level of 21-22%, which is close to the national average; this despite the fact that the number of women who graduate with a doctoral degree has steadily increased. One reason for the slow increase in the number of women professors has been the practice of filling posts by invitation, which became more common in the latter half of the 1990s. This practice has received negative attention from

the United Nations CEDAW Committee and indirectly from the EU (ETAN report of 2000). In addition to being mentioned in the University of Helsinki Equality Plan, the equality plans of several other universities note that the practice of filling posts by invitation is a closed and non-transparent procedure and thus less favourable to women than an open application process. According to preliminary data compiled by the Ministry of Education, the number of posts filled by invitation has decreased significantly at the beginning of the 21st century. While more than half of all Finnish professorships were filled by invitation in the late 1990s, from 2000 to 2002 this number has dropped to slightly more than 10%. Nevertheless, the practice of filling posts by invitation should continue to be monitored from the viewpoint of equality. This practice is meant to be an exceptional way of filling vacancies. When considering filling a post by invitation, the department and faculty concerned must take gender equality into account and survey the potential male and female applicants before beginning the procedure.

The practice of filling professorships for a fixed term has become more common at the beginning of the 21st century, and according to preliminary data provided by the Ministry of Education, 43.5% of all Finnish professorships filled in 2002 were fixed-term chairs. This practice should also be monitored from the equality perspective.

Faculties and departments must also take into account the gender distribution of members of appointment committees and working groups, and assessors, all of whom have a decisive role in the appointment procedure, and see to it that there is a balance in the gender composition of those chosen to act in this capacity.

Mentoring is a significant means of promoting women's career advancement. When the baby boom generation retires, it is important that the profound professional knowledge they have gathered is transferred to their successors. The University set up a mentoring programme upon the proposal of the Equality Committee as part of staff training. The mentoring programme will be continued, and new mentoring programmes will be tailored for all staff groups, particularly for groups who will benefit from such programmes in terms of equality; these include women who have recently embarked on their research careers.

Measures:

- Openness and transparency in recruitment are aimed at on all levels.
- Vacant posts and temporary positions must be openly advertised.
- In review meetings between superiors and employees, the participants should pay attention to the equal distribution of duties between men and women.
- The diversification of the duties of those working in administration and support functions should also be discussed in review meetings.
- The University will strive to increase the number of women in leadership positions.
- An equal number of men and women will be appointed to committees and as assessors when filling positions.
- When deciding whether to fill a professorial post by invitation, departments and faculties will chart possible female and male applicants and will take into account gender equality.
- The Equality Committee will monitor the filling of professorial posts by invitation and for fixed terms and will collect statistics.
- The faculties and departments will monitor the impartiality of recruitment for research groups and projects.
- Departments and research groups will make sure that supervision is sufficient and equitable for both genders.
- Adjusted or adjudged compensation that the University has been ordered to pay because of a violation of equal opportunities will be channelled for payment to the faculty or unit making the decision.
- Training in mentoring will be continued and targeted more accurately to various units and staff groups.
- Training in mentoring will be further developed by creating a separate mentoring programme for women who have recently embarked on their research careers.
- A gender-sensitive attitude demonstrated in research and teaching will be counted as a merit in appointments when it is relevant for the field.
- Fixed-term appointments will be monitored by gender, post group and the duration of the term.
- All professional groups should be equally entitled to participate in training during working hours.
- The use of academic portfolios in the filling of posts will be examined by the Equality

Committee from a gender perspective.

3.2.1 Affirmative action

Under Section 6 of the Constitution of Finland, gender equality shall be promoted in societal activity and working life. Under Section 1 of the Act on Equality Between Women and Men, special attention shall be paid to the improvement of the position of women in working life. In order to do so, *affirmative action* may be taken; such action refers to temporary measures which improve the position and conditions of a certain group of people (e.g., women) and aim at the realisation of equality in actual fact. Affirmative action also covers *positive discrimination* which means that the under-represented gender is given priority in recruitment or career advancement.

In fields where one gender is significantly under-represented in professorships, affirmative action can be taken to create a more balanced gender distribution; similar action may also be taken in the filling of other public- and private-law employment relationships. A clear under-representation of one gender at the University of Helsinki means that the share of the under-represented gender is less than 40%. If men and women applicants are as qualified or if their merits are only slightly different, applicants of the under-represented gender may be chosen for the post until equity in gender distribution has been reached. This is not synonymous with a gender quota. No one can be chosen simply on the basis of gender. Instead, clear and transparent qualifications criteria should be applied in the selection process, on the basis of which an objective comparison of the merits of all applicants must be made. In the determination of qualifications criteria, the individual life situations of the applicants must be taken into account; for example, interruptions in one's professional career because of family obligations or other personal reasons cannot be disadvantageous when assessing the merits of the applicant. On the other hand, such personal situations may be seen in a positive light if they are viewed as improving the applicant's suitability. Affirmative action is allowed if the procedure is proportional to the target aimed at, i.e., the balancing of gender distribution.

Measures:

- The use of affirmative action should be considered when filling posts in fields where one gender is clearly under-represented and when the other requirements of affirmative action are met.
- The Equality Committee will issue instructions concerning affirmative action in the filling of posts.

3.3 Working community

All people are to be treated equally in the University community, regardless of gender, sexual identity or gender expression. Equal treatment must be assured especially in hiring employees, in job descriptions, in salaries and in career advancement. If either gender is regularly relegated to dealing with lower paid or otherwise disadvantageous tasks, it may be a question of indirect discrimination if the employer cannot give what can objectively be called a valid reason for this procedure. The fact that an employee agrees to more unfavourable employment terms is not a valid reason. In addition, part-time work or part-time retirement cannot result in the unequal distribution of work or in discriminatory practices in terms of career advancement.

In October 2003, the Ministry of Finance issued instructions for the reduction of fixed-term employment contracts in public administration. The premise of these instructions is that fixed-term appointments are not allowed unless specifically provided for in legislation, in which case the grounds for the fixed term must be specified in detail. The project-based nature of the work or funding are not in themselves sufficient grounds for a fixed-term appointment. Moreover, fixed-term appointments must cover the duration of the entire project, and the contract should not need to be renewed, say, each year based on the available funding, unless there is good reason to do so. The University is systematically reviewing the grounds for fixed-term employment contracts and is striving to reduce them. The faculties and departments are responsible for the practical implementation of this task.

Measures:

- The Equality Committee will examine the departmental personnel plans and will issue instructions, if necessary.
- In the internal distribution of duties, units must see to it that teaching, research and administrative tasks are distributed fairly between the holders of different posts, regardless of gender.
- The gender impacts of adopting a new salary system must be assessed. Systematic monitoring requires the compilation of statistics on salaries according to gender.
- The survey charting the atmosphere at work will include questions relating to the achievement of equality.
- The faculties and departments will monitor the impact of part-time retirement on work duties.
- The Equality Committee will monitor the reduction of fixed-term appointments from a gender perspective.

3.4 Combining work, study and family responsibilities

Those working and studying at the University should be able to reconcile work, study and family life. Discrimination in hiring because of parenthood or pregnancy is considered illegal gender discrimination. Pregnancy, maternity leave and parental leave cannot shorten the fixed-term post or research position to which the employee has been appointed. Fixed-term appointments cannot be made so that an individual's post or employment is terminated because of pregnancy or because of the use of parental leave as prescribed by law.

Flexible working hours should be viewed as positive when demanded by responsibilities related to the provision of care, but this should not result in such employees being relegated to a status of inequality in the distribution of duties, rewards for services or career advancement. Care responsibilities include not only child care but also, for example, the care given to elderly parents. Flexibility in study arrangements and study-related social benefits

should also be viewed in a positive light, and students should not be treated unequally because of care responsibilities.

Statistics show that women carry the greater share of family responsibility, and this could indirectly weaken their position at work. The combination of a scientific career and family responsibilities is very common for Finnish women making a career in research. Men who have completed a postgraduate degree have the most children out of all Finnish men. Researchers with children should be seen as a resource, not a problem, and the combination of work and family should be supported by various practical arrangements. Special attention should be given to the situation of young researchers with families. Men and women should be encouraged to use their rights to parental leave equitably.

The child care services created for students also benefit the University, because they help the students to combine study and family responsibilities and thus accelerate graduation.

Measures:

- The Administration Office will draw up instructions concerning the reconciliation of work and family for the heads of departments and research groups and projects. Data on this will be included in staff training for managers and other personnel.
- Employees must be allowed to work flexible hours because of various care responsibilities.
- Superiors must see to it that the working hours specified in contracts for public- and private-law employment relationships are sufficient to carry out the work duties.
- Information on changes in the workplace must also be disseminated to those on maternity, paternity and parental leave.
- The Equality Committee will examine the possibility of further developing the nursery for the children of students in cooperation with the Student Union and the University as a whole.

3.5 Prevention of sexual harassment

The University community does not approve of the sexual harassment of its staff or students in any form. Section 6 of the Act on Equality Between Women and Men obligates employers to ensure that their employees are not subjected to sexual harassment in the workplace. The EC Equal Treatment Directive determines sexual discrimination as unlawful discrimination. Likewise, the Finnish Occupational Safety and Health Act of 2003 and the Non-Discrimination Act of 2004 both prohibit harassment. The employer is responsible for the working conditions, comfort and safety of staff. Students must also be ensured a safe and comfortable study environment.

The EC Equal Treatment Directive distinguishes two types of harassment. *Harassment* is where an unwanted conduct related to the gender of a person occurs with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of that person, and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. *Sexual harassment* is where any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature occurs, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. A person's rejection of, or submission to, such conduct may not be used as a basis for a decision affecting that person. According to research, harassment focuses mainly on women, weakening a woman's position in the working community and as a student.

The University has appointed contact persons responsible for dealing with the harassment of both staff and students. The contact person dealing with the harassment of staff is the University's Equality Adviser. The Student Union employs two contact persons, one male and one female, who can be contacted by students in matters relating to harassment and discrimination. Discussions with these contact persons are totally confidential, and they will not take further action unless they are authorised to do so by the person who has been harassed. **The University website contains instructions for the prevention of sexual harassment and for dealing with cases of harassment.** These instructions have also been distributed to the departments. The employer has the right and duty to investigate the

matter and, if necessary, to take further action against an offender, who may receive a reprimand or warning, or be dismissed from his or her post.

Measures:

- The Equality Committee will revise the instructions for the prevention of sexual harassment and for dealing with harassment at the University.
- The Equality Adviser will collect statistics annually on contacts dealing with harassment and will report annually on the number and type of harassment complaints, as well as on how the complaints have been handled and what measures have been taken.
- A well-functioning monitoring system will be developed so that the University will be able to monitor the situation concerning those who have made complaints about harassment to ascertain whether any retaliatory action has been taken against them.
- The heads of departments and units will see to it that the contact information of the persons responsible for dealing with harassment and the instructions on how to proceed in cases of harassment are made available in units.
- Training for contact persons and managers will be arranged in order to prevent harassment and to deal with such issues.

3.6 National and international cooperation

International cooperation for the advancement of gender equality in research and university teaching is on the rise. Development projects and experiments have been launched in many European countries. It is important to monitor and make good use of their results in equality activities at the University. The University supports, as much as possible, staff participation in international congresses and workshops on equality issues in university life.

The University continues its active participation in promoting closer international cooperation on equality issues between universities. The University summoned and hosted the first Equality Conference of European universities in 1998. This led to the initiation of Europe-wide networking and regular conferences in the field (Zurich in 2000 and Genoa in

2003), which have been planned and implemented also by members of the University's Equality Committee, and to the establishment of a mailing list (EQ-UNI), which is moderated by the University. This network for equality at universities has more than 320 members from more than 30 countries and all continents. The vice-chair of the Equality Committee is a member of the organising committee in charge of the fourth conference to be held in Oxford in 2005.

Gender equality must also be considered whenever the University and its units choose or invite persons to act as experts or as its representatives in an international setting.

The University also supports national cooperation on equality between Finnish universities, and the Equality Committee liaises with corresponding committees at other Finnish universities. The Committee has also established a national mailing list for equality committees at Finnish universities, and it will send a representative to the national university meeting on equality. It is important that those who work with equality issues establish networks which can be used to share experiences of good practices.

Measures:

- Women and men must be chosen on an equitable basis to act as University representatives at international functions.
- The University will propose an increasing number of women experts for international tasks requiring expertise.
- The University, faculties and departments will increasingly invite foreign women in science as guest lecturers.
- The University will maintain the mailing list for European university equality (EQ-UNI).
- The University will allocate resources for cooperation on equality between Finnish universities.
- The University will maintain the mailing list for Finnish university equality.
- The University will take an active part in cooperation on equality between European universities.

3.7 Communications, training and implementation

The inclusion of the equality perspective in all decision-making and activities at the University requires an even better flow of information and more active communication. Those playing a key role in this regard are, on the one hand, department heads, who are responsible for the working atmosphere, and on the other hand, the contact persons for equality affairs. In improving communication, the many and varied possibilities offered by electronic mail in particular should be made good use of. Important information on equality issues should be online and easily accessible to staff and students. Through its mailing list (tasa-arvo-lista@helsinki.fi, see <http://www.helsinki.fi/tasa-arvo/suomi/tasa-arvo-lista.html>), the University also promotes nationwide exchanges of information between the equality committees and equality contact persons of Finnish universities. One of the essential tasks of the University's Equality Adviser is participation in the planning and implementing of staff training.

Equality development is made visible and supported by giving out the annual Maikki Friberg award.

Measures:

- The Administration Office will see to it that equality issues are continually and in a variety of ways represented in the training of superiors and that they are included in the materials sent to them. The equality perspective is taken into account in other staff training as well.
- Equality issues are discussed in the training of employee representatives.
- The annual Maikki Friberg award supports active efforts in promoting equality. The Equality Committee bases its decision on the recipient of the award on proposals made by the academic community.
- Information on equality affairs and the activities of the Equality Committee will be distributed more efficiently and systematically.
- The Equality Committee will arrange campus-specific training sessions on topical issues, such as the reform of the Act on Equality Between Women and Men.
- The University has moved towards a system where staff and students have their own intranet

sites, and a more limited website is made available to outsiders. Despite this development, the University must ensure that all the resources contain a comprehensive presentation of equality issues which may be easily accessed.

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when a person or a group of people is treated differently than others in the same position without a valid reason.

Gender discrimination

Gender discrimination means that women and men are accorded different status on grounds of gender.

Gender impact assessment

Gender impact assessment means that the supposed impacts of proposed measures are assessed in light of women's and men's position, resources and interests.

Gender minority

Gender minorities are people whose gender identity or gender expression is contradictory to cultural gender expectations. Their identity or physical appearance is not unequivocally "male" or "female" but something in between. The concept of transgender people may also be used.

Gender sensitivity

Gender sensitivity means that people are aware in all their activities of the impacts of gender and gender-based differences on the lives of women and men, and that they strive to prevent the resulting inequality.

Gender system

The gender system consists of economic, social and political structures which maintain and produce separate gender roles for women and men.

Human rights

Human rights refer to the rights to which all human beings are equally entitled. According to the modern view, human rights primarily mean the rights which are protected by universal or regional human rights conventions.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination refers to a situation where an apparently neutral regulation or practice puts certain people at a disadvantage. Indirect discrimination is often caused by structural or cultural reasons and practices or deficiencies in the physical environment.

Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming is a strategy of change whereby policy processes are re-organised so that those involved in different fields promote equality at all levels and stages and especially in workplaces and other everyday activities.

Mentoring

Mentoring is target-oriented one-to-one interaction, which is characterised by privacy, trust, openness and commitment. The mentor uses his or her own experiences and know-how to support the professional and personal development of the person being mentored. Mentoring is an increasingly popular way of supporting the personal and professional development of women, in particular.

Multiple discrimination

Multiple discrimination occurs when the same person is discriminated against on more than one ground. For example, women who belong to several minorities face an entirely different set of problems than the majority of women.

Positive discrimination and affirmative action

Affirmative action refers to measures which promote equality and equal opportunities between men and women. In addition to affirmative action per se, which aims to help primarily women to compete more effectively with men, the term also covers positive discrimination, whereby the representatives of the minority gender are given priority in recruitment and promotions.

Segregation

Segregation means that women and men are employed and concentrate in different and unequal professions and educational fields in society.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome and one-sided physical or verbal conduct characterised by the negative feelings and effects that it produces in the person subjected to the harassment.

Women's studies

Women's studies is an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary discipline which produces new knowledge about gender relations, women's life and position, and the significance of gender as a factor that structures history, culture and society. Those involved with women's studies also carry out teaching and research on men's, equality and queer studies.