

# **Towards Gender Equity in Japanese and Nordic Labour Markets: A Tale of Two Paths**

**By**

**Helinä Melkas\*  
and Richard Anker\*\***

**International Labour Office, Geneva**

**July 2003**

\* Helsinki University of Technology, Lahti Centre, Institute for Regional Economics and Business Strategy.

\*\* Former ILO Official.

For more information on the InFocus Programme on Socio-Economic Security, please see the related web page <http://www.ilo.org/ses> or contact the Secretariat at Tel: +41.22.799.8893, Fax: +41.22.799.7123 or E-mail: [ses@ilo.org](mailto:ses@ilo.org)

---

Copyright © International Labour Organization 2003

Publications of the International Labour Office enjoy copyright under Protocol 2 of the Universal Copyright Convention. Nevertheless, short excerpts from them may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation, application should be made to the ILO Publications Bureau (Rights and Permissions), International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. The International Labour Office welcomes such applications.

Libraries, institutions and other users registered in the United Kingdom with the Copyright Licensing Agency, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9HE (Fax: +44 171436 3986), in the United States with the Copyright Clearance Centre, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923 (Fax: +1 508 750 4470), or in other countries with associated Reproduction Rights Organizations, may make photocopies in accordance with the licences issued to them for this purpose.

---

ISBN 92-2-114289-2

First published 2003

The designations employed in ILO publications, which are in conformity with United Nations practice, and the presentation of material therein do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the International Labour Office concerning the legal status of any country, area or territory or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers.

The responsibility for opinions expressed in signed articles, studies and other contributions rests solely with their authors, and publication does not constitute an endorsement by the International Labour Office of the opinions expressed in them.

Reference to names of firms and commercial products and processes does not imply their endorsement by the International Labour Office, and any failure to mention a particular firm, commercial product or process is not a sign of disapproval.

ILO publications can be obtained through major booksellers or ILO local offices in many countries, or direct from ILO Publications, International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Catalogues or lists of new publications are available free of charge from the above address.

Printed by the International Labour Office. Geneva, Switzerland

---

## Contents

Preface .....	v
1. Introduction .....	1
1.1 Background .....	1
2. Labour market differentials and occupational sex segregation .....	2
2.1 Significance of gender-based occupational sex segregation .....	2
2.2 Description of gender equality in labour markets of study areas .....	7
2.3 Japan: cultural and historical background .....	10
2.4 Nordic countries: cultural background .....	11
2.5 Gender equality in labour markets: comparisons of women's status .....	13
3. Policies for enhancement of gender equality .....	27
3.1 Recent concerns related to gender equity and policies and laws for its enhancement ..	27
3.1.1 Japan .....	27
3.1.2 Nordic countries .....	31
4. Statistical analysis of occupational segregation by sex .....	34
4.1 Indices of inequality .....	34
4.2 Gender-dominated occupations .....	36
4.3 Top 10 "female" and "male" occupations .....	39
4.4 Seventeen typical "female" and "male" occupations .....	40
4.5 Monetization of household-type work.....	43
4.6 Vertical segregation and comparison of similar occupations with different status .....	46
5. Summary and conclusions .....	49
5.1 Summary .....	49
5.2 Concluding comments.....	51
References.....	55
Annexures .....	63
Annex 1. Useful websites as of January 2003 .....	63
Annex 2. Finnish Family Policy .....	64
Annex 3. Description of data and comparability .....	69

## List of figures

Figure 1. Female labour force participation rate by age group in Japan, 1975-1999.....	14
Figure 2. Female labour force participation rate by age group, married and unmarried, in Japan, 1975-1999.....	14
Figure 3. Gender disparities in earning by age group in Japan, 1975-1998.....	21
Figure 4. Disparity between male and female contractual wages in Japan, 1998.....	22
Figure 5. Perception of roles in Japan ("Men should go out to work and women should take care of the home"), 1997.....	23
Figure 6. Disparity in parents' educational expectations for children in Japan, 1968-1994.....	24
Figure 7. Trends in female and male advancement in school by school category, in Japan, 1975-1999 .....	24
Figure 8. Proportion of female students by major (undergraduate departments), in Japan, 1975-1999 .....	26
Figure 9. Changes in occupational segregation by sex, as measured by ID, in Japan and the Nordic countries, 1970-1995 .....	36

---

### **List of tables**

Table 1. Stereotyped characteristics of women and their expected effect on occupational segregation by sex .....	5
Table 1 (contd). Stereotyped characteristics of women and their expected effect on occupational segregation by sex .....	6
Table 1 (contd). Stereotyped characteristics of women and their expected effect on occupational segregation by sex .....	7
Table 2. Labour force participation rates, Nordic countries, 1998 .....	15
Table 3. Proportion of employees by age and form of employment in Japan, 1997 .....	16
Table 4. Female-male wage ratios in the world, around 1990 <sup>1</sup> .....	19
Table 5. Index of dissimilarity (ID) and female share of non-agricultural labour force in Japan, Finland, Norway and Sweden, 1970 – 1995 .....	35
Table 6. Number of female-dominated non-agricultural occupations and percentage of women workers employed in them, Japan and the Nordic countries, 1970 - 95 .....	37
Table 7. Number of male-dominated non-agricultural occupations and percentage of male workers employed in them, Japan and the Nordic countries, 1970-95 .....	38
Table 8. Ten most female-dominated occupations in Japan and the Nordic countries, 1990.....	39
Table 9. Ten largest “female” and “male” occupations (based on the number of female and male workers in each occupation) in Norway, 1995 .....	40
Table 10. International comparison of the feminization (% female) of nine typical “female” occupations, generally around 1990 .....	42
Table 11. International comparison of the masculinization (% male) of eight typical “male” occupations, generally around 1990 .....	42
Table 12. Monetized household-type work in three Nordic and 15 non-Nordic OECD countries, around 1990 (percentage of all workers in selected occupations) .....	44
Table 13. Monetization of household-type work in Japan: percentage of women in selected occupations, 1990 .....	45
Table 14. Monetization of household-type work in Japan, the Nordic countries and other OECD countries (per cent of female non-agricultural labour force), 1990 .....	46
Table 15. Female participation in related occupations with different status, in Japan, 1970-95 .....	49

---

## Preface

The gestation period for this paper has been a long one. However, its relevance to continuing debates on gender inequities is considerable. The fact is that occupational segregation is among the worst and most intractable forms of gender inequalities, and is one aspect of the Scandinavian countries' relatively good performance in terms of gender that is still poor. Nevertheless, the Nordic countries do have a record that makes comparison with Japan intriguing. To what extent has Japan's progress lagged? Are the differences narrowing or growing? Are the policies that have produced progress in the Nordic countries replicable in a very different society such as Japan?

Gender inequalities are an important part of patterns of economic insecurity in all societies. In practice, some forms of inequality exist in all areas of work-related insecurity. The Programme takes it as axiomatic that governments cannot justifiably claim to have acceptable social and economic security if women face systematic discrimination and disadvantage. This is why in our work on a national Decent Work Index gender inequality variables are given a prominent place.

This paper presents a careful analysis of institutional differences that help to explain gender-based occupational segregation, and in doing so gives some tentative answers to the sort of questions posed above. It also provides a rich array of statistical information that students of gender relations should find extremely valuable.

Guy Standing  
Director  
InFocus Programme on Socio-Economic Security



---

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Much has been written about gender inequality in labour markets. It is a fact that women throughout the world of work have lower pay and status, and face restricted labour-market opportunities and occupational segregation. But, the situation of the woman differs significantly across countries, partly because her status is intertwined with culture and history. Indeed, it can be argued that gender difference is the most ancient, most universal, and most powerful origin of many morally valued conceptualizations in the world (Harding, 1986).

In order to shed light on recent developments and policies on gender, this paper contrasts two quite different worlds and paths of gender roles and development ? those of Japan and Nordic countries. Japan is often described as a traditional male-dominated society, where the glass ceiling is especially low and strong, where pay differentials are among the widest in the world, and where the level of occupational sex segregation is relatively high. Nordic countries, on the other hand, are widely known for their policies and commitment to gender equity and women's integration into nearly all spheres of public life, including the labour market.

The truth is somewhere between these stereotypes. While Japan has the highest female-male pay differential among developed countries, it has a below average level of occupational segregation by sex for the developed countries (Anker, 1998). While Japanese labour laws and policies have not been effective in bringing about gender equity in the labour market (and have been more about "endeavouring" to achieving gender equity), there has been a flurry of new laws and initiatives in Japan in the past few years. Nordic countries, on the other hand, have unexpectedly relatively high levels of occupational sex segregation alongside a progressive legal system and a low female-male wage gap.

The objective of this paper is, first, to describe how Japan differs from the three Nordic countries of Finland, Norway and Sweden as well as from other countries, especially other industrialized and European countries. In this paper, the three Nordic countries are mainly treated as a homogenous bloc. Of course, there are many important national differences between them, but they have been the focus of our attention in an earlier publication (Melkas and Anker, 1998). Second, the paper analyses the reasons for differing patterns between and within these groups of countries.

The following issues are specifically addressed in the empirical section of this paper, which takes a long time perspective of 25 years (1970 to 1995):

- ☞ which occupations are female-dominated or male-dominated in Japan and Nordic countries, and how this has changed over time;
- ☞ what indices of inequality reveal about levels and trends in occupational sex segregation;
- ☞ to what extent household work has become monetized, and how this has affected occupational segregation;
- ☞ What is the degree of vertical segregation?

This paper demonstrates how Japan and the Nordic countries have been tracing-out two quite different paths as regards gender equity in the labour market by providing new evidence and insights on for instance, the extent and characteristics of horizontal and vertical occupational sex segregation and monetization of household work. A sub-theme is

---

the changing policy and legal atmosphere in Japan; how this contrasts with the situation in other industrialised countries, and how likely it is to address problems in Japan and thereby increase gender equity.

The fact is that gender inequality in Japanese labour markets has not changed in the past 25 years - despite improving fundamentals which should be leading toward increased gender equity, such as increasing female education, decreasing fertility/child care, and increasing female labour market experience. This has important long-run implications for Japan. The poor use of one-half of Japan's human resources has serious implications for Japanese economic performance and global competitiveness. While higher GDP growth usually increases the status of women, the inferior status of women also reduces GDP growth (Roy et al., 1996).

This paper is divided into five sections. After the Introduction, section 2 discusses the significance of occupational sex segregation and describes labour market characteristics of Japan and the three Nordic countries, Finland, Norway and Sweden, as well as giving an overview of the global situation. Section 3 provides information on new laws, policies and concerns for gender equity in Japan as well as older and newer concerns in the Nordic countries for gender equity and equal opportunity. Policies to enhance gender equity and combat segregation in the Nordic countries are also discussed in this section.

Section 4 presents a statistical analysis starting with a description of the occupational data used. Labour market patterns are described using statistics on female-dominated and male-dominated occupations and indices of inequality. Section 4 also investigates monetization of household work, which greatly affects the ability of women with family responsibilities to be committed to the labour market, and patterns of vertical segregation. Section 5 summarizes the main findings and provides concluding remarks. Annex 1 provides a list of useful Internet sites with information on gender in Japan and Nordic countries.

## **2. Labour market differentials and occupational sex segregation**

### **2.1 Significance of gender-based occupational sex segregation**

Gender-based occupational segregation is defined as the employment of men and women in different occupations across the entire occupational structure (horizontal segregation), and the employment of men and women in different positions within the same occupation or occupational group (vertical segregation). Where there is a detailed occupational classification, the distinction between vertical and horizontal segregation starts to blur.<sup>1</sup> Sectoral or industrial segregation is a third aspect of occupational segregation by sex. It concerns segregation by economic sector, by the public and private sectors and by the formal and informal sectors.

Occupational segregation by sex is connected to work-life problems at all levels. A strict division of work between women and men by sex restricts labour market options,

---

<sup>1</sup> For example, the difference in the feminization of the occupations of nurses and doctors would be considered as vertical segregation in a typical two-digit classification, where medical workers form one occupational group, which includes nurses and doctors. In a typical three-digit classification, however, nurses and doctors would be considered as separate occupations and differences in feminization would concern horizontal segregation.

---

affects the valuation of work and causes pay differentials that cannot be explained by differences in education level and work experience. Indeed, it leads to a lack of equal opportunities that is one of the cornerstones of overall equality in society.

Occupational segregation by sex negatively affects the efficiency of the labour market as a whole. The traditional attitudes of employers favouring men or women may hinder them from choosing the most suitable person for a particular post or from finding a sufficient number of qualified candidates. Segregation causes inflexibility because it restrains mobility between “male” and “female” occupations. By inhibiting the smooth reallocation of workers from surplus to deficit sectors, segregation also contributes to unemployment, short-term skill mismatches and longer-term skill gaps.

Labour productivity is also affected by gender equity in the workplace. It has been found in Finnish surveys, for example, that work motivation is better in workplaces where there is a combination of both sexes and where gender equality prevails. Gender equality was also found to improve the external image, “innovativity”, creativeness, justice and functionality of the enterprise, and thus productivity and efficiency of the work community. Indeed, gender equality is a feature of a modern enterprise and part of a healthy work community (Kauppinen and Veikkola, 1997; Kauppinen, 2000).

At the individual level, occupational segregation based on the worker’s sex has a highly negative impact on women, on their career opportunities and their pay, as well as on the quality of work life and the valuation of women’s work (Anttalainen, 1986; Gunderson, 1994; Kolehmainen, 1999). The gender gap in pay is a reality due to both horizontal and vertical segregation. Thus, even where women have entered traditionally male occupations, as has happened recently to a certain extent in many countries (e.g. Anker, 1998; Rubery et al., 1998; Kolehmainen, 1999; Wootton, 1997), women are more likely than men to be found in lower status and lower paid positions (e.g. Barbezat, 1993; Kandolin, 1993; Nordic Council of Ministers, 1994; Gonäs and Spånt, 1997). The polarization of the labour market by gender also leads to qualitative differences between women’s and men’s work. Research has shown for example, that typical women’s work generally involves less decision-making and independent planning than typical men’s work, is more restricted in space and time, and is more monotonous (Kauppinen et al., 1989).<sup>2</sup> In work and health interviews carried out in Finland in 1997 and 2000, these factors were found to increase sickness absenteeism (Kauppinen, 2000).

Despite the numerous macro- and micro-level disadvantages of occupational segregation by sex, it does have a positive side for women. It protects some of women’s employment from male competition (Kandolin, 1993) and maintains demand for some forms of female labour (Lehto, 1991). It has also been claimed that the recent expansion in the service sector of the economy has benefited women by providing increased job opportunities (Rubery and Smith, 1996; European Commission, 1997). Increased job opportunities are indeed important, but should be combined with qualitative opportunities for women workers if gender equity is to be achieved.

One sometimes hears arguments in favour of “the natural division of work” - if women want to work in, for instance, caring occupations, why is it bad? The objective of reducing occupational segregation by sex is not to influence individual decisions on career choice but to promote improvement of the quality of work life in general and widen the sphere of free, truly individual choices. It is not desirable for anyone to be “a prisoner” of her/his own gender role - consciously or unconsciously.

<sup>2</sup> The decrease of women’s industrial work and increase in service-sector work decreases monotony of women’s work (Lehto, 1999).

---

A central aspect of gender segregation at work is the related gender segregation in unpaid work at home. Research has shown that gender roles and work roles are produced simultaneously in the society, so that an impression of naturalness ensues. The same applies to family. If family is taken as given and “natural”, it provides a seemingly simple explanation to gender positions, polarization of labour market and gender-specific choices in the labour market. Family, however, is only a justification of occupational segregation since it is a social construction and gender divisions in the family and in the labour market have common explanations (Julkunen, 1988; Harding, 1986; Anker, 1998, and Walby, 1990, to name just a few sources.).

Preferences are learned, and gender stereotypes are actively produced. The structure of occupational segregation is formed on the basis of gender labels of individual occupations (Kolehmainen, 1999). On the other hand, it has been observed that segregation is characterized by continuity within change (see, for instance, Hakim, 1979; Gonäs and Lehto, 1999b): as horizontal segregation declines, there is frequently an increasing trend towards vertical segregation (Kolehmainen, 1999).

Table 1 from Anker (1998) provides a conceptual framework to explain why men and women tend to be concentrated in occupations whose characteristics are closely related to typical gender stereotypes in society. For example, the positive stereotype that women are more caring than men helps qualify women for occupations requiring care, such as nurse, child carer, social worker or teacher. Women’s supposedly greater manual dexterity and nimble fingers helps qualify women for occupations such as seamster and weaver. Women’s assumed place in the home and greater experience in household activities help to qualify them for occupations such as maid, launderer, and housekeeper. Negative gender stereotypes, such as a supposed disinclination to supervise others, tends to disqualify women for managerial and supervisory occupations. Less physical strength helps disqualify women for occupations such as construction worker. Supposed lower ability in mathematics and science helps disqualify women for occupations such as engineering, architecture and physical science. Less willingness to face danger disqualifies women for occupations in fire services, police forces and mining. Evidence presented in this paper for Nordic countries and Japan strongly support the framework in table 1.

**Table 1. Stereotyped characteristics of women and their expected effect on occupational segregation by sex**

Common stereotyped characteristics of woman <sup>1</sup>	Effect on occupational segregation	Examples of typical occupations affected <sup>2</sup>	Comments
<b>Positive</b>			
1. Caring nature.	Helps qualify woman for occupations involving care for others, e.g. children, the sick, older people	Nurses Doctor Child carer Social worker Teacher Midwife	A characteristic often felt to be biologically determined, because women are mainly responsible for child care in all societies. This is, however, a learned, gender-based characteristic.  Note that occupations, which involve caring but also require greater authority (e.g. medical doctor), are often male-dominated.
2. Skill (and experience) in household-related work.	Helps qualify women for occupations that are frequently home-based (and almost always carried out by women), often as unpaid household work.	Maid Housekeeper Cleaner Cook Waiter Lauderer Hairdresser Spinner Seamstress Weaver Knitter Tailor/dressmaker	Skills easily acquired (therefore, women's greater experience of these skills before entering the labour market should not be very important).
3. Greater manual dexterity.	Helps qualify women for occupations where finger dexterity is important.	Seamstress Knitter Spinner Weaver Tailor/dressmaker Typist	Belief is based partly on biological difference (sex); and partly on experience difference (gender) acquired in the home before joining the labour market (see also stereotype 2).  Skill easily acquired.  Occupations often similar to those noted under household-related work activities (see stereotype 2).
4. Greater honesty.	Helps qualify women for occupations where money is handled and/or trust is important.	Cashier/book-keeper Salesperson Accountant	Higher-paid and higher-status occupations (e.g. accountant which is a professional occupation) are often male-dominated.
5. Attractive physical appearance.	Helps qualify women for occupations where physical appearance helps attract and/or please customers.	Receptionist Salesperson Shop assistant	This advantage is often thought to accompany a more pleasant and accommodating personality suited to e.g., reception or sales work.  In other situations, sex appeal is used to attract male customers (e.g. barmaid or prostitute).  In certain cultures and countries where public interaction between men and women is frowned upon, this characteristic disqualifies or excludes women from certain occupations (e.g. salesperson in the Middle East).

**Table 1 (contd). Stereotyped characteristics of women and their expected effect on occupational segregation by sex**

Common stereotyped characteristics of woman <sup>1</sup>	Effect on occupational segregation	Examples of typical occupations affected <sup>2</sup>	Comments
<b>Negative</b>			
6. Disinclination to supervise others.	Helps disqualify women for all types of supervisory and managerial occupations.	Manager (general; production; trade. Catering and lodging). Supervisor (clerical; sales; production). Government executive officer and administrator. Legislative official.	This is in many ways a parallel to willingness to take orders (see stereotype 11).  This often affects vertical occupational segregation (with lower-level jobs for women).
7. Lesser physical (muscular) strength.	Helps disqualify women for occupations requiring heavy lifting and/or other physical effort.	Construction worker Miner/quarrier Well driller	There is considerable overlap in the physical strength of individual women and men, which means that many women are physically capable of doing such work.
8. Lesser ability in science and mathematics.	Helps disqualify women for occupations where high levels of scientific and mathematical knowledge are required.	Physical scientists (chemist/physicist) Architect Engineer Mathematician Statistician	In this case, gender discrimination begins at school where girls are discouraged from specializing in mathematics or science.
9. Lesser willingness to travel.	Helps disqualify women for occupations where travel is required.	Aircraft officer and worker Ship officer and worker Transport equipment driver/operator	Many women are willing to travel, e.g. airline stewardesses (who were originally selected for their physical appearance (see stereotype 5).
10. Lesser willingness to face physical danger and use physical force.	Helps disqualify women for occupations where physical danger is relatively great.	Fire-fighter Police officer Security guard Miner/quarrier	This is a learned, gender difference.  Many women are willing to be employed in these occupations.
<b>Other</b>			
11. Greater willingness to take orders.  Greater docility and lesser inclination to complain about work or working conditions.  Lesser inclination to join trade unions.  Greater willingness to do monotonous /repetitive work.	General characteristics, which help qualify women for occupations and sectors of the economy where working conditions are poor, labour laws, are not applied (e.g. the informal sector) and work is routinized.	Note: These general characteristics (11,12, 13) qualify women for many jobs, which are low-paid, unskilled, unprotected and repetitious in nature.	These stereotypes have been combined because of their similar implication of a subservient nature. These are archetypes of learned (gender) characteristics.

Table 1 (contd). Stereotyped characteristics of women and their expected effect on occupational segregation by sex

Common stereotyped characteristics of woman <sup>1</sup>	Effect on occupational segregation	Examples of typical occupations affected <sup>2</sup>	Comments
12. Greater interest to accept lower wages.  Lesser need for income.	General characteristics, which help, qualify women for low-paid occupations and sectors of the economy.		Often related to (and justified by) the belief that women are secondary earners (i.e. not the main breadwinner). This is despite the increased incidence of female-headed households and many families' need for more than one income.  Often associated with occupations in highly competitive industries, where cost considerations are very important, notably those producing exports such as textiles.
13. Greater interest in working at home.	Helps qualify women for occupations and sectors of the economy where work is organized in a home-based, "putting out" type of production system.		Usually poorly paid home-based work; often involves piecework.  Home-based work is easy to combine with household/child care.  "Putting out" production system is often set up specifically to make use of the available cheap female labour.  Home-based work is increasing in importance. <sup>3</sup>

Notes:

1. Many of these stereotypes overlap in their effects. While some stereotypes help reinforce sex segregation of particular occupations (e.g. greater manual dexterity and skill at household-type work for seamstress), the effects of other stereotypes counteract each other (e.g. physical appearance and disinclination to supervise others for sales supervisor).

2. Almost all examples of occupations are taken from two and three digit International Standard Classification of Occupations, 1968.

3. *Bidi* making (local Indian cigarette), which is the largest non-agricultural occupation for women in India according to 1981 census data, is almost exclusively a home based industry.

Source: Anker, 1998.

## 2.2 Description of gender equality in labour markets of study areas

### Welfare state models

The history and form of the welfare state express the underlying attitudes affecting – enabling or restricting – women's activities in different spheres of life, including the world of paid work. Before describing the labour markets it is therefore necessary to look into the structure of the welfare state in the societies of Japan and the Nordic countries, in particular in comparison with other industrialized countries.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Rubery (1999) has summarized the historical continuities influencing employment position of women as follows: (i) economic structure, landholding and different traditions with respect to self-employment; (ii) the productivity level and the opportunity this provided for women to withdraw from the labour market; (iii) political and social decisions or legislation and regulation in the process of women's integration; (iv) the significance of political regimes; (v) fiscal and social security systems; and (vi) employer and trade union policy. These

---

In Western Europe, the welfare state has become an established avenue of modernization, but different countries are committed to its principles in very different ways (Julkunen, 1992). This has led to considerable differences in women's status, which is clearly seen when comparing other Western European countries with Nordic countries. Japan, on the other hand, has had a very different approach from all of these. We will first look at Western welfare states and then discuss Japan's place in the typologies.

Grouping of welfare states is always complex and difficult, but typologies are useful particularly in studies of very different societal systems such as in this paper. In fact, groupings could further be made according to (i) welfare regimes and (ii) gender regimes (Duncan, 1995), of which welfare regimes are regionally more coherent than gender regimes that are more varied. Within one nation-state, there may be such big regional differences that one can speak of different gender regimes. In addition, early mainstream comparative analysis of welfare states did not tell us much about how women fared in different welfare states (Sainsbury, 1994).

The Western European welfare states can be divided into four groups, according to Julkunen (1992):<sup>4</sup>

- ✍ The "core" of Western Europe:<sup>5</sup> Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Northern Italy, Austria, Switzerland.
- ✍ Mediterranean belt: Greece, Spain, Portugal, Southern Italy, Ireland.
- ✍ Modern Nordic welfare state: Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway, Sweden.
- ✍ Liberal social structure: United Kingdom.

Lewis (1992) proposed a division based on societal perceptions of the male-breadwinner role and the extent to which women are viewed as dependants. According to this typology, Western European countries range from strong, to modified and then to weak male-breadwinner states.<sup>6</sup> The Nordic countries represent weak male-breadwinner states. However, this basis is not necessarily sufficient, since taxation systems and social benefit policies are also very relevant (Rubery and Smith, 1996).<sup>7</sup> A social protection system based on individual rights encourages the labour force participation of women, and solutions concerning taxation can serve either as incentives or disincentives (Council for Equality, 1999).

While the Western and Southern/Mediterranean European welfare state is, generally speaking, built on men being breadwinners and women homemakers, the Nordic welfare

continuities are important in explaining differences between societies in women's current labour market position and different ideologies and practices with respect to the family. A description of all these aspects is beyond the scope of this paper, but the discussion of the different welfare state systems captures certain elements of many of them.

<sup>4</sup> In this framework, Northern and Southern Italy have been separated due to different stages of industrialization. Ireland, on the other hand, is situated in the same group as the Mediterranean countries, as its characteristics (such as low labour force participation rate of women and high birth rate) are closer to them than to the United Kingdom. This clarification is based mainly on an assessment of employment policies and social security systems. The title of the first group ("core" of Western Europe) is the authors', not Julkunen's.

<sup>5</sup> This group would also include the United States and Canada.

<sup>6</sup> Ireland and Germany, for example, are classified as strong male-breadwinner states that define wives as dependent upon their spouse and do not encourage women's gainful employment when they are married or have children.

<sup>7</sup> For discussion of other typologies, see Esping-Andersen, 1990; Liebfried, 1991; Langan and Ostner, 1991; Kofman and Sales, 1996; and Duncan, 1996.

---

state is based on the normalization of women's participation in gainful employment and a shared breadwinner role with men. Nordic women's integration into the labour market and also to political decision-making has been encouraged, and extensive social services have developed to support this model, resulting in the monetization of much previously unpaid household work (e.g. Nätti, 1994; Julkunen, 1992; Ministry of Labour, 2000). In Western and Southern Europe, unpaid household work has been monetized to a much smaller extent. Nordic social services facilitate to a high degree the combination of motherhood and parenthood with gainful employment (Kauppinen-Toropainen, 1993; Julkunen, 1992; Nordic Council of Ministers, 1994; Rubery and Smith, 1996), and the gender neutrality of these services has been exceptional: these countries were in the forefront of introducing parental leave and parental allowances.

The Nordic welfare state has aimed at a general redistribution of income and welfare, and the state has been used as an instrument of equal rights.<sup>8</sup> More than in countries in Western and Southern Europe, social security is directed to all citizens, and employment policy has emphasized active rather than passive labour market policies. The goal of full employment for women and men has been emphasized in the Nordic model more than in the other groups (Nätti, 1994). In fact, women's participation in gainful employment has become not only a structural and cultural expectation, but a structural necessity in the Nordic countries. The Nordic model has managed to decrease pay differentials between women and men, which has to a large extent undermined the possibility of men being sole supporters in families.

The Nordic child day-care system has been planned not only with an educational point of view in mind, but also to enable and encourage women's participation in the labour force. School lunches, for example, play an important role regarding mothers' opportunities to engage in gainful employment.<sup>9</sup> In the Nordic societies, women's rights are based on their citizenship or employment, not marital status. Because women are treated as individuals and not as spouses, social security and the services of married women doing unpaid household work do not depend on their husbands' employment status (Nätti, 1994; see also Ellingsæter, 1998).

In a comprehensive comparison of the welfare states in 23 OECD countries, Siaroff (1994) focused on the work - welfare trade-off for women to establish a gender-sensitive typology of welfare states. First he looked at gender differences in unemployment, total employment, wages and positions in the job hierarchy in the 1980s, to establish a measure of female work desirability; he then combined this measure with an analysis of social programmes benefiting women and families, to produce a new typology of work and welfare incentives for women. He found that female work desirability exists in two distinct groups of nations: (i) the Nordic group and (ii) certain Anglo-Saxon nations (the United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom). The lack of such desirability was found for Central and Southern Europe, Ireland and Japan. He notes that Japan effectively and uniquely combines high inactivity for women with full employment for men.<sup>10</sup> After investigating overall expenditures on family policy, Siaroff established a family-sensitive ranking of OECD welfare states, where Sweden took the first place, followed by France,

<sup>8</sup> The Nordic welfare state has undergone major changes in recent years due to, for instance, economic recession, and the period of change does not seem to be over. Its basis is, however, still mainly unchanged.

<sup>9</sup> Statutory school meals were introduced in Finland in 1943 (Council for Equality, 2000).

<sup>10</sup> It is often forgotten or disregarded, at least in political fora, that Japan's relatively low official unemployment rate is due in part to large numbers of "discouraged female workers". It has been found that when Japanese women are not looking for work as diligently and as frequently as certain employment survey questions imply, they are likely to be ultimately classified as "not in the labour force" (Siaroff, 1994). They are known in labour statistics as "discouraged workers" and while counted as being inactive and out of the labour force in official statistics, they are for all intents and purposes disguised unemployed workers.

---

Finland, Belgium and Norway. The average score was lowest in Japan, preceded by the United States, Australia and Switzerland. However, “family welfare” is not quite the same as “female welfare”, as the actual recipient of the benefits varies. If family benefits are universal and not paid to all mothers but to the father as a supplement to the presumed breadwinner’s income (as in Central and Southern Europe and Japan), high family welfare does not necessarily imply high female welfare.<sup>11</sup>

Siaroff further combines three factors (family welfare orientation, which parent is the recipient of benefits, and female work desirability) into a new, comprehensive typology with four groupings:

- ✍ Protestant social democratic welfare states (Sweden, Finland, Norway and Denmark) providing a true “work?welfare choice” for women.
- ✍ Protestant liberal welfare states (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States) with minimal family welfare yet a relatively egalitarian gender situation in the labour market.
- ✍ Advanced Christian Democratic welfare states (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) with strong incentives for women not to work and to stay at home.
- ✍ Late female mobilization welfare states (Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland), a heterogeneous group including both low and high per capita incomes.

Wealth typically improves women’s relative situation (Siaroff, 1994; Roy *et al.*, 1996), but this has not really been the case with Japan. This group is in contrast to “Advanced Christian Democratic welfare states” where women have been voting for much longer and where they have been mobilized into the political process earlier.

As far as European countries are concerned, Siaroff’s typology is similar to Julkunen’s typology, the only different placements being for Switzerland, Northern Italy and Iceland. In Julkunen’s typology, Japan would be placed in the “Mediterranean belt” group, or the “Latin rim”, as it is also called.

With this overview of welfare states and regimes as the basis, we now turn to descriptions of labour market characteristics in Japan and Nordic countries. Descriptions of the historical and cultural historical background as well as the present situation, including pay differentials, education, women in managerial positions, etc. are needed to understand how occupational segregation by sex fits into the wider context of gender inequality.

Koskiahio (1995) has noted that when Western evaluators discuss the position of Japanese women, they frequently adopt a critical approach, whereas the Japanese themselves, of course, discuss the role of women against the history and traditions of their own society and culture. We attempt to take a middle course between these two alternatives, that is, criticism based on sufficient understanding.

## 2.3 Japan: cultural and historical background

In Japan, economic growth has been accompanied by improvements in status, in the labour market or elsewhere. Gender role norms in Japan have been particularly resistant to

<sup>11</sup> It is important to note in this context that the idea is not to force women with children to look for work but to give them the choice of staying at home to look after children without thereby becoming dependent on a male breadwinner (see Dale and Foster, 1986).

---

change. “Remnants of the earlier patterns are present both in the consciousness of the Japanese people and in legal provisions that obstruct the realization of marriage and family based on true equality between women and men” (Yoshizumi, 1995).

Socio-cultural norms constrain Japanese women in numerous ways (Koskiaho, 1995). First of all, the traditional role of women as good wives and mothers precludes many married women from remaining in the labour market. Second, norms help channel women into traditional female faculties at university and college. Third, these factors perpetuate employers’ negative attitudes towards women workers. Fourth, the norms encourage most female workers to take up traditional feminine types of work, even prior to becoming good wives and mothers. Such pressure has limited many women to employment in sex-stereotyped jobs and helped to create “female” and “male” occupations. Thus, traditional gender roles have been applied to the Japanese labour market resulting in gender-based occupational segregation (Soyama, 1998). Many Japanese women work only until marriage; those keeping their jobs after marriage have often been pitied. Women are frequently treated as “office flowers” (*shokuba no hana*), admired for their youth and beauty and limited to non-professional fields. The responsibility of the “flower” is to serve tea and enable men to work smoothly and, at the same time, she can “study the world” (*shakai kengaku*) as a preparation for the main job, marriage and domestic management (Richardson and Riethmuller, 1996). Earlier, there was even forced retirement at marriage, but that is now seen as unlawful (Soyama, 1998).

Earlier, the concept of motherhood helped to guarantee women’s position in Japanese society. Today, it rather restricts them from fully participating in society and the labour market. Women are left in charge, and men hardly participate in the child-rearing process or household work. It is unfortunate that fathers are, to a large extent, unable to experience the influence of child rearing for their own psychological development (Ohinata, 1995). Ve (1989) has analysed the unhealthy effect of fathers’ absence from child care.

## 2.4 Nordic countries: cultural background

Nordic women are remarkably well represented in politics: at ministerial level, as leaders of political parties and as parliamentarians. Women are no longer exceptions in high political positions. For instance, Finland got its first female president in March 2000, Norway its first prime minister in 1981.

However, different gender-political profiles have developed in the Nordic countries, which reflect the different options that individual countries have had. Although countries have come closer to each other over time with regard to women’s increased participation in society and the development of public child care, integration strategies and solutions have differed (Nordic Council of Ministers, 1999). Individual country profiles have recently been published in the Nordic Council of Ministers (1999),<sup>12</sup> Ellingsæter (1998), Women in Finland (1999), and Council for Equality (2000).<sup>13</sup>

The public sector has been a very important employer for Nordic women, particularly in Sweden. The sphere of public-sector services has been large: education, health care, child day care and social services have been almost monopolized by the state. The Nordic

---

<sup>12</sup> The publication of the Nordic Council of Ministers (1999) analyses how the relations between the sexes, politics and democracy function in the Nordic countries. The homogenous picture of the Nordic countries is questioned. Similarities, equality and differences are illustrated with the help of comparative analyses of political mobilization and participation, public institutions, and child-care and gender equality policies. In-depth analysis covers all five Nordic countries as well as their autonomous territories.

<sup>13</sup> The latter two publications concentrate on Finland but include references to the other Nordic countries.

---

model has increased social cohesion and decreased social differences, and as the Nordic societies are relatively homogenous economically, differences between the status of women and men can be more clearly distinguished than in other (Western) societies where there are also distinct social classes.<sup>14</sup> Before the economic recession in the 1990s, income differentials and income shares of poor people were smallest in Sweden, Norway and Finland among industrialized countries (Uusitalo, 1989; OECD, 1995b). In addition, the Nordic welfare state has been able to guarantee a high quality of public services because it provides services for the whole population and not only for poor people (Julkunen, 1992). On the other hand, the public sector is responsible for one important aspect of sex segregation in the Nordic labour markets. The labour force is divided by sex to some extent into different sectors: private, governmental and municipal, causing sectoral segregation, with men working mainly in the private sector (Haataja and Nurmi, 2000; Gonäs and Lehto, 1999a).

Differences in the evolution of the welfare state and women's participation in the labour force between the Nordic countries are reflected in, for instance, the fact that in Finland, the integration of women into the labour market occurred to a large extent before the development of the welfare state. The proportion of women in the industrial labour force before the First World War was higher than in the other Nordic countries and, already in 1880, the proportion of women in non-agricultural occupations was 36 per cent of the total (Kauppinen-Toropainen, 1993). Finnish women's participation in work outside the home was more common than in any other OECD country in the 1960s, when the first statistical comparisons between countries were published (Lehto, 1999). In the other Nordic countries, there was a more distinct housewife or full-time homemaker phase between the agrarian society and the integration of women into paid wage employment (Ellingsaeter, 1998; Nätti, 1994; Kauppinen-Toropainen, 1993; Kauppinen-Toropainen et al., 1986). In Norway, the integration of women into the labour market was slower than in Sweden and Finland, and the role of the public sector as an employer was somewhat smaller until recently (Anttalainen, 1986; Ellingsaeter, 1998). As a result, differences in traditional values are still observed between Swedish and Norwegian women. In Sweden, the role of employment in the public-service systems became even more important than in Finland and Norway, and the development of the child day-care system coincided with the increase in paid employment of mothers; there was no delay as in Finland and Norway (Borchhorst, 1990). Moreover, in the 1990s, economic recession in Sweden affected first the private sector and thus mainly men. Reorganization and cuts in the public sector started later and caused a large decrease in mainly women's employment. Between 1993 and 1996 employment in trade and industry increased, whereas public-sector employment decreased. The net effect was that men's employment increased while women's decreased. In 1996, 73 per cent of the employees in the Swedish public sector were women, whereas 63 per cent of the employees in the private sector were men (SOU, 1998). Today, the public sector is not necessarily characterized by more secure employment than the private sector.

Notwithstanding women's increased labour force participation, the degree of occupational sex segregation is high in the Nordic countries and this phenomenon has persisted over the past decades.<sup>15</sup> Changes are taking place, however. Women's share has risen in a number of mainly white-collar professional occupations, such as medical doctors, lawyers and judges, and public relations personnel within the private sector. Other

---

<sup>14</sup> A society with sharp contrasts between social classes may to some extent hide differences in status based on sex. Wide differences caused by different social classes are likely to have more or at least as much importance as differences in sex-based status (Taylor-Gooby, 1991).

<sup>15</sup> Anttalainen, 1986; Kauppinen-Toropainen, 1991; Kauppinen-Toropainen et al., 1986; Nätti, 1994; Kandolin, 1993; Swedish National Institute of Occupational Health, 1995; Lehto, 1991; Haataja and Nurmi, 2000; Gonäs and Spånt, 1997; Gonäs and Lehto, 1999a; Melkas and Anker, 1997 and 1998.

---

examples of professional and technical occupations that have a growing percentage of women are optician, veterinarian and fine mechanic. Two occupations where there are considerably more women in Finland than in Norway and Sweden are architects and dentists. (Kauppinen-Toropainen, 1991 and 1993; Kandolin, 1993; Kauppinen et al., 1989).

## **2.5 Gender equality in labour markets: comparisons of women's status**

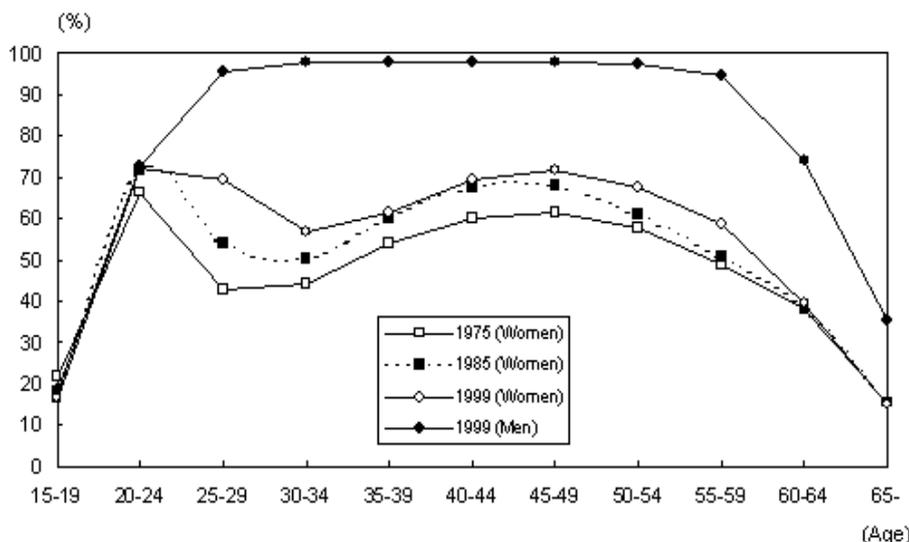
### *Labour force participation*

While major changes have taken place in the structure of the female labour force in Japan over the past 50 years (Kawashima, 1995), the adult female labour force participation rate (the number of working women as a percentage of the total population of women aged fifteen years or over) was almost the same in 1999 (49.6 per cent) as in 1950 (49.5 per cent), while rates were increasing rapidly in other OECD countries. Considerably higher than that of typical developed countries in 1950, Japan's rate was on the low side in 1999: the average OECD rate was almost 60 per cent (Council for Equality, 1999). Japanese women currently account for approximately 40 per cent of the labour force, while the figures for the Nordic countries for 1999 was almost 50 per cent (Office for Gender Equality, 2000a).

The lack of change in Japan can be traced to two counterbalancing trends: an increasing percentage of women in paid employment and a decreasing percentage in family employment, due to economic development, urbanization and the decreasing importance of agriculture (Soyama, 1998; Kawashima, 1995).

Female labour force participation rates have increased in Japan in almost all age groups during the last two-three decades. The pattern of women leaving the workforce at marriage or childbirth and returning later, often in their mid-forties to part-time or other non-regular forms of work, has created an "M-shaped curve" for women's labour. Over time, the M-shaped curve, with peaks at ages 20-24 and 45-49, has been moving upward and become less marked as more women enter the workforce (figure 1). The M-shaped pattern is unusual for Nordic and most OECD countries, which show an inverted U-shaped curve pattern in their female labour force participation rates - - although M-shaped curves were common 50 years ago in OECD countries (Durand, 1975). In surveys, Japanese women themselves have found the M-curve pattern of employment to be best. Yet the combination of the M-curve and Japan's system of lifetime employment with pay scales based on seniority has led employers to view women as "bad investments" (Richardson and Riethmuller, 1996) and helped to increase male-female pay differentials. Due to the lack of family support services, many Japanese women with family responsibilities have no choice but to drop out of the labour force.

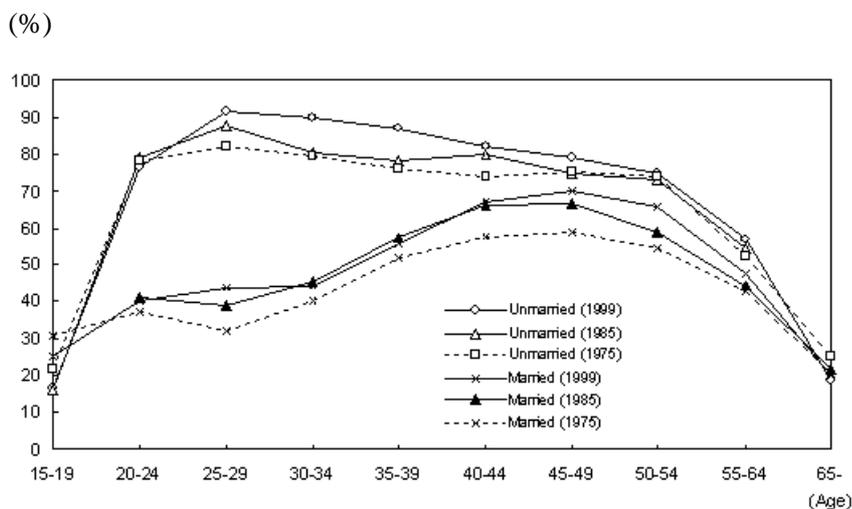
Figure 1. Female labour force participation rate by age group in Japan, 1975-1999



Source: Prime Minister's Office, 2000; figure 8.

The labour force participation rate of Japanese women by age group differs considerably for unmarried and married women. A graph drawn for unmarried women reveals an inverted U-shaped curve while a graph for married women presents more of a pyramid-shaped curve with the peak years between 45-49 (figure 2). The disparity in labour force participation rates for unmarried and married women is large during the 20s and 30s, the age groups in which child-care is concentrated. The shapes of the curves have remained unchanged since 1975.

Figure 2. Female labour force participation rate by age group, married and unmarried, in Japan, 1975-1999



Source: Prime Minister's Office, 2000; figure 9.

In the Nordic countries, female labour force participation rates are clearly higher than in many other OECD countries and have increased until recently. While both women's and men's participation rates dropped slightly at the beginning of the 1990s, they have been relatively stable since the middle of the decade. The gap between the participation rates of women and men is relatively small in the Nordic countries today, and considerably smaller than thirty years ago (table 2).

---

**Table 2. Labour force participation rates, Nordic countries, 1998**

	Female	Male
Finland	70	75
Norway	75	85
Sweden	75	80

Source: Council of Equality, 1999.

Nearly equal representation in the non-agricultural labour force occurred at different times in each country. In Finland, women already comprised 45 per cent of all non-agricultural workers by 1970. In Norway in 1970, on the other hand, women comprised only 35 per cent of the non-agricultural labour force, but this percentage increased in the 1970s and 1980s (to 44 per cent and 47 per cent respectively). Sweden experienced a similar pattern. The major part of the change occurred in the 1970s in Sweden, not in the 1980s. By 1990, all three Nordic labour markets had evolved to comprise roughly equal numbers of female and male workers. In comparison to other OECD countries, women's share of the total labour force in North America is close to that of the Nordic countries, while several non-Nordic European OECD countries have figures closer to that of Japan (Melkas and Anker, 1998).

### Part-time work

Women's part-time work is a prevailing feature in the Japanese labour market (table 3). As women temporarily withdraw from the labour force to raise children, they have difficulties re-entering, and often end up in part-time employment often involuntarily. These workers comprise perhaps the most marginal layer of the female labour force in Japan, denied the benefits covered by the lifetime employment system. Their status and contribution are hardly acknowledge, potential improvements in their working conditions are generally ignored and although their average length of service is increasing, being 4.9 years on average in 1994 (Soyama, 1998), they are considered to be only temporary workers and "bad investments" (Richardson and Riethmuller, 1996). Nevertheless, about 20 per cent of part-timers work more than 35 hours and often have the same job content and degree of responsibility as regular workers. Part-time employment is in Japan a domain of "reserve" workers who are usually married women over the age of 30.

The female life cycle consisting of study, employment, withdrawal from the labour force for child rearing, and re-entry into the labour force became a common pattern in Japan during the period of rapid economic growth from 1955 to 1973. An increasing number of married middle-aged Japanese women were hired particularly during a severe labour shortage after 1960. New employees were usually hired directly out of school. Government's policy encouraged employment of "mid-point entrants" (those who are not recent graduates at the time of employment) as part-time workers, and this became a persistent pattern. The labour shortage did not help raise female wages, as its potentially favourable effect was offset by the influx of middle-aged women into the labour market (Kawashima, 1995).

Table 3. Proportion of employees by age and form of employment in Japan, 1997

	Women (%)									Men (%)								
	Total age	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	Total age	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59
Executive	4.0	0.3	0.7	1.6	3.1	3.6	4.9	5.9	6.8	9.0	0.6	1.7	3.7	5.6	7.9	10.7	13.1	15.4
Regular employee or worker	53.8	71.8	73.1	60.6	49.8	45.5	45.5	46.7	46.9	80.9	76.8	91.6	92.3	91.4	88.9	85.9	83.2	78.1
Part-time	30.0	7.0	13.4	26.2	38.0	42.9	42.9	41.3	39.0	1.3	1.1	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	1.1
Arbeit (student's temporary work or traineeship)	7.7	17.2	7.4	6.1	4.6	3.6	3.1	2.8	3.2	5.0	19.7	4.2	2.0	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.2
Contracted employees	1.7	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.6	1.8	1.6	2.1	1.8	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.5	1.9
Dispatch from temporary employment agency	0.9	1.0	2.3	2.4	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
Others	1.9	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.5	1.6	0.3	1.8	1.2	1.4	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.5	1.6	2.2

Notes: "Age total" includes ages 15-19 and 60 and above.  
Source: Prime Minister's Office, 2000; figure 14.

---

The number and proportion of part-timers also increased in Japan after the 1970s. Part-time work accounted for 37 per cent of the total number of the female labour force in 1998, and 68 per cent of all part-time workers were women. A significant proportion of pseudo part-timers work as long as full-time workers (for instance, more than 8.5 hours per day): Japanese employers often hire part-timers to reduce labour costs and to be able to adjust the size of employment without provoking labour disputes (Kawashima, 1995).

As elsewhere, Nordic women work part time more often than men. Approximately 40 per cent of Norwegian and Swedish women workers are engaged in part-time work, compared with 10 per cent for men. In Finland, however, only about 17 per cent of women workers worked part time in 1999, compared to about 8 per cent of men. For the total OECD and the United States, the figures for women were 24, and 19 per cent respectively (1998). Depending on the country, about 65-80 per cent of all part-timers were women in the Nordic countries in the late 1990s, whereas the average 1998 figure for the OECD was 74 per cent and for the United States 68 per cent (Council for Equality, 1999; Haataja and Nurmi, 2000).

Unlike other Nordic countries, in Finland, the full-time homemaker role of women has never been deeply rooted (Nätti, 1994; Kauppinen-Toropainen et al., 1986; Kauppinen-Toropainen, 1993). This may partly explain the higher incidence of female part-time work in Norway and Sweden, where it has probably been easier and more acceptable to move from full-time household work to part-time rather than full-time work. Growth of part-time work is also closely connected to growth of the service sector, which has been somewhat slower in Finland than in Norway and Sweden (Nordic Council of Ministers, 1994). Women's large-scale participation in the labour force has a longer history in Finland, and the agricultural sector has been a more important employer there than elsewhere in the Nordic countries.

It is often suggested that part-time work is easily compatible with family responsibilities and therefore a suitable solution for women with young children. However, part-time work can limit access to paid leave (including parental leave), training and pensions and other social security entitlements, as well as leads to lower wages and often atypical working hours over which part-timers do not have control. Part-time work can also affect career opportunities and is often involuntary, caused by a lack of alternatives. Both in the short and long-term perspective, the flexibility of part-time and other atypical employment actually preserves unequal opportunities. In addition, job precariousness may have serious implications; without job security, a worker's capacity and willingness to acquire new labour market skills and/or take on new tasks is likely to be low. "Because part-time work is associated with particular sectors and occupations, it also tends to reinforce the tendency towards occupational segregation between the genders in the labour market, which is increasingly recognized as a major factor against flexibility" (European Commission, 1997, p.69; see also Bettio *et al.*, 1996).

### *Other atypical forms of employment*

In addition to part-time work, the eagerness to increase flexibility in the labour market has resulted in a wide variety of atypical forms of employment that differ from the secure employment model of full-time, permanent (or long-term) employment. In the Nordic countries, this has been facilitated by a deregulation of labour markets, supposedly in search of efficiency, while in Japan, atypical forms of employment have been a usual phenomenon for women workers. It remains to be seen whether recent attempts to increase regulation of the labour market in order to improve women's status will bring about profound changes.

The increase of "permanent temporary employment", i.e. workers who continuously have short-term, fixed-term or temporary contracts, or such contracts with short breaks in between, tends to be directed disproportionately at women workers also in the Nordic

---

countries (Swedish National Institute of Occupational Health, 1995; Työministeriö, 1997; Nurmi, 1999). This applies to women regardless of their educational level; for example, in Finland, young women in their 30s, who are highly educated and have a long working experience, often have fixed-term contracts (Työministeriö, 1997; Nurmi, 1999). Women are tied to temporary employment also because part-time employment (where women predominate) and temporary employment often overlap; part-time assignments are often temporary (Nurmi, 1999). A large share of temporary work is undertaken reluctantly – almost half on average in the European Union in 1997. In Sweden and Finland the share is much larger; about 70-80 per cent of temporary employment was involuntary (no permanent job could be found) (Council for Equality, 1999).

In Japan, the lifetime employment system makes the large firms' employment practices and labour costs extremely rigid.<sup>16</sup> In order to adjust labour costs to the firm's business fluctuations, employers have commonly used non-permanent workers who are hired during an economic boom and can be fired as the boom ends. They receive lower pay than permanent workers and no fringe benefits. Only those who have worked a long time in the same firm ("standard workers", *hyojun rodosha*) are entitled to the benefits of the Japanese wage system (*nenko*). As women have customarily worked only for a few years and in jobs that do not require special skills, replacing them by non-permanent workers reduces labour costs (Kawashima, 1995).

Flexibility has been maintained in Japan also by the use of subcontracting and home-based workers (*kanai rodosha*). Kawashima (1995) notes that recently, yet other atypical forms of employment have been emerging: contract workers dispatched by employment agencies (*haken rodo*), temporary workers doing a variety of odd jobs (*arubaito*, mostly students), and workers on contract (*shokutaku*). Part-timers, mid-point entrants and home-based workers are mostly middle-aged women, but the new types of workers are typically young women.

Atypical employment also affects the unionization rate, which varies greatly by size of firm, industry, and sex. Women workers are less unionized (with a rate of about 20 per cent) than men (about 30 per cent), because they are more often non-permanent workers who are excluded from unions, and employed in small firms and in service industries which both have a low unionization rate (Kawashima, 1995).

Non-standard employment may expand women's work opportunities by providing alternatives to the standard model, but, as shown above, these alternatives have important disadvantages such as job and income insecurity and reduced unionization. Moreover, many women who are already marginalized in the labour market may become even more marginalized, and permanently remain on the periphery of the "normal" labour market. This has been the case particularly in Japan, where permanent regular workers are the "core workers" and others are peripheral workers outside the core labour market system.<sup>17</sup> The increasing fragmentation of the labour market is of general concern in all the study countries, but it is especially alarming for women workers.

### Male-female pay differentials

Male-female pay differentials are one of the clearest indicators of gender inequality in the labour market. ILO data (table 4) show that female-male pay differentials in the Nordic countries are among the smallest in OECD countries. In Japan, the gender pay gap

<sup>16</sup> Japan has a dual economic structure and labour market consisting of two extremes, the large-firm sector and the small-firm sector. Labour mobility from small firms to large firms is restricted (Kawashima, 1995).

<sup>17</sup> Kawashima (1995) notes that male permanent regular workers in large firms are the ones who benefit the most from the system, as they comprise the vast majority of the core of the core workers.

is among the largest in the world, although it has tended to shrink somewhat during the last thirty years (Office for Gender Equality, 2000b). ILO data are also consistent with this observation.

**Table 4. Female-male wage ratios in the world, around 1990<sup>1</sup>**

Region/country/area	Reference period <sup>2,3</sup>	Female-male wage ratio	
		All non-agricultural	Manufacturing
OECD countries <sup>4</sup>			
Australia	Hourly	88.2	82.5
Belgium	Hourly	75.1	74.5
Denmark	Hourly	82.6	84.6
Finland	Hourly		77.3
France	Hourly	80.8	78.9
Federal Republic of Germany	Hourly	73.2	72.7
Greece	Hourly		78.4
Iceland	Hourly	87.0	
Ireland	Hourly		6.2
Luxembourg	Hourly	67.8	62.2
Netherlands	Hourly	77.5	75.0
New Zealand	Hourly	80.6	74.9
Norway	Hourly		86.4
Portugal	Hourly	69.1	69.0
Sweden	Hourly		88.9
Switzerland	Hourly	67.6	68.0
United Kingdom	Hourly	70.5	68.4
Average (unweighted)		76.7	75.7
Cyprus	Daily/weekly	59.0	58.0
Turkey	Daily/weekly	84.5	81.0
Average (unweighted)		71.8	69.5
<i>Developing countries or areas</i> <sup>4</sup>			
Sri Lanka	Hourly	91.2	
Average (unweighted)		91.2	
Egypt	Daily/weekly	80.7	68.0
Hong Kong	Daily/weekly	69.5	69.0
Sri Lanka	Daily/weekly	89.8	88.0
Average (unweighted)		80.0	75.0
Costa Rica	Monthly	66.0	74.0
Japan	Monthly	49.6	41.0
Kenya	Monthly	78.3	73.0
Republic of Korea	Monthly	53.5	50.0
Malaysia	Monthly		50.1
Paraguay	Monthly	76.0	66.0
Singapore	Monthly	71.1	55.0
Swaziland	Monthly	106.6	88.0
Average (unweighted)		71.6	62.1
World averages (unweighted)	Hourly	77.8	75.7
	Daily/weekly	76.7	71.2
	Monthly	71.6	62.1

Notes.

1. Data year's 1990.

2. Countries are grouped according to reference period over which wages are estimated, because the female-male wage ratio decreases as the reference period increases (since women work fewer hours than men on average). For purposes of exposition, estimates for daily and weekly reference periods are combined.

3. Preference is given to estimate for shorter reference period if data are available for two or more reference periods.

4. Japan is included with other Asian countries (which are developing countries). Sri Lanka appears twice because of different reference periods.

Source: Anker (1998) based on various issues of ILO Yearbook of Labour Statistics.

Nonetheless, even Nordic women receive substantially less pay than Nordic men. It is important to note that one major problem with OECD statistics on wages is that they include both full-time and part-time workers. This substantially increases observed male-female pay differentials because most part-time workers are women; it also reduces

---

comparability across countries, because the extensiveness of part-time employment varies across countries. On average, women in OECD countries received 30-40 per cent lower pay than men in 1995-96. In Finland, the average gap was (only) 25 per cent, but part of the differences between countries is caused by the inclusion of part-time work. Sweden and in particular Norway were closer to the average OECD level. In an investigation of pay structures in the European Union in 1995, the gap in Sweden was found to be only 18 per cent (22 per cent in Finland), but in this case, only full-time work (average monthly wages) was included (Nurmi, 1999). Japanese women, in contrast, are faced with a 36 per cent gap (Office of Gender Equality, 2000b).

In Finland, it has been observed that on average, women workers with regular working hours earned 80 per cent of men's pay in the private sector, 82 per cent in the Government public sector, and 86 per cent in the municipal public sector (1997). The relatively small gender gap in pay in the Nordic countries as compared to other countries is not only a result of relatively high gender equality, but in large part due to the generally homogeneous social structure and small wage dispersion in the Nordic labour markets in general. One of the main determinants of female-male pay differentials across countries has been found to be the overall level of wage inequality in each country (Blau and Kahn, 1992 and 2000). Wealth and wages are relatively equally distributed among Nordic citizens, although income inequality has recently widened (Kandolin, 1993; OECD, 1995a; Sosiaalibarometri, 1997; SOU, 1998). This trend is likely to increase the gender pay gap in the Nordic countries in the future.

Pay differentials vary greatly by position, occupation, industry and sector as well as age group. For instance in Sweden and Finland (1995), the gender pay gap of women in expert positions in the private sector was clearly smaller than that of managers (Nurmi, 1999). On the other hand, a Eurostat study found that pay differentials are often greater among non-manual workers, because manual workers have a more restricted range of jobs and hierarchical positions and therefore pay levels (Eurostat, 1995).

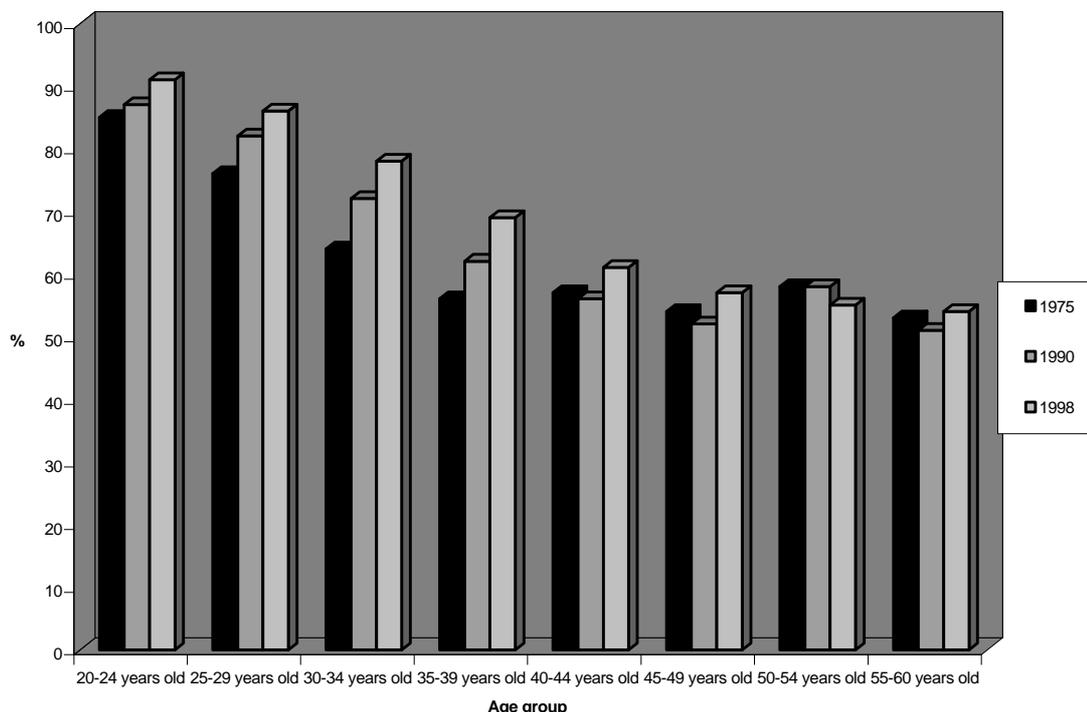
The male-female wage gap in the Nordic countries is not primarily due to differences in the number of years of education or work experience of women and men (Lehto, 1991; Nurmi, 1999): women have the same number of years of schooling as men, and the work experience of women is not much shorter than that of men. To a large extent, the gap is due to labour market segregation by sex, and other factors. Women are concentrated in branches and occupations characterized by relatively low pay, and they receive a smaller compensation for their education and accumulated work experience than men. It has been found that the higher the proportion of women in an occupation, the lower is the wage level of both men and women (Kandolin, 1991 and 1993).

An examination of the "sex-segregated pay market" in the Nordic countries indicated that one can find a pay limit, below which are eight out of ten women, and above which are eight out of ten men (Anttalainen, 1986). Various international studies have shown that around one-third of the female-male pay differential is due to occupational segregation by sex (Anker, 1998), and that about 10-30 per cent of the gender pay gap is "unexplained" (Nurmi, 1999). Differentials in women's and men's income also extend to pensions; the average difference in pension income between men and women was 47 per cent in Norway in 1991 (The Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1994).

In Japan, women earn on average 64 per cent of men's wages (1998). Wages paid to women in their early twenties are much higher, at about 90 per cent of wages paid to men of the same age group. The male-female wage differential in Japan increases with age, and by ages 45 and above women's earnings are approximately 50 per cent of those of men (figure 3). A recent report explains that wage disparities are caused in large part by factors such as the scarcity of female workers in managerial posts and their short length of

continuous service. Those causes are much more important than differences in education, age, company size and hours of work (Prime Minister's Office, 2000).

Figure 3. Gender disparities in earning by age group in Japan, 1975-1998



Source: Adapted from figure 6 in the Office for Gender Equality, 2000b.

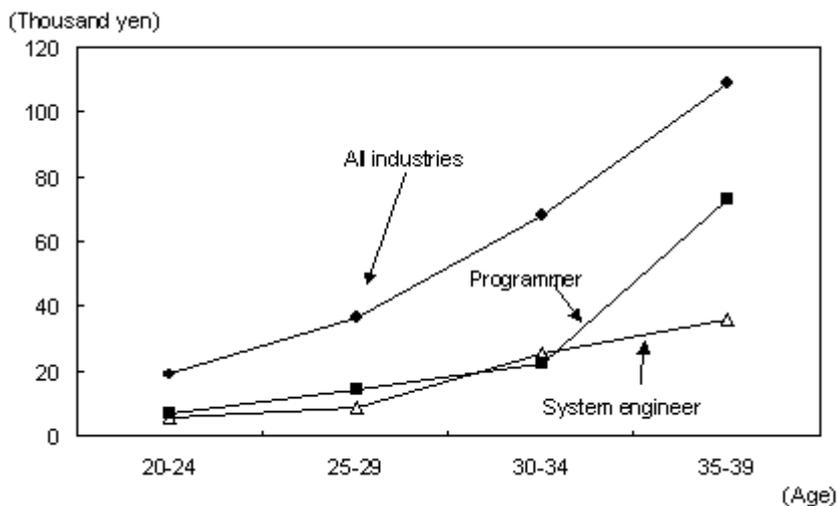
In fact, women and men around the world are often said to have two separate labour markets, and pay levels are influenced by this structure (Udsen, 1993). Whereas in the Nordic countries, the separate male and female labour markets are relatively equal in pay, in Japan, the separate male and female labour markets lead to unequal pay. First, Japanese women are often peripheral workers, who do not benefit from seniority wages, fringe benefits, stable employment and union membership. Second, there are millions of Japanese women who are not working but who wish to work. This potential labour supply consists mostly of housewives aged 25-39 and was almost 30 per cent in the 30-34 age group in 1997 (Office for Gender Equality, 2000b). The large size of this group helps to keep female wages low and reduces women's bargaining power vis-à-vis employers (Kawashima, 1995). Third, Japanese employers, particularly in large firms, trading firms, banks and insurance companies, offer two employment streams for new entrants: the managerial employee track and the clerical employee track. Men usually enter the managerial track. Women, on the other hand, generally enter the clerical track where there is a limit to promotion. Some may enter the managerial track by examination or interview, but usually only after they have been in the clerical track for two to five years. The dual-track system preserves gender differences in remuneration, as wages are lower in the clerical track, and when women are in the managerial track and are given the same tasks as men, often they do not get the same pay (Richardson and Riethmuller, 1996). The Equal Employment Opportunity Law was revised in 1997. Although the contents of the new law are further described in section 3.1.1 of this paper, it is still worth noting here that measures to secure effectiveness have been improved somewhat as compared to the 1986 law. This and the other recent legislative changes (which also are discussed in section 3.1.1) are not yet reflected in data on women's status and wages, so their effect remains to be seen.

It could be expected that pay levels of women and men in new occupations using advanced technology, such as computer specialists, would be closer to each other than in more traditional occupations, but research in Finland has indicated that this is not so (Lehto,

1991). It has also been found that result-based pay systems may increase the gap, owing in part to the old gender-division-based thinking that men are “core workers” (Lehto, 1991).

In Japan, on the other hand, the disparity between male and female wages for system engineers and programmers in information-related occupations is relatively small (figure 4) (Prime Minister’s Office, 2000). Due to historical and cultural traditions, it may be easier for women to be successful in completely new fields than to enter traditionally male-dominated and well-paid higher status occupations. This situation is consistent with the fact that male-female pay differentials are relatively low for workers in their 20s, before seniority systems and length of service affect pay. Therefore, the relatively small differences observed here may, in large part, be temporary and reflect the newness of IT occupations.

Figure 4. Disparity between male and female contractual wages in Japan, 1998



Source: Prime Minister’s Office, 2000; figure 15.

Comparable worth or pay equity schemes involving job evaluation have been seen by some in the Nordic countries as one possible means of reducing the gender pay gap. If the value of the type of work associated with typical women’s occupations were better acknowledged and rewarded, this would increase the pay in women’s occupations. Although comparable worth is promising in theory for decreasing the gender pay gap, it also has a number of important practical problems and limitations. For example, job evaluation systems are not always complete or gender-neutral;<sup>18</sup> comparable worth exercises are only possible in large companies and governments, since they require a range of male and female occupations, each with sufficient numbers of workers in an occupation and it is difficult in capitalist economies for only some large companies to pay higher than market wage rates for certain women’s occupations.

### Education

Education is of central importance to understanding gender inequality and occupational sex segregation. Gender stereotyping in the formal education system seems to exist to varying degrees in all societies. Messages about gender-appropriate behaviour are

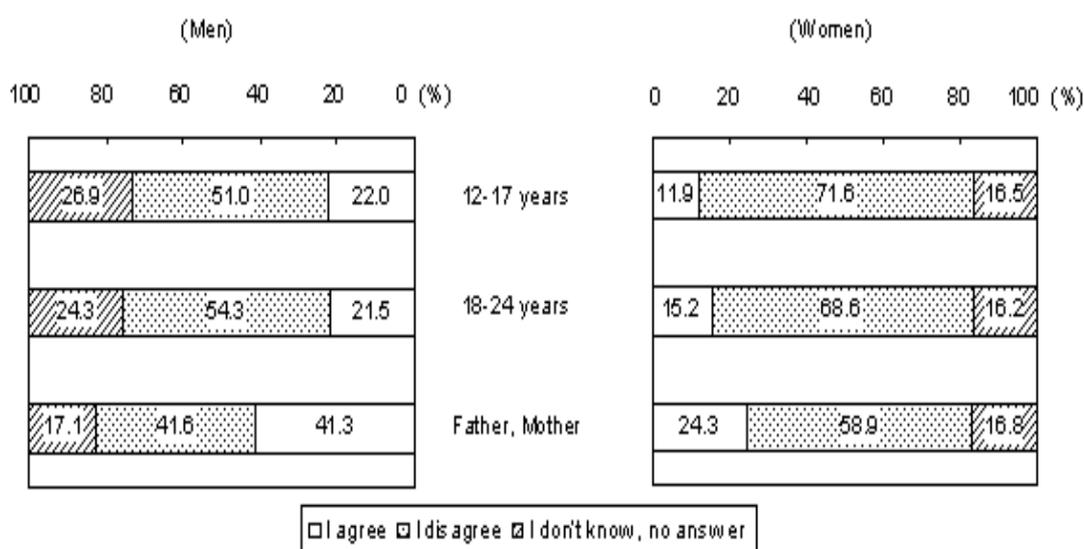
<sup>18</sup> The job descriptions of women’s jobs are often incomplete, and the typical characteristics of women’s work, such as caring, networking and social skills are usually omitted in job evaluation systems (Plantenga and Rubery, 1999; see also Gunderson, 1994).

conveyed to children in innumerable, visible or invisible, ways through the family and the surrounding society. Kameda (1995) states that many Japanese have very different expectations of male and female children. According to results of an international comparative study conducted by the Office of the Prime Minister in 1982, nearly 63 per cent of Japanese were in favour of sex-differentiated socialization, i.e. bringing up their children in conformity with notions of femininity and masculinity, whereas the corresponding figure was 31 per cent for the United States and 6 per cent for Sweden (Kameda, 1995).

Figures 5 and 6 show that in Japan, attitudes in favour of sex-differentiated socialization and desire of different levels of education for daughters and sons are still clearly distinguishable (Kameda, 1995). In the Nordic and other OECD countries, attitudes of this type are much less likely to come out in opinion polls or surveys, but they have not disappeared entirely. Kailo (2000) points out that children's toys reinforce traditional gender roles, and children are thus socialized not only to those roles, but in the long run even to occupations. Special strategies to break down occupational segregation do not work well if traditional models are continuously reproduced in upbringing, education, the mass media and societal institutions. Educational specialists do increasingly maintain that a large part of gender differences are innate, not society-fostered. In any case, the point here is that obstacles to free and informed choices of education and occupation should be eliminated.

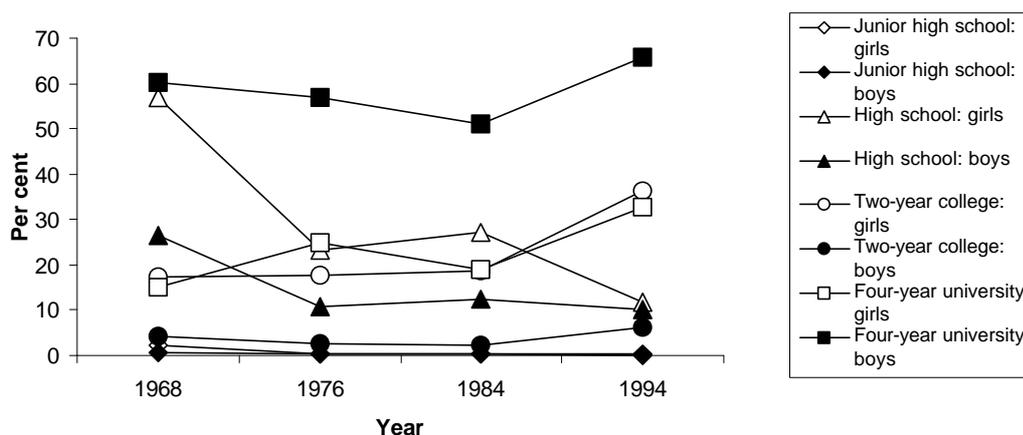
In the Nordic countries, both women and men have high and similar levels of education in terms of number of years of schooling (Anker, 1998, and Nurmi, 1999). A high level of education for women naturally contributes to increased labour force participation, higher pay level and lower risk of unemployment (Council for Equality, 1999). However, the typical fields of study for Nordic women and men are strikingly similarly and stereotyped across countries (for further details, see Melkas and Anker, 1998). Such differences in education partly maintain sex segregation in the labour market (e.g. UN Economic Commission for Europe, 1995; Anttalainen, 1986), as they reinforce and preserve gender stereotyping.

Figure 5. Perception of roles in Japan ("Men should go out to work and women should take care of the home"), 1997



Source: Prime Minister's Office, 2000; figure 26.

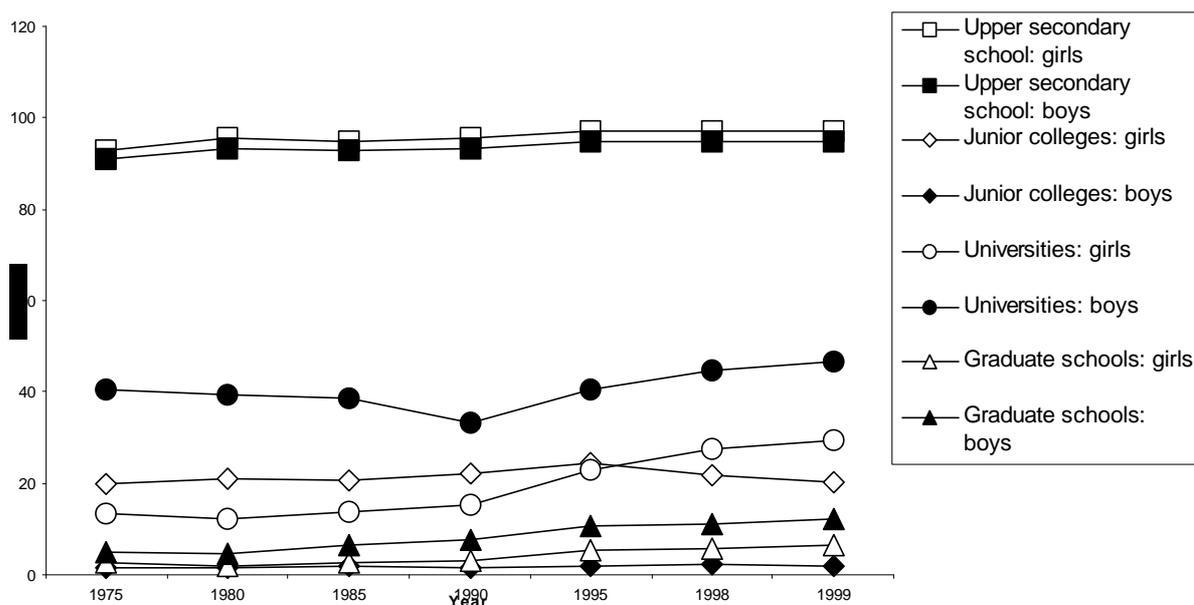
Figure 6. Disparity in parents' educational expectations for children in Japan, 1968-1994



Source: Prime Minister's Office, 2000.

In Japan, women's advanced education is a product of post-war democracy. Women's education prior to that had been limited to acquiring those skills necessary for becoming good wives and mothers. Parents often did not encourage their daughters' education, as they believed that well-educated women would have difficulties in finding a husband. In 1999, female enrolment rates at universities and junior colleges (49.6 per cent) exceeded those of men (46.5 per cent). A greater difference is in the percentages entering universities as compared to 2-year colleges. In 1999, 20 per cent of women chose a two-year college, while the corresponding figure for men was only 2 per cent (figure 7). It continues to be typical for women to enter the labour market at the age of 20 or 21 after a 2-year college education. This type of education usually leads to a lower level clerical-related occupation, and thus strengthens the stereotype of women workers as subordinate to men (Soyama, 1998; Office for Gender Equality, 2000b).

Figure 7. Trends in female and male advancement in school by school category, in Japan, 1975-1999



Source: Adapted from figure 3, Office for Gender Equality, 2000b

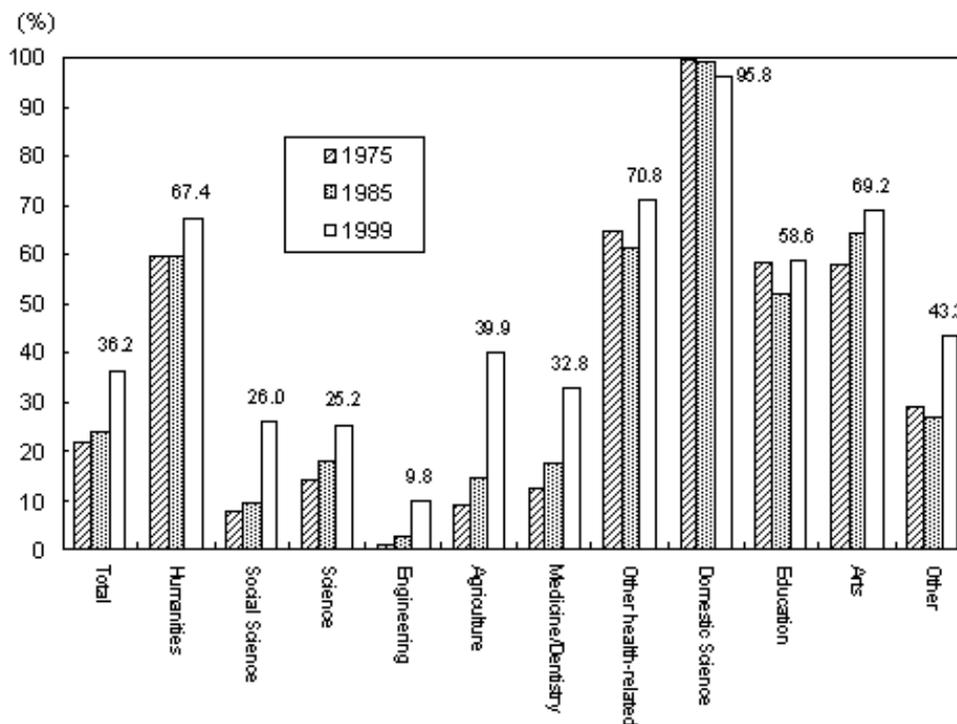
---

Richardson and Riethmuller (1996) note that attending a junior college severely limits women's opportunities to enter government service or major Japanese corporations that tend to recruit graduates only from seven so-called Imperial universities and prestigious private universities, or to enter management track positions. Tanaka (1995, pp. 305-306) called the two-year junior colleges (earlier girls' high schools) "bastions of traditional gender-specific education for women which emphasized the need to become good wives and wise mothers". Hara (1995) points out that miscellaneous schools, culture centres and centres for social education that are newcomers on the education market are also regarded as suitable learning sites for women, and all this contributes to keeping Japanese women on the periphery both of education and, consequently, of the labour market.

Several studies have shown that the benefits of women's education are often not translated into their career development. Tanaka (1995) explains that education is not only strongly related to wage rates but also a resource in the marriage market. Women with higher education are more likely to marry men with higher education, who in turn receive higher earnings. As women with higher education thus have access to greater economic resources, this enables them to choose to stay out of the paid labour market. Tanaka also notes that higher education, especially that given in junior colleges, is still considered to be a more valuable resource in the marriage market than in the labour market. Education is also related to home versus paid employment and part-time versus full-time paid employment, as less educated women are likely to withdraw from the labour market after marriage and return to work as part-time or self-employed workers. More-educated women, on the other hand, are more likely to delay marriage, keep working until later ages and continue to work even after marriage (Tanaka, 1995). This illustrates the variation with regard to impact of women's improved education.

As to subjects taken by Japanese women at four-year universities, the fields of study are clearly sex stereotyped, like in the Nordic countries. In 1999, the share of female students were highest in domestic science (96 per cent), other health-related subjects (71 per cent) and arts (69 per cent), and lowest in engineering (10 per cent), science (25 per cent) and social science (26 per cent). Figure 8 shows that since 1975 the imbalance in women's majors has decreased. In 1999, female university students accounted for 36.2, 26.1 and 24.9 per cent of those taking undergraduate, masters and doctoral courses respectively (Prime Minister's Office, 2000).

Figure 8. Proportion of female students by major (undergraduate departments), in Japan, 1975-1999



Source: Japan, Prime Minister's Office, 2000; figure 24.

### Female managers<sup>19</sup>

Vertical segregation is still strong both in Japan and in the Nordic countries. Women are usually in lower hierarchical positions, often performing routine work, and even though they have the same number of years of schooling as men, they seldom hold leading positions, although there are signs of slow change (Nurmi, 1999). According to UNDP (2000), women's share of administrative and managerial positions was 31 per cent in Norway, 27 per cent in Sweden and 26 per cent in Finland, but only 10 per cent in Japan.<sup>20</sup> Women's share of professional and technical workers was 63, 59 and 49 per cent in Finland, Norway and Sweden respectively, and 44 per cent in Japan. However, it is important to bear in mind in international comparisons that definitions and coding practices of managers and high level administrators vary greatly between countries and that most female professionals are found in only two occupations: teaching and nursing (Anker, 1998).

Despite a slight improvement since the 1970s, there are still very few female executives in Japanese companies. Two percent of managers at department chief level in companies with more than 100 employees were women in 1998 (up from 0.7 per cent in 1979). Women comprise only 0.9 per cent of all managers and officials. Although a long-term increase can be observed in the proportion of female national civil servants, there is great variation according to job classification. Women made up 34 per cent of those in

<sup>19</sup> A more general discussion of women in decision-making including politics would be essential, but is beyond the scope of this paper. For such discussions on Japan, see, for example, Soyama, 1998; Kawashima, 1995; Sato, 1995; Sasakura, 1995 and Kaya, 1995, and on the Nordic countries, see, for instance, Karvonen and Selle, 1995; Kuusipalo, 1999 and Council for Equality, 2000. See also UNDP, 2000 for global statistics.

<sup>20</sup> In a global study, Anker (1998) found that roughly 88 per cent of managers and legislative officials/government administrators in the world are men.

---

routine administrative work (grade 1), but only 1 per cent of ministry administrators and assistant administrators (grades 9-11). For women, it is not only prestigious to become a government official, but also attractive as salary and training are basically the same as for men, and maternity leave and child-care are guaranteed. Most of these women continue to work until retirement age, because of the possibility of taking maternity leave, which does not adversely affect their career (Office for Gender Equality, 2000b; Prime Minister's Office, 2000).

International studies have shown that the few women who reach really top positions usually engage in some kind of administrative support: accounting, personnel or public relations and training. The glass ceiling or glass walls usually stop women's careers at middle-level management or expert positions. Female managers are usually not included in the actual strategic planning and decision-making, but are either members in bodies that have restricted power, or lower-level managers. Women are most often managers in trade, the hotel and restaurant business or in pharmaceutical, social and cultural branches. It is easier for women to reach top positions in the public sector than in the private sector, and in female-dominated fields and occupations. The gender pay gap is often larger on the managerial level than elsewhere on average (Swedish National Institute of Occupational Health, 1995; Tilastokeskus, 1994; Nurmi, 1999; ILO, 1997).

Research on Nordic managers has further shown that men's career development tends to be faster than women's (e.g. Kauppinen et al., 1989).<sup>21</sup> The introduction of flat organizations means fewer managerial positions, especially in middle management (Swedish National Institute of Occupational Health, 1995; Nurmi, 1999). As this is where most women are concentrated, this may imply that the possibility for women to work their way up through the organization, thus breaking down vertical segregation, will become more difficult in the future (Swedish National Institute of Occupational Health, 1995). In addition, during economic recession or downturns traditional gender roles tend to gain strength, which implies further difficulties for women (Nurmi, 1999).

### **3. Policies for enhancement of gender equality**

#### **3.1 Recent concerns related to gender equity and policies and laws for its enhancement**

##### **3.1.1 Japan**

The most recent laws and policies related to equal opportunities are discussed in this section. For a discussion of earlier struggles for legal rights and reforms, see Kaneko (1995) and Kinjo (1995).

<sup>21</sup> Apart from the glass ceiling hindering women's rise to high positions, studies have indicated that invisible ceilings exist at many levels and can in fact be equally important for blue-collar workers. For example, it was found that Swedish workers in the food industry often began in monotonous, repetitive jobs, but men soon advanced to better tasks with improved work content, whereas women remained behind. This is due to both management and unions regarding women as "less technical" or some tasks as too heavy for them (Swedish National Institute of Occupational Health, 1995). Similar results have been found in Nordic studies on male as compared to female nurses, nursery-school teachers and secretaries (Lammi, 1992).

---

*The 1997 improvement of labour laws to guarantee equal opportunity*

Kinjo (1995, p. 355) notes that “a huge gap between *de facto* equality and *de jure* equality persists in contemporary Japan”. To help close this gap, a bill passed on 11 June 1997 led to a revision of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL) and the Labour Standards Law, an amendment to the Child Care and Family Care Leave Law, and the improved enforcement of maternity protection provisions (Major Issues of Administration for Women, 1999).

Revision of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law led to the prohibition of discrimination against women in all stages of employment from recruitment, hiring, assignment and promotion. Preferential treatment of women is prohibited in principle as it has a discriminative effect. The Government will give advice or other assistance to employers taking positive action in removing *de facto* differentials between male and female workers. Measures to secure effectiveness include (i) solving disputes through independent solutions to complaints in a company, assistance for dispute resolution by the Director of the Women’s and Young Workers’ Office, and relief by conciliation through the Equal Opportunity Mediation Committee; and (ii) provisions for advice, guidance and recommendations for enforcement of the Law. Unwillingness to conform to a recommendation will be published by the Minister of Labour (Major Issues of Administration for Women, 1999). Measures to be considered concerning employment of female workers also include obligation of employers to prevent sexual harassment, and to protect the health of female workers during pregnancy and after childbirth.

Amendments to the Labour Standards Law lifted the regulations on overtime, holiday and late night work for female workers, with a view to expanding the range of occupations available to women; it also extended leave before childbirth from 10 weeks to 14 weeks in the case of multiple pregnancy. Amendments to the Child Care and Family Care Leave Law set limits on late night work for those male and female workers who take care of children or other family members (Major Issues of Administration for Women, 1999).

Fiscal year 1999 was the first year of full implementation of the revised Equal Employment Opportunity Law. In order to ensure compliance with the revised Law, the Ministry of Labour pursued an information campaign. As to means of implementation, the words “advice”, “guidance” and “recommendations” are frequently mentioned. For example, the Ministry of Labour will conduct “active and careful administrative guidance” to secure equal treatment between men and women in recruitment, hiring, assignment and promotion, whereas the old EEOL provided only for a “duty to endeavour” (Major Issues of Administration for Women, 1999).

The Ministry of Labour is supporting the compatibility between working life and family life through, for example, developing the child/family care leave system. The Child Care Leave Law, obligating establishments with more than 30 employees to implement a child care leave system was first enacted in 1991, and extended to all employers in 1995. The 1997 revised Child Care and Family Care Leave Law legalized the family care leave system, and since April 1999 it has been the obligation of all employers on the basis of the Child Care and Family Care Leave Law<sup>22</sup> (Major Issues of Administration for Women, 1999).

---

<sup>22</sup> Under the law, a worker may get leave for child care until the child is one year old, and the employer may not dismiss a worker on account of an application for such leave or for getting such leave. A worker may also get one leave per one family member requiring constant care (spouse, parent, child, spouse’s parent, etc.) up to three consecutive months, and there is a similar prohibition against dismissal as for child care leave.

---

In spite of this legislative advance, several problems remain. In the revised EEOL, there is no prohibition of indirect discrimination. Although this type of discrimination is difficult to define, it could be expressly prohibited.<sup>23</sup> A non-governmental organization (NGO) report maintains that the attitude of the Japanese Government is still not sufficiently pro-gender equality and that the regulations may well be ineffective. NGOs point out that only advice and guidance are provided to employers who violate regulations prohibiting discrimination against women, noting that in the present circumstances, Japanese employers by themselves are not sufficiently prepared to realize gender equality and that the provision on government support for “positive action” by employers is weak. In their view, this provision should be a legal obligation to promote women’s assignment and promotion. The NGOs demand stricter regulations to prevent sexual harassment at the workplace, and compulsory maternity leave (Women 2000, 1999).

On the revision of the Labour Standards Law, the NGOs feel that recent changes to the Japanese labour protection law have made things worse. For instance, overtime work makes the life of workers with family responsibilities more difficult and increases women’s burden. Without restriction of maximum working hours, the abolition of the restriction on overtime work, holiday work and night work by women does not promote gender equality in the view of some NGOs (Women 2000, 1999).

On establishing an environment that allows workers to continue working while taking care of children or family members, NGOs stress the practical issues in the enforcement of the revised Child Care Leave Law. Public opinion on gender roles changes slowly. In addition, the child-care leave benefits introduced in the revised law are too low to live on.<sup>24</sup> An overwhelming majority of workers taking care leave are women; the NGOs point out that given the present environment in the workplace, male workers can hardly utilize leave benefits (Women 2000, 1999). According to a survey by the Japanese Ministry of Labour in 1996, only 0.16 per cent of male workers took child-care leave compared with 44.5 per cent for female workers (Major Issues of Administration for Women, 1999).<sup>25</sup>

The Japanese Government nowadays supports the harmonization of working life and family life in a variety of ways: subsidies for employers’ programmes facilitating reinstatement of workers who obtain child or family care leave; subsidies for employers’ costs if they provide child or family care services to their employees; subsidies for employers who establish day nurseries<sup>26</sup> at workplaces; establishment of Family Support Centres to respond to sudden or irregular nursing needs; support and guidance for re-employment of those who have resigned due to child care or family care; and promotion of “family friendly companies” (Major Issues of Administration for Women, 1999; Prime Minister’s Office, 2000). In 2001, it is too soon to see the effects of their implementation.

<sup>23</sup> See, for instance, Finland’s Act on Equality between Women and Men at <http://www.tasa-arvo.fi/www-eng/index.html>.

<sup>24</sup> The same applies to the Family Care Leave Law. The basic child care benefit is 20 per cent of the employee’s wage before taking child care leave, and a return-to-work benefit amounting to 5 per cent of the wage before the leave, multiplied by the number of leave months, is also paid. However, a partial revision to the Employment Insurance Law raising the benefit rate for child care and family care benefit to 40 percent was presented to the 147<sup>th</sup> session of the Diet in 2000.

<sup>25</sup> In the Nordic countries, the percentage of men of all recipients of daily allowances in conjunction with pregnancy and childbirth was around 30 per cent in 1996 (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 1999).

<sup>26</sup> A very practical concern related to the location of day nurseries at workplaces is that this implies that children also have to commute. This presents a major problem in big cities due to very crowded public transportation. Osawa (1995) has also brought up problems related to commuting and child care.

---

## *The basic law for a gender-equal society of 1999*

The preamble of the 1999 Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society states that to respond to the rapid changes occurring in Japan's socio-economic situation (fewer children, aging population, and maturation of domestic economic activities), the realization of a gender-equal society has become a matter of urgent importance. The purpose of the law is to clarify the basic principles with regard to formation of a gender-equal society, set a course to this end, and to promote related efforts by the state, local governments and citizens.

The formation of a gender-equal society is defined as:

“a society where both women and men shall be given equal opportunities to participate voluntarily in activities in all fields as equal partners in the society, and shall be able to enjoy political, economic, social and cultural benefits equally as well as to share responsibilities” (article 2).<sup>27</sup>

Article 4 recognizes the fact that as:

“Social systems or practices can become factors impeding formation of a Gender-equal Society by reflecting the stereotyped division of roles on the basis of gender, etc., thus having a non-neutral effect on the selection of social activities by women and men, care should be taken so that social systems and practices have as neutral an impact as possible on this selection of social activities”.

On compatibility of activities in family life and other activities, article 6 states that:

“Formation of a Gender-equal Society shall be promoted so that women and men can perform their roles smoothly as household members in home-related activities, including child-raising and nursing of family members through mutual cooperation and social support, and can thus perform activities other than these.”

All actors, the state, local governments and citizens shall promote the formation of a gender-equal society (articles 8-10). In addition to legislative, financial and other measures required to implement the policies related to the formation of a gender-equal society, the Government must submit annual reports on the implementation of the law and on future plans (the Basic Plan for Gender Equality). Article 17 contains a provision on handling complaints:

“in regard to policies implemented by the government which are related to promotion of formation of a Gender-equal Society or which are recognized as influencing formation of a Gender-equal Society, and, necessary measures intended for relief of victims whose human rights have been infringed through factors impeding formation of a Gender-equal Society including gender-based discriminatory treatment.”

Of central importance is article 15, stating that “When formulating and implementing policies recognized as influencing formation of a Gender-equal Society, the State and local governments shall consider formation of a Gender-equal Society”. This provision can be seen as indirectly connected to mainstreaming gender issues, a major issue in, for example, discussions within the European Union today. However, the formulation “policies recognized as influencing formation of a Gender-equal society” may prove to be unnecessarily restrictive, as such recognition often depends on who is looking into the

---

<sup>27</sup> The original document produced in Japanese naturally has to be the basis for interpretation of the law.

---

issue. Instead, an unrestricted commitment to mainstreaming equal opportunities into all areas of social life is essential to enhance coherence and reach long-lasting results.<sup>28</sup>

In principle, the necessary legislative framework exists for the improvement of women's position, though it is still rather vague and may not include sufficient incentives and obligations to promote *de facto* equality. However, it is a very welcome basis, and much depends on the implementation of the more practical Basic Plan for Gender Equality as well as prefectural and municipal plans. The list of policies implemented in the fiscal year 1999 and those to be implemented in the fiscal year 2000 was impressive (Prime Minister's Office, 2000).

### *Administrative reform of the national machinery in 2001*

The implementation of the 1999 Basic and Related Laws on Administrative Reform of the Central Government started in January 2001. Promotion of the formation of a gender-equal society became the responsibility of the Prime Minister's Office. A Congress on Gender Equality within this office took over the functions of the Council for Gender Equality and, in addition, monitors implementation and evaluates the impact of policies.

The new Bureau for Gender Equality that was established plans and coordinates policies and performs the main administrative work in the area. The aim of the reform was to make government organizations and their operations simple and effective (Office for Gender Equality, 2000a). This aim is very important, as coherence and transparency are crucial in government functions if lasting results are to be achieved in the field of gender equality. Gender issues also need to be handled at a sufficiently high level within the Government in order to be taken seriously; in Japan, a high level has been reached.

Annex 1 contains useful Internet links for gender-related information on Japan.

### **3.1.2 Nordic countries**

In the case of the Nordic countries, this paper discusses only certain aspects of gender equity and equal opportunity in the labour market. Annex 1 contains information on useful Internet sites, and Annex 2 gives an overview of Finnish family policy as an example of a Nordic approach.

#### *Nordic research on gender-issues*

Gonäs and Lehto (1999a and b) note the close relationship in Nordic countries between the research agenda on gender equality and policy programmes. One central area of study has been men and gender equality. Gender relations are outcomes of the complex co-existence of old, new and transitional gender practices and attitudes (Ellingsaeter, 1998), and men's role in, for instance, child care is of central importance to women's labour market position. Research has been done on different aspects of men's lives, the way in which boys are brought up, dominant forms of masculinity, and the absence of care-giving responsibilities in many men's lives. These issues are relevant to the development of new ways of being a man. An important objective of the work relating to men and gender equality is to demonstrate the possibilities men have of expanding their repertoire of roles.

<sup>28</sup> In Finland, for example, "gender impact assessment" is starting in the context of new legislation. The revised Employment Contracts Act that was passed in December 2000 was the first new Finnish law to be studied from a gender perspective. Such assessment should form part of normal procedures when new legislation or other regulations and big decisions are drafted. For instance, the state budget proposal should be assessed with regard to its gender impact, in addition to its environmental, economic and enterprise impact (*Helsingin Sanomat*, 2000).

---

In the Nordic countries, a joint Nordic Plan of Action on Men and Gender Equality has been prepared to support these efforts (Nordic Council of Ministers, 1998a).

During the 1980s, fathers in Norway and Finland were granted the right to parental leave. In Norway, the development was rapid, as a “forced” father’s quota was introduced in 1994 with great success. Fathers have to take one month of the total leave; if they do not, this time is lost to the parents. Swedish men gained entitlement in 1974, and a similar “daddy’s month” has been introduced there also, but not yet in Finland. The Nordic Council of Ministers has implemented special research projects and conferences to address the issue of why fathers do or do not take leave (Nordic Council of Ministers, 1998b). Ellingsaeter (1998) notes that the arrangements institutionalizing care work for young children (rights to paid leave and reduced working hours) are mainly framed as gender neutral parental rights, but in practice they act as “women only” arrangements. The relatively few men who wish to take long parental leave often meet with opposition and impertinent attitudes in their workplaces and other difficulties (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 1999; Kempe, 2000). How to bring about the realization of opportunities is not always self-evident, but seems to depend in large part on practical leadership and relations between superior and subordinate in the workplace (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 1999). Employers’ and workers’ organizations have an important task in creating a positive attitude at workplaces towards the sharing of family responsibilities.

In Finland, a comprehensive Gender Barometer on Equality between Men and Women was carried out in 1998 among 15 to 74-year-old Finns as a joint endeavour by the Council for Equality and Statistics Finland (Melkas, 1999). It examined attitudes and personal experiences of women and men on, inter alia, the division of labour, relative positions of authority and the acceptability of exerting power in different situations by employees of different sexes. According to the results for 1998, a clear majority of both men and women still feel that the social position of women is inferior to that of men. However, one out of two men and women believed that equality will increase over the next ten years. Finns appeared virtually unanimous in stating that women are entitled to work irrespective of their family circumstances and that men ought to participate more in child care. The results of the barometer received considerable national attention.

Gender impact assessment of all law reforms and alike is an emerging area. Tax and socio-political incentives need to be made visible from the gender equality perspective (Council for Equality, 1999). The increasing number of older persons, a major challenge in the future, is a challenge also from the point of view of gender equality. In arranging the care of older persons, it is firstly a question of how work is shared between families and service systems. Second, it is a question of women’s and men’s labour division at home. Unless strategies to support equality are followed, arranging care for older people may expressly affect women’s position in the labour market (Minister Eva Biaudet, 1999). The same considerations apply in Japan with its rapidly ageing population.

### *Policies to combat occupational sex segregation: the example of Finland*

Since the 1970s, a generally accepted aim of the Nordic equality politics has been to break up gender-based segregation and hierarchies. In practice, the Nordic countries have mainly resorted to different kinds of pilot projects and administrative or working life development programmes. The visible results of such measures have been rather meagre (Räsänen, 1996; see also Gonäs and Lehto, 1999b). In the following, a few attempts are presented.

The most comprehensive project to break up segregation so far has been the *Bryt Aava* (Break) project in 1985-89. The initiative came from the Nordic Council of Ministers, and the project aimed to develop methods as well as to have a practical impact. In Finland, three small municipalities were chosen to be the pilot areas. Implementation started by

---

discussions with teachers in secondary schools on the impact of education on gender roles. Many teachers opposed the project, because they did not think they could influence occupational segregation in their teaching. Many were of the opinion that the gender-based division of labour is determined by biology, that teachers cannot and should not change it, and that changes in divisions of labour would cause problems for women themselves and family life. In many teachers' view, gender equality was already realized in educational opportunities, curricula and school practices, and gender differences depend on individual choices that must be respected by teachers. However, the attitudes of student tutors in the above-mentioned schools and of teachers in schools providing vocational and technical education tended to be positive towards the project, perhaps because teachers in these occupations had faced the problem (Räsänen, 1996).

The lesson of the *Bryt Aava* project in Finland was that moral conflicts and disagreements must be accepted and worked out in the process of change. This work is very slow, however, as sex segregation has to be broken up by concrete measures everywhere it exists (Räsänen, 1996). The attitudes and behaviour of authorities in charge of equality projects are also of central importance: a Finnish study found that they may reinforce rather than reduce segregation (Jolkkonen et al., 1994). While government officials in charge of the *Bryt Aava* project were committed to its aims, the local level decision-makers regarded the project mainly as extra nuisance (Räsänen, 1996).

Finnish industry is concerned that women are not going into technological studies or seeking employment in technology industries. From 1996 to 1998, the industry implemented a two-year Women and Industrial Professions project in collaboration with the employees' organizations and government authorities to increase girls' interest in technical professions, to develop vocational schools from the standpoint of women, and to support women's placement in industrial professions. Industrial jobs and technical professions continue to be regarded as male occupations, and the project experiences confirmed that the dismantling of gender-based specialization calls for a new way of thinking about typical female and male jobs in the working world and in schools.

A number of Girls and Technology projects have also been carried out at comprehensive schools and senior high schools in recent years. These have sought to familiarize girls with traditional boys' subjects, such as mathematics and natural sciences. The Equal Opportunity Programme for 1997-1999 of the Government of Finland also sought to diminish the gender-based division of education. The LUMA Project, which formed part of the Equal Opportunity Programme, aimed to promote the development of mathematical and natural science skills and to increase the number of women students on technology courses, as well as to evaluate the success of these measures on increased equality between the sexes (Council for Equality, 2001).

In 1999, the European Union recommended to Finland that closer attention be paid to breaking up the gender division of occupations. In Finland's National Action Plan for Employment for 2000, the promotion of equal opportunities was based on the mainstreaming principle. The aim of the Government is to influence the mechanisms behind a person's choice of occupation and to encourage a more equal gender distribution in various occupations. First, an extensive strategic project on equality in the labour market is being undertaken (in 2000-2003), including research on the key factors for eliminating the gender division in occupations. Second, labour market organizations have launched a three-year programme in schools to study ways of encouraging children at various stages of their education to choose occupations that are not typical of their sex (Ministry of Labour, 2000). However, as socialization into gender roles begins before school age, in families and elsewhere, this needs to be taken into account in attempts to combat segregation. Third, a study on the statistics of gender-based pay differentials that started in 2000 will allow the construction of a framework for analyzing the factors that influence these differentials and monitoring changes. The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of

---

Social Affairs and Health and Statistics Finland are in charge of implementation, in cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations (Ministry of Labour, 2000).

## **4. Statistical analysis of occupational segregation by sex<sup>29</sup>**

### **4.1 Indices of inequality**

A number of different statistics are used in the research literature to measure occupational segregation. Part of the reason for the variety in statistics is that there are disadvantages to all indices. This section of the paper uses the index of dissimilarity (ID), by far the most widely used index in the research literature (see, for example, Anker, 1998, for a review of inequality statistics). Readers are referred to Anker (1998) for results using the marginal matching index, which is developed and recommended in Siltanen et al., (1995) and Melkas and Anker (1998).

In addition to the index of dissimilarity, other measures of occupational segregation and concentration are used in subsequent sections: the largest female occupations, female-dominated and male-dominated occupations, monetization of household work, and women and men in relatively higher and lower status occupations.<sup>30</sup> In this way, we are able to build up a fairly complete picture of both horizontal and vertical occupational segregation and gender inequality in Nordic and Japanese labour markets. The female share of the labour force was reported on in section 2 of this paper.

The inequality index (ID) has values, which range between 0 (no segregation, implying that there is an equal percentage of women in each occupation) and 1 (complete segregation, implying that all female workers are in occupations where there are no male workers). Thus, the higher an index value, the greater is segregation.

Cross-national studies of occupational segregation by sex have generally found relatively high levels of sex segregation in the Nordic countries and relatively low levels in Japan. This includes cross-national studies using one-digit occupational data with seven broadly classified occupational groups (professional/technical, clerical, services, agriculture, administrative/managerial, sales, and production) as well as studies based on much more detailed two- and three-digit occupational data (Anker, 1998; Melkas and Anker, 1998). These findings may surprise Nordics who are proud of their progressiveness with regard to gender equity, as well as non-Nordics who see the Nordic countries as a guiding light in gender equity.

Results presented in table 4 confirm findings from previous cross-national studies that occupational segregation by sex is relatively high in Nordic, compared to OECD, countries. Approximately 55 per cent of female non-agricultural workers and approximately 60 per cent of male non-agricultural workers in the three Nordic countries would have to change occupations in order to eliminate sex segregation. This level of sex segregation is on the high side. The index of dissimilarity (ID) was approximately .55 for 14 non-Nordic OECD countries as compared to about .60 for the three Nordic study

<sup>29</sup> The statistical sources and data used are described in Annex 3.

<sup>30</sup> See Melkas and Anker (1998) for information on the calculation, description and definition of indices and other statistics used in this paper.

countries in 1990 (Anker, 1998).<sup>31</sup> Table 5 also indicates the similarity of overall levels of occupational segregation by sex in the Nordic countries, and that ID values have fallen more or less in tandem since 1970 (figure 9). The high level of occupational segregation by sex in the Nordic countries is not a new phenomenon; in 1970, the sex segregation of occupations was so strikingly high that ID levels were probably similar to those found in many developing countries today (Anker, 1998). The downward trend has continued in the 1990.

**Table 5. Index of dissimilarity (ID) and female share of non-agricultural labour force in Japan, Finland, Norway and Sweden, 1970 – 1995**

Year/Country	Female share of non-agricultural labour force (%)	Index of dissimilarity (ID)
1970/Japan	36.0	0.526 <sup>a</sup>
1980	36.9	0.529 <sup>a</sup>
1990	39.3	0.529 <sup>a</sup> /0.545 <sup>b</sup>
1995	39.7	0.548 <sup>b</sup>
1970/Finland	44.6	0.725 <sup>a</sup>
1980	47.8	0.709 <sup>a</sup>
1990	49.8	0.663 <sup>a</sup> /0.673 <sup>c</sup>
1995	48.6	0.610 <sup>c</sup>
1970/Norway	34.8	0.736 <sup>a</sup>
1980	43.9	0.710 <sup>a</sup>
1990	47.1	0.635 <sup>a</sup> /0.564 <sup>d</sup>
1995	47.8	0.564 <sup>d</sup>
1970/Sweden	40.5	0.731 <sup>a</sup>
1980	46.3	0.688 <sup>a</sup>
1990	49.5	0.641 <sup>a</sup>
1995	48.3	0.591

Notes: Figures for 1995 are not directly comparable across countries nor are Japanese and Nordic values across years.

<sup>a</sup> Based on common three-digit occupational classifications for 1970, 1980 and 1990.

<sup>b</sup> Based on common three-digit occupational classification for 1990 and 1995.

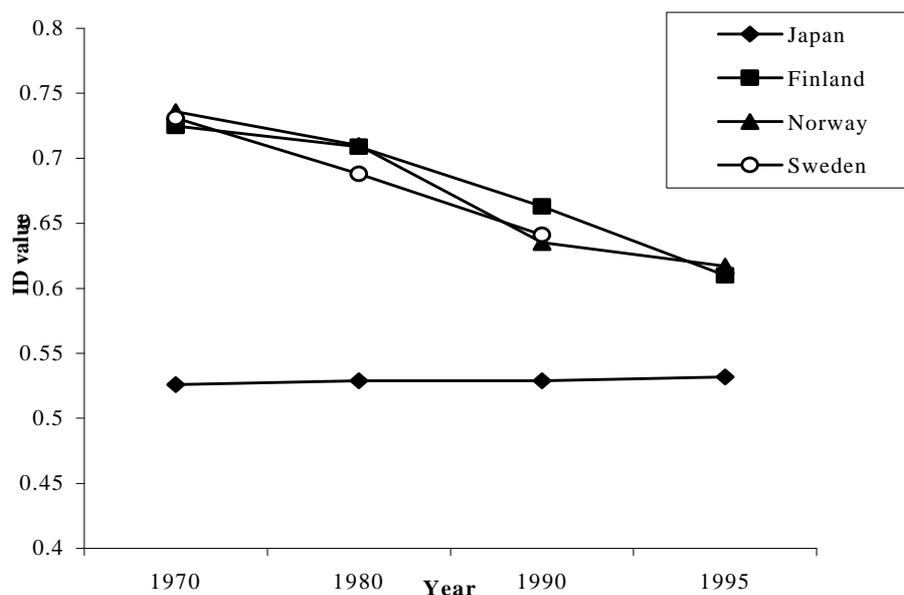
<sup>c</sup> Based on similar three-digit classification with rough adjustment to 1995 to take into account difference in number of occupations classified in 1990 and 1995.

<sup>d</sup> Based on similar two-digit occupational classifications for 1990 and 1995 with a rough adjustment to 1995 results to take into account slight differences in number of occupations classified in 1990 and 1995.

Sources: Authors' calculations and Soyama (1998); Gonäs and Spånt (1997).

<sup>31</sup> Readers should bear in mind that inequality statistic values increase along with increases in the number of occupations classified. Values in Anker (1998) take this fact into consideration using the mathematical relationship between ID and number of occupations classified.

Figure 9. Changes in occupational segregation by sex, as measured by ID, in Japan and the Nordic countries, 1970-1995



Note: 1995 value adjusted to be comparable to 1990 value by adding observed change from 1990 to 1995 for Norway, Finland and Japan to their 1990 value. Sweden 1995 is not included, because comparable data for 1990 and 1995 were not available. Source: Authors' calculations.

In Japan, the degree of occupational sex segregation has remained virtually unchanged over the past twenty-five years, contrasting with the rapid decreases observed for the Nordic countries. Nevertheless, Japan's segregation level is lower than the Nordic level and rather average or slightly on the low side for non-Nordic OECD countries (Anker, 1998). This surprising result is due in part to a higher level of vertical occupational segregation within occupational groups in Japan, and in part to the greater integration of women in Japan in production occupations.

The index values reported in this section provide evidence that the Nordic countries have, in addition to high levels of female labour force participation, high levels of occupational segregation by sex, yet rapidly decreasing in the 1970s, 1980s and the beginning of 1990s. Japan, on the other hand, has a lower level of female labour force participation and occupational segregation by sex, yet at an unchanged level.

## 4.2 Gender-dominated occupations

This section analyses the extent to which the non-agricultural labour force is divided into gender-dominated occupations where the percentage of either male or female workers is so high that they could be considered to be "male" or "female" occupations. Research studies and legal cases for comparable-worth settlements differ from each other in their definitions of gender-dominated occupations. Comparable-worth settlements in North America have used around 60 per cent of one sex, while research studies have typically used around 60 per cent female for defining "female" occupations and around 80 per cent male for defining "male" occupations (Anker and Hein, 1986; Melkas and Anker, 1998; Anker, 1998).

The use of a fixed numeric cut-off point can cause problems for analysing changes over time within a country as well as across countries at one point in time. This can occur when one or several large occupations have a female or male percentage, which is close to the fixed cut-off point (e.g. 80.1 or 79.9). For this reason, three definitions (70, 80 and 90

per cent) are used here, as in Melkas and Anker (1998). For simplicity in exposition however, only the 80 per cent definition is used here for 1995.

Table 6 presents results for 1970-1995 for female non-agricultural workers. It gives both the percentage of the female non-agricultural labour force working in female-dominated occupations as well as the number of these occupations, based on each of the three definitions of gender-dominated occupations, i.e. occupations where at least 70, 80 or 90 per cent of workers are women (80 per cent for 1995). A very high percentage of the female non-agricultural labour force in the Nordic study countries works in a “female” occupation, much higher than for other industrialized countries. Whereas approximately 22 per cent of female non-agricultural workers in 14 other OECD countries in 1990 worked in non-agricultural occupations where women comprised at least 80 per cent of workers, the corresponding figure for the three Nordic countries was more than twice as high at 48 per cent (Anker, 1998). The occupational classifications and particularly the numbers of occupations for Norway and Finland for 1995 are different from those for 1970-90, which explains part of the change from 1990 to 1995 in table 6.<sup>32</sup>

The values for Japan are low (17 per cent in 1990), and lower than the average value for non-Nordic OECD countries based on the 80 per cent definition. In addition, there have not been great changes either in the percentage of women working in female-dominated occupations or in the number of such occupations.

**Table 6. Number of female-dominated non-agricultural occupations and percentage of women workers employed in them, Japan and the Nordic countries, 1970 - 95**

Definition of female-dominated occupations	Japan				Nordic countries			
	1970	1980	1990	1995	1970	1980	1990	1995
>70% of workers female	26	20	30	-	69	73	66	-
No. of occupations	34	29	30	-	35	38	39	-
>80% of workers female <sup>a</sup>	20 <sup>a</sup>	19 <sup>a</sup>	17 <sup>a</sup> /19 <sup>b</sup>	14 <sup>b</sup>	46	59	56	43 <sup>d</sup>
No. of occupations	24 <sup>a</sup>	23 <sup>a</sup>	23 <sup>a</sup> /26 <sup>b</sup>	23 <sup>b</sup>	23	27	27	13 <sup>d</sup>
>90% of workers female	11	8	7	-	34	40	40	-
No. of occupations	18	14	14	-	15	18	15	-

Notes: Based on three-digit non-agricultural data (from censuses) except for Norway, 1995, which is based on labour force survey data. Nordic countries include Finland, Norway and Sweden, except for 1995 when only Finland and Norway are included. The numbers of occupations included: Japan 1970-90: 259 occupations; 1995: 279 occupations; Nordic countries 1970-90: 187 occupations; 1995: 85 (Norway) and 311 occupations (Finland). The values for Nordic countries are unweighted average values for the three (1995: two) countries, whose developments have been fairly similar during the last twenty-five years.

<sup>a</sup> Based on common occupational classification for 1970, 1980 and 1990.

<sup>b</sup> Based on common occupational classification for 1990 and 1995.

<sup>d</sup> Not comparable to 1990.

The average OECD value for 1990 is 22 per cent using the 80 per cent definition (from Anker, 1998) based on data for 14 other OECD countries, when values have been roughly adjusted to increase comparability by using classifications with only 75 non-agricultural occupations (not 187 non-agricultural occupations as for the Nordic countries above). Based on a similar occupational classification with 75 non-agricultural occupations, a comparable percentage for 1990 for all three Nordic countries is 48 per cent. The average change for other OECD countries was -1.7 percentage points for the 1970s and -4.9 percentage points for the 1980s (based on data for nine and eleven other OECD countries respectively, in Anker, 1998). Values for other OECD countries (except for Japan) are not available for 1995. Sources: Authors' calculations, and Anker (1998).

<sup>32</sup> Differences between the three Nordic countries that are hidden here have been reported on in Melkas and Anker (1998). All three Nordic countries were found to have had roughly the same experiences. The increase observed in Nordic female-dominated occupations in the 1970s and the decline in the 1980s is explained by the growth of the public sector, particularly in the 1970s. The results indicate that most of the increasing numbers of Nordic female labour force participants in the 1970-90 period in female-dominated occupations were absorbed into existing female-dominated occupations which grew in size, rather than in newly created female-dominated occupations (although this may be due to crudeness in the occupational classification as far as typical female occupations are concerned). In addition, as will be described below, women were entering male-dominated occupations.

Table 7 presents results for male-dominated occupations. These percentages are similar to those for Nordic women. They are also similar to those for men in other OECD countries (56 per cent on average in 1990, based on the 80 per cent definition for 14 other OECD countries). In the case of Japan, the percentages for male workers in male-dominated occupations based on all three definitions were lower than in the Nordic countries in 1970 and 1980, but by 1990 the Nordic countries had declined to Japan's level, which has been basically unchanged over the past twenty-five years. Japan's level is close to the other non-Nordic OECD countries' level (Anker, 1998), and the fact that it has not changed probably reflects the rigidity of the Japanese labour market system. There are many male-dominated occupations both in Japan and the Nordic countries.<sup>33</sup> There has been a large decrease in the 1970s and 1980s in the percentage of men working in male-dominated occupations and in the number of male-dominated occupations in the Nordic countries, but not in Japan. This means that while men in the Nordic countries came under increasing pressure to compete against women in the labour market, there has been no change in the privileged labour market position enjoyed by Japanese men.

**Table 7. Number of male-dominated non-agricultural occupations and percentage of male workers employed in them, Japan and the Nordic countries, 1970-95**

Definition of male-dominated occupations	Japan				Nordic countries			
	1970	1980	1990	1995	1970	1980	1990	1995
>70% of workers male	64	64	63	-	82	77	69	-
No. of occupations	145	143	141	-	107	95	82	-
>80% of workers male <sup>a</sup>	56 <sup>a</sup>	45 <sup>a</sup>	54 <sup>a</sup> /55 <sup>b</sup>	56 <sup>b</sup>	75	70	57	52 <sup>d</sup>
No. of occupations	126 <sup>a</sup>	117 <sup>a</sup>	115 <sup>a</sup> /126 <sup>b</sup>	123 <sup>b</sup>	85	77	64	42 <sup>d</sup>
>90% of workers male	45	41	41	-	63	47	39	-
No. of occupations	91	86	80	-	61	49	40	-

Notes: Based on three-digit non-agricultural data (from censuses) except for Norway, 1995, which is based on labour force survey data. Nordic countries include Finland, Norway and Sweden, except for 1995 when only Finland and Norway are included. The numbers of occupations included: Japan 1970-90: 259 occupations; 1995: 279 occupations; Nordic countries 1970-90: 187 occupations; 1995: 85 (Norway) and 311 occupations (Finland). The values for Nordic countries are unweighted average values for the three (1995: two) countries, whose developments have been fairly similar during the last twenty-five years.

<sup>a</sup> Based on common occupational classification for 1970, 1980 and 1990.

<sup>b</sup> Based on common occupational classification for 1990 and 1995.

<sup>d</sup> Not comparable to 1990.

The average OECD value for 1990 using the 80 per cent definition was 56 per cent (Anker, 1998) based on a classification with 75 non-agricultural occupations (not 187 occupations as for the Nordic countries). Based on a similar occupational classification for 75 non-agricultural occupations, a comparable percentage for the three Nordic countries for 1990 was the same 56 per cent. The average change for other OECD countries was -4.4 percentage points for the 1970s and -6.7 percentage points for the 1980s (based on data for nine and eleven other OECD countries respectively in Anker, 1998). Values for other OECD countries (except for Japan) are not available for 1995. Source: Authors' calculations and Anker (1998).

The Nordic countries display a unique pattern in that the majority of both men and women work in gender-dominated occupations (Anker, 1998). While the high percentage for men is typical of many OECD countries, the high percentage for women is not, and this pattern helps explain the relatively high level of occupational segregation in the Nordic countries: it is mainly attributable to the large size of the Nordic female-dominated labour force. It may be argued that despite this, Nordic women still fare better than their counterparts in other countries with a similar overall level of segregation in the labour market, since a higher proportion of them are in "protected" female-dominated occupations.

The pattern in Japan is typical of Asian countries (non-OECD countries) such as China, Hong Kong, Malaysia and the Republic of Korea. These countries have mid-to-low

<sup>33</sup> For results indicating the differences between the Nordic countries, see Melkas and Anker, 1998.

female labour force participation and female-dominated occupations, and mid-to-low overall levels of occupational sex segregation and male-dominated occupations.

### 4.3 Top 10 “female” and “male” occupations

Table 8 shows that in the ten occupations with the highest percentage of women there is great similarity between Japan and the Nordic countries regarding the most highly feminized occupations (figures are given for 1990 only, because the changes between 1970 and 1995 were small). For example, almost all nurses, housekeepers, child-care workers, other domestic service workers and telephone operators are women in all four countries. All the occupations in table 7 correspond to typical stereotyped activities of women, such as caring, manual and finger dexterity, and skills related to household work.

The most male-dominated occupations also show similar patterns in Japan and the Nordic countries. The percentage of Nordic men working in the ten most masculinized occupations was always very close to 100 per cent in 1990, and there was very little change from 1970 to 1990. It is noteworthy that five occupations in 1990 were among the top ten in terms of percentage male for all three Nordic countries: plumbers, construction carpenters, other construction workers and assisting building workers, shipmasters, mates and pilots, and firefighters. In Japan, the most masculinized occupations were similar to those of the Nordic countries, and changes over time were practically nonexistent.

**Table 8. Ten most female-dominated occupations in Japan and the Nordic countries, 1990**

Occupation	% of workers female	Occupation	% of workers female
<b>Japan</b>		<b>Norway</b>	
1. Midwives	100.0	1. Assistant nurses and attendants	98.4
2. Public health nurses	100.0	2. Housekeepers in private service, child-care workers in families and at home	97.7
3. Domestic maids (resident)	100.0	3. Directors and nursing staff in child day-care centres and nursery schools	96.5
4. Housekeepers	100.0	4. Home helps (municipal)	96.5
5. Geisha-girls and hall dancers	100.0	5. Secretaries, typists and stenographers	95.8
6. Kindergarteners	99.2	6. Telephone switchboard operators, etc.	95.8
7. Telephone operators	97.1	7. Technical nursing assistants	95.2
8. Nurses	96.7	8. Hotel and restaurant housekeepers	94.0
9. Kindergarten teachers	94.7	9. Nurses	93.3
10. Other domestic service workers	94.6	10. Industrial sewers, cutters, etc.	93.0
<b>Finland</b>		<b>Sweden</b>	
1. Housekeepers in private service, child-care workers in families and at home	99.9	1. Dental assistants and other health workers	99.7
2. Home helps (municipal)	99.1	2. Telephone switchboard operators, etc.	97.8
3. Industrial sewers, cutters, etc.	97.7	3. Housekeepers in private service, child-care workers in families and at home	96.5
4. Bath attendants, etc.	97.6	4. Home helps (municipal)	96.0
5. Milliners and hatmakers	97.4	5. Directors and nursing staff in child day-care centres and nursery schools	95.6
6. Nurses	97.1	6. Milliners and hatmakers	94.4
7. Secretaries, typists and stenographers	96.8	7. Nurses	93.8
8. Hairdressers, barbers, beauticians, etc.	96.8	8. Tailors, dressmakers, etc.	93.3
9. Kitchen assistants	95.8	9. Assistant nurses and attendants	92.4
10. Directors and nursing staff in child day-care centres and nursery schools	95.7	10. Secretaries, typists and stenographers	92.3

Source: Melkas and Anker (1998) except for Japan: Soyama (1998).

Table 9 provides examples of the largest female and male occupations in Norway in 1995 in terms of the number of workers. Differences over time and across countries were usually small, and call for little comment given the different classifications and coding practices across countries and years (Nurmi, 1999).<sup>34</sup>

**Table 9. Ten largest “female” and “male” occupations (based on the number of female and male workers in each occupation) in Norway, 1995**

“Male” occupations	% of male non-agricultural labour force	“Female” occupations	% of female non-agricultural labour force
1. Managers and working proprietors	8.2	1. Shop assistants	9.9
2. Other engineers	6.2	2. Charworkers	8.3
3. Construction carpenters and workers	5.0	3. Other clerks	7.3
4. Machine and motor-repairmen	4.9	4. Other practical nurses	6.7
5. Salesmen operating from an office	4.6	5. Professional nurses	6.5
6. Lorry and van drivers	4.1	6. Teachers (primary schools)	5.3
7. Shop assistants	3.6	7. Secretaries and stenographers	4.4
8. Electricians and electrical fitters	3.4	8. Social workers	3.7
9. Teachers (primary schools)	3.0	9. Accountants and bookkeepers	3.4
10. Warehousemen, storemen	2.7	10. Housekeepers	2.5
Percentage of total male non-agricultural labour force	45.7	Percentage of total female non-agricultural labour force	58.0

Source: Authors' calculations.

One distinctive national characteristic is worth noting for Japan. The occupational group of “general clerical workers” is the largest occupation for both women and men, accounting for 22.1 per cent of female non-agricultural labour force and 10.2 per cent of the male non-agricultural labour force (1995). It seems safe to draw the conclusion that this group aggregates a very broad range of tasks. Soyama (1998) comments on the results for 1970-90 that in Japan, the greatest demand in the labour market for female labour is for clerical work in response to the expanding service sector, and therefore, the share of female clerical workers in the total female labour force has increased.

The analysis in this section shows clearly that there is an exceedingly high degree of gender stereotyping in both the Japanese and the Nordic labour markets that is very consistent with gender stereotypes in society at large in the types of abilities and characteristics that are typically attributed to women and men.

#### **4.4 Seventeen typical “female” and “male” occupations**

Tables 10 and 11 present data from Anker (1998) and Melkas and Anker (1998) on seventeen specific occupations with a reputation of being typically “male” or “female”.

<sup>34</sup> For example, Norway has made greater use of the “assistant nurse and attendant” occupational category than Finland and Sweden, which have made greater use of the “technical nurse” occupational category. In another example, Sweden has seldom used the “other clerical workers” occupation and made greater use of the “secretaries, stenographers and typists” occupational group as compared to Finland and Norway (Melkas and Anker, 1998, on the results for 1970-90).

---

They were chosen also to ensure roughly equal numbers of supposedly “male“ and “female“ occupations (see ILO, 1968).<sup>35</sup>

In Japan, many of the typical “female” occupations were slightly less feminized around 1990 than elsewhere (teachers, bookkeepers, shop assistants). Since 1970, no significant changes had taken place; only the three occupations mentioned above became more feminized (Soyama, 1998). Like in other countries, in Japan the higher the educational level, the smaller is the share of female teachers. One specific factor explaining the low share of qualified female teachers at higher levels in Japan is the low enrolment rate of Japanese women at four-year universities.

For each occupational group except nurses, feminization was stronger in the Nordic countries than in Japan, where nursing is one of the few professional jobs for women. In comparison with the other regions, the Nordic percentages were clearly high for cooks, waiters, etc.; for hairdressers, barbers, etc., and for tailors, dressmakers, etc.<sup>36</sup>

Compared to other OECD countries, Nordic labour markets were thus generally found to be more gender-segregated as far as these nine typical “female” occupations are concerned. The opposite is the case for the eight typical “male” occupations, which were found to be more gender-integrated in the Nordic countries as compared to other OECD countries (table 10). Two typical “male“ occupations, (i) architects, engineers and related technicians, and (ii) legislative officials and government administrators have a lower percentage of men in the Nordic countries than in Japan and other OECD countries. These occupational groups include many influential decision-makers.

The typical “male” occupations were uniformly masculinized in Japan. Percentages for (i) engineers, etc.; (ii) legislative officials, etc., and (iii) managers were particularly high, reflecting the high degree of vertical segregation found in Japan, as noted earlier. Soyama (1998) demonstrates that a substantial proportion of Japan’s relatively low ID value for an OECD country is due to hidden vertical segregation.

In an analysis of 41 countries, Anker (1998) found that the nine typical “female“ occupations display some variation across countries in terms of feminization, whereas the eight typical “male” occupations tend to be uniformly male-stereotyped.

<sup>35</sup> Here, it should be noted that two-digit occupational data sometimes conceal differences in the feminization of occupations. For example, teacher is treated as one occupational group in two-digit ISCO-68 occupational data but as six different types of teachers in three-digit ISCO-68 occupational data (pre-primary, primary, secondary school, university, special education, and also teachers not classified elsewhere); yet, it is well known that these teaching occupations differ in their feminization.

<sup>36</sup> For a comparison of the three Nordic countries, see Melkas and Anker (1998).

**Table 10. International comparison of the feminization (% female) of nine typical “female” occupations, generally around 1990**

Region	Nurses	Teachers (all levels)	Typists, stenographers	Cashiers, bookkeepers	Salespersons, shop assistants	Cooks, waiters, bartenders	Maids, housekeeping services work	Hairdressers, barbers, beauticians	Tailors, dressmakers, sewers, etc.
Japan	96.5	43.4	93.3	75.6	64.6	63.1	97.4	69.1	80.4
Nordic countries	93.7	60.4	94.7	86.3	71.9	81.6	97.5	91.9	87.1
Other Europe	82.2	58.6	94.1	60.6	68.5	53.6	95.8	79.4	79.1
North America	92.7	65.8	98.4	85.5	66.9	58.3	89.7	81.4	62.8
Pacific area	93.6	57.0	96.8	78.8	66.0	70.1	95.1	80.4	77.9

Notes: Except for Japan, figures are regional unweighted averages (North America: only nurses, teachers and typists etc. are averages for Canada and USA, others are for the United States only). Pacific area includes Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Other Europe includes Austria, France, Germany (Fed Rep), Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland. Source: Anker (1998); Melkas and Anker (1998).

**Table 11. International comparison of the masculinization (% male) of eight typical “male” occupations, generally around 1990**

Region	Architects, engineers and related technicians	Legislative officials and government administrators	Managers	Sales supervisors and buyers	Protective services workers	Production supervisors and general foremen	Blacksmiths, toolmakers, etc.	Bricklayers, carpenters and other construction workers
Japan	97.6	98.3	90.8	n.a.	97.2	n.a.	95.2	95.4
Nordic countries	88.3	54.1	75.3	73.8	82.8	n.a.	94.2	98.0
Other Europe	94.1	85.8	84.4	80.4	96.7	96.2	96.1	99.2
North America	88.9	59.7	56.7	65.7	84.0	96.8	95.6	98.6
Pacific area	94.5	92.3	85.5	78.7	94.4	84.1	95.4	97.8

Notes: Except for Japan, figures are regional unweighted averages (North America: sales supervisors and production supervisors are for the United States only; Pacific area: production supervisors is for New Zealand only). n.a. indicates not available. Pacific area includes Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Other Europe includes Austria, France, Germany (Fed Rep), Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland. Source: Anker (1998); Melkas and Anker (1998).

---

## 4.5 Monetization of household-type work

Women who integrate into the labour force and become committed labour force participants are usually subject to the so-called “double day” (market work and housework).<sup>37</sup> The remainder of this section investigates the extent to which typical household work in the Nordic countries and Japan has become monetized and so is now carried out in the labour market, and the extent to which this monetization of household work affects occupational segregation.

In the Nordic countries, the state has had twin employment policy goals of (i) promoting gender equality in the labour market, and (ii) ensuring that all adults are able to work. Therefore, within “the Nordic model”, part of typical housework is provided by the State (and thus monetized in order to help women to be in the labour market). The Nordic countries have developed extensive facilitating policies and services to help these women with typical household work, especially with care of children and the elderly. The various Nordic welfare state policies are likely to increase occupational segregation by sex in the labour market, and this might explain in part its relatively high level.

Following the method of Melkas and Anker (1998), table 12 identifies five household activities for non-Nordic OECD countries and ten corresponding to the common Nordic occupational classification, of which the first five are mainly publicly funded, and the remaining mixed or mostly private.

The choice of these occupations is open to question; others could have been included, and some of those included could have been dropped, but we feel that this set provides an acceptable basis for analysis and discussion. Our reservations are discussed in Melkas and Anker (1998). In any case, the following analysis is designed to provide rough orders of magnitude. We have purposely tried not to unduly inflate estimates of the percentage of workers in monetized household occupations. The aim of this analysis is to widen knowledge on the sex segregation of occupations and not to suggest that monetized household work is of lower value in the labour market or that such work is women’s main contribution to the world of paid work.

A substantial percentage of Nordic non-agricultural women workers are found in the ten selected occupations, ranging from about around one-fourth in Norway and Finland to around one-third in Sweden. This demonstrates the importance of paid care and household-related occupations for Nordic working women, both for employment and as a source of assistance for women with family responsibilities. The private sector covered approximately 12-14 per cent and the public sector 12-19 per cent of these workers. Owing to a much larger public sector involvement in these activities in the Nordic countries, the percentage of women (27 per cent) was much higher than in the other industrialized countries (11 per cent).

As expected, all of these occupations were found to be highly feminized in the Nordic countries. On average (unweighted), women comprised approximately 86 per cent of the workers in these occupations in 1990; and over 90 per cent for six of these occupations. Public-sector occupations tended to be more feminized (92 per cent) than private-sector occupations (83 per cent). Feminization of the ten occupations decreased slightly between 1970 and 1990, by approximately three percentage points.

---

<sup>37</sup> For a list of strategies to cope with the burden, see Melkas and Anker (1998). On the subject of monetization of household work, see also Rantalaiho and Heiskanen (1997).

**Table 12. Monetized household-type work in three Nordic and 15 non-Nordic OECD countries, around 1990 (percentage of all workers in selected occupations)**

Selected occupations	% of female non-agricultural labour force		% of total non-agricultural labour force	
	Three Nordic	15 non-Nordic OECD <sup>a</sup>	Three Nordic	15 non-Nordic OECD <sup>a</sup>
1. Nurses, assistants, attendants and aids	6.8 <sup>b</sup>	— <sup>b</sup>	3.6 <sup>b</sup>	— <sup>b</sup>
2. Child day-care centre staff and teachers	1.6	2.6 <sup>c</sup>	0.8	1.2 <sup>c</sup>
3. Social workers	2.9	0.7	1.7	0.4
4. Home helps (municipal) <sup>d</sup>	2.9	n.a. <sup>d</sup>	1.5	n.a. <sup>d</sup>
5. Housekeepers, child-care workers in families <sup>f</sup>	2.6	5.0 <sup>e</sup>	1.3	2.2 <sup>e</sup>
6. Cleaning personnel <sup>f</sup>	6.3		3.3	
7. Kitchen managers, housekeeping	0.7		0.4	
8. Cooks	1.3	2.1 <sup>e</sup>	0.9	1.6 <sup>e</sup>
9. Kitchen assistants	1.9		1.0	
10. Laundry workers, pressing workers	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.3
Total	27.3	10.9	14.7	5.7

a Non-Nordic OECD averages are based on data for the following number of non-Nordic OECD countries: social workers (11); housekeepers, child-care workers in family/cleaning personnel/kitchen managers and housekeeping (13); cooks/kitchen assistants (9); laundry and pressing workers (10). Data for Japan are not included.

b For Nordic study countries, professional ("registered" in some other countries) nurses are excluded in these numbers. As a comparison, all nurses (e.g. professional, registered, assistants, etc.) were 5.2 per cent on average of the female non-agricultural labour force and 2.4 per cent of the total non-agricultural labour force in non-Nordic OECD countries. This compares to approximately 4.2 (2.2) per cent for the three Nordic countries for professional nurses only.

c Non-Nordic OECD countries are represented by data from the United States for child-care minders, as it is the only OECD country with a similar occupational title – "child care workers (except in private households)". This percentage is added to the average percentage for pre-primary teachers for six non-Nordic OECD countries with these data.

d Home helps (municipal) is an occupational group not found in non-Nordic OECD country occupational classifications. These workers are paid by the municipality to go to individual homes to cook, clean, shop and help people who are disabled, elderly, etc.

e Occupational groups are combined, because national classifications in OECD countries differed in where workers in each of these occupational groups were placed.

f Classification of workers into the occupational groups of housekeeper, child-care worker in families and cleaning personnel differed in Norway as compared to Finland and Sweden. For comparison, these two occupational groups are combined.

Source: Melkas and Anker (1998); Anker (1998) for non-Nordic countries.

As to the effect on the observed level of segregation (ID values) of the monetization of typical household work in the Nordic countries, it was found that ID is reduced when the ten selected occupations are excluded from calculations. For 1990, Sweden's ID was reduced by almost .057, while Finland's ID was reduced by approximately .049 and Norway's by about .023. The larger the public sector, the larger is this effect. Despite the quite sizeable reduction in ID associated with excluding monetized household-type occupations, ID remained high. Part of this may be explained by the somewhat problematic choice and relatively small number of sample occupations selected. The effect on ID of public sector occupations was similar in magnitude to the effect on ID of private-sector occupations in all three Nordic countries. Also, the effect on ID of these monetized household-type occupations increased between 1970 and 1990 in all three Nordic countries, partly because of the increasing percentage of workers in both the female and total non-agricultural labour force.

Using the 80 per cent definition of gender dominance, we investigated the effect of monetization of household work on the percentage of Nordic female and male workers working in gender-dominated occupations. There was relatively little effect on the size of the male-dominated non-agricultural labour force, although there was a tendency for this effect to have risen slightly over time. In contrast, the effect for female workers was large. For example, in Sweden the size of the female-dominated non-agricultural labour force was

higher in 1990 than in 1970 by approximately 15 percentage points due to female employment in the ten selected occupations; this represents approximately one-quarter of Swedish women in female-dominated occupations. Effects were somewhat smaller but still quite substantial for Finland and Norway.

In summary, our analysis indicates that the monetization of typical household work – i.e. its conversion into paid labour market activity – is an important aspect of Nordic life. Furthermore, it has a substantial effect on the observed level of occupational segregation by sex. The use of facilitating policies by Nordic Governments to meet the twin policy goals of gender equity in the labour market and labour force activity for all adult women has had the side effect of directly increasing the level of occupational segregation by sex, since those hired for these monetized jobs are almost all women. However, the results also indicate that the relatively high Nordic level of occupational segregation by sex, as compared to other industrialized countries, cannot be traced exclusively to public-sector jobs performing typical household-type activities. One should not forget that occupational segregation by sex fell faster in the Nordic countries over the two decades from 1970 to 1990 than in other industrialized countries, with the exception of North America (Anker, 1998), and it is likely that government-supported facilitating policies played a role in bringing about this improvement.

For Japan, table 13 identifies eight occupations from the Japanese national occupational classification that are related to typical household activities. Five of these are female-dominated, each with a feminization rate greater than 90 per cent. In almost all cases, changes in feminization from 1970 to 1990 were small (Soyama, 1998). The percentage of women among social and welfare workers increased from 44.8 per cent in 1970 to 63.5 per cent in 1990. Soyama (1998) notes that it seems likely that more and more women will be working in these occupations as the population ages. On the other hand, due to low birth rates, the importance of kindergarten occupations may decline in the future. The female share of cooks increased from 40.1 per cent in 1970 to 51.9 per cent in 1990. Cooking has traditionally been a male occupation in Japan, but now women are increasingly becoming professionally paid cooks (Soyama, 1998).<sup>38</sup>

**Table 13. Monetization of household-type work in Japan: percentage of women in selected occupations, 1990**

Selected occupations	Share of female non-agricultural labour force	Share of total non-agricultural labour force	Female share in occupation
Kindergarteners (without teaching qualification)	1.1	0.5	99.2
Kindergarten teachers	0.4	0.2	94.7
Social and welfare workers	0.5	0.3	63.5
Domestic maids	0.1	0.02	100
Housekeepers	0.2	0.1	100
Other domestic service workers	0.2	0.1	94.6
Laundry dry cleaners	3.9	2.9	52.4
Cooks	0.4	0.3	51.9
Total	6.8	4.4	82.0 (unweighted average)

Source: Soyama (1998).

<sup>38</sup> In comparison with the results for 1990 reported on in Melkas and Anker (1998) for the Nordic countries as well as in Soyama (1998) and above for Japan, only small changes could be observed for 1995. Moreover, since occupational classifications for 1990 and 1995 also differed somewhat, it seems fair to conclude that 1990 results summarized above are still valid. For this reason, data for 1995 are not presented in this section.

Table 14 shows that only 6.8 per cent of women workers were employed in five selected household-type occupations in 1990 as compared to 17.6 per cent in the Nordic countries and 10.9 per cent in other non-Nordic OECD countries. Differences are particularly large for the occupational group of housekeepers, child care in families, cleaning personnel, kitchen managers, etc. (0.5 per cent in Japan compared to 5.0 in other OECD and 9.6 in Nordic). It is clear that Japanese women do not get help in the household either from their husbands (UNDP, 1995) or by hiring outside help (as shown here). When it comes to taking care of old people, for example, it is still common for a Japanese wife whose husband is the oldest son to take care of his parents, as part of the wife's role at home, even if she has a job outside the home. This type of care is not recognized as a profession in Japan because women still do it as part of their unpaid household responsibilities.

**Table 14. Monetization of household-type work in Japan, the Nordic countries and other OECD countries (per cent of female non-agricultural labour force), 1990**

Occupation	Japan	Nordic countries	Other OECD
Social workers	0.5	2.9	0.7
Housekeepers, child-care in families, cleaning personnel, kitchen managers, etc.	0.5	9.6	5.0
Cooks, kitchen assistants	0.4	3.2	2.1
Laundry and pressing workers	3.9	0.3	0.5
Child-care workers and pre-primary teachers	1.5	1.6	2.6
Total	6.8	17.6	10.9

Notes: Two Nordic sample occupations (municipal home helps as well as nurses, assistants, attendants and aids) are not included here, as data are not available for Japan and other non-Nordic OECD countries.

Sources: Melkas and Anker (1998); Soyama (1998) for Japan, and Anker (1998) for other non-Nordic OECD countries.

#### **4.6 Vertical segregation and comparison of similar occupations with different status**

To further complete the picture of occupational segregation and gender equality in the Nordic and Japanese labour markets, we now investigate vertical segregation by comparing the feminization of pairs or groups of occupations in which workers either perform similar activities or work side-by-side in occupations which have different social statuses.<sup>39</sup> Numerous studies have shown that women around the world face a glass ceiling and are less likely than men to reach leading positions, and in this analysis we investigate the characteristics and trends in vertical segregation in the Nordic countries and Japan.

Melkas and Anker (1998) analyzed two sets of data, one based on the complete national occupational classifications and the second based on our common Nordic occupational classification with 187 non-agricultural occupations. The common classification was useful, since it allowed a direct comparison across the three countries, whereas the national classifications had the advantage of providing many more pairs of related relatively higher and lower status occupations.

Three characteristics were used for distinguishing occupations of relatively higher or lower status: education, earnings and relative authority. These are not always consistent

<sup>39</sup> According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1995), status is defined as "rank, social position, relation to others, relative importance, a superior social, etc. position".

---

with each other (e.g., earnings are not always higher in selected occupations with relatively higher status), but differences in the status of the occupational pairings or groups are readily recognizable to lay readers. The pairings and groups of occupations chosen do not indicate higher or lower skill or economic value.

### *Nordic countries 1970-90*

We found that there was a large gap in the feminization in Nordic countries of closely related occupations with relatively higher and lower status (see Melkas and Anker, 1998 for a fuller description). Women were much more likely to be concentrated in a relatively lower status occupation as compared to a matched relatively higher status occupation. Based on a comparison of nine occupational pairs or groups (using common classification), the average gap in 1990 ranged from approximately 27 per cent in Finland to approximately 37 per cent in Norway. However, a clear tendency of a decreasing gap in the feminization of relatively lower as compared to higher status occupations was observed for the 1970-90 period. The decrease was approximately 7-10 percentage points on average, depending on the country.

As to the results by type of occupation, the following was observed.

Engineering is definitely a male occupation in the Nordic countries with a masculinization rate of roughly 90 per cent in 1990. In almost all cases, both the higher and lower status-engineering occupations were similarly masculinized. The little change that did occur between 1970 and 1990 tended to increase the feminization gap between higher and lower status occupations. In summary, in technical occupations there is a great deal of both horizontal and vertical sex segregation: not only do men predominate, but they are also more likely to occupy the higher status and higher paid occupations as compared to women.

Nursing is a major occupational group for Nordic women and very much a female occupation, just as it is for women workers around the world. In the 1970-90 period, men tended to enter slightly faster into the higher status registered nurse occupation as compared to the assistant nurse level. The large gap in the feminization of nurses and doctors in 1970 narrowed fairly rapidly due to women entering the medical profession.<sup>40</sup> Dental assistants and pharmacists were virtually all women, but dentists and pharmacist working-proprietors were not. However, there were large differences between the Nordic countries: in 1990, 29 per cent of Norwegian dentists were women compared to 67 per cent in Finland. In summary, medical occupations are an important source of employment for women but considerable sex segregation exists, although the feminization gap decreased substantially in the 1970-90 period.

Teaching is another major professional occupation for Nordic women and for women around the world, and also an occupation within which there is considerable sex segregation everywhere. In 1990, approximately 96 per cent of pre-primary teachers but only about 30 per cent of university teachers in the Nordic countries were women. This resulted in a feminization gap of approximately 65 per cent between relatively higher and lower status teaching occupations. However, the gap decreased by about 15 percentage points from 1970 to 1990 on average due to the increasing entry of women into university teaching.

Large differences in the feminization of administrative occupations were observed, with the percentage of women much lower in higher administrative occupations. The feminization gap was approximately 30 per cent in 1990 in Norway and, surprisingly, the

<sup>40</sup> In Finland in 1991, as many as 63 per cent of young medical doctors under the age of 30 were women (Tilastokeskus, 1994).

---

gap increased in the 1970-90 period. The feminization of barristers and solicitors as compared to judges presented an unusual case: the percentage of women was higher in the relatively higher status (but lower paid) occupation of judge, increasing the status gap in favour of women.

Service occupations are an area of the labour market in industrialized countries where women are over-represented relative to their share in the labour force. Yet even here, there was an average gap of around 25 per cent in the Nordic countries in the status of women. Shop assistant as compared to shop manager/supervisor provided a good example. The feminization gap, however, decreased by about 10 percentage points on average in 1970-90 in the Nordic countries.

Data for 1995 were available only for Finland (census, 1995) and Norway (labour force survey, 1995). In Norway, since the occupational classification used in 1995 was different from that of 1990, data were not available for all occupational pairs/groups or parts of groups for 1995.<sup>41</sup>

In Finland, women continued to enter higher status occupations, such as chemical engineering (the female percentage rose from 15.6 per cent in 1990 to 20.8 in 1995), mining and metallurgical engineering (from 6.8 to 11.4 per cent), medicine (from 45.0 to 47.9 per cent), university teaching (from 33.9 in 1990 to 36.7 in 1995), and leading posts in public administration (from 17.9 to 22.9 per cent). In almost all occupations with very high feminization rates in lower status occupations, the percentage of women dropped slightly.

In Norway, the percentage of women in the higher status occupation of chief engineer rose from 8.9 per cent in 1990 to 14.3 per cent in 1995. A rise in the proportion of women was also observed for school principals (from 29.3 in 1990 to 36.4 per cent in 1995) and shop managers (from 36.1 to 40.0 per cent). In summary, although changes between 1990 and 1995 were usually small, the 1970-1990 trends continued toward decreasing gaps in the feminization of higher and lower status occupations. However, all the above-mentioned professions - both Finnish and Norwegian - are fairly small in the number of workers included.

### *Japan 1970-95*

For Japan, too, the data reveal that women were more likely than men to be in lower status occupations and men more likely to be in higher status occupations (table 15). Either there were very large differences in the feminization of the groups of related occupations (for example, nurses compared to physicians, and kindergarten teachers compared to college and university professors); or both of the related higher and lower status occupations were similarly masculinized (such as other judicial workers compared to judges, prosecutors and lawyers).

The integration of women into the higher status occupations was slow. For instance, the percentage of women physicians increased by 4.7 percentage points in the 1970-95 period, compared with 20.5 in Finland. As to the highly feminized lower status occupations (such as nurses and kindergarten teachers), the entry of Japanese men into those has been even slower, so female percentage remained very high in 1995. These findings indicate once again how resistant to change gender equity has been in the Japanese labour market. Nevertheless, in two cases (medical and legal), development from 1990 to 1995 was rapid compared to the change in the previous twenty years, but one must be cautious in drawing conclusions. The sample occupations are fewer than for the Nordic countries (Melkas and

<sup>41</sup> The 1995 Norwegian data have much fewer occupations, and occupations with less than 5000 workers were aggregated.

Anker, 1998), providing few possibilities to analyze the results by type of occupation; in addition, no Japanese technical and service occupations are included.

**Table 15. Female participation in related occupations with different status, in Japan, 1970-95**

Occupational group	Percentage of women					Feminization Gap	
	1970	1980	1990	1995	Change 1970-95 (percentage points)	1995	Change 1970-95
1 Nurses	97.6	97.5	96.7	96.5	-1.1	82.3	-5.8
Physicians	9.5	10.7	11.4	14.2	+4.7		
2 Other judicial workers	7.4	10.1	11.9	14.5	+7.1	8.0	+3.0
Judges, prosecutors and lawyers	2.4	3.4	3.5	6.5	+4.1		
3 Kindergarten teachers	94.9	94.6	94.7	93.8	-1.1	74.4	-5.5
Primary school teachers	51.3	56.9	59.1	61.3	+10.0		
Secondary school teachers	27.2	32.9	37.1	40.0	+12.8		
High school teachers	18.6	20.5	23.8	27.2	+8.6		
Professors; college and university	15.0	15.9	19.4	19.4	+4.4		
4 Stenographers and typists	96.9	96.4	93.3	90.3	-6.6	76.5	-11.9
General clerical workers	45.2	49.6	56.0	58.7	+13.5		
Directors of companies	8.5	12.0	12.6	13.8	+5.3		
5 Clerical workers in post and communication	20.7	26.5	36.1	40.5	+19.8	26.4 (1990)	+7.4
Managers and administrators of station, post and telegram, etc.	1.7	5.3	9.7	n.a.	+8.0 (1970-90)		
6 Deckhands	1.7	1.1	0.9	1.4	-0.3	0.9	-0.3
Ship captains, navigators and pilots (except fishing boat)	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.5	0.0		

Notes: For a description of the basis for the selection of occupational groups, see the text above and Melkas and Anker (1998). n.a. indicates not available.

Feminization Gap is calculated as differences between per cent of women in higher and lower status occupation.

Source: Authors' calculations for 1995; data for 1970-90: Soyama (1998).

## 5. Summary and conclusions

### 5.1 Summary

Countries in all regions of the world have high levels of gender inequality in their labour markets. This is just as true for the Nordic countries (which are often held up as the “gold standard” for other countries to emulate) as it is for Japan (which is often referred to as an example of a country with a low level of gender equity in the labour market).

Whereas in the last one-quarter century there has been virtually no change in Japan, there has been a remarkable improvement in gender equity in the Nordic countries.

---

Nordic countries treat taxation and social protection as based on individual rights and treatment of all citizens in their individual capacities rather than as members of families; assume that families do not depend mainly on a main (usually male) breadwinner; and commit themselves to enabling all persons, male and female, to participate in the labour market by providing child care and other facilities as well as a favourable family friendly policy environment. The Japanese state, in contrast, fits within a more traditional model which: assumes a main (usually male) breadwinner in each family; often considers social benefits and taxation based on individuals being part of a family; and provides relatively little state support for working women either directly through provision of services or facilities or indirectly through family-friendly laws. However, the changing policy and legal atmosphere in Japan has led to recent legislative changes favouring gender equality, although it remains to be seen how affective this will be.

While women comprise approximately one-half of all workers in the Nordic countries, this percentage is around 40 percent in Japan, since many Japanese women withdraw from the labour force (often temporarily) after marriage and child bearing. Pay differentials are among the smallest in the industrialized world in the Nordic countries, whereas in Japan they are among the highest; and sex differentials in education are high in both the Nordic countries and Japan in terms of the types of subjects men and women choose. Surprisingly, the level of occupational segregation by sex, as measured by an inequality index, is found to be somewhat higher in Nordic countries than in Japan and most other OECD countries. On the other hand, segregation decreased rapidly in the Nordic countries in the past 25 years, whereas in Japan it remained unchanged.

The main reason that occupational segregation is relatively high in the Nordic countries is because a very high percentage of the female non-agricultural labour force works in “female” occupations. For instance in 1990, approximately 50 per cent of Nordic working women were in occupations where at least 80 per cent of workers were women, a much higher percentage than in other industrialized countries. The percentage for Japan (less than 20 per cent) is much lower than in the Nordic countries, and even lower than the average values for non-Nordic OECD countries; in addition, there is virtually no change in Japan since 1970 in the percentage of women working in female-dominated occupations or in the number of such occupations.

The most feminized and masculinized occupations in both Japan and the Nordic countries correspond to sex stereotyped characteristics of men and women, such as caring, manual and finger dexterity, and skills related to household work for women. For example, nurses, housekeepers, child-care workers, other domestic service workers and telephone operators are almost all women in all four countries. The changes between 1970 and 1995 were small. This analysis shows that there is a high degree of gender stereotyping in both the Japanese and the Nordic labour markets that is very consistent with gender stereotypes in society at large in the types of abilities and characteristics that are typically attributed to women - and men.

Evidence presented in this paper indicates that in the Nordic countries, part of typical household-type work (for example, care of children and elderly people and house cleaning) is often purchased in the labour market, and that the monetization of household work is a major aspect of Nordic life. In Japan, monetization of household work is low in comparison to the Nordic countries and non-Nordic OECD countries. Household-type work is not widely established as paid activity, because the Japanese society expects women to do this as part of their unpaid responsibilities, even if they have a job outside the home.

An analysis of vertical segregation shows that women were much more likely to be concentrated in relatively lower status occupations in all four study countries. However, in the Nordic countries, the feminization gap between relatively higher and lower status occupations decreased during the 1970-90 period by approximately 7-10 percentage points

---

on average. In the 1990s, Nordic women were increasingly entering higher status occupations, such as engineers, physicians and university teachers. In Japan, in contrast, the integration of women into the higher status occupations has been slow between 1970 to 1995.

The experience of the Nordic countries illustrates clearly that the level of occupational segregation by sex is not necessarily indicative of gender inequality in pay and society. In the Nordic countries, a high level of occupational segregation is combined with a relatively high level of overall gender equality in the society. In Japan, on the other hand, a lower level of occupational sex segregation, as measured, is combined with a relatively low level of overall gender equality.

## 5.2 Concluding comments

Women around the world face similar problems in the world of work: lower and often unstable status in the labour market, occupational segregation and fewer job opportunities, lower pay and the double burden of household work, to mention a few. This is true in the Nordic countries as well as in Japan. Jobs and hierarchical structures are still gendered, and these correspond to typical socialization patterns in the Nordic countries as well as in Japan. Visible and invisible socialization into gender roles begins right after birth with amazing efficacy, and it is often too late to alter traditional occupational sex segregation by the time a high school student is choosing her or his future occupation or subject area in university.

The status of women in the labour market is tied to history and culture in all countries, and so changing the society in this regard is a difficult and time-consuming process. This means that the commitment to gender equality must be strong and consistent, including a clear view of why gender equality is, or is not, felt to be relevant by the public and what kinds of gender equity policies are possible. Without clear aims and public support from men as well as women, sustainable results are difficult to achieve.

Measures for increasing equal opportunities for women fall into five groups (Melkas and Anker, 1998; Anker, 1998). All five are required to help bring about gender equity.

First, awareness raising and dissemination of information on gender equality issues to the general public, government officials, company representatives and other groups are essential. In Japan, for example, changes in attitudes concerning women and their roles in the family and as workers are needed. In the Nordic countries, awareness raising on, for example, the early socialization to gender roles and on fathers' further increased participation in child-care and household responsibilities is important.

Second, *real* support for family responsibilities (which women overwhelmingly bear) is key to women's improved position in society and the labour market. This includes development of policies enabling effective reconciliation of work and family life in the context of changing labour markets, and more equally shared household and family responsibilities between women and men. Even when general opinion is in favour of gender equality, and both women and men are in favour of equal sharing of household and family responsibilities, this rarely translates into real equality within families. Solemn promises and expressions of concern by decision-makers are not enough; they need to be put into practice. In addition, employers' support for fathers' increased responsibility in the family is essential, and in this regard, much remains to be done in all countries.

Third, women need to acquire similar levels of human capital as men if they are to compete effectively in the labour market. This means that gender equality in schools and universities as well as in training needs to be improved. Especially in Japan, sex discrimination in schools must be combated, and women's participation in all subjects in

---

school (especially technical and scientific fields) and in four-year universities needs to be improved. In all countries, girls should be prepared for professional careers and encouraged to have challenging goals for their future. The atmosphere in schools needs to be egalitarian, emphasizing individual strengths instead of trying to find differences in girls' and boys' abilities. Gender perspectives need to be integrated into the training and education of new teachers. Boys should also be encouraged to become involved in caring work.

Fourth, analysis and assessment are of crucial importance. Continuous mapping of the equality situation in society (for instance, pay differentials, occupational segregation, career development, education, and implementation of legislation and regulations on gender equality) is essential to provide a sound basis for policy design. An example of this is the comprehensive gender barometer that was carried out in Finland in 1998. It was the first in what is to become a series to monitor the implementation of gender equality. Analysis and increased visibility of the consequences of government policies on women and men alike are essential. Gender impact assessment of new legislation is a good example of such analysis. Research on family life, the welfare state, power and democracy, reasons for the persistence of sex inequalities as well as on the impact of increasing job insecurity and atypical work are needed as well. It helps when research agendas and policy design have a close relationship, as is the case in the Nordic countries.

In the context of gender-based occupational segregation, future research needs to include:

- ✍ establishing matching and comparable wages and employment data for detailed occupational classifications and possibly for detailed industrial classifications;
- ✍ identifying and analysing occupations where there are major changes in women entering "male" occupations or men entering "female" occupations (reasons why, impact on wages, flexibility, etc. of occupation);
- ✍ analyzing the relationship between feminization of occupations and wage rates in occupations;
- ✍ analyzing the relationship between "value" of work in an occupation and feminization of an occupation; and
- ✍ analyzing comparable and detailed occupational data over time by age group, to observe changes for workers of different ages in occupational sex segregation and entry of younger men and women into non-traditional occupations.

Fifth, other strategies for improving the female labour market situation include encouragement of women in higher level positions - for instance through mentoring, support for women's entrepreneurship (training, financial support, etc.), and support for women's and men's entry into non-traditional occupations. Carefully tailored and catchy training on gender equality issues in workplaces, for instance in connection with equality planning at the enterprise level, can also be useful. In Japan, it is important that corporations change their strong gender bias, such as the streaming of workers into managerial and non-managerial tracks.

Many of the measures mentioned above have been pursued, particularly in the Nordic countries but also in Japan. Yet women's and men's capacity and potential are not used to the fullest anywhere, nor are real equal opportunities provided anywhere. In particular, there needs to be stronger political commitment to increasing fathers' participation in the home. This includes the use of parental and care-leave and related schemes by fathers. Governments and decision-makers need to take a clearly guiding and responsible role in gender equality matters and not blindly follow public opinion, since the risks of non-

---

traditional choices may seem large for individual families and employees, and the gains for employers may appear too obscure and distant in the future.

The disadvantaged labour market position of women around the world together with the two quite different paths toward gender equity in the labour market which this paper has documented for the Nordic countries (rapid improvement) and Japan (stagnation and lack of change) show quite clearly that more needs to be done everywhere to improve gender equity, and that there can be no excuse for lack of progress, as in Japan.



---

## References

- Anker, R. 1998. *Gender and Jobs: Sex Segregation of occupations in the World* (Geneva, International Labour Organization).
- Anker, R. 1997. "Theories of Occupational Segregation by Sex: An Overview", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. 136, No.3.
- Anttalainen, M-L. 1986. *Sukupuolen mukaan kahtiajakautuneet työmarkkinat Pohjoismaissa* (Gender-based labour market segmentation in the Nordic countries; in Finnish). Naistutkimusmonisteita 1:1986. Helsinki, Tasa-arvoasiain neuvottelukunta (Council for Equality between Men and Women).
- "Arvioinnilla parempia lakeja" and "Uusi työsuhdelaki ei estä työsuhteiden ketjuttamista", in *Helsingin Sanomat*, 21 December 2000.
- Barbezat, D. 1993. *Occupational Segmentation by Sex in the World. Equality for Women in Employment* (Geneva, ILO), Interdepartmental Project Working Paper No. 13. December.
- Bettio, F. et al. 1996. *Gender, Flexibility and New Employment Relations*. Paper presented at the ILO/European Commission Seminar on Women and Work in Europe, Turin, 18-19 April.
- Blau, F. and Kahn, L. 1992. *The gender earnings gap: Some international evidence*. (Cambridge (Massachusetts), National Bureau of Economic Research), Working Paper No. 4224, December.
- Blau, F. D. and Kahn, L. M. 2000. *Gender Differences in Pay*. NBER Working Paper Series, Working Paper No. 7732, ? Blau and Kahn. Cambridge, MA, National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Borchorst, A. 1990. "Political Motherhood and Child Care Policies: A Comparative Approach to Britain and Scandinavia", in Ungerson, C. (ed.) *Gender and Caring: Work and Welfare in Britain and Scandinavia* (New York, Harvester-Wheatsheaf).
- Bryt, A. 1989. *Yhteispohjoismainen BRYT-projekti tiedotta* (Helsinki, The Nordic Council of Ministers), No. 9, November.
- The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*. 1995. 9<sup>th</sup> edition.(Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press).
- Council for Equality. 1999. *Gender Equality and Employment Policy*. Background document for the (EU) Ministerial Conference on Equal Opportunities and Employment Policies, Helsinki, Finland, 29 September ? 1 October 1999 (Helsinki, The Council for Equality).
- Council for Equality. 2000. *The Council for Equality: A Pioneer of Equality, 1972-1997*. Publications of Equality 2000:1 (Helsinki, The Council for Equality/ The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health).
- Council for Equality. 2001. Internet website (<http://www.tasa-arvo.fi>). Helsinki, The Council for Equality.

- 
- Dale, J. and Foster, P. 1986. *Feminists and State Welfare* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).
- Duncan, S. 1995. "Theorizing European Gender Systems", in *Journal of European Social Policy*, Vol. 5, No. 4.
- Duncan, S. 1996. "The Diverse Worlds of European Patriarchy", in García-Ramon, Dolors, M and Monk, J. (eds.) *Women of the European Union: The Politics of Work and Daily Life* (London and New York, Routledge (International Studies of Women and Place)).
- Ellingsæter, A.L. 1998. "Dual Breadwinner Societies: Provider Models in the Scandinavian Welfare States", in *Acta Sociologica*, Vol. 41, No. 1, pp. 59-73.
- Employment Status Survey. 1997. Statistics Bureau, Management and Coordination Agency (Japan).
- Esping-Andersen, G. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Cambridge, United Kingdom, Polity Press).
- European Commission. 1997. *Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the European Union 1996* (Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities), Annual Report.
- EUROSTAT. 1995. *Women and Men in the European Union: A Statistical Portrait* (Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities).
- Gonäs, L. and Lehto, A. 1999a. "Overview of Literature ? Scandinavian Languages Area", in *European Commission: Women and Work: Report on Existing Research in the European Union* (Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities).
- Gonäs, L. and Lehto, A. 1999b. "Segregation of the Labour Market", in *European Commission: Women and Work: Report on Existing Research in the European Union* (Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities).
- Gonäs, L. and Spånt, A. 1997. *Trends and Prospects for Women's Employment in the 1990s*. (Submitted to the European Commission Network of Experts on the Situation of Women in the Labour Market). *Arbete och hälsa* 1997:4. Solna (Sweden), National Institute for Working Life.
- Gunderson, M. 1994. *Comparable Worth and Gender Discrimination: An International Perspective* (Geneva, International Labour Office).
- Haataja, A. and Nurmi, K. 2000. *Työnjako 1990-luvulla: Naiset työelämässä – ja sen ulkopuolella*. Tasa-arvon työraportteja 2000:3 (Helsinki, The Council for Equality /The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health).
- Hakim, C. 1979. *Occupational Segregation: A Comparative Study of the Degree and Pattern of the Differentiation Between Men and Women's Work in Britain, the United States and Other Countries* (London, Department of Employment), Research paper No.9.
- Harding, S. 1986. *The Science Question in Feminism* (Milton Keynes, Open University Press).

- 
- International Labour Office (ILO). 1968. *International Standard Classification of Occupations: ISCO-68* (Geneva, ILO).
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1997. *Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management*. Report for Discussion at the Tripartite Meeting on Breaking through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management (Geneva, ILO).
- Julkunen, R. 1988. *Miten naiset saavat naisten työt*. Työn taloustieteen feministinen kritiikki ja vaihtoehto. Eripainos, Sosiaalipolitiikka 1988. Vammala (Finland), Vammalan Kirjapaino Oy.
- Julkunen, R. 1992. *Hyvinvointivaltio käännekohdassa* (Tampere, Vastapaino).
- Kailo, K. 2000. Interview statement, Finnish national radio (YLE) news, 18 December 2000, 7 am. (Professor, University of Oulu, Finland).
- Kameda, A. 1995. "Sexism and Gender Stereotyping in Schools", in Fujimura-Fanselow, K. and Kameda, A. (eds.) *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York, The Feminist Press at The City University of New York).
- Kandolin, I. 1991. "Naisten ja miesten palkkaerot ja palkkatyytyväisyys", in *Työ ja ihminen*, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 258-274.
- Kandolin, I. 1993. "Women's Labour Force Participation and Sex Segregation in Working Life", in Kauppinen-Toropainen, K. (ed.) *OECD Panel Group on Women, Work and Health; National Report: Finland* (Helsinki, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health/Institute of Occupational Health).
- Kaneko, S. 1995. "The Struggle for Legal Rights and Reforms: A Historical View", in Fujimura-Fanselow, K. and Kameda, A. (eds.) *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York, The Feminist Press at The City University of New York).
- Karvonen, L. and Selle, P. (eds.). 1995. *Women in Nordic Politics: Closing the Gap* (Aldershot, UK, Dartmouth Publishing Company Ltd.).
- Kauppinen, K. et al. 1989. "Who Benefits from Working in Non-Traditional Work Roles: Interaction Patterns and Quality of Work Life", in *Acta Sociologica*, Vol. 32, No. 4, pp. 389-403.
- Kauppinen, K. and Veikkola, H-K. 1997. *Tasa-arvoistuvat työyhteisöt* (Helsinki, Työterveyslaitos and Työsuojeluhallinto).
- Kauppinen, T. (ed.). 2000. *Työ ja terveys Suomessa 2000* (Helsinki, Työterveyslaitos).
- Kauppinen-Toropainen, K. 1991. "Miehet naisvaltaisissa ja naiset miesvaltaisissa ammateissa: ainokaisaseman analyysi", in *Työ ja ihminen*, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 218-238.
- Kauppinen-Toropainen, K. 1993. "Introduction", in Kauppinen-Toropainen, Kaisa (ed.): *OECD Panel Group on Women, Work and Health; National Report: Finland* (Helsinki, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health/Institute of Occupational Health).
- Kauppinen-Toropainen, K. et al. 1986. "Töiden jakautuminen sukupuolen mukaan ja naisten työn laatu", in *Työterveyslaitoksen tutkimuksia*, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 209-222.

- 
- Kawashima, Y. 1995. "Female Workers: An Overview of Past and Current Trends", in Fujimura-Fanselow, K. and Kameda, A. (eds.) *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York, The Feminist Press at The City University of New York).
- Kaya, E. 1995. "Mitsui Mariko: An Avowed Feminist Assemblywoman", in Fujimura-Fanselow, K. and Kameda, A. (eds.) *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York, The Feminist Press at The City University of New York).
- Kempe, J (ed.). 2000. *Miesnäkökulmia tasa-arvoon*. Tasa-arvojulkaisuja 2000:5 (Helsinki, The Council for Equality /The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health).
- Kinjo, K. 1995. "Legal Challenges to the Status Quo", in Fujimura-Fanselow, K. and Kameda, A. (eds.) *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York, The Feminist Press at The City University of New York).
- Kofman, E. and Sales, R. 1996. "The Geography of Gender and Welfare in Europe", in García-Ramon et al. (eds.) *Women of the European Union: The Politics of Work and Daily Life* (London and New York, Routledge (International Studies of Women and Place)).
- Kolehmainen, S. 1999. *Naisten ja miesten työt: Työmarkkinoiden segregoituminen Suomessa 1970-1990* (Helsinki, Statistics Finland), Research Reports 227.
- Koskiaho, B. 1995. "Japanese Women in their Society", in Koskiaho, B. (ed.) *Women, the Elderly and Social Policy in Finland and Japan: The Muse or the Worker Bee?* (Aldershot, UK, Avebury).
- Kuusipalo, J. 1999. "Finnish Women in Politics", in *Women in Finland* (Helsinki, Otava Publishing Co. Ltd.).
- Labour Force Survey, Norway. 1995.
- Lammi, J. 1992. *Miehet naisvaltaisissa ammateissa: Katsaus länsimaiseen julkaisuihin vuosilta 1973-1991* Tasa-arvojulkaisuja, Sarja C: Työraportteja, 7/1992. (Helsinki, Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö).
- Langan, M. and Ostner, I. 1991. "Gender and welfare", in Room, Graham (ed.): *Towards a European welfare state?* Bristol, School of Advanced Urban Studies Publications (University of Bristol).
- Lehto, A-M. 1991. *Työelämän laatu ja tasa-arvo: Naisten ja miesten työolojen muutoksia 1977-1990* (Quality of working life and equality: Changes in working conditions of women and men, 1977-1990; in Finnish). Työolokomitean mietinnön 1991:39 liiteselvitys; Tilastokeskus, Tutkimuksia 189. Helsinki, Työministeriö /Tilastokeskus (Ministry of Labour /Statistics Finland).
- Lehto, A-M. 1999. "Women in Working Life in Finland", in *Women in Finland* (Helsinki, Otava Publishing Co. Ltd.).
- Lewis, J. 1992. "Gender and the Development of Welfare Regimes", in *Journal of European Social Policy* (Harlow), Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 159-173.

---

Liebfried, S. 1991. "Towards a European Welfare State? – On integrating poverty regimes in the EC", in Room, G. (ed.) *European Developments in Social Policy* (Bristol, Bristol University Press).

Major Issues of Administration for Women. 1999 ( Japan, Publisher unknown).

Melkas, H. and Anker, R. 1997. "Occupational Segregation by Sex in Nordic Countries: An Empirical Investigation", in *International Labour Review* (Geneva), Vol. 136, No. 3 (Autumn), pp. 341-363.

Melkas, H. and Anker, R. 1998. *Gender Equality and Occupational Segregation in Nordic Labour Markets* (Geneva, ILO).

Minister Eva Biaudet. 1999. National Address at the European Union's Ministerial Conference on Equality for Women and Men in Employment Policies, 30 September – 1 October 1999, Helsinki, Finland.

Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture. 2000. *School Basic Survey* (Japan, Prime Minister's Office).

Ministry of Labour. 2000. *Basic Survey on Wage Structure 1998* (Japan, Prime Minister's Office).

Ministry of Labour. 2000. *Finland's National Action Plan for Employment for 2000* (Helsinki, Ministry of Labour).

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. 1999. *Isätoimikunnan mietintö*. Komiteamietintö 1999:1 (Committee on Fatherhood - In Search of a New Kind of Fatherhood; See <http://www.vn.fi/stm/english/> (Helsinki, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health).

Nordic Council of Ministers. 1994. *Women and Men in the Nordic Countries: Facts and Figures 1994* (Copenhagen, Nordic Council of Ministers), Nord 1994:3.

Nordic Council of Ministers. 1998a. *Men and Gender Equality: New Challenges*. (Copenhagen, The Nordic Council of Ministers), TemaNord 1998, p.588.

Nordic Council of Ministers. 1998b. *Men on Parental Leave: How Men Use Parental Leave in the Nordic Countries* (Copenhagen, The Nordic Council of Ministers), TemaNord 1998, p.569.

Nordic Council of Ministers. 1999. *Equal Democracies? Gender and Politics in the Nordic Countries* (Copenhagen, The Nordic Council of Ministers), DIVS, p.838.

Nurmi, K. 1999. *Sukupuolet EU:n työmarkkinoilla*. Tasa-arvojulkaisuja 1999:2.(Helsinki, Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö).

Nätti, J. 1994. *A Nordic Model of Women's Employment*. Paper presented at the 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the International Working Party on Labour Market Segmentation, Strasbourg, 15-19 July.

Calculated by Office for Gender Equality, Prime Minister's Office, May 2000, based on data from Basic Survey on Wage Structure, Ministry of Labour.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). 1995a. *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators* (Paris, OECD).

- 
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1995b. "Income Distribution in OECD Countries", in *Social Policy Studies* (Paris, OECD), No. 18.
- Office for Gender Equality. 2000a. *The Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society* (Tokyo, Office for Gender Equality).
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000b. *Steps Towards Gender Equality in Japan* (Tokyo, Office for Gender Equality).
- Ohinata, M. 1995. "The Mystique of Motherhood: A Key to Understanding Social Change and Family Problems in Japan", in Fujimura-Fanselow, K. and Kameda, A. (eds.) *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York, The Feminist Press at The City University of New York).
- Osawa, M. 1995. "The Changing Women's Employment and the Role of Social Policies in Japan", in Koskiaho, B. (ed.) *Women, the Elderly and Social Policy in Finland and Japan: The Muse or the Worker Bee?* (Aldershot, UK, Avebury).
- Plantenga, J. and Rubery, J. 1999. "Introduction and Summary of Main Results", in *European Commission: Women and Work: Report on Existing Research in the European Union* (Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities).
- Prime Minister's Office. 2000. *Fiscal Year 1999 Annual Report on the State of the Formation of a Gender Equal Society: Policies to be Implemented in Fiscal Year 2000 to Promote the Formation of a Gender Equal Society* (Tokyo, Prime Minister's Office).
- Rantalaiho, L. and Heiskanen, T. 1997. *Gendered Practices in Working Life* (London, Macmillan Press).
- Richardson, J. and Riethmuller, P. 1996. "Women in Japan", in Roy, K. C. et al. (eds.) *Economic Development and Women in the World Community* (Westport, CT, Praeger Publishers).
- Roy, K. C. et al. (eds.). 1996. *Economic Development and Women in the World Community* (Westport, CT, Praeger Publishers).
- The Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 1994. *Gender Equality in Norway: The National Report to the Fourth UN Conference on Women in Beijing 1995* (Oslo, The Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs and The Royal Ministry of Children and Family Affairs).
- Rubery, J. 1999. "Overview and Comparative Studies", in *European Commission: Women and Work: Report on Existing Research in the European Union* (Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities).
- Rubery, J. and Smith, M. 1996. *Factors Influencing the Integration of Women into the Economy*. Paper presented at the ILO/European Commission Seminar on Women and Work in Europe, Turin, 18-19 April.
- Rubery, J. et al. 1998. "Women and European Employment", in *Routledge Frontiers of Political Economy 16* (London and New York, Routledge).
- Räsänen, L. 1996. "Sukupuolijakojen purkaminen", in Kinnunen, M. and Korvajärvi, P. (eds.) *Työelämän sukupuolistavat käytännöt* (Tampere, Vastapaino).

- 
- Sainsbury, D. 1994. "Introduction", in Sainsbury, D. (ed.) *Gendering Welfare States*. SAGE Modern Politics Series Volume 35 (London, SAGE Publications Ltd.).
- Sato, Y. 1995. "From the Home to the Political Arena", in Fujimura-Fanselow, K. and Kameda, A. (eds.) *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York, The Feminist Press at The City University of New York).
- Sasakura, N. 1995. "Aokage Takako: Housewife Turned Political Representative from Seikatsu Club Seikyo", in Fujimura-Fanselow, K. and Kameda, A. (eds.) *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York, The Feminist Press at The City University of New York).
- Siaroff, A. 1994. "Work, Welfare and Gender Equality: A New Typology", in Sainsbury, D. (ed.) *Gendering Welfare States* (London, SAGE Publications Ltd.), SAGE Modern Politics Series Volume 35.
- Siltanen, J. et al. 1995. *Gender Inequality in the Labour Market: Occupational Concentration and Segregation. A Manual on Methodology* (Geneva, ILO).
- Sosiaalibarometri (Social Barometer; in Finnish). 1997. Helsinki, Sosiaaliturvan Keskusliitto (Central Organization of Social Security).
- SOU. 1998. *Ty makten är din ... Myten om det rationella arbetslivet och det jämställda Sverige* (As the power is yours ... The myth of the rational working life and the equal Sweden; in Swedish). Betänkande från Kvinnomaktutredningen (Report from the Study on Women and Power). Statens offentliga utredningar (State Official Studies) 1998:6. Stockholm, Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet (Ministry of Labour).
- Soyama, E. 1998. *Gender Equality in the Japanese Labour Market* (Geneva, ILO), Unpublished manuscript.
- Swedish National Institute of Occupational Health. 1995. *Women's work and health* (English edition of *Forskning & Praktik* 4/1994). Solna, National Institute of Occupational Health.
- Tanaka, K. 1995. "Work, Education and the Family", in Fujimura-Fanselow, K. and Kameda, A. (eds.) *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York, The Feminist Press at The City University of New York).
- Taylor-Gooby, P. 1991. "Welfare State Regimes and Welfare Citizenship", in *Journal of European Social Policy*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 93-106.
- Tilastokeskus (Statistics Finland). 1994. *Naiset huipulla: Selvitys naisista elinkeinoelämän johtotehtävissä* (also available in English; Women at the top: A study on women as leaders in the private sector, Studies No. 211). Tutkimuksia 206. Helsinki, Tilastokeskus (Statistics Finland).
- Työministeriö. 1997. *Naisten työllisyystyöryhmän raportti* (Helsinki, Työministeriö), Työhallinnon julkaisu nro 168.
- Udsen, S. 1993. "Naisten työstä naisten palkkaa – miesten työstä miesten palkkaa", in *Nordic Council of Ministers: Naisten palkat – totta vai tarua?* (Copenhagen, Nordic Council of Ministers), p. 17.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2000. *Human Development Report 2000* (New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press).

- 
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. 1995. *Women in the ECE Region: A Call for Action* (New York and Geneva, United Nations).
- Uusitalo, H. 1989. *Income Distribution in Finland: The Effects of the Welfare State and the Structural Changes in Society on Income Distribution in Finland, 1966-1985* (Helsinki, Statistics Finland), Studies No. 148.
- Walby, S. 1990. *Theorizing Patriarchy* (Oxford (UK) and Cambridge (USA), Blackwell).
- Women 2000*. 1999. Japan NGO Alternative Report (Tokyo, Japan NGO Report Preparatory Committee).
- Women in Finland*. 1999. (Helsinki, Otava Publishing Co. Ltd.).
- Wootton, B. H. 1997. "Gender Differences in Occupational Employment", in *Monthly Labour Review*, April 1997, pp. 15-24.
- Yoshizumi, K. 1995. "Marriage and Family: Past and Present", in Fujimura-Fanselow, K. and Kameda, A. (eds.) *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York, The Feminist Press at The City University of New York).

---

## Annexures

### Annex 1. Useful websites as of January 2003

#### Japan

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare: <http://www.mhlw.go.jp>  
The Japan Institute of Labour: <http://www.jil.go.jp>  
Gender Information Site of Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office:  
<http://www.cao.go.jp/index-e.html>  
The Center for the Advancement of Working Women: <http://www.miraikan.go.jp>  
National Women's Education Center, Japan: <http://www.nwec.go.jp/index.html>  
Japan Institute of Workers' Evolution: <http://www.jiwe.or.jp>  
Osaka Prefectural Women's Center: <http://www.dawncenter.or.jp>

#### Finland

Office for the Ombudsman for Equality, Finland:  
<http://www.tasa-arvo.fi/www-eng/index.html>  
Finnish Act on Equality between Women and Men:  
<http://www.tasa-arvo.fi/www-eng/legislation/legis2.html>  
Statistics Finland: <http://www.stat.fi>  
Ministry of Labour, Finland: <http://www.mol.fi>  
Finnish Institute of Occupational Health: <http://www.occuphealth.fi>

#### Norway

The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, Norway:  
<http://www.dep.no/bfd/engelsk/index-b-n-a.html>  
Statistics Norway: <http://www.ssb.no>  
Nordic Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Research, Norway:  
<http://www.nikk.uio.no>

#### Sweden

The Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, Sweden (mainly in Swedish):  
<http://www.jamombud.se>  
Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, Sweden:  
<http://naring.regeringen.se/inenglish/index.htm>  
Statistics Sweden: <http://www.scb.se>  
The National Institute for Working Life, Sweden: <http://www.niwl.se>

#### Other

The Nordic Council of Ministers: <http://www.norden.org>  
The European Union – Equality between women and men: <http://europa.eu.int>  
European Employment Observatory: <http://www.ecotec.com/eoo/>

---

## Annex 2. Finnish Family Policy

Excerpt from: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. *Finnish Family Policy*, Brochures no. 1999:9. Helsinki, Finland. (May be found on: <http://www.vn.fi/stm/english/publications/>.)

### 1. Direct financial support for families in Finland

#### 1.1 Maternity grant

Every expectant mother resident in Finland whose pregnancy has lasted for at least 154 days is entitled to a government maternity grant. The mother is required to have a health check at a prenatal clinic or doctor's surgery before the end of the fourth month of pregnancy.

An expectant mother can choose to receive the maternity grant either in the form of a sum of money or as a maternity pack (containing child care items). In 1999 the maternity grant was 128 € (FIM 760).<sup>42</sup> The maternity pack contains the clothing and other things needed for the care of a new-born child including a baby's sleeping bag which zips open into a blanket, overalls and other important items of clothing, as well as a picture-book and a toy. 76 per cent of all mothers choose the pack; the percentage is even higher among those expecting their first child.

#### 1.2 Child allowance

Child allowance is the main means of evening out the expenses of families with children and families without children. It is paid from State funds for the support of every child under 17 years of age resident in Finland. Child allowance is exempt from tax and the family's financial standing does not influence it. The amount of child allowance depends on the number of children in the family (see table). Child allowance is estimated to cover about half of the cost of a child.

##### Amount of child allowance, Finland, 1999

No. of children	€	FIM per month
1st child	90	535
2nd child	110	657
3rd child	131	779
4th child	151	901
5th and further children	172	1 023

Single parents receive an increase of 33 € (FIM 200) for every child.

#### 1.3 Maintenance allowance

The purpose is to ensure maintenance for the child in certain cases where children under 18 years of age living in Finland do not receive adequate maintenance from their parents. The full amount of maintenance allowance in 1999 was 107 € (FIM 637) a month per child and per parent with a maintenance obligation.

<sup>42</sup> In early February 2001, 1 US\$ was about 6.6 FIM; one € was about .93 US cents; and 1 US\$ was about 115 Japanese Yen.

---

A child is entitled to maintenance allowance if one parent resident elsewhere has neglected to pay the child maintenance that the parent has undertaken to pay by agreement or has been ordered by a court of law to pay. The municipality is responsible for collecting unpaid maintenance payments from the liable parent.

If the maintenance payments have been set at a lower sum than the maintenance allowance, the child is entitled to receive the difference between full maintenance and the maintenance payments set in the form of maintenance allowance. A child born out of wedlock where paternity has not been established is also entitled to maintenance allowance, as is a child adopted by one adoptive parent alone.

#### 1.4 Housing support

Housing support helps families acquire accommodation of adequate size at a reasonable price and ensure reasonable housing standards. Forms of housing support available to families with children are housing allowance, government-subsidized housing loans and other interest subsidy and tax relief for housing loans.

Housing allowance is a way of using government funds to even out the housing costs of people with low income by paying part of their reasonable housing expenses. The amount of housing allowance depends on the size of the family, its income, housing expenses and the size and age of the dwelling.

#### 1.5 Income support

The municipality may pay income support if the family has no income or if its income is insufficient to cover necessary everyday expenses. Income support is granted on the basis of the difference between eligible expenses, on the one hand, and income and assets on the other. The amount of income support is defined in such a way as to cover basic necessities for the recipient.

#### 1.6 Taxation

Finland changed over from family-based taxation to individual taxation in 1976. Even after that, some family-taxation features remained. In 1994, family benefit tax deductions were removed altogether, except the deduction for maintenance liability, while the child allowance was increased instead. The change to individual taxation and the removal of family benefit deductions have made taxation simpler and clearer. In Finland, the shift to individual taxation caused an increase in the number of married women who choose to work.

### 2. Support for the day care of small children

The day care system for small children has been developed with the aim of offering families a number of different options, allowing them to choose what suits their individual needs best. Women's active participation in working life has favoured the development of legislation on care for small children and on parents' job security. The principle adopted in planning parental leave systems has been that both parents should have equal opportunities to care for their children.

#### 2.1 Parental leave and parental allowances

On the grounds of pregnancy, childbirth or child care, the mother and father can take maternity leave, paternity leave or parental leave, receiving maternity allowance, paternity allowance or parental allowance, respectively. The maternity allowance and parental allowance are paid for a total of 263 working days. The father is further eligible for paternity allowance.

---

The maternity allowance period that precedes birth safeguards the health of the mother and the unborn child by enabling the mother to be off work for some time before the birth. The maternity allowance period following the birth allows the mother to recuperate from giving birth and to care for the new-born. The parental allowance period allows the family to choose whether they want the mother or the father to stay at home to care for the child. The paternity allowance allows the father to participate in caring for the child and supports bonding between father and child.

## 2.2 Maternity leave and maternity allowance

An expectant mother can start her maternity leave at the earliest 50 working days and at the latest 30 days before the calculated time of the birth. Maternity leave is 105 weekdays. For that period, the mother receives maternity allowance, which is earnings-related, with a minimum sum of 10 €(FIM 60) a day.

An expectant mother in a dangerous job may receive special maternity leave and special maternity allowance unless her employer can assign her to a different task. If necessary, special maternity leave can cover the entire pregnancy. Dangerous jobs are, for instance, occupations where there is a danger of being exposed to chemicals or radiation.

## 2.3 Paternity leave and paternity allowance

The father may take 6 - 12 weekdays of paternity leave at the birth of the child while the mother is on maternity leave. He receives paternity allowance for this period. The father may also take an additional six weekdays of paternity leave during the period of entitlement to maternity or parental allowance. The amount of paternity allowance is earnings-related, with a minimum sum of 10 €(FIM 60) a day.

Paternity leave is becoming increasingly popular. In 1997, nearly 60 per cent of fathers exercised their right to paternity leave.

## 2.4 Parental leave and parental allowance

After the maternity leave, either parent may take parental leave. Parental leave is 158 weekdays, and is extended by 60 weekdays per child in the case of multiple births. Like maternity and paternity allowance, parental allowance is earnings-related, with a minimum sum of 10 €(FIM 60) a day.

In 1997, less than two per cent of fathers took parental leave.

After the parental leave period, families have a choice of three different child care alternatives supported by public funding until the child goes to school at the age of 7:

- ☞ caring for the child at home on care leave and receiving child home care allowance;
- ☞ having the child cared for at a private day care centre with private child-care allowance (see below);
- ☞ having the child cared for in municipal day care.

## 2.5 Care leave and child home care allowance

The parents of a small child have the right to take unpaid care leave from their work until the child is three years old. Either parent may take the leave, but both parents cannot take care leave at the same time. When care leave ends, the parents have the right to return to their former jobs or a comparable job.

---

Care leave is unpaid, but the family can receive child home care allowance from the municipality for the duration of the leave. The allowance is available to a family with a child under three years of age who is not in municipal day care. Child home care allowance is also paid for other children in the same family who are under school age and not in municipal day care.

The child home care allowance can be granted immediately after the parental allowance period ends and can be paid until the youngest child in the family is three years old or enters municipal day care or until the family chooses to use private child-care allowance for their child care.

Child home care allowance includes a basic care allowance paid separately for each child. The basic care allowance for one child under the age of three is 252 €(FIM 1,500) a month (in 1999), with 84 €(FIM 500) a month for each additional child under three, and 50 €(FIM 300) a month for each other child under school age.

In addition to the basic care allowance, the family may also receive an income-related supplement depending on the size and income level of the individual family. This is paid only for one child to a maximum amount of 168 €(FIM 1,000) a month. Child home care allowance is taxable income.

## 2.6 Parental care leave

A parent is entitled to an unpaid reduction of working hours, called partial care leave, until the end of the year when the child starts school. The employer and employee are free to agree on partial care leave and its details as they see fit. Both parents cannot take partial care leave simultaneously.

## 2.7 Partial home care allowance

Partial home care allowance is paid to a working parent of a child under the age of three if the parent's average weekly working time is less than 30 hours due to child care. Partial home care allowance is 63 €(FIM 375) a month (in 1999) and is taxable income.

## 2.8 Private child care allowance

Municipalities can pay private child-care allowance for the care of a child under school age living in Finland to a private child minder or daycare centre of the parents' choice. The support can be paid from the end of the parental allowance period until the child reaches school age. The support ends if the child is transferred to municipal day care.

Private child-care allowance is made up of a basic care allowance, which is 118 € (FIM 700) per child per month, and a supplement which the family may be entitled to, depending on its size and income. The supplement is paid to a maximum of 135 €(FIM 800) a month per child.

The private child-care allowance is paid directly to the child minder and represents taxable income for the child minder.

## 3. Municipal day care

In Finland, every child under school age has the right to municipal day care once the parental allowance period ends, regardless of the income level of the parents or of whether the parents work. According to the Children's Day Care Act, the aim of day care is to support parents and promote the individual and balanced development of children. Extending day care as an unconditional right of all children emphasizes its educational, as well as practical, aspect.

---

Municipalities must offer day care in the official languages of Finland: Finnish, Swedish and Sámi. Day care should also support the language and culture of speakers of Romani and children with immigrant backgrounds.

Municipalities arrange day care in day care centres and in the form of supervised family day care at the minder's home or as group family day care. Many municipalities also arrange supervised play activity open to all in playgrounds and open day care centres.

In a daycare centre, groups may consist of four children under three per nurse or kindergarten teacher, or seven children over three per teacher. A family care minder may provide full day care for a maximum of four children including the minder's own children under school age. In addition, part-time care may be provided for one pre-school or school-age child.

Most of the children in daycare are in full day care, but part-time care is also provided. The municipalities also operate 24-hour day care to provide care for the children of parents who do shift work. Children in day care receive all necessary meals during their time spent in the centre.

Day care staff are required to have at least a secondary-level degree in the social and health care sector. In a day care centre, one in three staff members must have a post-secondary level degree.

A kindergarten teacher's degree is now a university degree. Family care minders must have appropriate training.

### 3.1 Pre-school teaching

In Finland, care and education merge, unlike in many other European countries. This "educare" model means that care always has integral educational features while, correspondingly, teaching contains elements of care. This system is moulded by the children's need for full-time day care while their parents are at work. Pre-school teaching is included as part of day care education and is defined as providing systematic support for the child's growth, development and learning. Three in four six-year-olds take part in pre-school teaching.

### 3.2 Fees for municipal day care

Municipalities charge fees for day care based on the size and income of the family. The maximum fee is 186 € (FIM 1,000) per child per month (1999). No fee is charged for those families with the lowest incomes. Client fees cover about 15 per cent of total day care costs.

### 3.3 Use of different child care systems

The child care systems for children under school age are shown in the table below. Most children use all the forms of publicly supported care before they reach school age. First, they are cared for at home with the aid of the parental allowance, then most families use child home care allowance at least for a while, and later children go to municipal day care centres or family day care, or the family arranges day care with the aid of the private child care allowance.

In autumn 1997, there were nearly 214,000 children in municipal day care. This figure also includes school children in afternoon care. 46 per cent of all children under school age were in day care, and about 80 per cent of these children were in full-time day care. About 25 per cent of children under three and about 47 per cent of 3- 6-year-olds were in municipal day care. 64 per cent of the children in day care were in day care centres,

---

while 36 per cent were in family day care. So far, few children have been in private day care.

### **Day care for children, Finland, 1997**

	Percentage of children below 3 years old	Percentage of children 3-6 years old
Parental allowance	29	12
Child home care allowance	41	26
Private child care allowance	1	2
Municipal day care centre	11	30
Municipal family day care	13	17
Other	5	13

#### **3.4 Care leave for the care of a sick child**

The parents of a child under the age of ten have the right to four days off work to care for the child if she/he falls ill. This is subject to the condition that either both parents work or the child's only parent works.

### **Annex 3. Description of data and comparability**

The following statistical analysis covers the period from 1970 to 1995 (latest available data). It is based on census data for 1970, 1980 and 1990 compiled by the central statistical offices in Japan, Finland, Norway and Sweden. The data for 1995 are census data for Japan and Finland, and labour force survey data for Norway.<sup>43</sup> For the Nordic countries, the original national data for 1990 included 296 non-agricultural occupations (and 262 non-agricultural occupations for 1970 and 1980) for Finland, 292 non-agricultural occupations for Norway, and 261 non-agricultural occupations for Sweden. In order to increase comparability of country experiences, a common occupational classification was created (with 187 non-agricultural occupations) for all three countries for 1970, 1980 and 1990 by comparing national occupational titles. For the most part, this implied collapsing similar occupational categories, and this was relatively easy, as all three countries have very similar coding systems. For Finland and Norway, the data for 1995 were added to an earlier analysis (reported on in Melkas and Anker, 1998). This means that results for 1995 for Finland and Norway are not entirely comparable with results for 1970-1990 because occupational classifications differ, and the 1995 data have not been mapped on to the earlier common coding. While the occupational classifications for 1970-1990 include 187 non-agricultural occupations, there are 311 non-agricultural occupations in the 1995 Finnish classification and 85 non-agricultural occupations in the 1995 Norwegian classification. For Japan, slightly different occupational classifications were available for each year. For 1970-90, most of the analysis for Japan is based on a common classification for all three years (with 259 non-agricultural occupations) developed by and reported in Anker (1998). Data for 1995 use a somewhat more detailed occupational classification.

The common occupational classifications across the Nordic countries and over time for all countries (Japan and Nordic) are used as the basis for most of the empirical analysis

<sup>43</sup> For Sweden, comparative data for 1995 could not be obtained in time for this paper's analysis due to on-going development of Swedish occupational data systems. Results reported in other research on, for instance, values of indices of inequality are, however, included in this paper, but they are not entirely comparative with results for 1970-1990. See section 4.1 for further details.

---

in this paper.<sup>44</sup> Use of a common occupational classification for all three Nordic countries - as opposed to the original national classifications for each country - has advantages (especially greater comparability) as well as disadvantages (especially loss of detail). The loss of detail in the common classification was felt to be less important than the gain from having comparable occupational data for three countries. First, one major objective of this paper is to draw conclusions about differences between Japan on the one hand and the three Nordic countries on the other hand, and a common occupational classification is useful here. Second, the level of detail in the common occupational classification is already relatively high at 187 occupations (for further discussion, see Melkas and Anker, 1998). Similar reasoning applies to the common classification used for much of the 1970-1990 Japanese analysis.

As shown in a recent study (Anker, 1998), increasing disaggregation in occupational classifications at this relatively high level of detail is in most instances relatively unimportant for measuring either the overall level of occupational segregation by sex or the level of segregation for the male labour force. Sometimes, however, increasing detail in the occupational classification continues to be important for investigating the level of segregation for the female labour force. In all the Nordic countries, the way in which occupational divisions are constructed has been criticized, because the divisions between male occupations are more detailed than those between female-dominated ones (Gonäs and Lehto, 1999b). The reason for this is that occupational classification systems are more detailed for manufacturing and craft occupations, and typical female occupations are defined in a less detailed way than male occupations. This is also true in international classifications. For example, production and professional/technical occupations where male workers predominate contain 31 and 49 per cent respectively (i.e. 80 per cent in total) of all three-digit non-agricultural occupations in ISCO-68, whereas services and sales occupations where women often are concentrated contain only 6 and 5 per cent (i.e. 11 per cent in total) of these three digit occupations. This leads to a bias in the empirical results; and partly explains why women are more concentrated than men in a small group of occupations (Gonäs and Lehto, 1999b; *Bryt Aava*, 1989). In addition to having fewer classified occupational titles, typical women's occupations have broader tasks at work (*Bryt Aava*, 1989).<sup>45</sup>

To increase our ability to observe recent changes in occupational sex segregations we also recalculated segregation estimates for 1990 using the 1995 occupational classification when this was possible for Japan and specific Nordic countries. This provided a comparable 1990-95 data set to observe change between 1990 and 1995.

<sup>44</sup> The analysis excludes agricultural occupations for several reasons. First, the classification of workers into different types of agricultural occupations is often found to be inconsistent over time. Second, and more importantly, the reasons for gender segregation in family-based farms differ from those for non-agricultural occupations, which rarely have significant family-based components. Third, this makes the analysis here more consistent and more comparable with the data and analysis in Anker (1998), which provides the basis for comparison with the other industrialized countries. In addition, self-defence workers are excluded here, so our figures may differ slightly from those provided in some other studies.

<sup>45</sup> Notwithstanding the problems mentioned in the text, the national occupational classifications for Japan and the Nordic countries generally reflect changes in the society and the labour market. For example, some occupations disappear and others are created. The developments particularly in the IT sector are rapid, however, making it difficult to keep pace with them.

