



## European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination

### FLASH REPORT

<b>Country:</b>	Finland
<b>Title:</b>	New Government Programme
<b>Date:</b>	2 July 2019
<b>Expert:</b>	Kevät Nousiainen
<b><u>Context</u></b>	
<b>Issue at stake:</b>	New Government Programme promises amendments of gender equality law
<b>Grounds of discrimination:</b>	Gender
<b>Field of application:</b>	Equal pay, Family leave, Pregnancy and maternity, Gender mainstreaming, Violence against women
<b>Source:</b>	Government Programme

### **Content**

**Policy development:** The new Government presented its Programme on 6 June 2019.<sup>1</sup> The Programme promises that the Government will promote gender equality in various ways. Under the economic and social objectives, the Programme aims to make Finland a top country for gender equality by means of a separate gender equality programme to be presented later.

The Government Programme promises that gender impact assessments will be introduced to all Ministries.

The Government Programme also promises that pay equity will be promoted by adopting further legislation on pay transparency. The Act on Equality between Women and Men will be amended by increasing the right of the personnel, employee representatives as well as individual employees to access pay information. The traditional tripartite Equal Pay Programme should become more effective and carry out a study of the gender impact of all collective agreements.

The Government Programme also promises stricter legislation on discrimination based on use of family related leaves and on pregnancy, referring to the problems encountered in the context of fixed term employment.

The Government Programme promises that a reform of family related leave regulation is to be carried out. There was an attempt to introduce a reform already by the former Government, which was not carried out due to internal disagreements. The present Government promises to introduce a reform under which mothers and fathers will have an

---

<sup>1</sup> *Pääministeri Antti Rinteen hallituksen ohjelma 6.6.2019 Osallistava ja osaava Suomi* (Prime Minister Antti Rinne's Government's Programme 6.6.2019 Participatory and knowledgeable Finland)  
[https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/161662/Osallistava\\_ja\\_osaava\\_Suomi\\_2019\\_WEB.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/161662/Osallistava_ja_osaava_Suomi_2019_WEB.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).

equal number of non-transferable months of family related leave, but in such a way that the time that is now available for mothers will not become shorter. Both parents are promised a higher benefit during a part of their leave period. At the moment, the benefit paid to mothers for the first part of the leave is higher. The reform shall fulfil the requirements of EU law on family related leave. The Government Programme thus promises an increase of leave that is covered by income-related benefits. The period available for fathers will be extended.

There will be no reform of leave related to home care for children and related flat rate benefits. The home care leave, which may be taken until a child is three years old, has been considered a trap for women who have difficulties in finding work outside the home, such as women with low level of education and immigrant women in particular.

The Programme promises measures to combat violence against women. A new action plan is to be introduced, services to victims will be improved, a task of an independent rapporteur on violence against women will be introduced, and implementation of the Istanbul Convention enhanced. An act on assisting victims in human trafficking will be introduced, and the provisions on sexual and violent crimes assessed as to the punishments being proportionate to the criminal acts in question. The definition of rape is to be based on consent.

**Key points of analysis:** The new Government continues with equality policies (pay transparency, family related leave reform) that the previous Government introduced but failed to carry out. The family related leave system has been discussed extensively in public, and there has been a wide-spread expectation that the new Government will carry out a reform that is overdue.

The promise that pay transparency measures based on law amendment is important, when the legislation will be prepared in a tripartite manner.

The new Government introduces more extensive equality policies. Gender impact assessments have not been made during the last years but should now be started in all fields. The specific Gender Equality Programme will show the planned measures in detail.

The promised measures concerning violence against women would improve the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

**Internet link source:**

[https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/161662/Osallistava\\_ja\\_osaava\\_Suomi\\_2019\\_WEB.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/161662/Osallistava_ja_osaava_Suomi_2019_WEB.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).

Pääministeri Antti Rinteen hallituksen ohjelma 6.6.2019 *Osallistava ja osaava Suomi* (Prime Minister Antti Rinne's Government's Programme 6.6.2019 *Participatory and knowledgeable Finland*). Publications of the Government 2019:23