

Facts and Figures on Gender Equality Estonia

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LEGAL FRAMEWORK:

ILO Conventions ratified:

No. 100 – ratified in 1996

No. 111, 156 and 183 – not ratified.

Estonia is the only country in the region that has not ratified Convention No. 111.

(**No. 103** – not ratified)¹

National legislation:

Gender Equality Act entered into force in May 2004. It contains inter alia: prohibition of discrimination based on sex, promotion of gender equality, resolution of disputes concerning

discrimination based on sex, regulations for Gender Equality Commissioner and Gender Equality Council.

Equality and non-discrimination provisions also placed under general law; discrimination based on several grounds including sex is hence banned through the *Employment Contracts Act* as well as the *Constitution*. The principle of equal pay for work of equal value for women and men was established for the first time in the amended *Wages Act*, from 2001.

The *Parental Benefit Act* entered into force in January 2004².

Moreover, Estonia is a country of origin regarding trafficking in women. No special anti-trafficking legislation exists except for the clause in the *Penal Code* that bans enslaving and abduction.

¹ ILO Ilolex
² ILO Natlex

GENDER EQUALITY MACHINERY:

Promotion of gender equality is under the auspices of the *Equality Bureau* within the *Ministry of Social Affairs*, the ministry in charge of labor and employment issues. The main undertakings of the Bureau, which was established in 1996, are to promote and coordinate the implementation of

equality policies and to take part in the preparation of relevant laws. In addition, a network of gender focal points has been set up within the public administration and an *Inter-ministerial Equality Commission* was formed in 1996 in order to enforce gender mainstreaming. (No changes)

SOME BASIC INDICATORS:

Female/Male economic activity rate and unemployment rate: In 2003, the total economic activity rate was 44.3% for women and 53.9% for men. During the same year, the unemployment rate (+15) was 9.9% for women and 10.2% for men³.

Female/Male part-time employment: In 2001, 11.35% of female employment and 5.07% of male employment were part-time⁴.

Sex distribution by employment sector: In 2003, 3.8% of total women employees in the agricultural sector, 22.8% in the industrial sector and 73.4% in the service sector⁵.

University graduates: In 2001, 64% of all university graduates were women⁶.

Gender wage gap: In 2001, the female average gross wage was 75.7% of the male average gross wage⁷.

Composition of tripartite body: The Social and Economic Council consisted of 12 men and 6 women in 2002⁸.

Retirement: The retirement age for men is 63 years. The age for women is currently 58 years but is to be raised with 6 months each year until it reaches 63 years as well. Both men and women have a requirement of 15 years of service⁹. (No changes¹⁰)

Maternity: The remuneration is 100% of the average income for 126 calendar days. During the maternity leave, the father is entitled 14 days of paid leave. Following the maternity leave, parental leave can be granted to either parent until the child is three years old¹¹. (No changes)

³ ILO Laborasta

⁴ UNECE

⁵ Statistical Yearbook of Estonia 2004

⁶ UNECE

⁷ Statistical Office of Estonia

⁸ ILO Working Paper 2003

⁹ ISSA

¹⁰ UNECE Paper, Geneva 2004

¹¹ ISSA

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KARAT website www.karat.org