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Nordic Gender Institute –  
NIKK

# Mapping the field of gender equality in the Nordic countries

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This brochure presents the most important authorities and other national-level actors in the field of gender equality and gender research in the Nordic countries, i.e. Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden and the autonomous territories of the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland. NGOs that focus on gender issues in the Nordic countries constitute a wide and constantly changing group. The aim here is to mention those NGOs that are most visible on the national level. The actors are described according to the situation prevailing in May 2010.

## Nordic co-operation

The Council of Ministers for Gender Equality (MR-JÄM) leads the Nordic governments' co-operation in the area of gender equality. The Council consists of Ministers responsible for gender equality in each of the Nordic countries and autonomous territories. The Council is part of the Nordic Council of Ministers, which is the principal forum for Nordic governmental co-operation.

The ministers' co-operation is assisted by the senior officials in the Nordic Executive Committee on Gender Equality (EK-JÄM) and by the Secretariat for the Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality.

The Nordic Gender Institute (NIKK) is a transnational resource- and information centre on gender research and gender equality in the Nordic countries funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers and currently located at the University of Oslo in Norway.

NIKK initiates, co-ordinates, and executes projects that focus on central gender equality issues. In addition NIKK disseminates information on the results of Nordic gender research and gender equality policies primarily through the web www.nikk.no, an electronic news letter and the publication NIKK Magasin.

NIKK co-operates with local and national research centres, associations, information and documentation centres as well as with gender equality units in the Nordic countries.

Co-operation between Nordic gender researchers takes place, amongst other things, via the Nordic Association for Women's Studies and Gender Research and the Nordic Association for Research on Men and Masculinities. Both associations also publish a journal. NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research is an interdisciplinary English-language journal. NORMA - Nordic Journal of Masculinities Studies is a forum for masculinity studies in the Nordic countries conducted in both English and Scandinavian languages.

# Denmark

Danish gender equality politics is led by the Minister for Climate and Energy and Gender Equality.

## Authorities

The Minister for Gender Equality is responsible for developing the Government's gender equality politics and implementing gender mainstreaming both within the Government and in other areas of public administration. At the same time, all ministries are responsible for integrating a gender equality perspective in their field of competence. In Danish legislation discrimination on the basis of gender is separated from other anti-discrimination legislation, and hence the mandate of the authorities mostly covers gender equality between men and women.

The goals and achievements of the gender equality policies are presented in a yearly Perspective and Action Plan published by the Minister. The responsibilities of the Minister include laying down rules and guidelines for gender equality work and undertaking initiatives with regard to special measures to promote gender equality and equal opportunities. In addition, the Minister is responsible for performing national and international tasks that relate to international co-operation.

The Department of Gender Equality performs the function of a secretariat for the Minister. In addition it is responsible for launching initiatives and preparing legislation and administrative rules concerning gender equality, coordinating and developing gender mainstreaming in the Government, implementing the Government's policies and the Action Plan and advising the Minister and Parliament on matters concerning gender equality.

The Gender Equality Board is an independent organ that deals with complaints about gender discrimination and the Board's decisions are final within the administrative system. Decisions can be referred to a court of law. Furthermore the Board also has an advisory role and it provides guidance to the authorities and the general public.

In addition there are gender equality consultants in the municipalities and among the local labour authorities.

## Information and research

The Department of Gender Equality and Statistics Denmark have created a common databank on gender equality statistics. In addition, information on key statistics on gender equality can be found in the leaflet Facts on Gender Equality issued by the Department.

KVINFO is the Danish Centre for Information on Gender, Equality and Ethnicity. Its primary objective is to promote the results of gender research to the general public, and to contribute to gender equality in society. KVINFO hosts a research library, and provides a wide range of online resources on women's history and gender issues, including a expert database on women in

different branches. The centre also runs a national mentor network for immigrant women and is engaged in international co-operations on women's rights and equal opportunities. KVINFO is a grant-maintained self-governing institution under the Ministry of Culture.

Womendialogue.org is a platform provided by KVINFO for cooperation and debate on gender between Danish and Arab civil society.

All About Gender in Denmark is KVINFO's English language information service on women, gender and society and gender research in Denmark:

The Co-ordination for Gender Studies in Denmark is a co-operation network for gender research units. The tasks of the Co-ordination cover internationalization and initiation of international projects, as well as dissemination of gender research. The network also publishes an interdisciplinary journal Women, Gender & Research.

Foreningen for Kønsforskning i Danmark is the national organization for researchers in the field of gender research.

NeMM is a network for researchers in the field of men and masculinities.

The Women's Museum in Denmark is a state recognized national specialist museum on women's lives and work in Danish culture-history.

Contact information for the units of gender research at the universities and other institutions of higher education.

## Organizations

The Women's Council in Denmark is an umbrella organization for women's organizations, the equal status committees of the political parties, trade unions, professional women's groups, migrant and refugee women and gender studies researchers.

Dansk Kvindesamfund is an independent women's organization that works for gender equality.

Selskab for Ligestilling (Society for Equality) is an independent NGO that works for gender equality.

Feministisk forum is a Copenhagen based network to create discussion on gender and gender equality.

KULU is a Danish umbrella organization for women's groups and organizations working with women and development issues.

LOKK is a national organization for crisis centres for women.

LBL is the Danish National Association of Gays & Lesbians.

# The Faroe Islands

The Gender Parity Commission has an advisory role and advises authorities and institutions as well as the general public regarding issues of gender equality.

# Greenland

Gender equality in Greenland is promoted through The Gender Equality Council, that among other things, monitors the development of gender equality in society and advises both the authorities and the general public.

# Finland

The highest level of political responsibility for issues related to gender equality rests with the Minister of Culture and Sport.

## Authorities

Gender equality politics in Finland is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (MSAH). In Finland there are two separate pieces of legislation in the field of discrimination, one on gender-based discrimination, and the other on discrimination on other bases, and hence the mandate of authorities responsible for gender equality covers mostly issues related to equality between women and men. The national gender equality mechanisms in Finland consist of three entities.

The Gender Equality Unit (TASY) in the MSAH is responsible for drafting and developing the Government's gender equality policy in collaboration with other ministries and preparing national legislation. The main tool for the government's gender equality policies is the Government's Action Plan for Gender Equality. The Unit's responsibilities also include tasks related to the European Union's equality legislation and policies as well as international affairs. The Unit co-ordinates gender mainstreaming in the state administration.

The Ombudsman for Equality is an independent authority within the MSAH that monitors and oversees compliance with legislation concerning gender equality, promotes the purpose of the Act of Equality and provides information about it. In addition, the Ombudsman supervises the implementation of protection of gender minorities against discrimination.

The Equality Board is an independent committee that oversees compliance with gender equality legislation and resolves matters related to it.

The Council for Gender Equality (TANE) is a parliamentary body assigned to promote gender equality. Its tasks include monitoring the implementation of gender equality, taking initiatives and issuing statements regarding the development of legislation and supporting collaboration between authorities and organizations and promoting gender research.

## Information and research

Minna - Centre for Gender Equality Information in Finland gathers data and information about research concerning gender equality in Finland. The tasks of Minna include dissemination of information and provision of information services to authorities, researchers and the general public as well as collaboration on the national level with authorities, researchers and NGOs.

The website [minna.fi](http://minna.fi) provides, among other things, news about current research and projects, a dissertation database, an expert database and essential statistics. Minna is funded by the MSAH.

Statistics Finland, a public authority specifically established for the production of statistics, is responsible for the vast majority of Finnish official statistics. It produces gender specific statistics and statistics on gender equality on different areas of society. Statistics Finland also produces the publication Women and Men in Finland on a bi-annual basis.

Every four years the MSAH and Statistics Finland publish the Equality Barometer, which reports on the state of gender equality in the country and the gendered division of work and power relations in different areas of life.

Women's studies and gender studies are taught in several Finnish universities, and collaborative bodies exist to promote the discipline. HILMA – the University Network for Gender Studies is a collaboration network for women's and gender studies units in Finland. The Association for Women's Studies in Finland (SUNS) is the national scientific association that promotes Women's Studies. The Finnish Society for Studies on Men (SUMS) is the national scientific association that promotes Studies on Men. The Society of Queer Studies in Finland (SQS) is an academic society that promotes queer studies.

Contact information for the units of gender research at the universities and other institutions of higher education.

## Organizations

The Coalition of Finnish Women's Association (NYTKIS) is an umbrella organisation for the women's associations of all the political parties represented in the Finnish Parliament, as well as for three politically unaffiliated women's associations.

The National Council of Women of Finland is an umbrella organization of women's organizations in Finland.

The Feminist Association Unioni is a non-governmental women's organization that makes public statements, publishes expert opinions on women's issues and comments on legislative initiatives.

Monika-naiset is an NGO for women from minority ethnic groups.

SETA is a national NGO that works to promote equality among different sexualities, gender identities and ways of expressing gender.

Gender specific activism on men's rights is less established but there are distinct groups promoting men's rights of which Miessakit focuses on men's social rights, Profeministimiehet is a men's organization that promotes feminism, and Miesten tasa-arvo is a men's organization that aims to promote gender equality by concentrating on discrimination against men.

# Åland

The Gender Equality Unit in Åland co-ordinates work for gender equality. It is placed in the Government of Åland.

The Discrimination Ombudsman (DO) is an independent authority headed by the Province of Åland, and it works to prevent discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation.

# Iceland

The Minister of Social Affairs is in charge of the implementation of gender equality legislation.

## Authorities

The official gender equality apparatus in Iceland is divided into three separate entities.

The Centre for Gender Equality within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Security is the national organ in charge of monitoring the legislation on gender equality, and developing policies on gender equality as well as making initiatives to promote it. In addition, the centre provides counselling and education in the field of gender equality for the government and municipal authorities, different organizations and the general public.

The Gender Equality Council is a parliamentary organ nominated by the Minister of Social Affairs and Social Security. It consists of representatives of employees and employers' interest organizations as well as women's associations. The council has an advisory role, and prepares the Gender Equality Forum that discusses the development of gender equality in Iceland.

The Gender Equality Complaints Committee examines complaints about violations of the gender equality legislation.

## Information and research

The Center for Women's and Gender Research (RIKK) is an independent research institute at the University of Iceland. It also serves as the hub of a network for gender researchers in Iceland.

The Centre for Labour Law and Equal Rights aims to promote and strengthen research on Labour law and Equality rights.

## Organizations

The Icelandic Women's Rights Association is an association working to promote equal rights for women and men.

The Icelandic Women's Association is a national women's association that works for the promotion of women's rights and the securing of the interests of families.

The Feminist Association of Iceland is a free and independent forum with the goal of fostering feminist discussion.

Samtökin '78, The National Queer Organization, is an interest and an activist group for homosexuals, bisexuals and transsexuals in Iceland.

# Norway

The primary responsibility for gender equality matters in the Norwegian government is held by the Minister for Children and Equality at The Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion (BLD), which also has the primary responsibility for gender equality and other anti-discrimination legislation and policies, but all ministries are responsible for promoting equality in their own areas of expertise.

## Authorities

The Department of Children and Equality at the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion heads the National Machinery of Gender Equality. This department oversees public policies promoting equality with regard to gender and sexual orientation. In addition the department monitors existing laws and regulations concerning gender equality. The gender equality act is an independent piece of legislation but monitoring all anti-discrimination laws have been delegated to the same authorities.

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud (LDO) operates independently within the field of expertise on gender equality but is administratively integrated within the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion. The Ombud fights discrimination and promotes equality regardless of factors like gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and age by promoting equality, enforcing the legislation by making statements in connection with complaints regarding violations of laws and regulations, and by providing guidance. In addition, the Ombud is responsible for ensuring that the Norwegian legislation, and the resulting legislation and administrative practice concerning equality are in accordance with international agreements.

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal handles complaints and appeals regarding recommendations and actions by the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud.

## Information and research

KILDEN Information Centre for Gender Research in Norway is responsible for promoting and informing about Norwegian gender research both nationally and internationally for various target groups such as students and researchers, journalists, the authorities and the general public. KILDEN works for to promote documentation of gender research in Norway. Through the online information service KILDEN provides information on recent research results and publications and current gender related themes in the media. KILDEN also maintains a gender researcher database forskerbasen.no and provides an English language newsletter.

KILDEN gets its basic financing from The Research Council in Norway. In addition, KILDEN is involved in a variety of projects with external partners.

Gender in Norway is an English language information service on the Internet about gender equality in Norway. The website provides information about official gender equality work,

gender research, and gender statistics in Norway. The website is a collaboration between various public authorities and agencies in Norway co-ordinated by KILDEN.

The Committee for Gender Balance in Research supports and provides recommendations on measures that can contribute to the mainstreaming of the gender equality efforts in academia and other research institutions. The committee is appointed and funded by the Ministry of Education and Research.

Statistics Norway is a public authority specifically established for the production of official statistics, and publishes gender specific statistics on different areas of society. Statistics Norway also produces a publication Women and Men in Norway that draws together the gender-specific statistics concerning the daily lives of women and men. In addition, Statistics Norway publishes a Gender Equality Index that measures gender equality on the municipal level.

Gender Studies are taught in several Norwegian universities. The Gender Studies units co-operate through The National Council for Women's Studies and Gender Research.

FOKK is an NGO for gender research through which individual researchers and students committed to the discipline co-operate.

Reform - resource centre for men is a national centre for knowledge on men funded by the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion.

In addition there are regional centres for gender equality and diversity located in the towns of Agder, Hamar and Nordfold.

Contact information for the units of gender research at the universities and other institutions of higher education.

## Organizations

The Norwegian Association for Women's Rights (Norsk Kvinnesaksforening, NKF) is a nation-wide NGO.

The Women's Front of Norway is a national feminist NGO.

The Feminist Group Ottar is a nation-wide radical independent group of feminist activists.

The MiRA CENTRE is an NGO that aims to promote equality for black, immigrant and refugee women in Norway.

FOKUS – Forum for Women and Development – is a knowledge and resource centre for international women's issues with an emphasis on the spreading of information and women-centred development co-operation

LLH - The Norwegian LGBT Association works for the equality of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people and their liberation from all forms of discrimination.

# Sweden

In Sweden gender equality politics is led by the Minister for Gender and Integration.

## Authorities

Responsibility for the coordination of government action to promote gender equality is held by the Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality.

The task of monitoring all anti-discrimination laws has been delegated to the same authority. The Swedish Equality Ombudsman (DO) is a government agency that works against discrimination and for equal opportunities. It monitors how employers, universities and schools live up to the anti-discrimination legislation's demands for measures to prevent discrimination on grounds of sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. The Ombudsman reviews gender equality plans, develops and provides methods for different institutions to prevent discrimination and informs about the legislation. The responsibilities of the Ombudsman also include international co-operation.

The programme for gender mainstreaming at governmental level (Jämi) is placed at the Secretariat for Gender Research, and is run as a project. The purpose of the programme is to provide support for governmental agencies in their work with gender mainstreaming. Jämi cooperates with other governmental institutions and has among other things produced a national website, jämställ.nu, containing information on gender mainstreaming as well as tools and methods.

The programme for sustainable gender equality serves to support gender mainstreaming on the local and regional levels. The programme is hosted by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL).

## Research and information

The Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research is a government funded information centre for gender related research. Its tasks include improving the conditions for gender research to achieve the highest international standards, disseminating the results of Swedish gender research and contributing to collaboration with the surrounding society, as well as contributing to the internationalization of gender research. To achieve its goals the Secretariat uses several different tools, such as producing popularized information in magazines and on the web and arranging conferences and seminars. The Secretariat also provides results from the gender research field in English in the form of the publication Gender research in Sweden.

The Secretariat is based at Gothenburg University and collaborates with the Women's History Collections, which is the national resource library for gender studies and has nation-wide responsibility as a documentation centre for women's, gender and men's studies. The Secretariat and the Women's History Collections primarily work together on information

distribution. The two units have jointly developed the expert database [GREDA](#) for gender researchers and the database [GENA](#) for latest dissertations in gender research.

[Sveriges Genusforskarförbund](#) is a national interest organization for gender researchers.

[Statistics Sweden](#) is responsible for the official gender statistics in Sweden. Every other year Statistics Sweden produces the publication [Women and men in Sweden. Facts and figures](#).

The [Thematic Group on Equality](#) is a project that aims to produce and spread knowledge on gender equality and work by gathering, analyzing and standardizing the information different projects have produced on the topic.

[The National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women](#) (NKC) is a knowledge and resource centre that has been commissioned by the government to increase knowledge of men's violence against women in Sweden, and to develop methods for the treatment and care of women subjected to violence.

[Contact information for the units of gender research](#) at the universities and other institutions of higher education.

## Organizations

[The Swedish Women's Lobby](#) (SWL) is a politically independent umbrella organization for women's non-governmental organizations in Sweden.

Women's associations of political parties that are influential in Sweden are mostly not members of the Swedish Women's Lobby. They are not presented here but can be reached through each political party.

[The Women's Front in Sweden](#) is a feminist NGO that aims to fight all discrimination against women.

There are two national organizations for women's and girl's shelters [Roks](#) and [SKR](#) that work to prevent violence against women.

[RIFFI](#) is the national organization for multicultural and migrant women's associations.

[RFSL](#) is the Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights.

[Män för Jämställdhet](#) is a national men's organization for gender equality.

The association [Forum för feministisk forskning i Stockholm](#) is an organization for feminist and/or female researchers. [Feministiskt Forum](#) is a network for individuals from different feminist organizations and parties.