

Thematic Update : Theme H

Equal Opportunities: Theme H

To identify ways of reducing the gender gap and supporting job desegregation.

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The logo for 'Equal' features the word 'Equal' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letter 'l' is stylized with diagonal yellow and black stripes.

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1.0 Introduction

This paper gives an overview of policy developments in relation to Theme H of **Equal**, highlighting developments since the publication of the initial Community Initiative Policy (CIP) Guidance in May 2001 and since the previous update published in March 2002. It sets out recent developments at European and National levels, highlighting issues of relevance to Development Partnerships (DPs) in Great Britain (GB).

The paper is intended to help current DPs in developing their work programmes for Actions 2 and 3. It is also intended as guidance for new partnerships while preparing their Development Partnership Agreements and Transnational Co-operation Agreements. It sets out recent developments at European, UK national and regional levels, highlighting policy and related initiatives directed at extending employment to particular target groups.

The paper is structured as follows:

- Section 2 summarises progress to date towards Theme H's objective.
- Section 3 introduces the Thematic Network Group that supports Theme H.
- Section 4 summarises the European gender and labour market context for UK policy on gender gap and desegregation in the workplace.
- Section 5 introduces the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001–05).
- Section 6 considers the issues surrounding gender segregation in Europe.
- Section 7 summarises UK context and policy for reducing the pay gap and job segregation.
- Section 8 summarises UK strategy and initiatives to reduce the pay gap and job segregation.
- Section 9 comments on UK government initiatives to address Work-Life Balance (Theme G of the EQUAL programme, however not taken up in GB).
- Section 10 concludes by summarising the potential for DPs in terms of impact on future policy and practice.

2.0 Theme H's strategic objectives

The strategic objective of Theme H is:

To identify ways of reducing the gender gap and supporting job desegregation.

As with other themes within the EQUAL programme, the intention is to develop innovative partnership programmes that can provide models, which can be successfully mainstreamed in due course. Action 1 for the EQUAL programme allowed for the development of strong partnerships and working arrangements, Action 2 for developing joint or complementary activities and initiatives, and Action 3 focuses on mainstreaming those initiatives.

Inevitably there is overlap between the different themes of the EQUAL programme and so, depending on the particular focus of your DP, you may also find useful information in the Thematic Updates for:

Employability:

- Theme A / access to employment
- Theme B / ethnic minorities

Entrepreneurship:

- Theme C / business creation
- Theme D / social economy

Adaptability:

- Theme E / lifelong learning and inclusive work practices
- Theme F / adaptability of firms and employees

Asylum seekers:

- Theme I

Good Practice Guides are also currently being prepared, which provide good practice principles and practical examples emerging from the current EQUAL programme. These guides also draw on the experience of earlier European and national initiatives with similar objectives. The six guides focus on support and guidance centred on the six principles that underpin the whole of the EQUAL programme, these are:

- Empowerment
- Equal Opportunities
- Innovation
- Partnership
- Mainstreaming
- Transnational Working.

Each of these guides will be updated as **Equal** progresses, so that other examples can be included as they emerge.

3.0 Thematic Networking Group

The Thematic Networking Group (TNG) for Theme H has a key role in ensuring that activities are relevant to the changing policy context relevant to desegregation of the labour market.

The members of the TNG for Theme H are:

Cathleen Pratt, Women and Equality Unit, DTI
Sheila Wild, EOC

Activities arranged for TNG members are publicised on the equal website, where you can also find further information and access to the notes from earlier meetings.

3.1 Theme H DPs participating in this call of Equal are:

Agender: Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council

The Agender Partnership consists of partners drawn from the voluntary, community, public and private sectors through PCTs, public authorities, Sure Start programmes, Children's Centres, Information, Advice and Guidance network, local businesses and business brokers.

The Agender Partnership will aim to help local women and young females to aspire to higher level careers not traditionally associated with women's employment by:

- ◆ developing support centres that combine family support (childcare, child and adult health services, social service support etc) with advice about jobs / careers / training delivered by advisers who are particularly expert in higher level jobs / non – traditional careers;
- ◆ working with employers / intermediaries to identify where women are under-represented in the workplace and developing positive action strategies;
- ◆ developing new routes into careers using learning and qualifications.

The DP will do this by focussing on 6 centres for the family support / Information, Advice and Guidance, all of which are in areas of significant deprivation, some of which are in areas of high levels of minority ethnic groups or lone / teenage parenthood:

- ◆ Aston
- ◆ Kingstanding
- ◆ Chinn Brook
- ◆ Bartley green
- ◆ Smiths Wood
- ◆ Chelmsley Wood

They will work with employers and intermediaries (eg recruitment hubs, developers) in:

- ◆ Redevelopment brokers active in Chelmsley wood Town Centre / Witton / Selly Oak / A38 High Technology Corridor
- ◆ New Super-Hospital hub (University Hospital)
- ◆ DiverCity (positive action group for the Professional and Financial sector)
- ◆ Construction Employment Alliance
- ◆ Public Sector Compact

The DP will build new routes into careers not generally thought open to women and will actively involve public sector planning and funding bodies in developing the solutions to gender inequality

JIVE (Joining policy and joining practice): Bradford College

JIVE (Joining Practice + Joining Policy) is a national DP led by the new UK Resource Centre for Women in SET at Bradford College, with Let's TWIST at Sheffield Hallam University, the Open University, Oxford Women's Training Scheme and Cardiff Women's Workshop. The DP builds on and extends the work of JIVE Partners from Equal round 1.

The DP will address theme H by targeting the highly segregated sectors of Science, Engineering, Construction and Technology (SEcT) where the under representation of women is an economic and social concern contributing to the gender pay gap. The DP will tackle the inequalities faced by all women in SEcT and recognises that gender discrimination is compounded by race, culture, sexuality and disability.

The purpose of the DP is to create a coalition of initiatives delivering innovative practical solutions to overcoming gender segregation within the SEcT industries, education and academia whilst providing opportunities to women returners through positive action initiatives linked to employment opportunities. The DP will add value to the UK Government Strategy for women in SET, and outcomes will inform policy makers who will be invited as strategic partners in action 1.

Action 1 activities will establish the delivery infrastructure, which is planned to operate through 4 regional centres and 3 National Resource Centres in Scotland, Wales and England. The partnership will be developed with the addition of policy-makers, employers, additional lead bodies, equality organisations and transnational partners.

Action 2 activities will be targeted at a minimum of 150 employers, a minimum of 600 women returners (offering upskilling and re-entry programmes); developing regional based collaborative partnerships of practitioners drawn from schools, Connexions, colleges, universities and employers to embed gender equality practices into the whole of the employment cycle thus tackling supply and demand side issues. The partnership will develop promotional materials (videos, drama, books, guides) to raise the profile of women in SEcT to challenge occupational stereotyping. The work will be underpinned with materials development and 4 research studies including one at transnational level.

This will be delivered by harnessing expertise nationally and transnationally and ensuring high level commitment to the project activities.

Transnationally we will engage in exchange and development of materials; cross cultural research in occupational segregation and production of a European database of research on women in SEcT.

The DP will utilise the influence of the UK Resource Centre, its high level Implementation Group and the TNG to engage with UK Government, Welsh Assembly and Scottish Executive's policy makers to ensure that gender mainstreaming is at the heart of their strategies for combating skills shortages within the targeted sectors.

Women Building Futures: SOVA

The DP will consist of cross-sectoral organisations and beneficiaries forming a unique partnership to access employment sectors in which women are currently under-represented. All beneficiaries will face barriers to "traditional" access routes to employment, and may also face barriers to working in "stereotypical" roles because of criminal records or other disadvantages. Opportunities explored will include:

- ◆ construction careers - project management, surveying, architecture, maintenance etc;
- ◆ information, communications and electronic technology fields;
- ◆ arts and media, in areas where women are generally under-represented and where disadvantaged women have traditionally experienced difficulty gaining access;
- ◆ transport industry, where there is considerable under-representation of women.

DP will base its approach on findings rooted in the Equal Round 1 Women into Work initiative and additional industry-based research, in conjunction with specialist industry providers and the Equal Opportunities Commission.

Action 1 – consultation with the beneficiary group, employers and partners about relevant industries and barriers faced by disadvantaged women; establishing "test" models;

Action 2 – piloting of models within different industries, working with transnational partners to develop and disseminate good practice;

Action 3 – bringing together beneficiaries with partners, policy makers and industry representatives for wide-ranging horizontal and vertical dissemination/mainstreaming through policy proposals, training materials, reports, conferences and advocacy.

Leading Equal principles:

- ◆ Partnership – bringing different perspectives to service development;
- ◆ Innovation – beneficiaries will work closely with industry representatives to identify and address current barriers for disadvantaged women;

- ◆ Equal opportunities – contributing to the progression of women into under-represented industries;
- ◆ Transnational co-operation – sharing approaches to successful job desegregation initiatives and promoting benefits of peer/mentoring support in accessing employment;
- ◆ Empowerment – beneficiary group will be empowered by pivotal role in research, development and consultation with employers;
- ◆ Mainstreaming and Dissemination - evidence-based developmental approach will feed into national and transnational policy.

Advancing Women: recruitment, retention and progression for women and by women in ITEC: Portia

The DP will contribute to the EQUAL Theme A, within the objective to help target groups integrate or reintegrate into labour market, targeting women and Information Technology, Electronics and Communications (ITEC) labour market.

Women are poorly represented in ITEC, with only 23% across all sectors, and even lower at more advanced levels, where they represent only 9 % of the labour force. The under-representation of women in ITEC exists at a time when ITEC is experiencing serious skills gaps, which is predicted to continue at 12% per year for the forthcoming years. Women are therefore losing out on important employment opportunities and companies and society are losing out on important resource and talent.

The project will pilot innovative ways to help integrate and reintegrate women into the ITEC labour force. It will, tackle the needs of women with higher skills and help them progress in ITEC, and the needs of women returners, after a career break, or a period of unemployment, caused by commitments to family or personal responsibilities.

The DP will also promote women inventors and innovators. It will work with all the key players to tackle barriers to recruitment, retention and advancement of women in ITEC, and mainstreaming activities to the widest policy audience.



4.0 Gender and the European Labour Market

4.1 Background:

The European Employment Strategy sets common priorities and individual objectives for member states' which includes employment guidelines that are agreed by all its member states. The current guidelines cover the period 2005-2008 and address strategies for job creation, job quality, productivity and for making work pay. They also promote a better balance between the demands of work and personal life, active ageing and means of ensuring that race, gender or disabilities do not limit opportunities for employment.

Eliminating inequalities and promoting gender equality throughout the European Community is seen as priority for the EU. Key legislation is in place, i.e. Articles 2 and 3 of the EC Treaty (gender mainstreaming), Article 141 (equality between women and men in matters of employment and occupation) and Article 13 (sex discrimination within and outside the work place) for the EU.

Within the EU Employment, Social Affairs & Equal Opportunities Directorate-General (DG), the following two Units deal with Gender Equality issues:

- ◆ the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men: Strategy and Programme" Unit
- ◆ the Equality of Treatment between Women and Men: Legal Questions" Unit.

The Equal Opportunities for Women and Men: Strategy and Programme Unit is also responsible for preparing the future policy roadmap on gender equality, which will succeed the current Community Framework Strategy on gender equality 2001-2005 (details provided in section 5.0) and will be adopted by the Commission in late 2006.

A report on equality between women and men is submitted to the Spring European Council each year.

For more information see:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/gender_equality/gender_mainstreaming/employment/employment_labour_market_en.html

4.2 Employment Statistics

In the second quarter of 2005, 63.7% of the working age population (15-64 years of age) were in paid work in the EU-25, compared to 63.1% one year before. The gender gap also continued to narrow: while the male employment rate increased from 70.7% in the second quarter 2004 to 71.2% in the second quarter 2005, the female employment rate rose from 55.8% to 56.3.

In the EU-25, the share of part-time employment increased between the second quarter of 2004 and the second quarter of 2005. For men, it grew by 0.3% to 7.3%, while for women it increased by 1% to 32.5%. Temporary contracts also increased, but unlike part-time employment, this rise was higher for men (up by 0.9% to 13.9%) than for women (up by 0.6% to 14.9%).

This increasing participation of women in the labour market is a significant factor in Europe's economic growth. For the EU as a whole, it is estimated that almost a fifth of the annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth can be explained by women's increased participation in the labour force. However, many of the jobs created are part-time and often low paid.

In the EU as whole:

- ◆ one third of all employed women work part-time compared to 4.5% of all employed men;
- ◆ the unemployment rate for women is just over 1 percentage point higher than the male rate; and
- ◆ where women are employed, they earn less than men. Women account for a high proportion of low income employees across the member states, estimated to be 77% of all low paid employees in the European Union.

Recent research for the European Commission¹ found that the role of women appears to be significant when looking at employment patterns between the EU and US. The research found that:

- ◆ Women are significantly underrepresented in high wage jobs, particularly in Europe. High wage employment growth for women is much greater for those in the US.
- ◆ Women in Europe tend to work part-time in the years when they have childcare responsibilities; while in the US women tend to work part-time when approaching retirement.
- ◆ Women are heavily concentrated in low wage jobs, especially those who work part-time. Part-time work carries a significant pay penalty.

The EU has already prioritised further increases in the number of women who are economically active in the EU. The European Council meetings in Lisbon and Santa Maria da Feira in 2000 agreed:

- ◆ the objective of increasing the percentage of women in employment from 54% to 60% by 2010;
- ◆ the importance of balanced participation by women and men in family and working life.

Overall, this means drawing an additional 10 million women into the labour market.

1 The European-American Employment Gap, Wage inequality, Earnings Mobility and Skill, W. Salverda, St. Bazen, M. Gregory et al. The results of the study are based on research for four EU Member States (France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the UK) and the US. http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/employment_social/pub_en.htm
http://www.eustatistics.gov.uk/statistics_in_focus/downloads/KS-NK-04-014-EN.pdf

The European Council meeting in Stockholm in 2001 set an intermediate target of 57% of women in employment by 2005. It is recognised that a continued long-term increase in activity for women is essential in order to achieve the Stockholm and Lisbon targets. Particular attention will need to be paid to finding ways to give women equal access to the knowledge-based economy.

The European Council has therefore called on the European Commission and the Member States to develop employment policies that support these targets. The European Council has specifically asked Member States to:

- ◆ reduce occupational segregation;
- ◆ make it easier to reconcile working and family life;
- ◆ improve childcare provision.

The Commission is already committed to taking gender into account as one of the criteria for admitting additional member states. In its Resolution of 5 October 2000, the European Parliament also expressed the view that any type of aid, funding or benefit granted by the European Union must be subject to the requirement to observe the principle of equal pay for men and women.

Women's participation in the labour market used to be high in all Central Eastern European countries but fell dramatically during the early years of economic transition. In the Candidate Countries, women's activity rates were found to be at or above the EU average except in Malta, Hungary, and Bulgaria. In addition, the female employment rate is at, or higher than, the EU average except in Hungary, Malta, Poland, Bulgaria and Slovakia, but both female participation in the labour market and employment are on a declining or stagnating trend in most of these countries². The labour markets of Candidate Countries are strongly segregated by gender and significant gender pay gaps exist³.

Hungary, the Czech Republic and Lithuania are making good progress in bringing Community legislation on gender equality into national law. However, in general, family-friendly working arrangements have not been developed beyond basic provisions (e.g. maternity leave). Also, most Candidate Countries need to develop affordable childcare facilities.

For further information about European policy and guidelines go to:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/empl&esf/news

² Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Progress in Implementing the Joint Assessment Papers on employment policies in Acceding Countries (06/11/03).

³ Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Progress on the Implementation of the Joint Assessment Papers on employment policies in Candidate Countries (30/01/03).

4.3 The Lisbon Strategy (Progress update 2006)

The 2005 Annual Progress Report on the Lisbon Strategy, the partnership between the EU and Member States for growth and more and better jobs, urged the need for its members to 'step up a gear'. The Annual Progress Report is designed to reinforce momentum and force the pace of delivery. There are three main elements in the Progress Report:

- ◆ providing an analysis of the 25 new National Reform Programmes submitted by Member States in October 2005;
- ◆ identifying the strengths in different national programmes with a view to promoting the exchange of good ideas;
- ◆ highlighting areas where there are shortcomings and proposing concrete action at EU and national level to deal with them.

The four priority action areas identified are:

- ◆ investment in education,
- ◆ research and innovation;
- ◆ freeing up SMEs;
- ◆ employment policies to get people into work;

The employment policies priority cited 'stronger efforts to meet national targets for the provision of affordable high-quality childcare and measures to achieve greater gender equality at work and to promote a work-life balance', as priority.

The Commission will ask European leaders to prepare clear proposals on how they intend to deliver on the priority areas by 2007 at its Summit in Brussels in March this year.

For the full text of the Report see the Commission' s Growth and Jobs web site at:

http://europa.eu.int/growthandjobs/index_en.htm

For a full set of National Reform Programmes, please see:

http://europa.eu.int/growthandjobs/pdf/nrp_2005_en.pdf

4.4 The Amended Equal Treatment Directive (2002), monitoring and further legislative changes

The 1976 Equal Treatment Directive has been expanded and modernised to incorporate case law and Treaty changes strengthening the principle of equal treatment and its practical implementation. Many of the provisions of the amended Equal Treatment Directive are already reflected in existing legislation.

The provisions of the amended Equal Treatment Directive include: an amended definition of indirect discrimination, harassment on the grounds of sex and sexual harassment as forms of discrimination and making unlawful discrimination that takes place after employment has ended.

The Commission has identified a theme within the *Community Framework Strategy On Gender Equality as Promoting Gender Equality in Civil Life*. This theme aims to strengthen and further the development of the enforcement mechanisms of the equal treatment legislation, together with better awareness of and training on equality rights and the human rights of women. The measures are being orientated towards training on equality legislation for the legal profession and informing NGOs about this legislation. The theme aims to pay particular attention needs to be paid to women who are subject to multiple discriminations (such as migrant women or women with disabilities) or women who face violence and/or sexual exploitation. They identify action in the areas of:

- ◆ monitoring Community law and case law on equal treatment for women and men and, if required, proposing new legislation including review of equal pay directives;
- ◆ reinforcing the role and powers of the labour inspectorate bodies with regard to equal pay legislation; and
- ◆ supporting specific information and training on equality legislation and the human rights of women for the legal professions, labour inspectorates and social partners.

See section 5.0 for more detail on the Community Framework on Gender Equality.

4.5 Equal Pay and the Pay Gap

EUROSTAT data published January 2003 shows that women's earnings are around 84% of male earnings (based on hourly calculations). However the earnings pattern shows that the differential is generally greatest in the private sector and least in the public sector. These differentials are particularly marked in the UK.

Reasons for this appear to be related to education, sectors of work, value of work, number of hours worked, structure of pay, career breaks, career opportunities, senior jobs, tax and benefits systems, collective agreements and existence of minimum wage. The Gender Equality Programme 2001-5 (see section 5) argued the case for:

- ◆ merging of gender specific jobs;
- ◆ harmonising pay systems;
- ◆ redefinition and re-evaluation of formal qualifications and skills;
- ◆ broadening employment categories;
- ◆ training measures to improve access to particular jobs / sectors;
- ◆ extending these advantages to part time workers.

A transnational project under the Gender Equality Programme, 'Towards Closing the Gender Gap' funded by the Commission, and led by Norway, worked on identifying ways to promote equal pay in three target occupations: unskilled workers in the food processing industry,

engineers and secondary education teachers. The research report on the UK concluded, among other issues, that women's employment opportunities and closing the pay gap can best be helped by making existing legislation work better⁴. It was however highlighted that awareness of existing rights is patchy and a gender neutral culture and change of attitudes for both genders in employment is important for ensuring equality.

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) led an Equal Pay Campaign over a 12 month period in 2000-2001 and set up an international network of female trade union experts in the area of equal pay covering the 15 member states and Norway. The campaign concluded that there is a need:

- ◆ to collect more information and publicise data on the wage gap;
- ◆ to revise existing directives and legislation;
- ◆ for further actions based on "collective bargaining" and the "revision of classifications" including job evaluation systems; and
- ◆ to revise actions and roles of the Commission, Member States and trade unions.

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) has also released a briefing on Equality through Pay Equity which illustrates ways in which trade unions are taking action to pursue pay equity: these include promoting proactive legislation, legal action, collective bargaining and decent minimum wages.

The EU 'code of practice on the implementation of equal pay for work of equal value' recommended:

- ◆ analysis of pay systems to pinpoint gender discrimination so that remedies can be found;
- ◆ a follow up plan to eliminate gender discrimination in pay structures.

For further details and information about steps to address the pay gap in Europe, go to

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equ_opp/statistics_en.html

<http://www.etuc.org/equalpay/>

<http://www.likestilling.no/genderpaygap/>

<http://www.icftu.org/www/pdf/PayequityE.pdf>

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equ_opp/gender/mag11-en.pdf

⁴ Institute for Social Research and the Norwegian Centre for Gender Equality. Towards a Closing of the Gender Pay Gap – A Comparative Study of three Occupations in six European Countries. 2002.

5.0 Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001–05)

The *Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001–05)* was designed to provide a more integrated approach to gender equality. The strategy combines specific measures designed to promote gender equality through appropriate mainstreaming. The strategy uses gender impact assessment to focus on five objectives:

- ◆ equality in economic life;
- ◆ equal representation and participation in decision making;
- ◆ equality in social life;
- ◆ equality in civil life; and
- ◆ changing gender roles and overcoming stereotypes.

Between 2001 and 2005, a sum of 50 million Euro was to be made available to fund awareness-raising measures, analysis and evaluation of policies affecting equality, and the forging of equality networks linking EU institutions, national authorities, social partners and NGOs. These activities serve three objectives:

- ◆ to promote and disseminate good gender-equality practice and the values underlying it;
- ◆ to provide insight into the issues related, directly or indirectly, to gender discrimination by finding out where it exists and exploring policy responses;
- ◆ to develop the capacity of key players, such as NGOs and social partners, to promote gender equality.

The programme also included both open and restricted calls for proposals. The open calls were for transnational actions to promote gender equality involving a range of players from different member states or countries from the European Economic Area to carry out transfers of information, lessons learned and good practice. The restricted call was for applications member state or by equality bodies to finance transnational actions such as meetings, seminars, campaigns to improve synergy amongst national policies on gender equality and to develop community added value.

The priority for proposals for activities starting in 2001 was equal pay, in 2002 reconciliation of work and family life and in 2003 prioritising women in decision making. For 2004-2005 the priority theme was 'promoting change in gender roles and overcoming gender stereotypes'. The project implementation started in Autumn 2004 and was due to last up to 15 months. The priority theme addresses the stereotyped images of women and men and the need to change behaviour, attitudes, norms and values which define and influence gender roles in society through for instance education, training, culture, science, sport, and the media.

The interim evaluation of the programme⁵ (2001-2003) outlined that the Programme has fulfilled its key objectives of raising awareness, improving policy analysis and developing the capacity of players to promote gender equality with a view to support the implementation of the Framework Strategy. It has played an important role in supporting the development and the implementation of EU law concerning gender equality and the promotion of the gender dimension in the European Employment Strategy, the Social Inclusion / Protection Process and the Lifelong Learning Strategy. The trans-national projects have contributed to the reinforcing synergy among national policies on gender equality. Following recommendations from the evaluation, the Commission intends to develop more systematic information on the outputs of the Programme.

The evaluation of the Programme is currently underway.

For further information on gender equality go to:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equ_opp/index_en.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equ_opp/1047-2004.pdf

⁵ Interim evaluation Report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Programme relating to the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality 2001-2005 (11.08.2004)

6.0 Gender Segregation

The European Council recommends that Member States continue to highlight occupational segregation and moves towards desegregation within their employment policies.

6.1 Current evidence of segregation

The figures on male and female occupations across Europe show 50% of women work in areas where women fill 80% or more of the jobs. Four out of 10 women entering the European labour market become sales and service workers, with women filling 80% of new low-skilled, non-manual jobs.

Men are most concentrated in agriculture, industry and finance services, whilst women predominate in health and care services, education and work in private households. Gender gaps are declining in a few areas, such as wholesale and retail, financial intermediation, transport and electricity industries. Low skilled women are mainly employed in the health and social work sector, and hotels and restaurants, whilst high skilled women are mainly employed in the health and social work sector. The gender gap is widening for craft workers and machine operators, for managers, legislators and senior officials.

The then DTI's Women and Equality Unit led a transnational European project, 'Advancing Women in the Workplace', which identified ways in which employers and trade union representatives could remove barriers to opportunity through training, promotion, flexible/part-time working and by overcoming stereotypical attitudes to women in the workplace. This project took place under the 5th Action Programme's Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (see Section 5). The research undertaken highlighted that women are playing an increasingly significant role in the EU economy however, still face considerable barriers.

For further information, go to:

http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/women_work/advancingwomen.htm

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equ_opp/statistics_en.html

6.2 Moves towards desegregation

Desegregation of the labour market in respect of gender has been a key part of the EMPLOYMENT and NOW programmes as well as the current EQUAL Community Initiative, ESF (European Structural Fund), and Objective 2 and 3 programmes.

For example, for the ESF, specific direction to Member States includes:

- ◆ an analysis undertaken in the mainstreaming context of the difference between women and men in specific sectors and areas; and
- ◆ targets based on this analysis to correct these, and indicators of progress set and monitored.

6.3 Women and Technology

A recent review of Employment in Europe shows that the high-tech sectors are very much dominated by male workers, who hold two thirds of such jobs. Even countries such as Greece, Belgium and the UK have a gender gap of more than 50% for high-tech sectors (i.e. more than twice as many men than women work in this sector).

New technologies is an area where the EU has taken particular steps to try to reduce levels of segregation within the labour market – as such segregation has serious implications for the effectiveness of the growth of the European economy in key areas such as ICT. The *eEurope 2002* action plan stresses the importance of attracting women into IT professions. The initiative is considered to be successful as it has increased the number of citizens connected to the internet. Building on the success of eEurope 2002, the Commission extended the eEurope initiative into 2005, adopting "eEurope 2005: An Information Society for all - An Action Plan" in June 2002. The *eLearning initiative*, adopted by the Commission in May 2000, focused on reducing the gap between those with access to the new information technologies and those without, including women. New *eLearning Programme* has been established for the period 2004 – 2006 and it pays particularly close attention to gender differences in the use of e-learning and the promotion of equal opportunities.

Further information on the eEurope initiative and the new eLearning Programme is available at:

<http://www.e-europestandards.org/>

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/elearning/programme_en.html

6.4 Women and Science

Across Europe, the scientific labour market remains male-dominated. The proportion of women in senior scientific positions also remains low, with few women in important scientific committees and in key policy-shaping arenas. However, different statistics were being collected in each country, making comparisons difficult. To address this difficulty, the Commission launched a three-year project, *'Design and collection of statistical indicators on women in science'* in March 2000. The project has organised the existing data collected at national levels and developed indicators on the basis of this data. The project concluded that political developments are required to advance systematic collection of data on women in science so that their progress can be more accurately measured. Some information from this project is available at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/women-science/women-science_en.html

http://idcrue.dit.upm.es/documentacion/Comision_1/Otras_Politicasy_relacionadas/SEC_2001_771.pdf

The **Helsinki Group on Women and Science**, set up in 2000/1 meets twice a year. In 2001, this group appointed statistical correspondents to help the Commission in collecting sex-disaggregated statistics and building gender sensitive indicators. National delegates

have also produced reports on women in science in their respective countries, to provide essential information for a European report on *National Policies on Women and Science in Europe*. This report - by Professor Teresa Rees, from Cardiff University - is now available on-line at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/documents_en.html#eurepor

To further help the Commission in collecting sex-disaggregated statistics and build gender-sensitive indicators, the Helsinki Group has appointed national statistical correspondents.

Further information about the group can be accessed at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/women-science/helsinki_en.html

In 2002 the Commission established the *Enwise Expert Group*, which worked until December 2003. Their final report put forward recommendations on how to improve the role and place of women in the European scientific research and more specifically how to tackle these issues in the new Member States.

More detail can be found at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/women/enwise/index_en.html

The promotion of equal participation of women in all scientific disciplines and at all levels is an integral part of the *Sixth Framework Programme*. The emphasis is on actions to increase the participation of women in industrial research and to integrate equal treatment in scientific institutions. The Sixth Framework Programme runs from January 2003 to December 2006.

More detail of the Sixth Framework can be found at:

<http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/i23012.htm>

6.5 Women and Rural Development

The rural development programmes adopted in 2000 aim to support the major role that women can play in diversification of the rural economy. The **Leader+** Community initiative, approved in 2000, identifies measures for women in rural areas as a priority area. These measures take account of the evidence that Women currently account for 34% of the workforce on farms, and 22% of heads of farms are women.

Additional information about the Leader + programme can be found at:

<http://www.europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/g24208.htm>

6.6 Gender and Education

Recent decades have witnessed major changes in education enrolment in Europe. Women now outnumber men in upper secondary and university education in most EU countries and

represent 58% of graduates in the Union as a whole. Women are also closing the gender gap at the highest academic level, making up 41% of PhD graduates. Nevertheless, the different areas of study still show traditional gender patterns, with men continuing to dominate the sciences, mathematics, informatics and engineering.

While women's increased qualifications have had a positive effect on their employment rate, pay levels, and promotion to managerial positions, imbalances in subject choices in education still feed through to gender segregation in the labour market.

6.7 International Women's Day

International Women's Day is the day that connects all women around the world and inspires them to achieve their full potential. IWD 2006 launches another year of working progressively for women's equality worldwide.

The day aims to signify achievements of women past, present and future.

International Women's Day 2006 will be celebrated globally on Wednesday 8 March.

IWD has been celebrated annually since 1908, and highlights women's equality worldwide aiming to inspire women to achieve their full potential. Celebrated globally each country shows its support in its own way, for example the day is declared a holiday in Russia where white flowers are given to women to mark the days of the early suffragettes. Even Google, the global search engine, changes its logo to an IWD Google logo on 8 March.

7.0 Reducing The Pay Gap And Job Segregation: UK Context And Policy

The European Commission has specifically recommended the UK to review its National Employment Action Plan, in order to achieve greater parity in terms of pay between men and women in the workforce. Occupational segregation and the gender pay gap are a problem throughout the EU. However, the UK Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) has highlighted evidence that the UK pay gap is one of the highest in Europe. Latest figures (August 2004) for hourly earnings are £8.84 and £11.53 for women and men respectively⁶.

Latest National Employment Action Plan (2004) outlines the variety of measures the UK Government has adopted to address this issue, including:

- ◆ improvement on the way the Equal Pay Act works in practice (for example, new streamlined procedures for dealing with the complex and large-scale equal value tribunal cases came into effect in October 2004);
- ◆ working alongside the business community, employers, trade unions and the EOC to promote voluntary equal pay reviews;
- ◆ additional Government funding to trade unions to train over 400 representatives in equal pay issues; and
- ◆ requiring the Civil Service to undertake internal pay reviews.

More information about the latest National Employment Action Plan is available at:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2004/uk_action_plan/index.asp

7.1 Legislation

Legislation to ensure that men and women receive equal pay for equal jobs has been in existence in Great Britain (GB) since 1970. In GB, the Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended) provides for equal pay between men and women working for the same employer and undertaking the same work, work rated as equivalent or work of equal value.

In recent years, legislation and policy have helped to improve the conditions for working women, parents and part-time workers, thus providing:

- ◆ three months' unpaid leave for either parent;
- ◆ new anti-discrimination rights for part time workers - particularly relevant for women, who form the majority of part-time workers;
- ◆ improved rights to maternity leave; and
- ◆ improved protection from unfair dismissal for expectant mothers.

A consultation on the implementation of the new European Directives on Employment and Race, 'The Way Ahead', was concluded in January 2003. This included consulting on some

⁶ DWP. United Kingdom Employment Action Plan 2004.

of the legislative changes to the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) required by the amended Equal Treatment Directive and some minor changes to the Equal Pay Act.

The Equal Opportunities Commission is also supporting a strengthening of the Sex Discrimination Act including introduction of a public duty to promote gender equality similar to that provided under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The Employment Act (2002) included a number of measures to help tackle the main causes of the pay gap, women's lower level of work experience and the part-time pay gap such as:

- ◆ improved maternity pay and leave;
- ◆ new rights to paid paternity and adoption leave; and
- ◆ a new right for parents of young children to apply to work flexibly.

The Employment Act makes it easier for women who have been discriminated against to take up equal pay cases by simplifying the existing procedure through the introduction of an equal pay questionnaire. The questionnaire came into effect in April 2003 and is intended to help those who believe they have not received equal pay to request key information from their employer; this information should make it easier to resolve disputes. Further information about the questionnaire procedure can be found at:

http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/pay/update_question.htm

7.2 The Gender Equality Duty

The Gender Equality Duty is due to come into force in April 2007. It will require public bodies to eliminate sex discrimination and promote equality throughout their services, policies, and employment and recruitment practices – responding to the sometimes differing needs of men and women. The pending Duty has the potential to transform public services - including health care, transport and education – and help close the pay gap between women and men. The Duty will require public bodies to set their own gender equality goals in consultation with their service users and employers and to take action to achieve them.

More information can be found at:

http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/cehr/gender_duty.htm

7.3 Consultation on a Single Equality Organisation

Currently, the three key equality organisations in Great Britain are:

- ◆ Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) – www.eoc.org.uk;
- ◆ Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) – www.cre.gov.uk; and
- ◆ Disability Rights Commission (DRC) – www.drc-gb.org.

A consultation document '*Making It Happen*' was launched by the Government in late 2002 to examine the implications of the possible development of a single equality body. In light of

the responses received the Government has concluded that a single body will provide the most effective framework for supporting legislation and working to highlight the importance of equality as a mainstream concern. The working title of this body is the Commission for Equality and Human Rights. On 12 May 2004 the Government published a White Paper, *“Fairness for All: A New Commission for Equality and Human Rights”*, which sets out in detail the proposed vision, functions, powers and structures for the body. However, it is unlikely that any changes will be in operation before 2007.

In the lead up to the new Commission the Equal Opportunities Commission had agreed to develop a 10 year Gender Manifesto for the CEHR.

Further information about the reviews can be found at:

<http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/equality/project/project.htm>

http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/equality/project/cehr_white_paper.pdf

7.4 Female Participation Rates – full-time and part-time⁷

In the UK, 67% of women of working age have paid jobs, compared to 79% of men, although a high proportion (44%) of female employees work part-time rather than full-time (this compares to only 10% of male employees). The factors that influence women to take part-time or other flexible patterns of work, such as shift work, include:

- ◆ Dependent children.
- ◆ Part-time work being widely available in certain occupations and sectors.
- ◆ Elder care
- ◆ Care and responsibility for family members in general

Women whose youngest child is under 5 have an employment rate of 52% compared with 70% for those whose children are aged 5-10. 78% of women whose children are over 10 are employed. Some 91% of men whose youngest child is under 5 have an employment rate of 91% compared with 90% for those whose children are over 5.

New research from the Equal Opportunities Commission is differentiating between women’s rates of participation in the labour market according to their ethnicity. This shows that Black African, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women were three times as likely to be unemployed than white women.

7.5 Occupational Segregation

Occupational segregation is a crucial factor relating to the pay gap. However, the Government is aware that there are “no quick fixes” for the pay gap or for occupational segregation - or for improving the skills of the workforce in general.

⁷ Data presented is taken from the EOC’s Facts about Women and Men in Great Britain (2004)

Addressing the gender imbalance in the workforce is a key issue in the Government's drive to tackle skill shortages in IT, electronics and communications (ITEC) occupations. Women are significantly under-represented across these occupational roles, often deterred by either gender stereotyping, which pressures women into non-science/technology-based occupations, or the negative images that surround jobs in these sectors.

The Government is, therefore, committed to working in partnership with industry, education providers, Sector Skills Organisations and other key bodies to show women a more positive image of careers in ITEC, and to help industry introduce recruitment, training and retention policies that support women in their careers. The aim is to:

- ◆ remove barriers to girls' and women's choices;
- ◆ encourage education and career choices that will be financially rewarding;
- ◆ prohibit overt or covert discrimination; and
- ◆ respect individual choices.

In June 2003, the Equal Opportunities Commission launched a General Formal Investigation (GFI) into gender segregation in five occupational areas where there are skill shortages. The GFI is being undertaken with funding from the European Social Fund (ESF). The areas chosen for study in the GFI are amongst the most strongly segregated: construction, engineering, plumbing, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (all male-dominated), and childcare (female-dominated). The report concludes a range of actions should be taken to promote atypical employment to young people, including young children, before the age at which key educational and career decisions are taken. The study results can be found at:

http://www.eoc.org.uk/cseng/research/occupational%20segregation_ph1_report.pdf

A new initiative was launched in 2004 to develop a UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (SET). This provides an official website funded by the Department of Trade and Industry as part of their Strategy for Women in (SET). It provides: data and statistical information; mentoring information; information on course in SET in the UK; and is backed up by a team of people at the offering information and assistance through a help line. The website can be found at:

<http://www.setwomenresource.org.uk>

7.6 Gender Segregation and Pay

Segregation of occupations along gender lines is both 'horizontal' and 'vertical'. Vertical segregation known commonly as the 'glass ceiling' serves as an invisible barrier to women's progression to more senior levels. Statistics back up this concept: less than 10% of directors in British companies are women, and women make up only 30% of management positions (excluding directors).

Horizontal segregation is the gendered channelling of women into certain occupations and industries (often low paying, with limited career opportunities). For example, in the UK, women comprise 69% or more of administrative and secretarial occupations, personal

service, and sales and customer service occupations, while men make up 69% or more of managers and senior officials, skilled trades, and process, plant and machine operatives.

Gendered segregation of the labour market leads to pay differences. The Engineering Society, for example, has shown that women have only 4% of managerial positions in the engineering sector. Consequently, that the earnings of women in the SET (Science Engineering and Technology) professions are 83% of men's, with the gap being largest between women and men with the highest level of qualifications.

7.7 The Pay Gap

Overall, female employees working full-time earn on average 18.8% less than the average hourly male earnings of male full-time employees, despite the fact that the achievements of girls at GCSE and A level or SCE/NQ Highers significantly outdo those of boys. In the UK, this gender pay gap can largely be attributed to the concentration of women in lower paid occupations and at lower levels in the hierarchy across occupations. The differences in the work experience of men and women (with women more likely to have interrupted careers or take part-time work) tend to concentrate women at the lower spectrum of the hierarchy and in lower paid jobs. In the 1995 Structure of Earnings Survey, the UK was placed 12 out of 15 countries surveyed in relation to the pay gap between men and women, with women most concentrated in the lower paid industries, occupations and grades.

The fact that women remain concentrated in lower-paid jobs throughout their lifetime also leads to significant differences in work-related benefits such as pension entitlements, and therefore a greater risk therefore of poverty in retirement. Women's gross individual income, including income from pensions, benefits, investments etc., is on average 51% of men's.

In addition, new research from the Equal Opportunities Commission highlights the differences within rates of pay for women, showing that ethnic minority women have lower average income than white women (£118 per week compared to £135 per week)

The *Kingsmill Report* concludes that although some evidence remains of unequal pay between men and women doing the same jobs, the remaining gender pay gap can largely be attributed to the concentration of women in lower paid occupations and at lower levels in the hierarchy across occupations. By reviewing the situation on equal pay in some of the UK's key employers it found significant differences in the work experiences of men and women.

The *Kingsmill Review* recommendations can be found in the full report Women's Employment and Pay at:

<http://www.kingsmillreview.gov.uk/docs/Kingsmillreviewreport.pdf>

Prime Minister Tony Blair is due to officially launch the *Women and Work Commission Report* at the end of March 2006. The Report was convened to examine the problem of the gender pay gap and other issues affecting women's employment.

The Women and Work Commission Report includes:

- ◆ how men's and women's education and skills affect which jobs they can get;
- ◆ promotion and career progression - the 'glass ceiling';
- ◆ women's experiences in the job market before and after having children; and
- ◆ the different experiences of women working full-time and part-time.

The report highlights the fact that although women in full-time employment earn on average 17 per cent less than their male counterparts this does not imply that women are paid less than men for doing the same jobs, and instead is a result of the fact that women's average pay is lower because they tend to be employed in low-paid, traditionally female occupations.

The report made a total of 40 recommendations, including the setting up of programmes to improve vocational training, work-taster days for primary school children and more help for mothers who wanted to return to work after giving birth.

More detail on the recommendations can be found at:

http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/women_work_commission/index.htm

8.0 Action To Reduce The Pay Gap And Job Segregation In The UK

This section outlines the government departments, gender equality initiatives and agencies most concerned with reducing the pay gap and job segregation in the UK. It concentrates on the relevant developments that have taken place since the previous thematic update paper.

8.1 Government Departments

The Department for Communities and Local Government

<http://www.odpm.gov.uk/>

The DLG was created on 5 May 2006 with a remit to promote community cohesion and equality, as well as responsibility for housing, urban regeneration, planning and local government.

Within its new remit the DCLG brings together responsibility for equality policy, including policy on race, faith, gender and sexual orientation. It is an expanded department with a powerful remit to promote community cohesion and equality.

The Women and Equality Unit (WEU) has moved to DCLG from the Department for Trade and Industry. The Race, Cohesion and Faiths directorate has moved to DCLG from the Home Office. DCLG is also the sponsor department for the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR).

Department for Work and Pensions

The New Deal schemes now in place include programmed help for lone parents, generally women. For more about New Deal go to the Thematic Update for Theme A or direct to:

<http://www.newdeal.gov.uk/newdeal.asp?DealID=LPAR>

Cabinet Office

Delivery for Families and Children is a key component of the government's drive to get unemployed parents off benefit and back to work. A lack of affordable childcare is now widely seen as a barrier to work for many parents and this report discusses measures to ensure that affordable, good quality childcare provision is available to everyone.

For the report's findings, and the implications for government spending, go to:

<http://www.number-10.gov.uk/su/childcare/index.htm>

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)

In March 2000, the DTI established a Challenge Fund to provide free consultancy advice to companies that want to introduce innovative working arrangements, which benefit their business, their employees and their customers. Since the campaign was first launched, 448 organisations across England and Scotland have benefited from funding. These organisations come from the private, public and voluntary sectors and they represent a wide range of industry and service sectors. Applications for the Fund closed on 31 July 2003.

For further information, read section 9.0 or go to:

http://164.36.164.20/work-lifebalance/funding_challenge.html

Office of Science and Technology, DTI

Promoting Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) for Women

Concerns about the under-representation of women in science, engineering and technology (SET) have been voiced by government and others since the seventies. The DTI's SET for Women Unit was set up in 1994.

The Unit's aim is to improve the recruitment, retention and progression of women throughout SET education and employment and to increase their involvement in shaping SET policy. In particular, the Unit:

- ◆ develops policies to mainstream gender in SET in the UK and the EU;
- ◆ develops and encourages international good practice in the field of SET for women;
- ◆ provides up-to-date statistics on the state of women's participation in SET; and
- ◆ supports organisations and networks of women within the science community, and facilitates action within them.

The Unit's long-term objective is to achieve a SET community in which it is tacitly assumed that women can have successful, rewarding careers based upon equality of opportunity at every level and throughout all institutions. Further information about the Unit can be found on their website at:

<http://www.set4women.gov.uk/>

The UK Government is committed to increasing the representation of women in SET which is why the Secretary of State appointed Baroness Greenfield early in 2002 to advise on a stronger and more strategic approach to increasing the participation of women in science, engineering and technology. The Terms of Reference of the Greenfield report were to:

- a) Consider UK activity along with overseas activities and identify priorities for more focused action;
- b) Advise on what could be done to improve the recruitment and retention of women in SET, and
- c) Increase the number of women in policy making and recognise women's achievement and contribution to SET.

The Greenfield Report can be downloaded at:

http://www2.set4women.gov.uk/set4women/research/the_greenfield_rev.htm

Women and Equality Unit (WEU), DCLG

The top priorities of the WEU are:

- ◆ increasing women's economic productivity and participation;
- ◆ strategic promotion of diversity and gender cross government, EU and beyond;
- ◆ reducing barriers to social participation;

- ◆ improving equalities legislative and institutional frameworks; and
- ◆ mainstreaming diversity in DTI policies and programmes.

The WEU runs the **Gender Research Forum**, which is co-sponsored by the Office for National Statistics and the Economic and Social Research Council. It provides users and providers of gender research with an opportunity to exchange information and views on current gender-related research. The Forum operates through bi-annual conferences, ongoing liaison and networking, and through dissemination of papers and conference proceedings. The research programme focuses on key policy areas identified for the year, as well as monitoring key indicators of the position of women in Britain and outlining changes in their position. Further information about the Forum can be found at:

http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/research/about_research.htm

The report of the WEU project *Key Indicators of Women's Position in Britain* published in November 2002, provides up-to-date information on the position of women in Britain, including appropriate indicators and baseline data by which to measure future improvements. The report on *The impact of women's position in the labour market on pay and implications for UK productivity* identifies skills deficits and labour market failures as the two main causes of gendered pay and productivity differences – with skills deficits concentrated amongst the over 40s. For further information, summaries and full reports go to:

<http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/research/index.htm>

The WEU **Gender Briefing** also provides a wide range of statistical information on women's position in the labour market and is up-dated every quarter. The Briefing is disseminated widely and posted on the Unit's website. Latest Briefing (September 2004) can be found at:

http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/research/gender_briefing_sept2004.doc

The Unit is also responsible for management of the **Castle Awards**. The awards are designed to recognise the steps taken by employers of all sizes and in all sectors to promote equality of opportunity between men and women and to address the issue of pay inequality. Further information can be found at:

<http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/pay/castle/castle.htm>

8.2 National Intermediary Organisations

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)

The EOC have a vision of a fair society for every woman and man, whatever their age, race, religion, disability or sexual orientation. They want to see:

- ◆ Women and men treated equally.
- ◆ Fair treatment, not discrimination.
- ◆ Caring roles shared.
- ◆ Equal choice, not stereotypes.
- ◆ Different lives, equal services.

- ◆ Equal power.
- ◆ Women safe from violence.

In 1999 the EOC launched the *Valuing Women* campaign specifically to address unequal pay, followed in 2000 by an *Equal Pay Task Force*. The recommendations of the subsequent report, *Just Pay* (2001), include a five pronged approach to the UK pay gap to:

- ◆ Raise awareness and develop a common understanding of what the pay gap means;
- ◆ Reform and modernise the equal pay legislation;
- ◆ Ensure that employers and trade unions know how to implement equal pay;
- ◆ Improve transparency and accountability for delivering pay equality; and
- ◆ Make sure that social, economic and labour market policies complement equal pay measures.

The EOC has also set targets for pay reviews by employers to be completed as follows:

- ◆ 50% of large employers (500 workers or more) by the end of 2003;
- ◆ 25% of employers with less than 500 workers by the end of 2005.

To support this, the EOC has developed an Equal Pay Review Kit to help employers assess their pay structures by comparing the pay of men and women doing equal work, explaining any pay gaps and closing those gaps that cannot satisfactorily be explained on grounds other than sex. This Review Kit is available at:

<http://www.eoc.org.uk/cseng/advice/equalpay.asp>

The EOC also produces a Working Papers Series. Recent titles include *Gender and Poverty in Britain* (2003) and *Qualifications and Careers: Equal Opportunities and earnings among graduates* (2002).

Launched in 2001, the 'What's Stopping You?' campaign targets young people with posters and postcards, and makes policy recommendations for action by government and others.

As previously mentioned, in June 2003, the EOC launched a national inquiry into occupational segregation. This general formal investigation *No more jobs for the boys and jobs for the girls* focuses on modern apprenticeships in five sectors: construction, plumbing, engineering, ICT, and childcare. The investigation explores the relationships between gender segregation in training and at work, and skills and pay gaps in the UK. Between June and December 2003 the investigation carried out two pieces of research:

- ◆ A statistical overview of occupational segregation, skills gaps and pay gaps;
- ◆ A survey of all 47 Learning and Skills Councils, the funding organisations for Modern Apprenticeships, to identify how choice and equality are promoted by the system, including rates of pay.

The research findings have been published in *Occupational segregation, gender gaps and skill gaps* – report. In 2004 the campaign examines the effectiveness of current initiatives to challenge stereotyped choices and carry out qualitative research, including focus groups, with young people, employers and training providers.

For further information about the work of the EOC in Scotland and Wales go to: <http://www.eoc.org.uk> and follow the links provided.

The Trade Union Congress (TUC) and Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC)

These organisations take a significant role in campaigning for improved employment and workplace practices on equality. In September 2002, the TUC Equal Pay Project received more funding to revise and update training materials in collaboration with the Equal Opportunity Commission, to provide training on Equal Pay and to further understand how the pay gap occurs. More information can be found at:

<http://www.tuc.org.uk/equality/index.cfm>

Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)

These new bodies replace the sector based National Training Organisation from 2002 onwards; they are licensed by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills and the Lifelong Learning Ministers in Scotland and Wales.

The four key goals of Sector Skills Councils are to:

- ◆ Reduce skills gaps and shortages and increase the speed of development and transition by sectors;
- ◆ Develop specific actions that lead to improved productivity, business and public services performance;
- ◆ Take action leading to the development of the whole sector's workforce; and
- ◆ Influence action that leads to improvement in learning supply.

Sector Skills Councils will be independent business-led organisations. Their Boards will be representative of employers in their sector, including small business where appropriate, with other members drawn from trade unions and professional bodies. More information is available on the Sector Skills Development Agency website:

<http://www.ssda.org.uk/>

Opportunity Now

This is a business-led campaign, with over 350 members, that works with employers to realise the economic potential and business benefits that women at all levels contribute to the workforce – by challenging complacency and tackling barriers to women's progress, and encouraging an inclusive culture in the workplace. The campaign is part of Business in the Community, a not-for-profit organisation, committed to continually improving their positive impact on society.

The campaign launched a research report in September 2004 titled *A Place for Women or a Woman's Place?* providing an insight into the role that women play in some of Northern Ireland's Top 100 companies. The report highlighted that although there is a greater number of women in the workplace, women are still under-represented at senior levels, and where they are better represented they tend to be segregated into 'traditional female roles', for example administration, human resources, support roles.

There are regional as well as national level activities carried out by Opportunity Now, which may be of importance to DPs in their mainstreaming activity. Forthcoming activities and events are in the fields of equal pay, diversity in the workforce, childcare, sector based campaigns, networking employers together to share information and good practice.

For more information go to:

<http://www.opportunitynow.org.uk/>

8.3 National and Regional Agencies taking a lead on Gender Mainstreaming

Department of Trade and Industry

Gender mainstreaming is central to the European Community's community action programme and the UK Government's efforts to improve public services and encourage greater representation of women in public life. It means that the normal ideas, attitudes or activities of society routinely incorporate a gender perspective and become a normal feature of mainstream thinking. The DTI's Women and Equality Unit takes the lead on gender equality in government. Information about the work of the unit is available in section 8.1 of this update and also on their website:

<http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/index.htm>

Learning And Skills Councils

The national LSC supports local LSCs in establishing a framework for action within which all Council activities can contribute towards promoting equality between men and women. The national LSC equality and diversity strategy aims to ensure that sex equality is prioritised in planning and operational activities. It encourages staff to promote sex equality in learning provision, to develop mechanisms to challenge learning and occupational sex stereotyping, contribute to reducing skills gaps and challenging curriculum and occupational segregation by sex.

For general information about the national, regional and local Learning and Skills Councils go to the Thematic Update for Lifelong Learning, Theme E or direct to:


<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/>

Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)

RDAs are expected to gain a comprehensive understanding of population profile and the diversity of communities to inform their regional strategies and analyse their equality monitoring data on a regular basis to identify possible barriers to opportunities. They must

set clear priorities and plans for contributing to the equality agenda, e.g. targets for the involvement in and benefit of all groups from regional strategies and publish progress against targets and objectives for equality in annual reports.

Further information about the RDAs, along with links to individual websites, can be found at:
<http://www.consumers.gov.uk/rda/info/>



9.0 Work-Life Balance

EQUAL Theme G / work-life balance has not been adopted in Great Britain.

The Employment Act (2002) includes a right for women to request flexible working, thus allowing them to remain active in the labour market.

In April 2003, working parents gained new employment rights to help them juggle work and family life. For the first time mothers and fathers will have a right to be able to apply to work flexible hours, fathers will be able to take paternity leave, parents who adopt will be able to take paid adoption leave, and the arrangements for maternity leave and pay will be simplified.

This new duty for employers to seriously consider requests for flexible working from parents of young children will benefit mothers who have chosen to return to work because flexible working will be available to them for the first time.

A recent report from the DTI and Treasury - *Balancing work and family life: enhancing choice and support for parents* – identifies the following key drivers for change:

- ◆ a transformation in the way families organise their work, with a strong trend among couples away from single-earner towards dual-earner families and sustained growth in lone parent employment;
- ◆ a dramatic increase in the proportion of employees with caring responsibilities;
- ◆ the combination of a competitive business environment and the current labour market context, bringing new challenges for employers and employees.

The government's stated strategy includes:

- ◆ supporting parents' choices.
- ◆ tailoring support to family circumstances.
- ◆ working in partnership with business to promote the benefits of flexible working and support the take up of best practice approaches.

Employers will be encouraged to help employees to balance work and family life through improved provision of leave, work arrangements, childcare support, training and information. The *Challenge Fund*, established in March 2000, already provides free consultancy advice to companies who want to introduce innovative working arrangements that will benefit their business, their employees and their customers. An evaluation of the Fund (26.08.2004) indicates that the Fund has enabled employers to introduce significant changes in their employment practices so as to create greater awareness of, and develop policies to support, work-life balance. Key success factors in implementation included the need for a participative approach, involving all employees, and the need for senior management commitment.

The DTI has also collected data and researched the impacts of Work Life balance and flexible working in the UK, covering both employer and employee perspectives. *The Second Work-Life Balance Study: Results from the Employees' Survey* was published in March 2004 and *The Second Work-Life Balance Study: Results from the Employers' Survey* came out in November 2003.

These reports can be found at:

<http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/inform.htm>

The DTI /treasury report is available at:

<http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/individual/balancing.pdf>

10.0 Summary - What Does This Mean For Equal?

Equality of opportunity is one of the four pillars of the European Employment Strategy, and as such is central to the formulation and monitoring of Member States' national Employment Action Plans. The EU's mainstreaming policy also commits it to pursuing the goal of gender equality through all of its policies, legislative measures and other activities, not just those with equal opportunities as their primary purpose.

Gender mainstreaming, in its role as a central element in the Commission's new framework strategy, provides an open door for DPs to adapt and introduce new initiatives specifically to address particular gender issues but also to highlight and promote other successful gender mainstreaming at national or transnational level.

The Commission is also keen to take up gender issues within the programme of EU research activities for 2002–06. The recommendations from the Gender Impact Assessment of the previous (fifth) programme highlighted the need for:

- ◆ Wider dissemination of a reinforced policy message;
- ◆ Developing greater capacity to put policy into practice;
- ◆ Mainstreaming gender within the research areas, documentation, evaluation and promotional materials;
- ◆ Evaluation panels should be gender sensitive;
- ◆ Improve the production of disaggregated statistics, gender sensitive indicators;
- ◆ Produce targets for participation of women in the programmes;
- ◆ Specific actions to facilitate women's participation as experts, mentors and role models.

Additional mainstreaming activities could include:

- ◆ Combating discrimination and employer perceptions and promoting desegregation among employers;
- ◆ Piloting ways of breaking down and overcoming stereotypes of 'women's and men's work' and roles among parents, peers, teachers, careers advisers, training providers and employers;
- ◆ Promoting occupational desegregation, e.g. in SET occupations through the entry of women at technician level and below, giving priority to help women train for and fill the ICT skills gap (priority could be given to young women, older women, 'multiply disadvantaged' women as appropriate).

The Theme H TNG is already starting to identify the key outcomes and routes for mainstreaming across Member States as well as within the UK. The inclusion of representatives from the DTI, EOC, Welsh Assembly and Scottish Executive should facilitate mainstreaming at national, regional and partnership level within the UK.