

Lõpuseminar „Palgaerinevuste statistika parem kättesaadavus“ 26.01.2016

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Norway's law on gender equality was introduced in 1975. Since then, a lot has changed, including attitudes. For instance, back in 1975 many considered it improper for women to participate in a marathon run. Not any more.

Changing attitudes takes a lot of time, but it can be done. In Norway we have for some time gathered statistics about the share of paid and non-paid work that men and women do. What we have seen is that young family men are more engaged in the non-paid work at home and spend less time in the workplace. But interestingly enough, the age group that shares the domestic work most equally is the 67-74 years old - a generation of men and women that grew up in a time when it was most traditional for the women to be housewives while their husbands went to work. It is obviously never too late for change.

However, we still have the pay gap. Today, women earn 86,4% of the average salary of men. 20 years ago it was 83,7%. It seems to be a very persistent gap, even if we have managed to improve it somewhat. Another finding is that the pay gap increases by age and level of education. The higher age, the bigger pay gap between men and women. And with a higher level of education comes a bigger gap in salary between men and women. Old habits are hard to die. The labor market remains segregated. There are still few men in the education and care sector, and few women take an education in the technical sector or in the natural sciences, even if women are in the majority in higher education. And still only one quarter of top leaders are women, although their share is growing.

But the gender pay gap cannot be explained by a segregated labor market alone. We still need to understand better the causes and mechanics that are behind the gender pay gap. This is a challenge both for Norway and Estonia. To fix a problem, one need to know what the problem is. To understand the nature of the problem, one need to collect information. But not just any information - you need relevant and reliable information. This is what this conference is all about. And this is why the initiative of Statistics Estonia to start gathering wage statistics by gender is a very valuable undertaking.

Norway is glad to have contributed to this project through the EEA and Norway Grants.