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***From Welfare to Knowfare.
A European Approach to Employment
and Gender Mainstreaming in the
Knowledge Based Society***

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From Welfare to Knowfare.

A European Approach to Employment and Gender Mainstreaming in the Knowledge Based Society

WELLKNOW

Final report

HPSE-CT-2002-00119

**Funded under the Key Action
'Improving the Socio-economic Knowledge Base' of FP5**

**DG Research
European Commission**

Issued in
June 2006

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Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2007

ISBN 978-92-79-07790-6

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Printed in Belgium

PRINTED ON WHITE CHLORINE-FREE PAPER

Preface

Within the Fifth Community RTD Framework Programme of the European Union (1998–2002), the Key Action 'Improving the Socio-economic Knowledge Base' had broad and ambitious objectives, namely: to improve our understanding of the structural changes taking place in European society, to identify ways of managing these changes and to promote the active involvement of European citizens in shaping their own futures. A further important aim was to mobilise the research communities in the social sciences and humanities at the European level and to provide scientific support to policies at various levels, with particular attention to EU policy fields.

This Key Action had a total budget of EUR 155 million and was implemented through three Calls for proposals. As a result, 185 projects involving more than 1 600 research teams from 38 countries have been selected for funding and have started their research between 1999 and 2002.

Most of these projects are now finalised and results are systematically published in the form of a Final Report.

The calls have addressed different but interrelated research themes which have contributed to the objectives outlined above. These themes can be grouped under a certain number of areas of policy relevance, each of which are addressed by a significant number of projects from a variety of perspectives.

These areas are the following:

- ***Societal trends and structural change***

16 projects, total investment of EUR 14.6 million, 164 teams

- ***Quality of life of European citizens***

5 projects, total investment of EUR 6.4 million, 36 teams

- ***European socio-economic models and challenges***

9 projects, total investment of EUR 9.3 million, 91 teams

- ***Social cohesion, migration and welfare***

30 projects, total investment of EUR 28 million, 249 teams

- ***Employment and changes in work***

18 projects, total investment of EUR 17.5 million, 149 teams

- ***Gender, participation and quality of life***

13 projects, total investment of EUR 12.3 million, 97 teams

- ***Dynamics of knowledge, generation and use***

8 projects, total investment of EUR 6.1 million, 77 teams

- ***Education, training and new forms of learning***

14 projects, total investment of EUR 12.9 million, 105 teams

- ***Economic development and dynamics***

22 projects, total investment of EUR 15.3 million, 134 teams

- ***Governance, democracy and citizenship***

28 projects; total investment of EUR 25.5 million, 233 teams

- ***Challenges from European enlargement***

13 projects, total investment of EUR 12.8 million, 116 teams

- ***Infrastructures to build the European research area***

9 projects, total investment of EUR 15.4 million, 74 teams

This publication contains the final report of the project 'From Welfare to Knowfare. A European Approach to Employment and Gender Mainstreaming in the Knowledge-based society', whose work has primarily contributed to the area 'The challenge of socio-economic development models for Europe'.

The report contains information about the main scientific findings of WELLKNOW and their policy implications. The research was carried out by eight teams over a period of 36 months, starting in 1 December, 2002.

The abstract and executive summary presented in this edition offer the reader an overview of the main scientific and policy conclusions, before the main body of the research provided in the other chapters of this report.

As the results of the projects financed under the Key Action become available to the scientific and policy communities, Priority 7 'Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-based society' of the Sixth Framework Programme is building on the progress already made and aims at making a further contribution to the development of a European Research Area in the social sciences and the humanities.

I hope readers find the information in this publication both interesting and useful as well as clear evidence of the importance attached by the European Union to fostering research in the field of social sciences and the humanities.

J.-M. BAER,

Director

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Acknowledgements

The work on the project **From welfare to knowfare: A European approach to employment and gender mainstreaming in the knowledge-based society** was made possible by a grant from the EU's fifth framework programme, as part of the programme 'Improving Human Research Potential and the Socio-Economic Knowledge Base.' The project partners would like to thank the EU DGXII (Research) for funding this project. This funding enabled multidisciplinary and cross country cooperation in research on neglected aspects of the Knowledge Based Society. The project partners would also like to thank their scientific officer at the EU DGXII (Research), Dr Angelos Agalianos, for his valuable support and advice during the course of the project.

The research results and arguments of the WELLKNOW project were developed at a series of workshops in Iceland, Copenhagen, Utrecht, Budapest, Barcelona, Brussels and Finland, as well as via e-mail correspondence. The project partners would like to thank the following people who participated in these workshops and/or made valuable contributions to background work, debates and discussions without being named as authors of WELLKNOW's publications:

- Mary Daly, Queen's University, Belfast;
- Oriol Homs, CIREM, Barcelona;
- Katalin Nagy, Permanent Representation of Hungary to the European Union;
- Sebastia Sarasa, University of Barcelona, Barcelona;
- Peter Steiner, Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna;
- Olga Tóth, Institute of Sociology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

The co-ordinator would like to thank Stefán Kalmansson, financial manager, Hólmfríður Sveinsdóttir, research assistant, and Birna Thorbergsdóttir researcher, for their assistance with the various administrative reports for the Commission.

Eight non-profit private institutions and universities located in Iceland, Spain, the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Austria and Brussels were responsible for the project, and about 20 researchers engaged in it at different stages during the three-year project period. The institutions were: Bifrost School of Business, Iceland; CIREM, Barcelona, Spain; Utrecht University, the Netherlands; Roskilde University, Denmark; University of Tampere, Finland; Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of

Sciences, Hungary; Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna; European Trade Union Institute, Brussels. The following researchers participated in the WELLKNOW project:

- Bifrost School of Business, Iceland, Lilja Mósesdóttir, Birna Thorbergsdóttir and Rósa G. Erlingsdóttir;
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- Utrecht University, The Netherlands, Joop Schippers, Chantal Remery and Jannecke Plantenga;
- Roskilde University, Denmark, Karen Sjørup and Kenneth Reinicke;
- University of Tampere, Finland, Pertti Koistinen and Seppo Roivas;
- Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary, László Neumann, Teréz Laky and Olga Tóth;
- Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna, Austria, Ute Behning and Margit Leuthold;
- European Trade Union Institute, Brussels, Belgium, Amparo Serrano Pascual.

Abstract

The EU's goal, set at Lisbon (2000) is to develop a model of the Knowledge Based Society (KBS) that is competitive and capable of maintaining sustainable economic growth, while providing both more and better jobs and social cohesion. This project (acronym: WELLKNOW) addressed the employment and gender challenges of the KBS. An attempt was made to measure and explain through statistical indicators and context analysis, the extent to which the progress towards the KBS involves both quality in working life and gender equality. Moreover, an analysis was made of how the European Employment Strategy and national policies have sought to regulate the transition to the KBS.

There is a broad consensus that the concept of the KBS involves diffusion of ICTs, the development of a service-based economy and a trend towards higher educational attainments. Our statistical analysis did not provide clear evidence that the progress towards the KBS in the EU-15 and Hungary and Iceland implies increased social inclusion. Instead, our analysis confirmed the existence of a strong relationship between the level of the KBS performance and different models of the welfare state. At one end of the scale are the Mediterranean countries (with low KBS scores), while at the other end of the scale are the Nordic countries (with high scores), with the Continental and Liberal (the UK) countries occupying the intermediate positions. The main difference between the Continental and Liberal countries is that the latter have higher levels of social exclusion. Regarding the EU's vision of better quality of jobs, our statistical analysis showed a positive relationship between the move towards KBS and a higher quality of jobs. The same was not true for the level of gender equality. Full gender equality is still a long way off, even in those countries with the most comparable situation of men and women. Moreover, progress towards gender equality has been less general and intense than progress towards the KBS.

The lack of legal enforcement of the European Employment Strategy (EES) means that the different welfare state models across Europe have so far played a greater role in shaping the direction of the KBS than the strategy itself. Hence, the EES is a regulatory mechanism that operates primarily at the discourse level, spreading a common understanding of problems in the area of employment and gender equality. The EU and national authorities must overcome the problems related to the rhetorical character of the EES. More detailed information must be provided on the scale, costs and time span of measures used to reach objectives of the strategy in the member countries. In addition,

greater efforts are needed to integrate issues and criticism of social partners, NGOs and gender experts into the EES.

The policy analysis revealed that gender mainstreaming has so far not empowered women or altered women's under-representation in policy-making processes at the national level. Instead, it has brought to light both how unstable women's representation is within narrowly defined policy areas that have a relatively low budget and the lack of institutional mechanisms to ensure that gender actors are able to influence non-traditional and new policy areas. The gender mainstreaming strategy applied within the framework of the EES is non-transformative as it has not led to fundamental changes in policy processes (objectives and measures) and structures (e.g. the welfare state) at the national level. Gender equality is perceived more as a derived objective of economic growth than a question of social justice and the ability of different welfare states to fulfil the EU's vision of the KBS varies. Hence, we will not necessarily see progress towards gender equality as we move to the KBS.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Project scientific results

The particularity of the project *From welfare to knowfare. A European Approach to Employment and Gender Mainstreaming in the Knowledge Based Society* (WELLKNOW) is that it tackles neglected aspects of the Knowledge Based Society (KBS) by focusing on the employment and gender dimensions of this phase in the development of European societies and their policy implications (see www.bifrost.is/wellknow.is). The project received funding from December 2002 to December 2005 from DGXII (Research) of the European Commission as a part of the EU fifth framework programme *Improving the human research potential and the socio-economic knowledge base*.

The overall objectives of the WELLKNOW project were: to identify the employment and gender challenges of the KBS; to measure and evaluate through statistical indicators and context analysis the progress towards the KBS involving both quality in working life and gender equality; to analyse how the European Employment Strategy (EES) and national policies have sought to regulate the transition to the KBS; and to identify how the EU's vision of the KBS, as presented at Lisbon (2000) has and can be realised, especially regarding gender equality. The EU's vision is to develop a KBS model that is competitive and capable of maintaining sustainable economic growth, with both more and better jobs and social cohesion.

The countries represented in the project were Austria, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, the Netherlands and Spain. Selection was carried out on the basis of the countries' diversity at the start of the twenty-first century with respect to regional location (north/south and east/west), population size (micro, small and large), welfare-state model (Mediterranean, Continental, Liberal or post-socialist, and Nordic)¹ and status in relation to the EU (member country, accession country or associate member). Hungary joined the EU in 2005 after an accession period, while Iceland (together with

¹ There are at least four models of the welfare state within the EU. They vary in their capacity to integrate and realise the employment and social objectives of the EES: (1) Nordic social democratic welfare states (for example, Denmark and Finland), where access to services and social protection is based on citizenship principles; (2) Continental corporatist welfare states (for example, Austria), where the family or voluntary organisations are responsible for care of dependents, the state provides 'last resort' services and the social insurance system reproduces labour market hierarchies (insider/outsider distinctions as well as statuses); (3) Mediterranean welfare states (for example, Spain), where pensions, health care and education are highly developed, while other services are still catching up with average EU levels and the family plays a prominent role in the provision of social services; (4) Liberal welfare states (for example, Britain and, to a lesser extent, Hungary), where public provisions are more targeted and private initiatives are encouraged. (see Mówesdóttir 2005: 60).

Norway and Lichtenstein) has been a member of the European Economic Area since 1994.

1.1. The employment and gender challenges of the Knowledge Based Society

The state-of-the-art analysis of the WELLKNOW project group involved review of concepts, theories and empirical evidence that were used to describe and verify a transition to the Knowledge Based Society (KBS) in policy and academic documents. The main changes claimed to be a part of the transition to the KBS are: a shift in economic activity from goods production to service delivery; an expansion of work organisations which are less hierarchical, more skill-intensive and more flexible; and a growth of occupations with a high information and knowledge content in their activities. The extent to which the changes have taken place and are associated with greater or fewer skills, inequalities and risks is contested.

Those who are optimistic about the nature of the changes claim that the KBS involves increasing the educational attainment of the workforces and a growing use of ICTs which will lead to economic growth, better jobs and social cohesion. The changes involved in the move towards the KBS have the potential to challenge gender inequalities as the advantages of the technology development will eventually trickle down to the rest of the society. The growth of the services sector will enhance women's employment opportunities. Finally, organisational changes may provide greater opportunities to reconcile work and private responsibilities and provide employees with more control over their working time, which in turn may facilitate a more equal division of domestic responsibilities between the sexes.

This positive scenario has been questioned by those adopting a more pessimistic approach. They doubt that there is a general trend towards the upgrading of skills and a greater quality of jobs leading to social cohesion and gender equality. Evidence reveals, for example, extensive gender segregation in high-tech occupations. A survey of job quality in the EU shows that the jobs women have involve on average less complexity and less autonomy than men's jobs (Gallie and Paugam 2002). In addition, the gender pay gap in the EU has remained unchanged in recent years as the benefits of educated women moving up the wage distribution have just offset the loss of women at the bottom in unskilled and low paid jobs. Finally, women's higher educational attainments mean that more women are moving into occupations with a wide(ning) dispersion of wages. This positive development will, however, lead to a greater gender pay gap if no counter

measures are taken as women tend to be concentrated at the lower end of the wage distribution.

Divergent developments across countries and a lack of empirical evidence manifesting the direction and the real impact of the changes underway have contributed to the controversy over what the KBS implies. It has, however, become increasingly apparent that the transition towards the KBS is socially embedded. In other words, individuals, social groups and institutions have some degree of choice in shaping the design, development and application of technologies at the same time as technology change creates conditions for breaking down prevailing power relations and institutional structures. Hence, nation states are able to influence the changes underway and can develop alternative models of the KBS with different levels of skills, inequalities and risks. However, through the European Employment Strategy (EES), the EU has brought into play a certain converging pressure by urging the member states to promote investment in people and combat social exclusion (see Serrano Pascual and Mósésdóttir eds. 2003).

1.2. The progress towards the Knowledge Based Society across Europe

A statistical analysis was undertaken as a means to answer some of the controversies around the transition towards the Knowledge Based Society (KBS) and to assess the extent to which the EU-15 member countries, Iceland and Hungary have developed the EU's vision of the KBS (see Caprile 2004a). Four indices were developed to capture the main employment and gender challenges of the KBS that had been identified in the state-of-the-art analysis in the first part of the project work. These four indices were: a general index on the KBS, for benchmarking economic, technical and social performance (KBS index); an index on the quality of working life (QWL index) and two gender indices, one on the Knowledge Based Society (GE-KBS index) and one on the quality of working life (GE-QWL index).

The main empirical results for each index, covering the EU-15 Member States plus Iceland and Hungary were as follows:

- The overall KBS scores show a clear divide between Scandinavian and Mediterranean countries. Denmark and Sweden, followed by Finland and the Netherlands, score highest. Portugal is found in the lowest position, followed by Greece, Italy, Spain and Hungary. From 1997 to 2002, there has been a general improvement on KBS scores. Germany is the only country with a (slightly) negative percentage change.

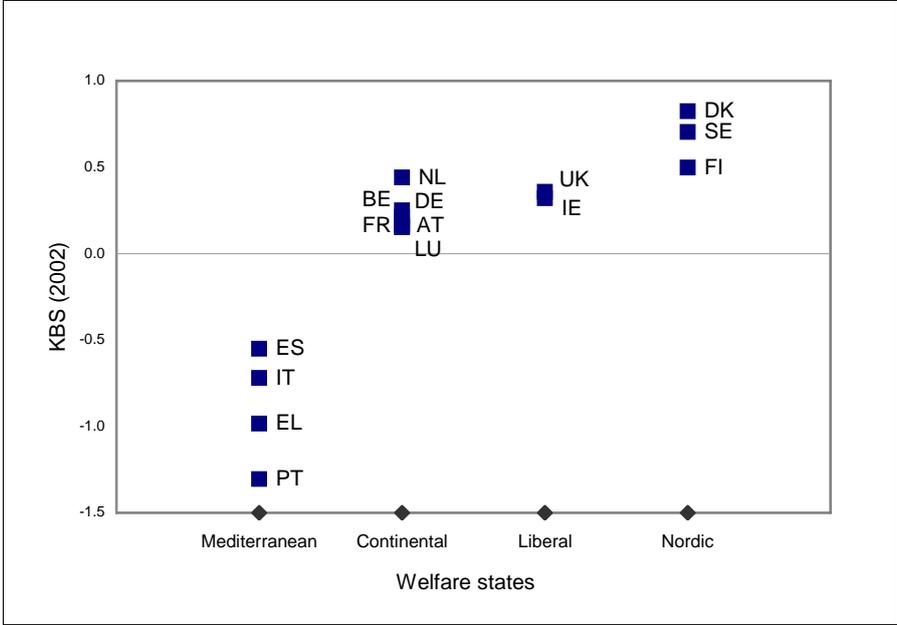
- Again, Scandinavian countries score highest on the GE-KBS, although in this case Mediterranean countries are not found as a homogenous group in the worst positions: Germany, Netherlands, Luxembourg and Greece close the ranking. However, even in the Scandinavian countries, full gender equality is still a long way off: the highest score is 0.65, being very far from the value 1 which corresponds to a situation of complete gender equality. Trends from 1997-2002 are rather contradictory (gender equality increased in some countries, but decreased in others). It is worth noting that progress towards gender equality has been less general and intense than progress towards the KBS.
- Denmark scores highest on QWL, followed by Austria, the Netherlands and Sweden, whilst Spain and Greece close the ranking. In general terms, there has been some improvement in QWL scores from 1997 to 2002; Finland is the only country with a negative percentage change.
- With regard to GE-QWL, Austria and Denmark score highest, while Spain is found last, well behind the other countries. Again, however, full gender equality is still a long way off, even in those countries with the most favourable situation, as the maximum score is lower than 0.8, with 1 being the highest possible score. Furthermore, progress towards gender equality is far from being a general trend. In a large number of countries, inequality actually appears to have increased from 1997 to 2002.

The performances of the seven WELLKNOW countries varied considerably (see Remery, Schippers and Caprile 2005). All seven countries have their own specific patterns with regard to employment, the KBS and gender equality. A number of general patterns are also visible, however. Denmark and Finland, both representatives of the Nordic welfare state model, seem furthest on the way towards the KBS model for which the European Commission is aiming. They have reached the Lisbon targets and are doing relatively well in respect of almost all indices. Denmark has high scores on all indices; Finland has high scores on three out of four indices and scores average on the QWL index. Both countries are well-developed welfare states with a high educational level, a strong emphasis on public provision and a long tradition of gender mainstreaming. Spain, on the other hand, has negative scores on all indices. In addition, Spain is a long way from meeting the Lisbon targets. The remaining countries show a mixture of positive and negative results.

What may be concluded about these performances in terms of the EU's model of the KBS? Does progress towards the KBS imply more social inclusion, better jobs and gender equality? Our analysis did not provide clear evidence that the progress towards the KBS

implies more social inclusion (see Caprile 2004a). An important factor contributing to this lack of a relationship is that the progress towards the KBS involving social cohesion is closely linked to the different models of the welfare state. In this case, our statistical analysis confirms the existence of a strong relationship between the level of the KBS performance and the different models of the welfare state: Mediterranean, Continental, Liberal and Nordic.² As Figure 1 shows, three broad groups of countries can be distinguished: at one end of the scale are the Mediterranean countries (with low KBS scores), while at the other end of the scale are the Scandinavian countries (with high scores), with the Continental and Liberal countries occupying the intermediate positions. The main difference between the Continental and Liberal countries is that the latter have higher levels of social exclusion.

Figure 1. Relationship between welfare state regimes and KBS scores.



Source: Caprile 2004a.

The empirical evidence of our analysis is in line with approaches stating that economic and technical progress is not unavoidably associated with social progress. It also gives support to claims that policies do have an impact as we were able to establish a connection between different models of the welfare state and different models of transition towards the KBS.

² Results are significant for the Anova test (significance <0.001); eta square=0.92 (three groups of countries considered: Nordic, Mediterranean and continental-liberal).

The question that remains to be answered is whether the progress towards the KBS implies more gender equality? Again, our analysis did not provide evidence for this and when recent trends were analysed, there proved to be no correlation at all (see Caprile 2004a). However, the lack of a relationship between gender equality and the different models of transition towards the KBS (and welfare state models) should not be surprising. As is well known, the debate still continues concerning how to include the gender dimension fully in an analysis of the welfare state, and it is widely agreed that the previously used typology does not achieve this. Moreover, our study uses a KBS concept that precludes key aspects of gender equality, such as equal pay and the equal sharing of care for children and dependents.

2. Policy implications

In principle, one can say that the European Employment Strategy (EES) has worked, at least at the level of the exchange of ideas. Outside the mutual learning process, it seems that the EES is an effective tool for spreading specific policy ideas, such as lifelong learning, gender mainstreaming and activation. The problem is that these general and commonly accepted policy ideas have not been conceptualised, operationalised and benchmarked accurately in order to achieve integrated policy outcomes. The National Action Plans are not innovative with regard to the Knowledge Based Society (KBS) and gender mainstreaming. They represent instead the tradition of active labour market policy (with the emphasis on training and support measures for the unemployed) rather than the EU strategies concerning the KBS (such as People First 1996), gender mainstreaming and the Lisbon agenda.

The EU and national authorities must overcome the problems related to the rhetorical character of the National Action Plans. More comprehensive knowledge of performances and policies of each country will enable a better understanding of the different starting levels and advances of the member countries regarding the employment and gender objectives. In addition, more detailed information must be provided of the scale, costs and time span of policies, legislation, institutions, projects and programmes playing a role in achieving these common objectives in the member countries. Finally, greater efforts are needed to integrate issues and criticism of social partners, NGOs and gender experts into the National Action Plans which in most cases are the responsibility of public officials.

In the seven WELLKNOW countries (Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Spain, Iceland and Hungary), committees and actors shaping policies in the area Knowledge Based Society (KBS) have in most cases a clear gender bias in favour of men. Strategies

to promote knowledge and technology often make only a general reference to gender mainstreaming by stressing that both men and women will benefit from flexible working arrangements and training possibilities. In most of the seven countries, the responsibility for the KBS area has been given to prime ministers' offices and to ad hoc committees at the ministerial level that distribute a relatively large budget to individual projects and measures. This contrasts with the low budget and low profile action programmes in the area of gender equality which are in most cases the responsibility of an individual ministry. If we are going to see the same progress to gender equality as we move to the KBS, the gender mainstreaming strategy must be given the same status within the public administration and budget as policies promoting the KBS.

Women's limited political opportunities to challenge definitions of gender problems means that the focus is mainly on women's deficiencies or lack of engagement in paid work and/or insufficient technical skills and not on men's deficiencies such as insufficient skill levels (in some countries) and a lack of engagement in care of children and dependents both in the labour market and in the household. In other words, women and their needs and interests must be included into policy-making and the problem formulation of policy approaches should be reconstructed to include men. Moreover, greater cooperation between social partners, public officials, experts on gender equality and political actors on gender issues is needed in order to ensure effective implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy.

The majority of the countries have followed a two-track strategy involving both lifelong strategies under active labour market policies and special measures/action programmes to promote the KBS. In the young policy field of the KBS, it is rather difficult to identify common objectives across the seven WELLKNOW countries since measures and references to the KBS are often indirect and dispersed. The overall approach to the KBS in the WELLKNOW countries has been socio-economic as universal access to ICTs and the creation of new jobs and better employability through training and education are emphasised. References were made to the needs of society at large rather than specific disadvantaged groups. Moreover, the social and gender implications of technical changes were seldom mentioned. Hence, there is a risk that too much emphasis is put on education and training at the cost of other vital aspects related to the KBS. In the majority of the countries, efforts to increase the number of students choosing technical education have been implemented but have been largely unsuccessful. The reason for the ineffectiveness of policies striving to enhance women's educational and job opportunities in the KBS is that the measures are in most cases temporary and do not question the male-oriented nature of natural and technical science.

A stronger synergy should be developed between the National Action Plans and new policy areas such as the KBS and gender mainstreaming. Examples of synergies between different policy areas are when measures to improve opportunities to combine work and family life use the possibilities of ICTs and when educational policies recognise the specific problems women experience as they enter highly skilled technical training and professions. Moreover, measures must be taken to prevent traditional gender division of work to be reproduced in new sectors and jobs and to ensure that women's skills are recognised as formal skills and rewarded financially in the same way as men's. The EU and the member states need to be much more aware of the outcomes of central policy strategies such as life-long learning. The life-long learning strategy not only has the potential of enhancing the skill level in the labour market. It also opens doors to further differentiation between men and women.

In most cases, the gender mainstreaming strategy has become a question of political rhetoric and policy methodology instead of a tool to transform gender relations. If the gender mainstreaming strategy is to move from being a discourse to a transformative mechanism, it must ensure that policy processes and structures are changed in a fundamental way – not only in under-performing countries but also in over-performing countries when it comes to medium term targets for gender equality. Policy objectives should consider gender equality in its own right and be sensitive to the fact that objectives can be contradictory or have contradictory implications for gender equality. The construction or definition of the problems to be solved needs to be reconstructed or focus on men as well as on women. Moreover, diversity across and within groups of men and women on the one hand and countries on the other hand should be recognised as the benefits of the transition towards the KBS are unevenly distributed.

Measures to promote gender equality must be changed from statements of good intentions to action programmes involving the active engagement of actors such as the social partners. Moreover, these measures must to be designed in such a way that they lead to the equal distribution of resources, equal participation in both paid and unpaid work as well as equal representation of men and women at each level of decision-making and in different spheres of society. An institutional mechanism is also needed to ensure the empowerment of women (in terms of inclusion, resources and construction of the problems), the use of gender expertise when it comes to planning, implementing and evaluating policies and to deal with the resistance of those responsible for carrying out the gender mainstreaming strategy or opposing greater gender equality. Each actor inside and outside the state apparatus must be given a clear responsibility for the realisation of the gender mainstreaming strategy and must be provided with the necessary training, time, money and tools. Finally, institutional reforms should be

facilitated at both the international and national levels if the needs of new groups such as women in the labour market cannot be met or acted upon within the prevailing structural framework. The responsibility for the gender mainstreaming strategy and its institutional framework should, for example, be given to the prime minister's office in each country in order to increase the status of the strategy and its effectiveness.

Our analyses revealed that policies influence the way in which countries progress towards EU's goal of the Knowledge Based Society. However, the impact of policies is shaped by the wider political and social context prevailing at the national level. More extensive public services to ensure women's labour force participation have, for example, been difficult to integrate into the Continental and the Mediterranean welfare states, in which the family has responsibility for caring for children and dependents. In contrast, the Nordic welfare states already have extensive service provisions and in principle have also been able to meet new needs, such as universal access to ICTs and high skill levels. However, the move towards the KBS has created new incompatibilities and made it increasingly difficult for workers to reconcile the increasing demands of paid work and caring for children and dependents. Hence, the development towards the dual breadwinner model and equal participation of men and women is dependent on the type of welfare state, and the EES is putting a lot of pressure on institutional structures in countries in which the male breadwinner model prevails. At the same time, countries performing relatively well in terms of the strategy's gender objectives are using their favourable position to justify the lack of further progress.

There are four possible developmental paths towards the Lisbon goal. The first path is characterised by a lack of focus on either the KBS or gender. This situation should be avoided as it would result in economic stagnation or even decline, while at the same time there is a high risk of gender exclusion. None of the seven WELLKNOW countries seems to be on this path. On the second path countries focus particularly on the development of the KBS and put less emphasis on gender integration. Although this path might result in increased competitiveness, the price may be a high level of social exclusion. The Netherlands is an example of the second path, with high scores on the KBS but lower scores on gender equality. The third path is characterised by a strong focus on gender equality and gender integration but without a clear connection with the KBS. In this case there will be a high level of social inclusion, but the price may be lower economic growth. The situation in Austria seems to correspond to the third path: higher scores on gender equality and lower scores on the KBS. In the last path, both gender and the KBS have a clear, simultaneous focus. This is the path the EU is aiming for. The Nordic countries score high on the KBS and perform well with regard to gender equality compared with

other countries. However, full gender equality is still a long way off in the Nordic countries and it is, therefore, not obvious that they are on the fourth path.

II. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

1. Rationale

The project tackles neglected aspects of the Knowledge Based Society (KBS) by focusing on the employment and gender dimensions of this phase in the development of European societies and their policy implications. The underlying force believed to be driving the transition to KBS is the growing use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), creating economic growth and social progress. Widespread use of ICTs, the shift towards knowledge-intensive organisations and employment, as well as more extensive employment regulation at the European level have contributed to the growing importance of what we would like to term 'knowledgefare' or 'knowfare' across Europe. Knowfare refers to policies promoting education and lifelong learning in order to stimulate employment participation throughout the life-cycle as opposed to welfare policies, ensuring a certain standard of living via a benefit system. In the KBS, human competence is at the core of economic development, with the state increasingly taking responsibility for establishing incentives for firms and individuals to enhance and upgrade skill levels in order to reduce the risk of unemployment. However, individuals are expected to take on the responsibility of investing in the 'right' education and lifelong learning themselves.

Studies of transitional labour markets reveal an increasing tendency for individuals to be constantly crossing the boundaries between paid work, education and private sphere (see, for example, Heuvel et al. 2004). Moreover, new technologies and organisational changes are believed to favour the reconciliation of work and personal life and to provide employees with more control over their work. However, evidence shows that labour markets are becoming more diversified in terms of skills, pay, and job autonomy and security. These employment changes increase the risk of the social exclusion of those with a weak labour market position at either a global or local level. Women's greater responsibility for the care of children and dependents makes it more difficult for many of them to obtain secure, skilled and well-paid jobs throughout their working life.

The EU has used the European Employment Strategy (1997) to address the employment and gender challenges of the KBS (as well as the poorer employment performance of the EU in comparison with the United States). The strategy consists of the Employment Guidelines set by the Council and National Action Plans (NAPs), which are reports written by the member states on measures implemented to achieve the EU's employment objectives as stated in the guidelines. The EU has introduced a certain convergence pressure by means of the European Employment Strategy (EES), urging member states

to promote investment in people, tackle gender inequalities and develop a KBS model that is competitive and capable of maintaining sustainable economic growth, with both more and better jobs and social cohesion (Lisbon 2000). Moreover, in 1999 the EU urged the member states to use the gender mainstreaming strategy as a part of the EES to tackle gender gaps or gender inequalities.

2. Objectives

The overall objectives of the WELLKNOW project were: (1) to provide a theoretical and comparative understanding of the transition towards the Knowledge Based Society (KBS) from the employment and gender perspectives; (2) to analyse how the European Employment Strategy seeks to promote more and better jobs, as well as gender equality as part of the transition towards the KBS; (3) to evaluate statistical indicators and develop indices for monitoring progress towards the KBS and gender equality; and (4) to identify policy options in respect of the EU's strategic goal, set at Lisbon (2000), of developing a model of the KBS that is competitive and capable of maintaining sustainable economic growth, while providing both more and better jobs and social cohesion.

III. SCIENTIFIC DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS AND METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction

WELLKNOW is a three year research project involving eight European partners and seven European countries. The countries represented in the project are Austria, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, the Netherlands and Spain. Selection was carried out on the basis of the countries' diversity at the start of the twenty-first century with respect to regional location (north/south and east/west), population size (micro, small and large), welfare state model (Mediterranean, Continental, Liberal or post-socialist, and Nordic) and status in relation to the EU (member country, accession country or associate member). Hungary joined the EU in 2005 after an accession period, while Iceland (together with Norway and Lichtenstein) has been a member of the European Economic Area since 1994. A comparison of five EU member countries (Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Spain) on the one hand and two non-member countries (Iceland and Hungary [until 2005]) on the other, was undertaken as part of the WELLNOW project in an attempt to distinguish between the influence of the EU and that of the national authorities in designing the transition towards the Knowledge Based Society (KBS).

The four overall objectives of the project stated in section II 2. were divided into six different work packages. Each one of these work packages resulted in a publication available from WELLKNOW's website (www.bifrost.is/wellknow), except for the book presenting the main findings of project that the European Trade Union Institute will publish some time during 2006 (see Mósesdóttir et al. 2006). This book was written as a part of the research work in work package six. In the following sections, the content, methodology, aims, results and innovative aspects of each work package will be discussed.

2. The implications of the Knowledge Based Society for employment and gender relations.

The first work package involved a state-of-the-art review of concepts, theories and empirical evidence used to describe and verify a transition to A Knowledge Based Society (KBS) in policy and academic documents. Moreover, the EU's gender mainstreaming approach was examined in light of the gender challenges of the KBS. The aim of this undertaking was to identify the main employment and gender challenges considered to be part of the transition to the KBS. The results were published in report 1 (see Serrano Pascual and Mósesdóttir 2003).

Results

Our review of academic and policy documents tackling the transition to the KBS revealed the polemic nature of the debate regarding the direction and the nature of the changes on the one hand and the various and wide-ranging ways in which they impact on gender relations on the other. This first report of the WELLKNOW project did not set out to settle this fascinating debate but rather to reflect on some of its aspects in order to put in place an analytical and theoretical framework for our area of enquiry. There are significant discrepancies in the technological development across countries and social groups as nation states differ in their vulnerability to external challenges, in their perception of these challenges and in their capacity to respond to them. Moreover, there is growing evidence that benefits of the KBS are unevenly distributed across and within countries and social groups. Hence, we argue that various models of the KBS will develop involving different forms and levels of social divisions. This gives a reason for critical and comparative studies of the transition to the KBS and its implications for prevailing institutional and social relations.

The main changes claimed to be a part of the transition to the KBS are a shift in economic activity from goods production to service delivery, an expansion of work organisations which are less hierarchical, more skill-intensive and more flexible, and a growth of occupations with a high information and knowledge content in their activity. The extent to which these changes have taken place and are associated with greater or less skills, inequalities and risks is contested. It is, however, possible to identify two opposing sides in the academic and political debates. Firstly, there are those who are optimistic about the nature of the changes and focus on the opportunities provided by these changes. Secondly, there are those who are more pessimistic about the changes and point to empirical evidence indicating not only that previous social and gender

inequalities have in most cases not been altered, but also that new inequalities are arising.

Greater educational attainments achieved across Europe at the same time as the number of unskilled jobs has increased have given rise to claims that the labour force is becoming increasingly overqualified. Evidence of both skill-deficiencies and over-qualification has been found within the same country. Moreover, a survey by Eurostat indicates that the majority of those employed in the EU state that they have the skills to hold a more demanding job. The mismatch between the level of education and the skills demanded or required to perform a job are explained by fluctuations in demand over the business cycle, changes in the life-course of individuals who now start at a lower job level, a more dispersed demand as compared with the supply of labour and by insufficient institutional links between the educational and employment systems. The trend towards higher educational attainments is an important driving force in the transition towards the KBS and evidence of over-qualification in some EU member countries may signal wasted opportunities to realise full potential of the KBS.

Another controversy is whether the KBS and the greater demand for qualified workforce in the KBS will improve the quality of jobs and eventually destroy the gender pay gap as young women are better educated than young men. Several studies have demonstrated that the wage gap is widening between skilled and unskilled workers. However, the gender pay gap in the EU has remained unchanged in recent years as the benefits of educated women moving up the wage distribution have just offset the loss of women at the bottom or in unskilled and low paid jobs. Moreover, the dispersion of wages within occupational groups, which is in some cases growing, will counteract some of the positive effects of increased educational attainments of women on the gender pay gap. Currently, the remuneration of educational attainment levels and specific skills is higher for men than women such that the gender pay gap for women with university education in 1998 was 28% as compared with the overall gender gap of 16%. In addition, the overall job quality measured as complexity and autonomy declined from 1996 to 2001 for both men and women but the reduction was significantly greater for women. Hence, the pace of job upgrading in Europe appears to have slowed down, especially among those (women) lower in the job hierarchy.

There are signs of more complex divisions in the labour market based on skill and pay as well as security, which in turn is reshaping or reinforcing prevailing patterns of inequalities as well as creating new risks for workers. The risk of skill obsolescence is increasing as we move towards the KBS. As a result, individuals need to cross the boundaries between work and education several times during their professional career to

ensure “employability”. Divergent intervals of education and work during the professional career of individuals are exposing greater numbers to the risk of unemployment. The organisational change associated with the new technology and its dissemination is blurring the barriers between the world of work and private life. The positive aspect of this development is that greater flexibility in terms of location and hours may allow men and women to achieve a better balance between work and family/private life. However, the economic pressures to develop more flexible production systems and hours work have put greater time pressure on families and households which has in some cases undermined their capabilities to tackle the burden of care. The strategy used by most families in Europe to cope with the time pressure of work is for women to work part-time and for men to work long hours.

The diffusion of ICTs and deregulation of labour markets have stimulated a growth in atypical employment like temporary and part-time work. Atypical work has been praised for the flexibility it provides and for being a bridge into standard employment for women and young people. Studies show, however, that a significant number of workers do not see this type of work as a personal choice (men more than women) and do not enjoy flexibility in terms of hours and autonomy at work (women more than men). Moreover, the working conditions of workers in atypical employment are less favourable in most European countries than of those in typical contracts. Individuals in, for example, part-time work have less control over their working hours, enjoy less autonomy, perform fewer skilled tasks, receive less training and have fewer career prospects. Moreover, part-time workers are at a much higher risk of unemployment or inactivity than full-time workers. Hence, the growth in atypical work is not leading to a radical change in gender inequalities, imbalances between public and private responsibilities and in risks of social exclusion due to unemployment.

Divergent developments across countries and a lack of empirical evidence manifesting the direction and the real impact of the changes underway have contributed to the controversy over the significance of the KBS. It has, however, become increasingly apparent that the transition towards the KBS is socially embedded. In other words, individuals, social groups and institutions have some degree of choice in shaping the design, development and application of technologies at the same time as technology change creates conditions for breaking down prevailing power relations and institutional structures. Nation states are able to influence the changes underway and can develop alternative models of adaptation to the KBS. Hence, different levels of skills, inequalities and risks are partly societal choices such that there is no direct link between the move toward the KBS and gender (in)equality. However, the EU has introduced a certain converging pressure by urging the member states to modernise the European social

model in order to promote investment in people and combat social exclusion by ensuring equal access to ICTs.

3. The European Employment Strategy and national employment policies.

The task in the second work package was to examine the engagement of actors, policy discourses and policy measures (choices and intervention) in the area of employment, gender equality and Knowledge Based Society (KBS) at both the national and the EU levels. The overall goal of the work was to gather information on how the transition towards the KBS has been shaped by political choices and policy interventions at both the national and EU levels. Moreover, efforts were made to identify how the employment and gender challenges of the KBS were addressed and gender mainstreamed during the period 1997-2003 in the European Employment Strategy (EES) and in national policies. The results were published in report 2, which contains three chapters on the political processes of the EES and seven national reports as annexes (see Sjørup 2004).

Three different approaches were used in this part of the project work. The first approach involved a state-of-art-study of available literature on and evaluations of the policy choices and policy intervention involved in the EES. The second approach was a rhetorical analysis of the National Action Plans in Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Spain in 1998, 2000 and 2003. The National Action Plans are annual reports written by the national authorities on the implementation of the Employment Guidelines and both constitute different parts of the EES. A total of 41 sub-criteria (relevant words, phrases etc.) were used to analyse the National Action Plans in the field of employment, the KBS and gender mainstreaming. The third approach involved seven national studies of actors' engagement in policy making and policy processes (choices and intervention) in the field of employment, the KBS and gender mainstreaming in Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Spain, Hungary and Iceland during 1997-2002 (see Caprile 2004b; Behning and Leuthold 2004; Laky and Neumann 2004; Mósesdóttir 2004; Reinicke and Sjørup 2004; Remery and Schippers 2004 and Roivas 2004a, 2004b). Below we will present the results of the state-of-art study of the EES and the rhetorical analysis of the National Action Plans. A comparative analysis of the national studies was undertaken in work package four (see discussion in section III 5.).

Results

The main political objectives of the EU concerning the transition to the KBS and gender equality are full employment, job quality (skills, mobility and the right balance between flexibility and security) and social equality, particularly gender equality. The EU has steadily expanded the objectives and the scope of the EES in order to achieve policy convergence around these political choices across the member states. However, the EU uses the concept of convergence to deal with the problematic exercise of aligning the national economies to a unified economy without violating the principle of subsidiarity³ on which the Continental welfare states are based. Nevertheless, there is a constant tension between the principle of convergence and the principle of subsidiarity at the EU level, since convergence in the sense of the EES means living up to targets and taking into consideration recommendations made from outside the national or regional democratic systems.

The EU urges the member states to renew the European social model to ensure that they attain economic growth with more and better jobs as well as social cohesion. So far, social intervention at the European level has mainly been through the two mechanisms of taxing/spending and regulation. The child care targets set by the Barcelona Council (2002) signal a radical shift in the EU's social policy intervention as it involves the direct provision of services characterising the Nordic welfare states. Hence, the EES creates preconditions for the gradual expansion of the EU's intervention in areas traditionally under the responsibility of the member states.

This expansion of EU's intervention is, however, linked with economic integration as was the case with the childcare targets. It will enable the EU to define in more detail the desired outcomes of the transition to the KBS and gender equality. So far, a lack of definition has made it difficult to assess whether the member states are actively supporting the EU's vision of the future.

Our analysis of the National Action Plans (as policy documents) of the five WELLKNOW countries between 1999 and 2003 may lead us to suppose that there is a tendency towards policy convergence in relation to employment, gender and the KBS. However, this convergence is taking place in a divergent social and economic context. European societies have different traditions concerning how they understand full employment, gender equality and the KBS. The National Action Plans are shaped in a process of

³ Subsidiarity is the principle which states that matters ought to be handled by the smallest (or, the lowest) competent authority.

political discourse involving both global and national political actors, but the rules, ideas and values of this discourse are governed by new political elites whose values, concepts and ethos dominate in comparison to the knowledge and values of local and civic actors.

Due to their rhetorical character, it is not always possible to analyse on the basis of National Action Plans how effective policies have been, to what extent they have been implemented and how extensive they are from the point of view of the target groups. It also seems that the Open Method of Coordination, based on the Employment Guidelines as the social planning procedure, leads to many similarities in the texts of the National Action Plans. It is an entirely different matter, however, how these textual similarities relate to the social realities of each country. Among the problems we must overcome are the different starting levels and cultural understandings of the various countries in many policy fields and their advancement in terms of the KBS and gender mainstreaming. A better understanding is also needed for evaluating the effectiveness of large-scale policies, legislation, statutes, institutions, projects and programmes, given their different scales, costs and time-scales. With this kind of qualitative text analysis it is difficult to say to what extent the EES has a role in the transition towards the KBS and a more gender-equal society.

Of the countries analysed, it appears that Spain is learning most from the other countries, at least on paper. For example, it uses ideas on Nordic welfare policies, the collective bargaining system and the modern 'dual-track' education system related to Active Labour Market Policy. By comparison, the Central European countries are at least looking at the family policies of the Nordic countries to find ways to react to lack of childcare places and weaker family policy system. At the same time, the ideas of the more neo-liberal 'third way' are coming to Nordic countries from Central Europe. In principle, one can say that the EES works at least at the level of the exchange of ideas (and ideologies). Outside the mutual learning process, it seems that the EES is an effective tool for spreading specific policy ideas, such as lifelong learning, gender mainstreaming and activation. The problem is that these general and commonly accepted policy ideas are not conceptualised, operationalised and benchmarked accurately in order to achieve integrated policy outcomes.

The National Action Plans present a limited view of the KBS and gender mainstreaming when compared with the conclusions of the first WELLKNOW Project Report (2003). These concepts are combined only in a weak sense. The National Action Plans are connected to traditional employment and social policies; they are not innovative with regard to the KBS and gender mainstreaming as they are understood by our project or by the EU's initiatives in the area of the KBS like RISI and eEurope. They represent more

the tradition of Active Labour Market Policy (with the emphasis on training and support measures for the unemployed) than EU strategies concerning the KBS (such as People First 1996), gender mainstreaming and the Lisbon agenda.

In the National Action Plans, gender mainstreaming is used as a rhetorical concept to convey the idea that gender equality issues are taken seriously. Under the concept of gender mainstreaming, there are several policy measures related to gender issues. These policies are similar to the mature, non-discriminatory, universal social policies of the Nordic countries, because they are policies for reconciling work and family life and incorporate special ad hoc development programmes of gender equality. However, gender mainstreaming as a concrete method of policy integration is not practised in the long term and greater efforts must be made to establish it permanently.

The key aim of the WELLKNOW project is to study the synergies between the KBS and gender mainstreaming in concrete policies. However, it seems that this combination has not been carefully thought out or conceptualised by policy-makers. There are no large structurally effective policies which would cater for both the KBS and gender mainstreaming, except the strong emphasis on education and training. Instead, policies tend to work separately. Thus measures for reconciling work and family life do not recognise the possibilities of ICTs, and educational policies do not recognise the specific problems of women entering highly skilled KBS professions, although there are a number of projects which are exceptions to this. The few programmes aimed at preventing a digital divide do not recognise labour market issues, and labour market policies do not recognise ICTs access and literacy issues. The intermediate zone combining the KBS, gender mainstreaming and employment policies is missing from the National Action Plans. Things are generally considered separately and traditionally, not as intertwined processes or wholes meeting the Lisbon challenge.

4. Measuring progress towards the Knowledge Based Society, quality of working life and gender equality.

The work in work package three consisted of statistical analysis to assess the extent to which the EU member countries as well as Iceland and Hungary have achieved the Lisbon goal (2000), especially concerning social inclusion and gender equality. The purpose of this undertaking was to develop criteria and synthetic indices to measure and benchmark the progress towards the Knowledge Based Society (KBS) focusing on the main employment and gender challenges. Four indices were developed and the main empirical results regarding these indices are presented below, covering the EU-15 plus Iceland and Hungary. The results are presented separately for each index, showing first the overall scores for 2002 and then the main trends over the last five years. More detailed outcomes for indicators and dimensions can be found in report 3 of the WELLKNOW project (Caprile 2004a).

Four indices were developed on the basis of our discussions in report 1 on the main employment and gender challenges of the KBS. These four indices were: a general index on the KBS, for benchmarking economic, technical and social performance (KBS index); an index on the quality of working life (QWL index) and two gender indices, one on the KBS (GE-KBS index) and one on the quality of working life (GE-QWL index).

Table 1. Four indices.

Index	KBS	GE-KBS
Purpose	Benchmarking economic, technical and social performance in the transition towards KBS	Measuring the extent of gender (in)equality in the transition towards the KBS
Dimen- sions	1. ICTs	1. Equal access to the ICTs
	2. Competitiveness	2. Equal contribution to competitiveness
	3. Knowledge	3. Equal access to knowledge
	4. Social inclusion	4. Equal access to social inclusion
		5. Gender desegregation in the KBS
		6. Equal pay
		7. Equal sharing of caring work
Index	QWL	GE-QWL
Purpose	Benchmarking quality of working life in the transition towards the KBS	Measuring the extent of gender (in)equality in the quality of working life in the transition towards the KBS
Dimen- sions	1. Decent pay	1. Equal sharing of decent pay
	2. Healthy work	2. Equal sharing of healthy work
	3. Skilled work	3. Equal sharing of skilled work
	4. Autonomous and complex work	4. Equal sharing of autonomous and complex work
	5. No entrapment	5. Equal risk of entrapment
	6. No unemployment	6. Equal risk of unemployment
	7. Decent work/life balance	7. Equal sharing of decent work/life balance

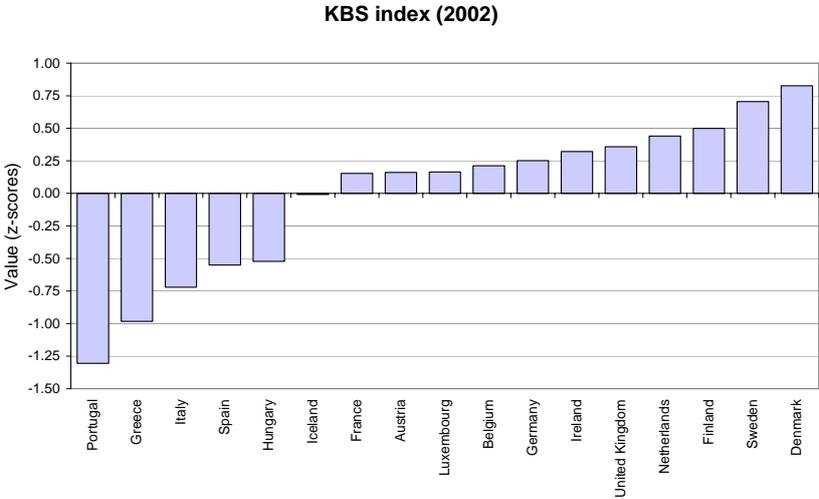
Source: Caprile 2004a

4.1. KBS index

Figure 2 shows a clear divide between the Nordic countries (except for Iceland) and Mediterranean countries with regard to overall KBS scores. Denmark and Sweden score highest followed by Finland and the Netherlands. At the bottom of the ranking, Portugal is found in the lowest position, followed by Greece, Italy, Spain and Hungary. However, scores differ substantially across the different dimensions. Denmark, Sweden and Finland have high scores in all dimensions, but their scores are somewhat lower in terms of competitiveness. Among the countries with intermediate scores, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Luxembourg have quite a balanced situation, whilst the United

Kingdom and Ireland score relatively worse on social inclusion than in other dimensions, and the same holds for France and Belgium with regard to ICT. Turning to the Mediterranean countries, Spain and Italy have a rather unbalanced situation, with particularly low scores on social inclusion; Greece scores among the lowest in all dimensions except knowledge, and the same appears to be the case for Portugal in respect of social inclusion. Finally, Iceland and Hungary each score particularly low in one dimension: competitiveness and ICT, respectively.

Figure 2. Scores on the KBS index, 2002 (sample mean calculated for EU-15 plus Hungary and Iceland).



Source: Caprile 2004a

Figure 3 shows the evolution of the KBS overall scores from 1997 TO 2002. The horizontal axis measures the average annual percentage change on the KBS scores over these years; the vertical axis refers to the overall scores on the KBS in 1997. However, figures are not fully comparable to those previously analysed for 2002 because of the lack of data on ICTs for 1997. The scores are therefore only based on three dimensions: competitiveness, knowledge and social inclusion. When combining performance on overall score and percentage change, countries can be roughly divided into four groups: at one extreme, those countries that are falling further behind, having both below average overall scores and below average percentage change; at the other extreme, those countries that are moving ahead (both overall scores and percentage change are above average). In between, countries can be classified as catching up (overall scores below average, but percentage change above average) or losing momentum (having the opposite situation). Figure 3 shows that there has been a general improvement on the KBS scores; Germany is the only country with a (slightly) negative percentage change. However, the speed of progress differs widely. It is highest in most of the countries

catching up (Hungary, Iceland and Spain) and lowest in some of the countries having good scores in 1997 (Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark and Belgium). In the best situation are a number of countries that appear to be steadily moving ahead: United Kingdom and Ireland, followed by Finland, Austria and France. The worst situation is that of Greece, with growth only slightly above average. Portugal and Italy are, clearly falling further behind.

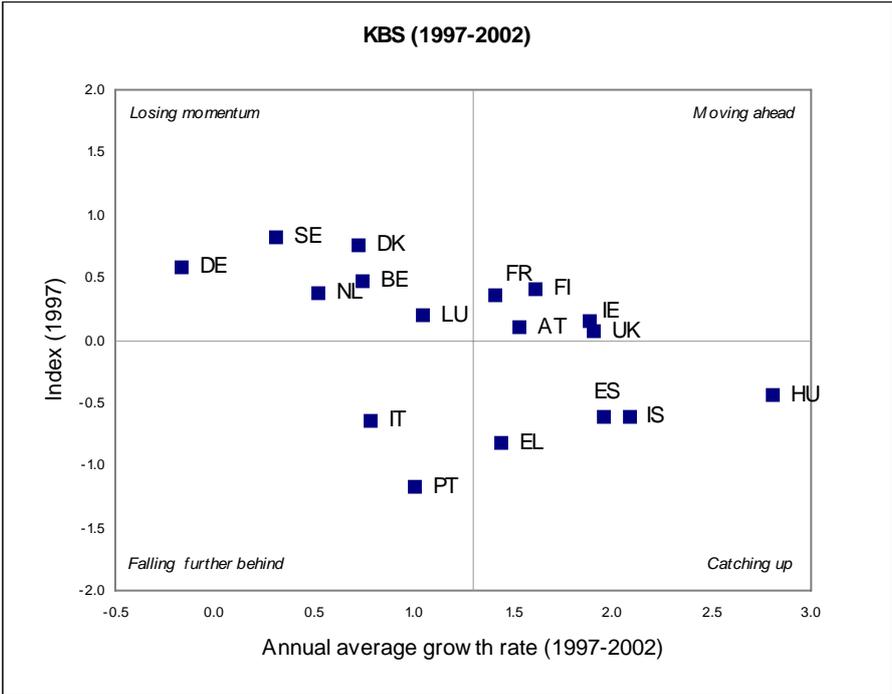


Figure 3. KBS (1997–2002).

Notes: The figure refers to the following indicators: KBS 2.1, KBS 2.2, KBS 3.1, KBS 3.2, KBS 4.1, KBS 4.2.

Source: Caprile 2004a

As expected, development trends diverge substantially when individual dimensions are analysed. Inter-country differences are quite extensive for competitiveness. Some countries with negative scores in 1997 (that is, below average) appear to be steadily catching up (Hungary and Portugal), whilst others are clearly falling further behind (Iceland and Spain, where competitiveness decreased).

The countries with positive scores in 1997 show different patterns. Competitiveness decreased in Germany, Sweden and especially Italy, whilst other countries appear to be moving ahead. This is particularly the case for Ireland, the country with the most

outstanding improvement in competitiveness over this period regarding knowledge, the overall picture is a clear improvement in most countries. The main exception is Portugal, the country with the lowest score in 1997, which keeps falling further behind. Finally, all countries show an improvement with regard to social exclusion. The only exception is Denmark, although its score was the highest in 1997 and remains so in 2002. It is also worth noting that some countries scoring very low in 1997 appear to be steadily catching up: this is particularly the case for Spain, due to a strong increase in the employment rate over this period. To a lesser extent, the same holds true for Portugal and Italy.

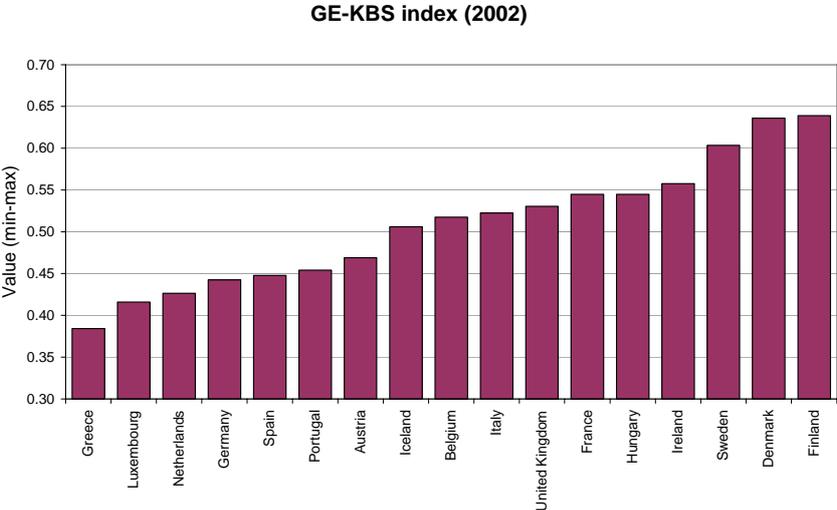
4.2. GE-KBS index

Figure 4 shows the overall GE-KBS scores. Again, Nordic countries (except for Iceland) score highest,⁴ but in this case Mediterranean countries are not found – as a homogenous group – in the lowest positions. Although Greece has the lowest score, Italy scores rather well, in the middle of the ranking, and Portugal and Spain show a slightly better situation with regard to gender equality than countries such as Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. In respect of the overall scores, however, it should be stressed that, even in the Nordic countries, full gender equality is still a long way off. Seven countries score below 0.5 and the maximum score does not even reach 0.65, far from the value 1 which corresponds to a situation of complete gender equality. Furthermore, scores differ substantially across the different dimensions. Knowledge is the dimension with the smallest gender gap and its maximum score is already close to the situation of full gender equality (0.90). At the other end of the scale, gender gaps are widest with regard to care for children and dependents (maximum score at 0.66) and desegregation (0.57). Finally, it should also be noted that the performance of countries varies greatly across the different dimensions. Finland, Denmark and Sweden show high scores in all dimensions except desegregation, where they perform substantially worse than in other dimensions. Among those countries with intermediate overall scores, Hungary, France and Belgium show quite a balanced situation, whilst other countries have low scores in one or more dimensions: Ireland and Iceland score particularly low in equal pay, the United Kingdom in competitiveness and equal pay and Italy in caring work and ICTs. Finally, in most countries low overall scores are related to a rather unbalanced situation where intermediate scores in some dimensions are combined with very low scores in others. To give an example, the Netherlands scores particularly low with regard to equal pay, desegregation and social inclusion, and the same holds for Spain in the care of children and dependents and social inclusion. The only exceptions are Germany

⁴ Indeed, the overall score of Sweden is probably underestimated because of missing data for some dimensions.

and Luxembourg, whose scores are quite similar (and consistently low) across all dimensions.

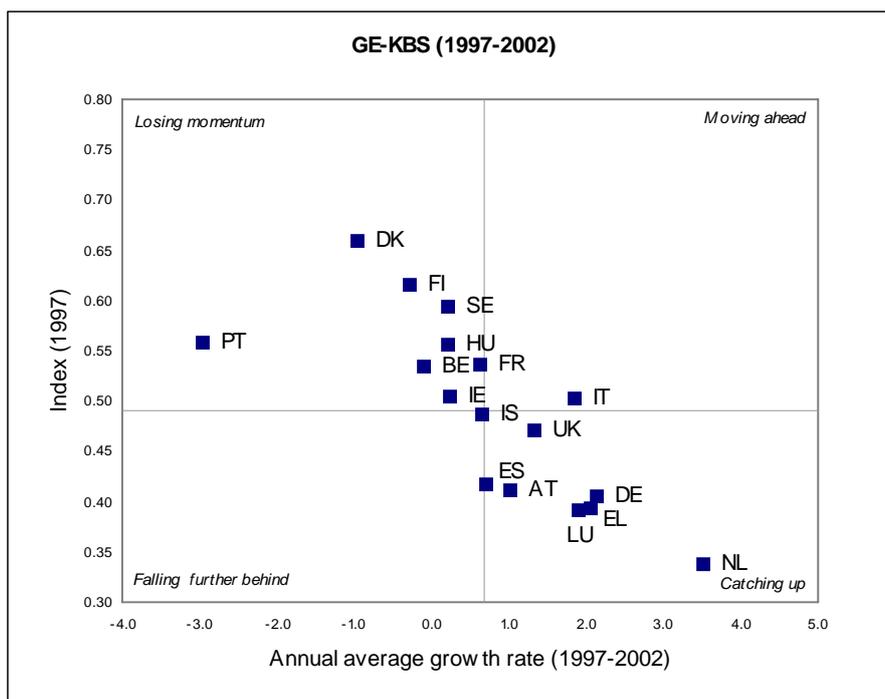
Figure 4. Scores on the GE-KBS index, 2002.



Source: Caprile 2004a

Figure 5 shows the development of overall scores for GE-KBS between 1997 and 2002. Again, figures are not fully comparable to those previously analysed for 2002 because of the lack of data on ICTs for 1997. Overall, the figure shows a rather contradictory picture. Progress towards gender equality has been especially pronounced in those countries with a more unequal starting point, such as the Netherlands, Germany, Greece and Luxembourg. However, gender equality has somewhat decreased in Belgium, Finland, Denmark and, especially, Portugal, whilst most countries scoring above average in 1997 show a rather limited improvement over this period. Italy is the only country showing fully favourable development, with an overall score slightly above average in 1997 and one of the highest rates of progress. It is worth noting that progress towards gender equality has been less general and intense than progress towards the KBS.

Figure 5. GE-KBS, 1997–2002.



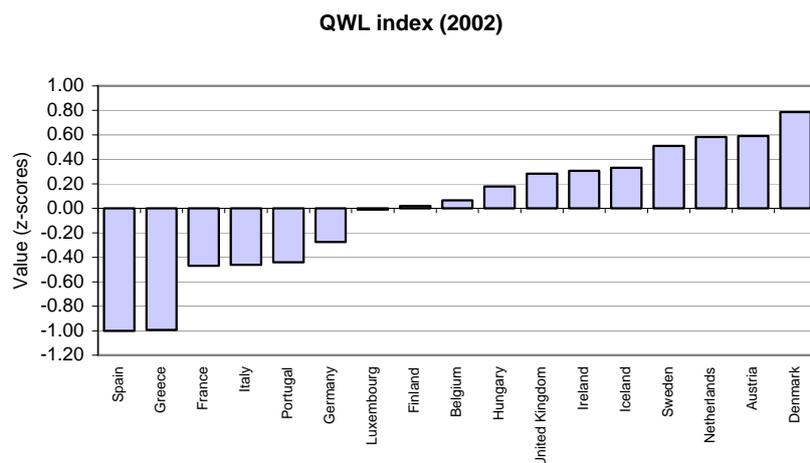
Note: The figure refers to the following indicators: GE-KBS 2.1, GE-KBS 2.2, GE-KBS 3.1, GE-KBS 3.2, GE-KBS 4.1, GE-KBS 4.2, GE-KBS 5.1, GE-KBS 5.2, GE-KBS 6.1, GE-KBS 6.2, GE-KBS 7.1, GE-KBS 7.2. Source: Caprile 2004a

Trends appear to be even more contradictory when each dimension is analysed individually. Between 1997 and 2002, most countries progressed steadily towards more equal contributions to competitiveness and more equal access to social inclusion. However, progress in social inclusion has been mainly related to the growth of female employment rates, with trends in income being much more divergent: the most striking example is Spain, with a sharp increase in the female employment rate and a parallel increase in the proportion of women in a situation of income vulnerability. However, trends are far less favourable regarding the other dimensions. Between 1997 and 2002, equality in caring work worsened in seven out of eleven countries with complete data for this period: this was mainly the result of a general widening of the gender gap in caring for dependent adults, since the gap in caring for children remained stable or decreased. In turn, segregation increased in six out of twelve countries, either because the gender pay gap for tertiary graduates increased or the proportion of women among graduates decreased. The same holds for equal pay, with six out of twelve countries registering a widening gender pay gap, especially in terms of hourly earnings. Finally, a large number of countries show a negative trend with regard to equal access to knowledge, mainly due to the increasing proportion of women at higher and medium levels of education.

4.3. QWL index

Figure 6 shows the overall QWL scores. Denmark scores highest on QWL, followed by Austria, the Netherlands and Sweden,⁵ whilst Spain and Greece are at the bottom of the ranking, well behind the other countries. Negative scores, although not as low, are also found in France, Italy, Portugal and Germany. In most countries, scores differ rather substantially across the different dimensions, although no clear typology can be identified. To give a few examples, Denmark scores very high in all dimensions except “no entrapment”, and the same holds for Austria in respect of skilled work and the Netherlands for decent pay and healthy work. Germany scores rather well in most dimensions, but its overall score is negative due to its very low scores on healthy work and unemployment. At the bottom of the ranking, Greece scores very low in all dimensions except in healthy work, where it has one of the highest rankings.

Figure 6. Scores on the QWL index, 2002 (sample mean calculated for EU-15 plus Hungary and Iceland).

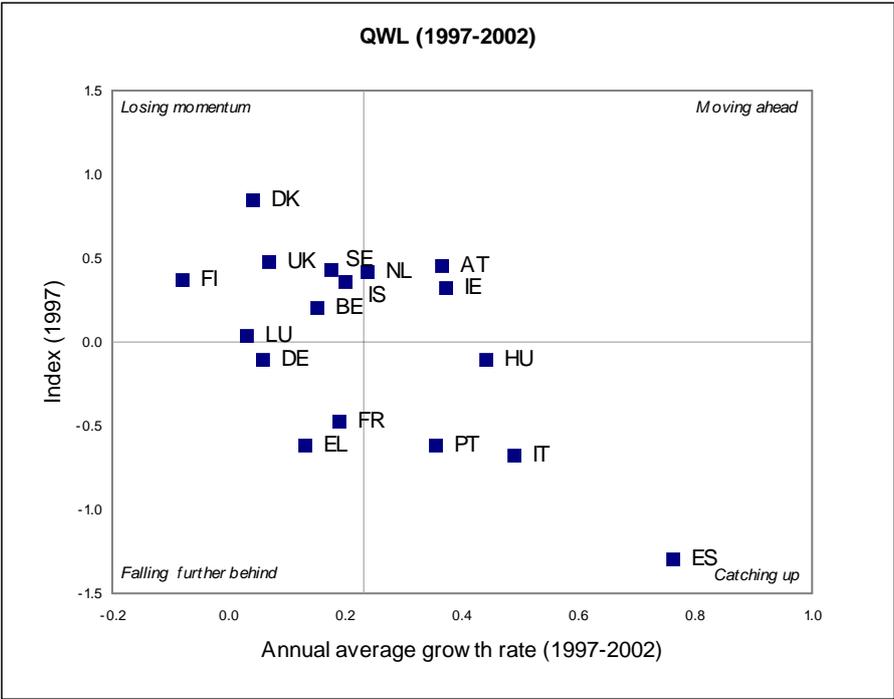


Source: Caprile 2004a

⁵ Performance probably underestimated in some of the dimensions where data is missing.

Figure 7 shows the development of overall QWL scores over 1997 and 2002. Figures are not fully comparable to those previously analysed for 2002, due to the lack of 1997 harmonised data on the dimension of autonomous and complex work, as well as on one of the indicators of the dimension of a decent work/life balance. In general terms, Figure 6 shows that there has been some improvement in QWL scores; Finland is the only country with a negative percentage change. Again, however, the pace of progress differs widely. It is highest in some of the countries with negative scores in 1997 (Spain, Italy, Hungary and Portugal). Ireland and Austria are the countries in the best situation, having both above average scores and growth rates, whilst the opposite applies to France, Greece and Germany.

Figure 7. QWL, 1997–2002.



Notes: The figure refers to the following indicators: QWL 1.1, QWL 1.2, QWL 2.1, QWL 2.2, QWL 3.1, QWL 3.2, QWL 5.1, QWL 5.2, QWL 6.1, QWL 6.2, QWL 7.1. Source: Caprile 2004a

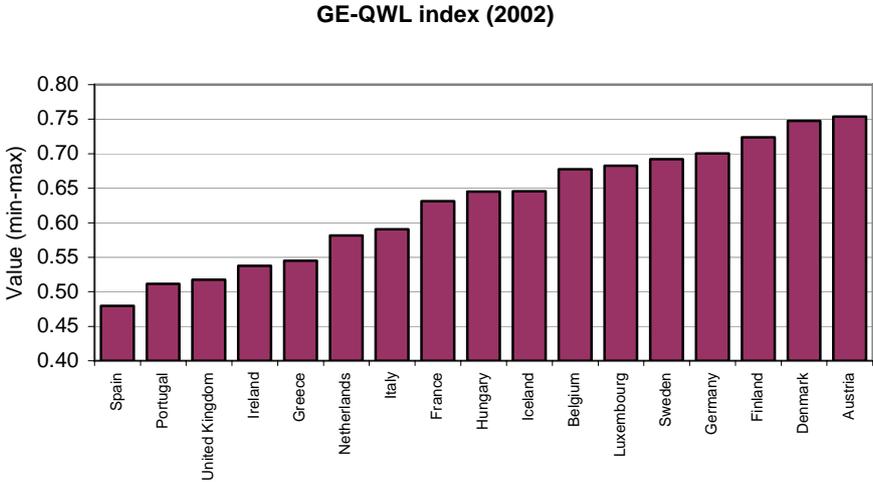
Again, trends are substantially divergent across dimensions. In most countries, scores on decent pay worsened over this period and negative and positive trends are combined in other dimensions: healthy work, skilled work, no entrapment and decent work/life balance. The overall negative percentage change in Finland is mainly related to a marked worsening in decent pay and no entrapment. Other countries with relevant negative changes in some dimensions are the Netherlands and France (decent pay), Sweden and

Spain (healthy work), the United Kingdom (skilled work) and finally Germany, Denmark and Ireland (no entrapment).

4.4. GE-QWL index

Figure 8 shows the overall GE-QWL scores. Austria and Denmark score highest, while Spain is found at the bottom of the ranking, well behind the other countries. Again, however, full gender equality is still a long way off, even in those countries with the most favourable situation. Scores differ substantially across the different dimensions. Some countries show a situation of (almost) full equality for some dimensions: this is the case of Denmark for decent pay (0.96), the Netherlands for skilled work (0.99), Germany for both autonomous and complex work (0.90) and unemployment (0.96) and Austria for work/life balance (0.95). On the other hand, gender gaps are larger for entrapment (with a maximum score of 0.74) and healthy work (0.69). Furthermore, the performance of the countries varies greatly both within and across the different dimensions. To give just one example: the Netherlands scores as high as 0.99 for skilled work; however, the lowest score for this dimension does not even reach 0.25, and the Netherlands scores lowest for healthy work with a score as low as 0.16. Similar overall scores can, therefore, be the result of very different situations. Austria and Denmark score very closely at the top of the ranking: however, Austria scores quite well in all dimensions except decent pay, and Denmark scores very high in decent pay, work/life balance and unemployment, but its performance is much worse in other dimensions. Similar differences can be found among the countries at the bottom of the ranking. Spain scores consistently low in all dimensions except healthy work, whereas Portugal combines good scores for work/life balance, autonomous and complex work and unemployment with very low scores for entrapment, healthy work and skilled work.

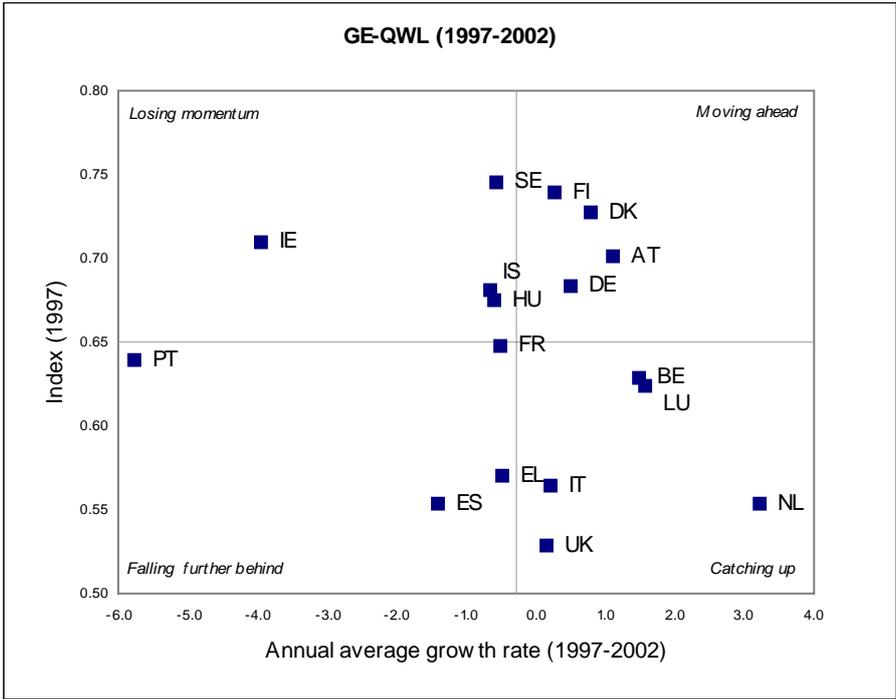
Figure 8. Scores on the GE-QWL index, 2002.



Source: Caprile 2004a

Figure 9 shows the development of overall scores for GE-QWL over 1997 and 2002. The horizontal axis shows the average annual percentage change for GE-QWL scores from 1997 to 2002; the vertical axis shows the overall scores for GE-QWL in 1997. Again, the figures are not fully comparable to those previously analysed for 2002 because of the lack of 1997 data on autonomous and complex work and one of the two indicators of a decent work/life balance.

Figure 9. GE-QWL, 1997–2002.



Notes: The figure refers to the following indicators: GE-QWL 1.1, GE-QWL 1.2, GE-QWL 2.1, GE-QWL 2.2, GE-QWL 3.1, GE-QWL 3.2, GE-QWL 5.1, GE-QWL 5.2, GE-QWL 6.1, GE-QWL 6.2, GE-QWL 7.1. Source: Caprile 2004a

Overall, Figure 9 shows that progress towards gender equality is far from being a general trend. In a large number of countries inequality appears to have increased; this negative trend is particularly pronounced in Ireland and Portugal. Changes, when they are positive, are in general rather limited. Among the countries below average in 1997, only the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Belgium seem to be steadily progressing towards gender equality. On the other hand, only Austria, Denmark, Germany and Finland combine an above average score in 1997 with a positive trend over this period.

Negative trends are found in almost all dimensions. Portugal, Spain and Greece show a strong negative evolution with regard to the equal sharing of decent pay. In fact, the

proportion of women among low-paid earners increased in a large number of countries, although this negative trend was partially counterbalanced by more positive developments in income. With regard to entrapment, negative trends were particularly pronounced for Portugal and Ireland, whilst gender gaps in unemployment increased in Spain and Ireland. In all these cases, more inequality means more disadvantages for women. However, men's disadvantage with regard to skilled work also increased in a large number of countries due to the increasing proportion of women among both professionals and lifelong learners.

5. Policies and performances

In work package four, empirical results of previous work packages were studied from a comparative and theoretical perspective. The overall aim of this work was to uncover common patterns and reasons for different policy approaches and performances of Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Spain as well as of Iceland and Hungary as concerns the move towards Knowledge Based Society (KBS) and gender equality. The study of different policy approaches was based on the seven national reports written as a part of the work in work package two while the analysis of performances used the empirical results produced in work package three as its point of departure. The purpose of comparing different policy approaches was to study how the EU and national governments have sought to regulate labour markets and especially gender relations through identification of policy problems and solutions and how this regulation has strengthened certain actors and weakened others. The aim of comparing statistical performances of the seven countries in different dimensions of the KBS, employment and gender equality was to put the results into context or to view them in light of country-specific institutional and social conditions. The results of this work package were published in report no. 4 (see Mósésdóttir 2005).

5.1. Performances

The performances in the seven WELLKNOW countries vary considerably. All seven countries have their own specific pattern regarding employment, the KBS and gender equality. A number of general patterns are also visible, however. Denmark and Finland, both representatives of the Nordic welfare state model, seem furthest on the way towards the KBS model for which the European Commission is aiming. They have reached the Lisbon targets and are doing relatively well in almost all indices. Denmark has high scores on all dimensions. Finland has high scores on three out of four dimensions and scores average on the QWL dimension. Both countries are well-developed welfare states with a high educational level, a strong emphasis on public

provision and a long tradition in respect of gender mainstreaming. Spain, on the other hand, has negative scores on all indices. In addition, Spain is a long way from meeting the Lisbon targets. The other countries show a mixture of positive and negative results. It should be noted that the indices are composed of different dimensions and indicators. Even if they have comparable scores on an index, countries may differ considerably in terms of the component dimensions. Moreover, in respect of Hungary and, to a lesser extent, Iceland, some data is missing and the EU average was inserted instead. Therefore, the results for these countries have to be treated with caution.

What can be concluded about these performances in terms of the EU's model of the KBS? Does progress towards the KBS imply a higher level of social inclusion? Our conclusion in work package three is that there seems to be no clear relation between the level of social inclusion and the level of performance in ICTs, competitiveness and knowledge. This seems to be in line with our conclusion in work package one or that there is no direct link between ICTs and social progress because it is shaped by political choices and country-specific institutions. The situation in the seven WELLKNOW countries, however, shows that progress is possible. At the same time, Denmark, ranking fairly high in respect of both the KBS and social inclusion in 1997, had an increase in the poverty rate between 1997 and 2002. This indicates that even a long tradition in social inclusion is not a guarantee of continuous progress.

A second question concerns whether progress towards the KBS implies quality jobs. The development of the QWL index shows a similar result to the KBS index. There seems to be a development towards greater quality of jobs, but again, as illustrated by Finland – where the index score slightly decreased – progress does not take place as a matter of course.

In respect of gender equality, a first conclusion is that in all seven countries there is still considerable inequality between men and women. There is less gender inequality in respect of quality of working life than the KBS. Moreover, as already suggested, the European Employment Strategy (EES) seems to have had a significant impact. Occupational segregation and the gender pay gap remain problem areas in terms of employment. In the Nordic countries, despite a fairly high level of gender equality, both prove to be persistent problems. In addition, the situation in the care of children and dependents hardly seems to have changed in the period under study. The unequal gender division of paid and unpaid work is hardly addressed in the EU and national policies, however. Also problematic is the fact that Denmark and Finland – again countries that perform well in respect of gender equality – show a slightly negative development on the GE-KBS index. This implies that progress cannot be taken for

granted; nor will women necessarily be the winners of the development towards the KBS, as is often claimed (see work package one). Our study confirms the conclusions of the Kok reports (2003, 2004) that much needs to be done before the KBS model as defined by the EU becomes a reality. In addition, we may conclude that more effort is necessary to realise a KBS model that is gender mainstreamed.

Another legitimate question concerns whether different development paths in respect of the KBS and gender integration are possible. Taking the KBS and gender into account, one could argue that there are four possible developmental paths towards the Lisbon goal. Table 2 summarises these paths.

Table 2. Development paths towards the European social model and the KBS.

KBS	Gender –	+
–	1. Stagnation/decline High risk of gender exclusion	3. Social/gender inclusion Lower economic growth
+	2. Competitiveness Higher risk of social/genderexclusion	4. Sustainable economic growth Social/gender inclusion Social innovation

Source: Remery, Schippers and Caprile 2005

The first path is characterised by a lack of focus on either the KBS or gender. It seems self-evident that this situation should be avoided as it would result in economic stagnation or even decline, while at the same time there is a high risk of gender exclusion.

On the second path countries focus particularly on the development of the KBS and put less emphasis on gender integration. However, technology (and related knowledge) is male-dominated and supply-driven and the wishes and needs of users are usually ignored, which makes such an economy problematic. Technology remains more or less a separate field and is not fully integrated into society. Although this path might result in increased competitiveness, the price may be a high level of social exclusion. In addition, such an economy might be quite vulnerable in the long run, as technological innovation seems easier to copy than social innovation.

The third path is characterised by a strong focus on gender equality and gender integration but without a clear connection with the KBS. In this case there will be a high

level of social inclusion, but the price may be lower economic growth. In the long run this might be a risk for – especially – lower-income groups.

In the last path both gender and the KBS have a clear, simultaneous focus. This is the path the EU is aiming for.

None of the seven WELLKNOW countries seems to be on the first path. Spain and Hungary have quite negative scores in respect of the indices and targets of the EES. However, both countries show considerable improvement on the indices between 1997 and 2002, so it is still unclear how their developmental paths can be characterised. The Netherlands is an example of the second path, with high scores on the KBS but lower scores on gender equality. The situation in Austria seems to correspond to the third path: higher scores on gender equality and lower scores on the KBS. The situation in Denmark and Finland is less clear. At first glance it seems to correspond to the fourth path: their scores on the KBS are high and both countries perform well in respect of gender equality. However, this is a good performance mainly compared to other EU countries, as there is still considerable gender inequality in such areas as segregation, pay and care of children and dependents. Moreover, there are no clear signs that this will improve in the short term. This implies that there is a risk that both countries will end up on the second path.

The intention of realising the EU goals of social inclusion, gender equality and the KBS means that there are limitations on possible paths into the future. It is not sufficient to focus on only one concept. The results of this chapter suggest that the integration of the KBS and gender mainstreaming will not come about automatically. The KBS and gender mainstreaming are concepts with both a public and a private dimension. It is well known that public goods need some form of public intervention (Musgrave and Musgrave 1984). This applies even more to a combination of both concepts. National governments and the European Commission – as keepers of the public good of gender integration in the KBS – have to take the lead in this respect.

5.2. Policy approaches

The EU recognises that the EES can only succeed if all relevant actors such as parliamentary bodies, social partners and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are able to contribute directly to its implementation. However, our analysis reveals that the involvement of “external actors” such as the social partners and NGOs is limited to external pressure or informal consultations and is in some cases non-existent. The participation of the social partners in the design and making of employment policies depends on whether a formal system of tripartite consultations existed prior to the introduction of the EES. The governments either consult with the social partners or they are asked to make recommendations to the drafts after joint discussions. The involvement of the social actors is, however, subject to the “goodwill” of the particular government as the responsibility for and the ownership of the processes lies with the national authorities. In the five EU member countries in our study, the National Action Plans are seldom discussed in political organs or in the public sphere since they mainly summarise the annual implementation of national employment policies. This secondary status of the National Action Plans affects the number of actors involved and explains the absence of NGOs in the policy processes. Hence, the EES can be characterised as a top-down approach.

The selection of actors in the policy field of gender equality is more sensitive to frequent changes in governments (Hungary) and political changes from a “social-democratic” government to a “conservative” government (Austria, Denmark and the Netherlands) than is the case with employment policies around which a stable system of consultation has long been established. A lack of cooperation between social partners, bureaucrats, experts on gender equality and political actors hinders the implementation of gender mainstreaming which requires the involvement of all actors at each stage of the policy-making processes. In all the seven WELLKNOW countries, women are underrepresented in the policy-making processes – more so in the area of employment and the KBS than gender equality. So far, the WELLKNOW countries have put their greatest effort into employment policies. Government officials are responsible for employment policies and they often collaborate with representatives of the social partners who are in most cases men. A lack of a consistent selection method of actors shaping gender policies and the narrowly defined tasks given to temporary committees on gender issues, constrain the opportunities of actors to exhibit long-lasting influence on policy-making in various policy areas affecting gender (in)equality.

The KBS and gender mainstreaming are both young policy areas and are characterised by an intensive learning process. Hence, certain actors have not yet been able to claim ownership over these policies. In some countries, ad-hoc committees with senior government officials, university experts and managers have been formed to draft and fund national action plans to promote the KBS. In most cases, these committees and actors shaping the KBS policies have a clear gender bias in favour of men. Usually, the responsibility for the KBS policy area has been given to prime ministers offices and to ad hoc committees that distribute a relatively large budget to individual projects and measures. This contrasts sharply with the low budget and low profile action programmes in the area of gender equality. Experts on gender equality, who often work within academia, are seldom consulted when it comes to the drafting and implementation of gender equality measures. Moreover, the respective offices of the prime minister in the WELLKNOW countries have not yet been given the responsibility of implementing gender mainstreaming, although governments are committed to the integration of the gender perspective into all policy areas and not only into particular areas such as employment and social affairs.

The main aims and problems of national employment policies across the EU member states in our study reflect key objectives of the Employment Guidelines or the EES during the period under consideration. The common aims and problems of the employment policies in the WELLKNOW countries are: full employment, ageing of the workforce, gender gaps, especially the female employment rate, and skill gaps. The Employment Guidelines have a clear influence on employment policies in Hungary, while the objectives of the Icelandic national employment policy differ from those of the guidelines as they reflect a more favourable labour market situation than on average in the EU.

During the period under consideration, the five EU member states among the seven WELLKNOW countries were working towards the objective of full employment or to achieve the Lisbon target of an overall employment of 70% but Denmark is the only country which has reached a higher overall employment rate than this target or 75.1%. As a result, the main emphasis of Danish employment policies has been on measures to enhance employability and prevent long-term and regional unemployment as well as further growth in youth unemployment. All seven WELLKNOW countries are working towards strengthening the flexibility of workers through lifelong learning and reconciliation policies. There is a clear tendency towards a liberal-economic approach to employment influenced by growing pressures of competitiveness of national economies in a global market. Legislative measures such as tax changes to make work more rewarding and pension reforms have implemented to foster active ageing or employment of those past the official pension age. In addition, the public employment services of the EU

member states are being reformed in order to make them user-friendlier through, for example, increased individual service and staff training. The unemployment rate is at a relatively low level in Iceland and the employment policy involves primarily inactive measures such as the payment of unemployment benefits.

The main gender problems identified in the employment policies of the EU member states and in Hungary are gender segregation and the gender pay gap. Iceland has already achieved the highest female employment rate among the WELLKNOW countries. However, issues of gender equality have not yet become a part of the active employment policy, in spite of a large gender pay gap and rigid gender segregation in the labour market. In the EU member states, active employment policies are meant to tackle "gender problems" by making the labour market more flexible and by improving the (re)integration of women into employment. All the WELLKNOW countries emphasise the need to enable women to combine work and care responsibilities. Different measures are implemented under this policy priority, including child care provisions and extended care leave entitlements as well as special programmes like training for women returning to the labour market. The programmes are often funded by the EU. Efforts to improve the reconciliation of work and care mainly focus on women and fail to question the unequal gender division of work in paid and unpaid work.

The gender perspective is not well integrated into lifelong learning strategies across the partner countries. These strategies emphasise the need to invest in the individual work career based on economic and technological changes. In some cases, mothers (re)entering the labour market are addressed as a special target group of training measures. The Austrian labour market service has integrated gender mainstreaming into their work and offers trainers education in gender issues. It appears from our analysis that a lack of awareness and knowledge of issues concerning gender equality hampers the successful implementation of gender mainstreaming into employment policies.

Overall, the authorities in the WELLKNOW countries have a positive view towards the EES. The main influence of the EES at the national level has been procedural, resulting in a better coordination of policies in the field of employment. Moreover, the EES has pushed the member states to implement measures to achieve quantitative employment goals. However, the influence of the EES has been weaker in countries where the main employment targets have already been achieved, as is the case in Denmark. Hence, the EES does not appear to give enough incentive to countries like Denmark to tackle more difficult issues such as gender segregated labour market and the gender pay gap, which both require measures to transform gender relations.

In the five EU member states and in Hungary, gender equality policies are employment-orientated. This employment orientation appears in measures to improve opportunities to reconcile work and family life, child care provisions and special training for women to facilitate their (re)entry into the labour market. Less attention has been paid to the common problems of occupational segregation or the gender pay gap. The general objective of gender equality policies in all the partner countries is to achieve and maintain equal opportunities for women and men within the principle of equal opportunities for all. This goal is to be achieved by gender mainstreaming of all public policies and by special measures to improve the situation of women. In practice, the authorities in the WELLKNOW countries rely to a greater extent on special actions/measures than on implementing gender mainstreaming into public policies. However, special actions/measures are usually temporary, low budget initiatives which do not challenge the male-dominated structures of labour markets or societies.

In all the WELLKNOW countries, there is a political commitment to gender mainstreaming due to among others international agreements at the UN and EU levels. Our analysis shows, however, that the term gender mainstreaming is still vague and open to different interpretations among political actors and public officials responsible for implementing gender equality policies. The adaptation of gender mainstreaming has induced national authorities to adopt an administrative-technical approach to gender equality, which has weakened external pressure and involvement of social actors, such as the women's movement and the media. If Europe is to move towards greater gender equality, national governments need to apply a more comprehensive approach to gender equality with a clearer definition of the term gender mainstreaming and provide education for all actors engaged in issues of gender equality.

In the young policy field of the KBS, it is rather difficult to identify common objectives across the WELLKNOW countries since measures and references to the KBS are often indirect and dispersed. The majority of the countries follow a two-track strategy involving lifelong strategies under active labour market policies and special measures/action programmes to promote the KBS. The overall approach to the KBS in the partner countries is socio-economic as universal access to ICTs and the creation of new jobs and better employability through training and education are emphasised. References are made to the needs of society at large rather than of specific groups. Moreover, social and gender implication of technical changes are seldom mentioned. In the majority of the WELLKNOW countries, efforts to increase the number of students choosing a technical education have been implemented but have been largely unsuccessful. The reason for the ineffectiveness of policies striving to enhance women's educational and job

opportunities in the KBS is that the measures are usually temporary and do not question the male-oriented nature of natural and technical science.

The EES treats gender problems first and foremost as technical in nature, preventing the member states from achieving economic growth comparable with that of the US. Hence, gender equality is perceived more as a derived objective of economic growth than a question of social justice. The solutions provided by the EU to solve gender problems (gender mainstreaming and special measures) within the framework of the EES have so far been successful in raising awareness of gender issues across the member states and in creating institutional learning processes. Gender mainstreaming has, however, been applied differently in the member states. Some member states have used the approach as a rhetorical concept (for example, Spain), while others have applied it as a systematic method to integrate the gender perspective into policies (the Netherlands and Finland). There are also recent examples of a lack of progress concerning the application of gender mainstreaming within the EES: for example, in Austria, Denmark, Portugal and the UK (Rubery et al. 2004, 96). Moreover, changes in government and a lack of interest in gender issues among actors engaged in the EES have meant that some countries appear to be going in circles instead of forward when it comes to the implementation of measures to promote gender equality. The impact of the EES at the national level has mainly been discursive and the strategy has not yet led to a transformation of institutional structures, such as the divergent welfare state models prevailing in Europe, although changes in welfare priorities are apparent in, for example, the Spanish Mediterranean welfare state. Hence, progress towards gender equality has been and will continue to be slow and uneven across Europe.

6. Policies promoting employment and gender equality in the Knowledge Based Society

The aim of work package five was to identify policy options in the context of divergent national conditions and of the Knowledge Based Society (KBS). The focus was on how structures (welfare states) and processes (the European Employment Strategy) frame policy options. The analysis in this work package drew on the results of the previous work packages and other academic studies as well as on discussions with policy makers. The results of this work package were published in report 5 (see Koistinen et al. 2005).

Given the multitude of resources and starting points for developing policy options, the difficult question is the choice of the best policy alternative in a given situation and the appropriate methodologies and principles. Our basic argument is that policy choices and their effectiveness depend on a complex configuration of public and private actor interests, strategies and resources. The success of public policies depends on the state's capacity to provide and allocate resources for the institutions that ultimately make the policy decisions.

Results

The effectiveness of the European Employment Strategy (EES) in reaching the Lisbon goal depends on how it is framed or shaped by structures (welfare states) and other policy processes (mode of implementation) at the national level. Structures and policy processes shape performances but are themselves the creation of societal choices at the national level. Moreover, these past and present societal choices have created variations in structures and policy processes which are an important cause of cross-country differences in implementing and fulfilling the objectives of the EES.

We observe different strategies among the member countries to promote the objective of gender equality such as the dual breadwinner model (men and women working close to full-time), the modified dual breadwinner model (women working part-time and men full-time) and the male breadwinner model (women encouraged to take on responsibility for unpaid care). The strong path-dependence of structures and policy processes is evident in the development of welfare states in transitional countries such as Hungary, which has seen a gradual change from the state socialist type of the welfare society in 1948-68 to the maternalist type of the welfare in 1968-85 to the liberal welfare state in 1985-1996 (see discussion in Koistinen et al. 2005).

A comparison with the Active Labour Market Policies reveals that the EES focuses much more on supply side problems and policies and has a weaker institutional and macro-economic framework. These characteristics explain to a certain extent limited achievements of the EES when it comes to attaining the Lisbon goal. Moreover, the emphasis made by the EES of ranking countries according to their performance on narrowly defined targets like, for example, the female employment rate runs the risk of making those countries that out-perform the others the unachievable standard for member countries falling behind. Economic, political and social contexts cannot be copied over night. Moreover, those nations performing well tend to focus more on their relative position than on their distance from the EU's employment and gender objectives. Hence, the focus of the EES should be more on identifying variety of policy options than on good performances when it comes to promoting learning processes in Europe (See Koistinen et al. 2006).

The question that remains to be answered is whether policy options identified as "good practises" are transferable as general, Europe-wide policy options? The sheer cost of transferring, for example, large-scale Nordic policies in the area of gender equality and KBS is prohibitive. Moreover, the historical and political backgrounds of individual countries may hinder the acceptance of such policies and the principle of social citizenship. It is therefore worth repeating that the Nordic policy model should be seen as a policy option but not as a standard or goal. The same applies to other examples of good practises or areas of social innovation, such as organisational innovations in education and gender mainstreaming. If European societies really want to pursue social innovations in areas which are complex social constructions, like gender equality, then more integrated programmes, better coordination between social partners, public officials and experts on equality issues and policy actors and even global awareness and coordination will be required. Therefore good examples and success stories should be seen as verification that policies matter even in a complex global world and mutual learning and dissemination can be a way of upgrading international social norms and social rights.

7. Moving Europe towards the Knowledge Based Society and Gender Equality

The final work package had three aims: (1) To generate a dialogue with targeted decision makers and experts about policy options, (2) To inform experts, decision makers and citizens about the results of the various parts of this project, (3) To produce a book presenting the main analysis and results of the various project parts. In September 2005, a workshop was organised by the European Trade Union Institute in Brussels in order to establish a dialogue with decision makers and experts on the main results of the WELLKNOW project. Before the workshop, the project group produced a manuscript of a book presenting the main analysis and findings of the WELLKNOW project. Seven experts and policy-makers were then given the task of commenting on individual chapters of the manuscript in order to improve the analytical and policy discussions of the project results. Six experts were able to submit their comments for publication in the book. The book is edited by Lilja Mósesdóttir, Chantal Remery and Amparo Serrano Pascual and its title is *Moving Europe towards the Knowledge Based Society and Gender Equality: Policies and Performances*. The European Trade Union Institute will publish the book in 2006. The content of the book will be:

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IV. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

1. Introduction

We will now review the main conclusions and policy implications of the WELLKNOW project as presented in the book *Moving Europe towards the Knowledge Based Society and Gender Equality: Policies and Performances* edited by Lilja Mósesdóttir, Chantal Remery and Amparo Serrano Pascual. This book will present the main analysis and findings of the WELLKNOW project and will be published by the European Trade Union Institute in 2006 (See <http://www.etui-rehs.org/>).

The main contribution of the WELLKNOW project to the state-of-the-art is that it gives empirical evidence of the direction and impact of the changes underway across Europe regarding the Lisbon goal (2000) of a competitive economy and social inclusion, including gender equality, as we move towards the Knowledge Based Society (KBS). The analysis demonstrated that there is no direct link between the KBS on the one hand and social progress and gender equality on the other hand. There are countries that score high on the different dimensions of the KBS and low on the various aspects of gender equality and vice versa. Countries are on different development paths towards the EU's vision of the KBS (cf. Lisbon goal) as the development is influenced by divergent actors, policy processes and national contexts. It is, however, still too early to characterise the development of each country, although at least four paths are possible. The European Employment Strategy (EES) and national policies are not innovative with regard to the KBS and gender mainstreaming. They represent more the tradition of an active labour market policy with the emphasis on training and support measures for the unemployed and the need for economic growth. Moreover, the EES has adopted an administrative approach to gender equality as opposed to a transformative approach

2. Conclusions

The review of academic debate and policy documents revealed that there is no consensus about what kind of society the Knowledge Based Society (KBS) encompasses and what its implications are in terms of gender equality. The following employment changes were claimed to be a part of the transition to the KBS: (1) growth of the service sector; (2) expansion of a less hierarchical, more skill-intensive and more flexible work organisations; (3) a growth of occupations with a high information and knowledge content in their activity. The extent to which these changes have taken place and have been associated with greater or lesser skills and gender inequalities is contested among academics. They also debate whether the employment changes have enabled better opportunities to reconcile work and family life. Empirical research shows growing complexities concerning the development of gender and employment relations and the need to differentiate between different groups of women as the benefits of the transition towards the KBS have been unevenly distributed among them (See Mósesdóttir and Serrano Pascual, 2006; Castaño Collado, 2006).

As argued in the first report of the WELLKNOW project, the transition towards the KBS is shaped by the particular labour market contexts and organisational practices of firms and contains processes with contradictory consequences for social relations at the national level. Hence, different models of the KBS are forming that have various levels of skills, job quality and social cohesion or gender equality. Moreover, the development is continuous but uneven and different models co-exist as countries differ in their vulnerability to external challenges, in their perception of these challenges and in their capacity to respond to them. In other words, it is a matter of political choice how much social inequalities are built into the KBS (Serrano Pascual and Mósesdóttir 2003).

2.1. Performances and pathways

Four indices were developed on the basis of our discussion in report no. 1 on the main employment and gender challenges of the KBS. These four indices were: a general index on the KBS, for benchmarking economic, technical and social performance (KBS index); an index on the quality of working life (QWL index) and two gender indices, one on the KBS (GE-KBS index) and one on the quality of working life (GE-QWL index).

The main empirical results for each index, covering the EU-15 Member States plus Iceland and Hungary were:

- KBS overall scores show a clear divide between Nordic countries (except for Iceland) and Mediterranean countries. Denmark and Sweden, followed by Finland

and the Netherlands, score highest. Closing the ranking, Portugal is found in the worst position. Greece, Italy, Spain and Hungary also perform badly. From 1997 to 2002, there is a general improvement on KBS scores; Germany is the only country with a slightly negative percentage change.

- Again, Nordic countries (except for Iceland) score highest on GE-KBS, although in this case Mediterranean countries are not found as a homogenous group in the worst positions; Germany, Netherlands, Luxembourg and Greece close the ranking. However, even in the Nordic countries, full gender equality is still a long way off: the maximum score is around 0.65, while a situation of complete gender equality corresponds to the value 1. Trends from 1997-2002 are rather contradictory (gender equality increased in some countries, but decreased in others) and it is worth noting that progress towards gender equality has been less general and intense than progress towards the KBS.
- Denmark scores highest on QWL, followed by Austria, the Netherlands and Sweden, whilst Spain and Greece close the ranking. In general terms, there has been some improvement in QWL scores from 1997 to 2002; Finland is the only country with a negative percentage change.
- With regard to GE-QWL, Austria and Denmark score highest, while Spain is well behind the other countries. Again, however, full gender equality is still a long way off, even in those countries with the most favourable situation, as the maximum score is about 0.75. Furthermore, progress towards gender equality is far from having been a general trend. In a large number of countries inequality appears to have increased from 1997 to 2002.

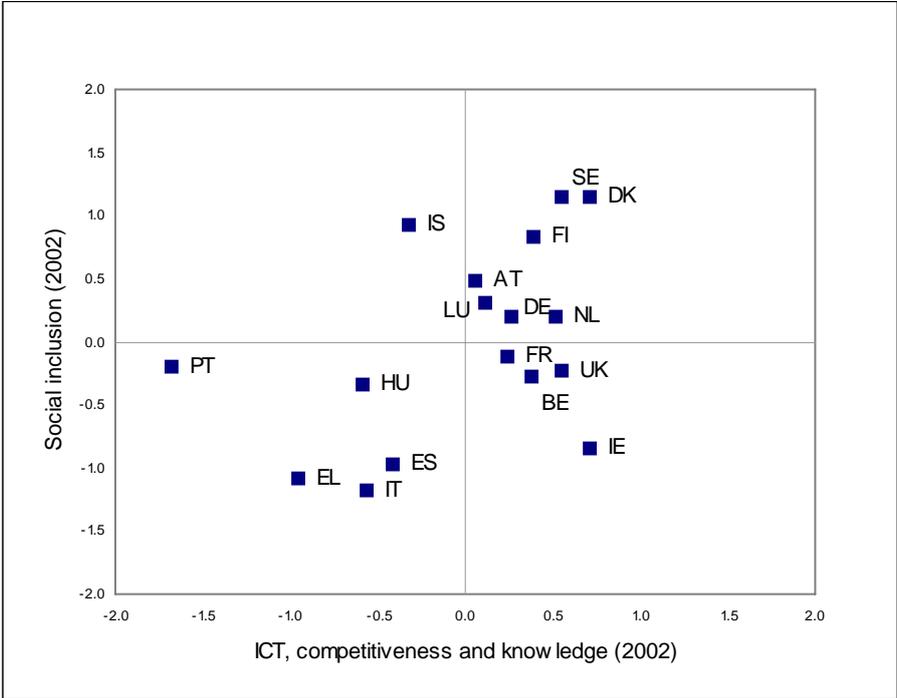
Finally, the analysis carried out does not provide clear evidence about the relationship between progress towards the KBS, social inclusion and gender equality or the goals set out at Lisbon (2000) by the EU. A more in-depth and contextualised analysis is needed before drawing any further conclusions.

Our empirical work allows us to take a small step forward and give at least preliminary answers to debates on the transition towards the KBS and its social and gender implications. The analysis set out below tackles, first, the different models of transition towards the KBS and their implications in terms of social inclusion and quality of working life and, second, an analysis of the consequences in terms of gender (in)equality.

Does progress towards the KBS imply more social inclusion? The analysis carried out does not provide clear evidence. Using the most recent data, Figure 10 compares levels

of social inclusion with levels of performance in the ICTs, competitiveness and knowledge (measured as the mean of the overall scores for each of the three dimensions). In some countries, this linear relationship seems to have become a reality to a certain extent: Sweden and Denmark score highest for both, whilst Greece, Spain and Italy score lowest. However, it is also evident that this relationship does not exist in many other cases. The correlation between both variables is very weak and not significant. When recent trends are analysed, the results are even clearer: there is no correlation between change in competitiveness and knowledge and change in social inclusion.

Figure 10. Relationship between scores on ICT, competitiveness and knowledge and scores on social inclusion.



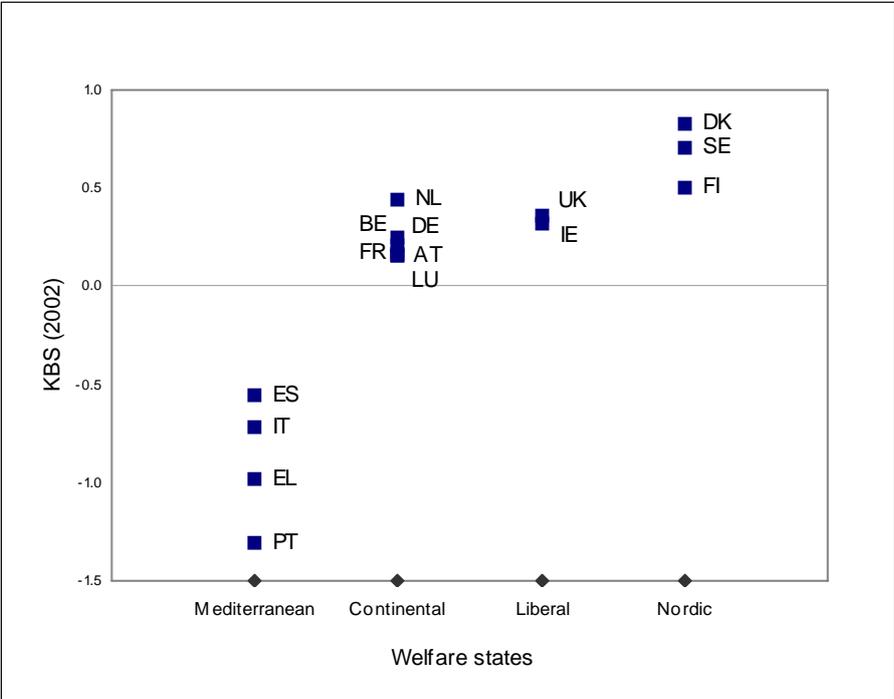
Source: Caprile 2004a

It is easier to understand the implications of this lack of a relationship when we realise that balanced progress towards the KBS, which also includes progress towards a more inclusive society, is closely linked to the different models of the welfare state. In this case, the statistical test confirms the existence of a strong relationship between the level of the KBS performance and the different models of the welfare state: Mediterranean, continental, liberal and Nordic.⁶ As shown in Figure 11, three broad groups of countries can be distinguished: at one end of the scale are the Mediterranean countries (with low

⁶ Results are significant for the Anova test (significance <0.001); eta square=0.92 (three groups of countries considered: Nordic, Mediterranean and continental-liberal).

KBS scores), while at the other end of the scale are the Nordic countries (with high scores), with the continental and liberal countries occupying the intermediate positions. It should also be added that, as already explained, the main difference between the continental and liberal countries is that the latter have higher levels of social exclusion.

Figure 11. Relationship between welfare state regimes and KBS scores.



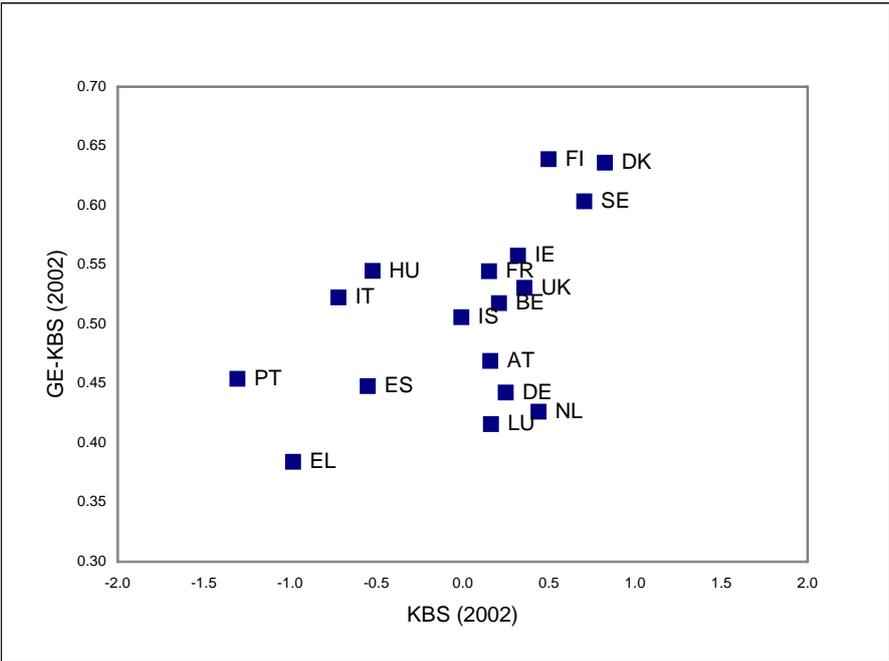
Source: Caprile 2004a

Finally, the analysis also confirms that when there is balanced progress towards the KBS it appears to be associated with a higher quality of working life. In other words, there is a relevant and significant correlation between the KBS and QWL indices. If this analysis provides any empirical evidence, it is in line with the approaches stating that economic and technical progress is not unavoidably associated with social progress. Depending on the country, high levels of ICTs penetration, competitiveness and even access to knowledge co-exist with more or less unemployment, poverty and social exclusion. In this respect, the analysis reinforces the idea that ‘policy matters’, establishing a connection between different models of the welfare state and different models of transition towards the KBS, more or less balanced, more or less inclusive and with a higher or lower quality of working life.

Does progress towards the KBS imply more gender equality? Again, the analysis does not provide evidence for this. As shown in Figure 12, the relationship between the KBS and GE-KBS indices is very weak. When recent trends are analysed, there proves to be no

correlation. However, the lack of a relationship between gender equality and the different models of transition towards the KBS (and welfare state models) should not be surprising. As is well known, the debate still continues concerning how to include the gender dimension fully in an analysis of the welfare state, and it is widely agreed that the previously used typology does not achieve this. Furthermore, our study uses a KBS concept that precludes key aspects of gender equality, such as equal pay and the equal sharing of care for children and dependents.

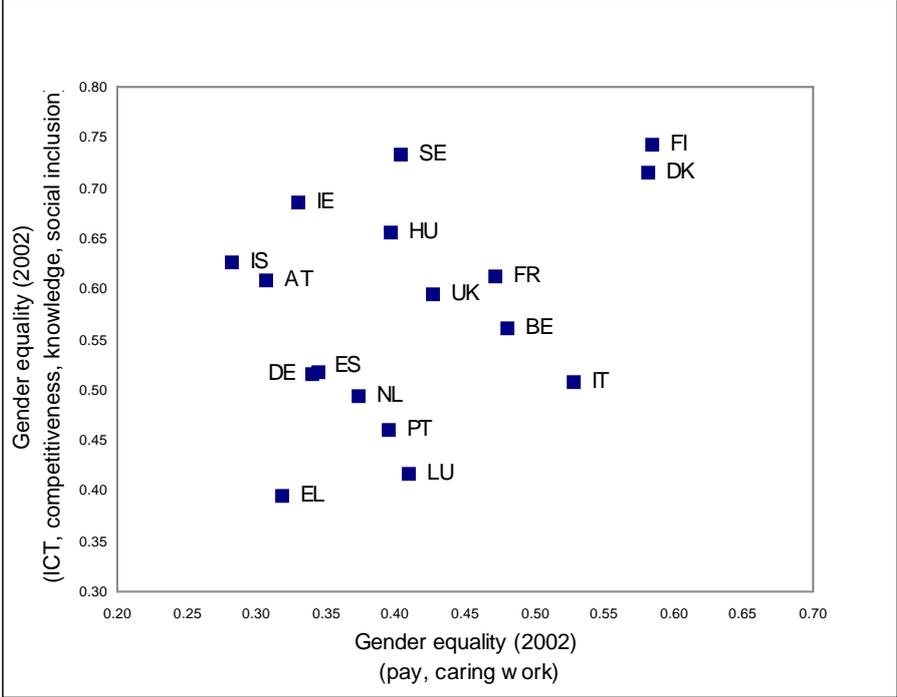
Figure 12. Relationship between KBS scores and GE-KBS scores.



Source: Caprile 2004a

From this viewpoint, it is of greater interest to realise the lack of relationship between different aspects of gender equality. Figure 13 compares the level of equality in those aspects most directly related to the KBS performance (ICTs, competitiveness, knowledge, social inclusion) with the equality achieved in pay and sharing of care for children and dependents. In both cases, the overall score was calculated as the average of the scores achieved in each of these dimensions. As can be seen, the relationship is non-existent, and the same results are achieved by including the desegregation dimension in either of the two axes. Furthermore, comparison of the GE-KBS and GE-QWL indices shows that the overall level of gender equality in the transition towards the KBS bears no relation to the level of gender equality with regard to quality of working life.

Figure 13. Relationship between overall scores on gender equality in the ICTs, competitiveness, knowledge and social inclusion and overall scores on gender equality in pay and caring work.



Source: Caprile 2004a

A comparison of gender (in)equalities across different social groups – namely knowledge and non-knowledge workers – might shed some light on these apparent paradoxes. In line with previous WELLKNOW reports, it should be taken into account that the gender approach is incomplete unless it is integrated with a social class approach: gender inequalities and social inequalities are linked and both shape the division between paid and unpaid work, quality of working life and the risk of poverty and social exclusion. Obviously, to go into detail on this question lies outside the framework of this study: our far more limited objective is to draw attention to the existence of certain paradoxes and to stress the need to enhance research in this field by dealing jointly with gender and social inequalities.

Remery, Schippers and Caprile (2006) put performances of Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Spain as well as of Iceland and Hungary into their national contexts and four different development paths are identified. The main characteristic of the first path is that there is a lack of focus on either the KBS or gender. Economies following this path run the risk of economic stagnation and social exclusion. Countries following the

second path put the main emphasis on developing the KBS and few efforts are undertaken to ensure gender equality. Social exclusion is therefore likely to increase in the long run. The focus of those countries on the third path is on closing gender gaps with limited connection to the KBS. This situation may produce high level of social inclusion but low economic growth. Those countries on the fourth path concentrated on promoting both gender equality and the KBS. It is noteworthy that countries with the highest level of gender equality have had the highest economic wellbeing in recent years (see United Nations 2005; World Economic Forum 2005). Hence, those countries concentrating their efforts only on promoting the KBS (second path) or gender equality (third path) do not have a sustainable economic strategy (see also Papouschek. 2006).

2.2. Regulating the transition

As demonstrated by Sjørup, Reinicke and Roivas (2006) and Roivas (2006), the EES has been an important policy tool to pressure the EU member states to pursue the Lisbon goal of a competitive economy and social inclusion including gender equality as we move towards the KBS. However, the emphasis has first and foremost been on promoting economic growth and only secondarily on improving social inclusion. Hence, the EES facilitates a convergence around a European model based on neo-liberal convergence criteria which stress the free play of markets instead of state interventions and sanctions to change gender imbalances (See also Webster, 2006). Moreover, the "soft" regulation involved in the EES has meant that the different welfare state models across Europe have, so far, played a greater role in shaping the direction of the KBS than the strategy itself. Hence, the EES is a regulation mechanism that operates primarily at the discourse level by spreading common understandings of problems in the area of employment and gender equality (Serrano Pascual 2003).

Sjørup, Reinicke and Roivas (2006) and Roivas (2006) identify a certain convergence concerning policy approaches in the National Action Plans. All the National Action Plans in Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Spain address skill shortages by emphasising the need for education and training on the one hand and opportunities for women to reconcile work and family life and occupational segregation on the other hand. One reason for this convergence is that the National Action Plans are written by the national authorities within the discourse framework of the Employment guidelines of the EES (see also Webster, 2006 and Emerek, 2006). The National Action Plans are primarily political documents representing the values of parties in power and public officials who seek to convince the EU that its policy goals are implemented or at least taken seriously. These common policy approaches are implemented in divergent social and economic contexts so that the outcomes of the EU's regulation differ at the national level. In

addition, the National Action Plans have not been effective in achieving the Lisbon agenda as the policy approaches in the area of employment, gender equality and the KBS that are in most cases separate policy fields or not integrated at all. For example, unequal access to ICTs is not tackled directly by employment and gender equality policies but is only the objective of policies to promote the KBS.

Koistinen, Roivas and Neumann (2006) argue that the effectiveness of the EES in reaching the Lisbon goal depends on how it is framed or shaped by structures (welfare states) and other policy processes (mode of implementation) at the national level. Structures and policy processes shape performances but are themselves the creation of societal choices at the national level. Moreover, these past and present societal choices have created variations in structures and policy processes which are an important explanation of cross-country differences in implementing and fulfilling the objectives of the EES. Hence, we observe different strategies among the member countries to promote the objective of gender equality such as the dual breadwinner model (men and women working close to full-time), the modified dual breadwinner model (women working part-time and men full-time) and the male breadwinner model (women encouraged to take on responsibility for unpaid care). The strong path-dependence of structures and policy processes is evident in the development of welfare states in transitional countries such as Hungary which has seen a gradual change from the state socialist type of the welfare society in 1948-68 to the maternalist type of the welfare in 1968-85 to the liberal welfare state in 1985-1996 (see discussion in Koistinen et al. 2005).

A comparison with the Active Labour Market Policies reveals that the EES focuses much more on supply side problems and policies and has weaker institutional and macro-economic framework. These characteristics explain to a certain extent the strategy's limited achievements when it comes to attaining the Lisbon goal. Moreover, the emphasis made by the EES of ranking countries according to their performance on narrowly defined targets like, for example, the female employment rate, runs the risk of making those countries which out-perform others the unachievable standard for member countries falling behind. Economic, political and social contexts cannot be copied over night. Moreover, those performing well tend to focus more on their relative position than on their distance from the EU's employment and gender objectives. Hence, the focus of the EES should be more on identifying the variety of policy options than on good performances when it comes to promoting learning processes in Europe (See Koistinen, et al., 2006).

2.3. The gender dimension

A question guiding the analysis of gender equality in the KBS is whether the gender mainstreaming strategy as applied within the framework of the EES has empowered women or given them an opportunity to voice their needs and interests. The policy analysis revealed that the introduction of gender mainstreaming has so far not altered women's under-representation in policy making processes at the national level. Instead it has brought to light both how unstable women's representation is within narrowly defined policy areas that have a relatively low budget and a lack of institutional mechanisms to ensure that gender actors are able to influence non-traditional and new policy areas such as the KBS. Hence, the gender mainstreaming strategy has so far failed to empower women, especially at the national level. However, the integration of gender mainstreaming into the EES has in some cases created opportunities for women to act as political actors and experts at the EU level (e.g. experts groups) (See Mósesdóttir and Erlingsdóttir, 2006).

Another question guiding the analysis of gender equality in the KBS is whether the gender mainstreaming strategy as applied within the framework of the EES is transformative or has led to a fundamental change in policy processes (objectives and measures) and structures (e.g. the welfare state) at the national level. An important reason for the lack of transformation is that gender equality in the EES is treated more as a derived objective of economic growth rather than a question of social justice. Moreover, the EES does not acknowledge tensions and contradictions between different policy objectives regarding gender gaps in employment, unemployment and pay as well as gender segregation. Evidence shows that the gender pay gap is smaller in countries with a low female employment rate (for example, Italy). The gender gap in employment may also become smaller due to growth in bad or low paid jobs (for example, Spain) and gender segregation is high in countries with a high female employment rate (for example, the Nordic countries). The gender mainstreaming strategy has so far not been able to transform policy measures but it has led to the implementation of a two-track gender strategy in the WELLKNOW countries involving special measures to improve the situation of women and the integration of the gender perspective into policies. However, greater emphasis has been put on special measures and an administrative-technical approach to gender mainstreaming has been adopted in Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Spain as well as Iceland and Hungary (See Mósesdóttir and Erlingsdóttir). In other words, the "old routines" of policy making have not changed (See Verloo, 2006).

The various welfare state models in Europe affect not only the ability of national states to increase women's employment but also their capability to meet new needs arising from the transition to the KBS. The child care targets set by the Barcelona Council (2002) signal a radical shift in the EU's social policy intervention as it involves direct provision of services. A more extensive public service to ensure women's labour force participation is difficult to integrate into the Continental and the Mediterranean welfare states where the family has the responsibility of caring for children and dependents. At the other end of the spectrum, the Nordic welfare states already have extensive service provisions and they have also been able to meet new needs such as universal access to ICTs and skills. Hence, the development towards the dual breadwinner model or equal participation of men and women is path-dependent or dependent on the type of welfare state. The EES is putting a lot of pressure on institutional structures in countries where the male breadwinner model prevails. At the same time, countries performing relatively well in terms of gender objectives of the strategy use their good position to justify a lack of further progress (See Mósesdóttir and Erlingsdóttir, 2006).

3. Policy Implications

We will start this part by discussing the overall policy implications of the WELLKNOW project (see Sjørup 2004 and the seven national reports). Thereafter, we will highlight nine policy options to achieve EU's vision of the Knowledge-Based Society (KBS) which were identified on the basis of the analyses of performances and policies undertaken by the project group (see Koistinen et al. 2005). We will conclude this section by making several suggestions about how the gender mainstreaming strategy needs to be improved if it is to achieve EU's goal of gender equality across the member states (see Mósésdóttir 2005).

3.1. Overview

The objectives of Employment Guidelines of the European Employment Strategy (EES) are in line with what have been identified as the challenges of KBS. Moreover, the National Action Plans in the five EU member countries (Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Spain) and Hungary reflect the key employment and gender objectives of the Employment Guidelines. These objectives are employment growth and the closing of gender and skill gaps. Common policies to achieve these goals are activation, reconciliation and life-long learning policies. When the objectives of the EES are examined it appears that the central concepts of the strategy such as life-long learning and gender mainstreaming are used rhetorically without concrete definitions of what they imply in terms of outcomes. This means that the member countries can interpret them anyway they like, which explains to some extent the lack of progress in certain dimensions of the Lisbon 2000 goal. In addition, policies implemented to achieve the employment and gender objectives of the EES are still seen as an important area of national policy autonomy, although most countries have a positive view of the strategy. Hence, a European approach to employment and gender mainstreaming is slowly developing across the member states, although it is still patchy and more at the rhetorical level than the level of implementation.

The EU and national authorities must overcome the problems related to the rhetorical character of the National Action Plans. A more comprehensive knowledge of the performances and policies in each country will enable a better understanding of the different starting levels and advances of the member countries regarding the employment and gender objectives. In addition, more detailed information must be provided about the scale, costs and time span of policies, legislation, institutions, projects and programmes playing a role in achieving these common objectives in the member countries. Finally, greater efforts are needed to integrate issues and criticism of

social partners, NGOs and gender experts into the National Action Plans, which in most cases are the responsibility of public officials.

Good practices

Policy efforts to promote gender equality in Finland and the Netherlands appear to be more result-oriented than in the other countries as they include to a greater extent quantitative targets (the Netherlands) and assessment tools (Netherlands and Finland). In Finland, an equality barometer calculated on the basis of statistical data and opinion polls is published on a regular basis and the Dutch government issues bi-annually an emancipation monitor in order to examine progress in the policy area. In countries like Denmark, Austria and Finland, the social partners' contributions are incorporated directly into the drafts of the NAPs. However, the social partners claim that the NAPs include only governmental employment programmes and policies which are decided elsewhere in the administration. NGOs are not required to contribute directly to the NAP processes but in some of the countries they are able to influence the final version of documents through external pressure. In Finland, the NAPs have been discussed within the national association of unemployed people, a central organisation of more than 200 local organisations. In Denmark, the national council of NGOs representing the disabled participated in the 2003 NAP process without, however, a formal involvement.

In the WELLKNOW countries (Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Spain, Iceland and Hungary), committees and actors shaping policies in the area of KBS often have a clear gender bias in favour of men. Strategies to promote knowledge and technology often make only a general reference to gender mainstreaming by stressing that both men and women will benefit from flexible working arrangements and training possibilities. In most of the countries, the responsibility for the KBS area has been given to prime ministers' offices and to ad hoc committees at the ministerial level that distribute a relatively large budget to individual projects and measures. This contrasts with the low budget and low profile action programmes in the area of gender equality which are in most cases the responsibility of an individual ministry. The gender mainstreaming strategy must be given the same status within the public administration and budget as policies promoting the Information Society if we are going to see progress in gender equality as we move to the KBS.

Good practices

In recent years, there has been an increased cooperation in countries like Austria, Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands between responsible ministries and the social partners as concerns equal pay programmes and equal pay analyses which often seek to establish a common analytical reference framework for equal pay discussions. In the Netherlands, there is a tradition of temporary ad hoc advisory committees of experts on gender mainstreaming. These consultative bodies are part of the current policy of gender mainstreaming giving stimulus to government policies at all levels. The Emancipation Audit Committee reviews the emancipation policies of all government departments and organises workshops. It elaborates and monitors policy content and processes and reports the results of the operations. A new General secretary for equality has been created in Spain that has clearly defined responsibilities and position within the public administration.

The majority of the WELLKNOW countries have implemented a two-track strategy to promote the KBS involving, on the one hand, lifelong learning policies within the active labour market policies and, on the other hand, special measures or action programmes to promote the Information Society or the KBS. The overall approach has been socio-economic as universal access to ICTs and the creation of new jobs and better employability through training and education are emphasised. References were made to the needs of society at large rather than specific disadvantaged groups. Moreover, the social and gender implications of technical changes were seldom mentioned. Hence, there is a risk that too much emphasis is put on education and training at the cost of other vital aspects related to the KBS. In the majority of the WELLKNOW countries, efforts to increase the number of students choosing technical education have been implemented but have been largely unsuccessful. The reason for the ineffectiveness of policies striving to enhance women's educational and job opportunities in the KBS is that the measures are in most cases temporary and do not question the male-oriented nature of natural and technical science.

Good practices

In Iceland, the main emphasis has been on realising goals such as a broad access to ICTs to enhance quality of life and a better security of the ICTs and information while in Finland and the Netherlands the strategy also includes measures to prevent digital divide. All three

countries have a high score on the KBS. The Finish governmental Information Society programme includes a broad concept of KBS which stresses active citizenship and training in ICTs to prevent digital divide or social exclusion of weak groups such as women and elderly people. In the Netherlands, the policy measures include, for example, training of school staff in ICTs skills and a guideline for e-learning for every citizen. In addition, ad-hoc committees with high-level governmental officials or business managers have been formed in the Netherlands and in Spain in order to increase public awareness of the importance of ICTs and the relevance of scientific and technical training for the future economy.

A stronger synergy should be developed between the National Action Plans and new policy areas such as the KBS and gender mainstreaming. Examples of synergies between different policy areas are when measures to improve opportunities to combine work and family life use the possibilities of ICTs and when educational policies recognise the specific problems women experience as they enter highly skilled technical training and professions. Moreover, measures must be taken to prevent traditional gender division of work to be reproduced in new sectors and jobs and to ensure that women's skills are recognised as formal skills and rewarded financially in the same way as men's. The EU and the member states need to be much more aware of the outcomes of central policy strategies such as life-long learning. The life-long learning strategy not only has the potential of enhancing the skill level in the labour market. It also opens doors to further differentiation between men and women.

Good practices

Few examples could be found of the integration of the gender perspective into KBS related policies. These are training in IT for female workers and women returning to employment after maternal leave (Austria, Hungary and Spain) as well as efforts to increase the number of women choosing traditionally male dominated fields of studies such as computer science and engineering (Austria and Denmark, Finland, Iceland and the Netherlands). With a reference to the low number of women in technology related studies in higher education and the ICTs in general, the Dutch government has formulated a target stating that the share of women should reach 30% in 2010. In spite of aims to increase the share of those with technical education across the WELLKNOW countries, little progress has been made. An exception is Finland where the share of women in technical education has been rising. The

integration of the gender perspective into the lifelong learning strategy is not well developed across the WELLKNOW partner countries. However, the Austrian labour market service (AMS) has integrated the concept of gender mainstreaming into its employment programmes and women are, for example, offered education and training in order to enable them to keep contact with regional employment offices as a first step of returning to work. In addition, special training programmes (train-the-trainer moduls) have been developed to create awareness among trainers of the issues of gender mainstreaming. These programmes are considered to be of great importance for the introduction and promotion of gender mainstreaming in Austria.

3.2. Policy options

On the basis of the results of the various analyses of performances and policies undertaken by the WELLKNOW project group, nine good practices were identified regarding achieving the goal set at Lisbon to develop a KBS model that is competitive and capable of maintaining sustainable economic growth, with both more and better jobs and social cohesion (see table 3).

Table 3. Good practise recommendations of the WELLKNOW project.

Field	Country	Policy description and reasoning	Statistical evidence?
1. R&D policies	<i>Finland</i>	Systematic and coordinated research & development policy involving state financiers, educational institutions and private enterprises.	Ranks 2 in R&D intensity in first 25 EU, Eurostat 2002 (no. 1 Sweden) Ranks 1 in component 'university-industry collaboration' in Networked Readiness Index of World Economic Forum
2. ICTs–broader citizenship and access	<i>Hungary</i>	Tele-cottages movement: self-sustaining civil-society initiative, which has successfully promoted access to ICTs and raised education level and awareness in less developed settlements.	
	<i>Iceland</i>	Long-term strategies (1996 to 2004) for universal ICTs access. The strategies stress the importance of partnership between government, education system, social partners and individuals.	Ranks 1 in KBS index dimension ICTs in WP 3 report, p. 59 Rank 1 in component index 'Infrastructure Environment' in the Networked Readiness Index of World Economic Forum
3. Women's training initiatives	<i>Finland</i>	A large campaign (incl. ESF project 'Tietonaisia') to foster women's study as IT professionals. There have been specific ICTs and media training and continuous education for women and the number of female students has tripled in the field of ICTs and media.	
4. Extended family allowances and services	<i>Finland</i> <i>Denmark</i>	Broad and continually developing family policy system incl. leaves of absence, day care and right to return to work. Extensions in the area of leave are currently being made to include fathers.	See Gornick and Meyers (2001). Finland ranks 1 and Denmark ranks 2 in the dimension 'Equal sharing of caring work' and in the overall GE-KBS index of the WP 3 report, pp. 72 and 74 Denmark ranks 1 in value QWL 7.2 'Compatibility between work and family-social commitments' of the WP 3 report, p. 83

5. Extended active labour market policies	Denmark	Strengthened activation line in labour market policy. All unemployed persons offered a job or training position within one year.	Denmark ranks 1 in the overall Quality of Working Life index and 2 in the Gender-Quality of Working Life index of the WP 3 report, pp. 84 and 94 Denmark ranks 1 in overall employment rate (75.1 %) and no. 2 in women's employment rate (70.5 %) in first 25 EU, Eurostat 2003
6. Continuing gender mainstreaming processes in the administration	Denmark	Continuously introducing gender mainstreaming in all the core activities of the PES system. Guiding customers systematically to non-typical occupations against occupational segregation.	Denmark ranks 1 in the dimension of 'equal sharing of decent pay' of the WP 3 report, p. 86 Denmark ranks no. 2 on the overall GE-KBS index of the WP 3 report, p. 94
	Austria	Gender mainstreaming in employment programmes; women are offered education and training as a first step in returning to work; counselling centres in the provinces.	Austria ranks 1 on the dimension of 'the equal sharing of a decent work/life balance' and 2 on the dimension of the 'equal sharing of autonomous and complex work' of the WP 3 report, pp. 89 and 92 Austria ranks 1 on the overall GE-KBS index of the WP 3 report, p. 94

The question is, are these 'good practises' transferable as general, Europe-wide policy options? The sheer cost of such large-scale Nordic policies is prohibitive, but the historical and political backgrounds of individual countries may also hinder the acceptance of such policies and the principle of social citizenship. It is therefore worth repeating that the Nordic policy model should be seen as a policy option but not as a standard or goal. The same applies to other examples of good practises or areas of social innovation, such as organisational innovations in education and gender mainstreaming. If European societies really want to pursue social innovations in areas which are complex social constructions, like gender equality, then more integrated programmes, better coordination between social partners, public officials and experts on equality issues and policy actors and even global awareness and coordination will be required. Therefore good examples and success stories should be seen as verification that policies matter even in a complex global world. Mutual learning and dissemination can be a way of upgrading international social norms and social rights.

3.3. Improving the gender mainstreaming strategy

One reason why converging regulation in the area of gender equality (e.g. gender mainstreaming) at the EU and national levels has, so far, not succeeded in securing a general progress towards gender equality is that it has failed to empower women across Europe and transform policy processes and structures. Women will be empowered only if national and international authorities ensure that, as political actors and experts, men and women are: (1) equally represented; (2) equally consulted; (3) equally provided with resources (time, money and tools). The transformation of policy processes and structures requires that: (1) gender equality is pursued as a question of social justice as well as economic efficiency; (2) gender equality is the responsibility of the highest ministerial level; (3) policies and institutions are complementary (mutually supportive) across different spheres of society.”

The empowerment of women requires that national and international authorities ensure equal representation of men and women among actors and institutions consulted on a regular basis and an equal distribution of resources to these actors as well as equal consideration of their viewpoints. Women's limited empowerment and lack of opportunities to challenge definitions of gender problems means that the focus is mainly on women's deficiencies or insufficient engagement in paid work and/or limited technical skills and not on men's deficiencies such as insufficient skill levels in some countries and lack of engagement in care of children and dependents both in the labour market and in the household. In other words, women and their needs and interests must be included in policy-making and the problem formulation of policy approaches should be reconstructed to include men. Moreover, greater cooperation between social partners, public officials, experts on gender equality and political actors on gender issues is needed in order to ensure effective implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy.

The gender mainstreaming strategy has in most cases become a question of political rhetoric and policy methodology instead of a tool to transform gender relations. If the gender mainstreaming strategy is to move from being a discourse to a transformative mechanism, it must ensure that policy processes and structures are changed in a fundamental way – not only in under-performing countries but also in over-performing countries when it comes to medium term targets concerning gender equality. Policy objectives should consider gender equality in its own right and be sensitive to the fact that objectives can be contradictory or have contradictory implications for gender equality. The construction of the problems to be solved needs to be reconstructed and focused on men as well as on women. Moreover, diversity across and within groups of

men and women and countries should be recognised as the benefits of the transition towards the KBS are unevenly distributed.

Measures to promote gender equality must be changed from statements of good intentions to action programmes involving the engagement of actors such as the social partners. Moreover, these measures must be designed in such a way that they lead to an equal distribution of resources, equal participation in both paid and unpaid work as well as equal representation of men and women at each level of decision-making and in different spheres of society. An institutional mechanism is also needed to ensure the empowerment of women (concerning inclusion, resources and construction of the problems). Gender experts should be consulted when it comes to planning, implementing and evaluating policies. Moreover, measures are needed to deal with resistance to the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy and of those persons opposing greater gender equality. Each actor inside and outside the state apparatus must be given a clear responsibility for the realisation of the gender mainstreaming strategy and be provided with the necessary training, time, money and tools. Finally, institutional reforms should be facilitated at both the international and national levels if the needs of new groups such as women in the labour market and new developments or challenges cannot be met or acted upon within the prevailing structural framework. The responsibility for the gender mainstreaming strategy and its institutional framework should, for example, be given to the prime minister's office in each country in order to increase the status of the strategy and its effectiveness.

4. Suggestions about further research

The EU should commission research into:

- Why the progress towards the Knowledge Based Society does not imply more gender equality
- Different models of the Knowledge Based Society and their (in)effectiveness in securing gender equality.
- Why there does not appear to be a clear evidence that the progress towards Knowledge Based Society implies more social inclusion.
- The relationship between gender inequalities and social inequalities as these are interlinked and shape the division between paid and unpaid work, quality of working life and the risk of poverty and social exclusion.
- The role of welfare states in shaping the transition to the Knowledge Based Society.
- The role of welfare states in the Knowledge Based Society.
- The scale, costs and time span of the policies, legislation, institutions, projects and programmes being used to reach objectives of the European Employment Strategy in the member countries.
- How the gender mainstreaming strategy can be used to empower women and transform gender relations.

V. DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS

1. Introduction

The dissemination strategy of the project during its lifetime has consisted of following strands:

- Establishment of the project website (www.bifrost.is/wellknow) for virtual dissemination of the project.
- News announcements summarising the main findings of individual reports and a Briefing paper have been sent out to experts and policy-makers at the national and international levels.
- Invitation of experts and policy-makers to the final conference held in Brussels, September 23rd 2005.
- Publication of reports available on the project website.
- Presentations of the project and its results at conferences, workshops, seminars etc. (See table 4).
- Book, chapter and article publications by various project partners (See section VII 1.).
- Utilization of project findings in teaching (MA and PhD courses)
- Utilization of project findings in further research (PhDs) by junior project researchers.

2. Exploitation and follow-up of results

In table 4, the dissemination of the WELLKNOW project and its results among academics, policy-makers and the general public undertaken by the seven project partners are presented.

Table 4. Exploitation (see also publications in annex).

Country/name	Activities
<p>Iceland (partner 1): Lilja Mósésdóttir</p>	<p>Conferences, seminars and workshops: Presentation of the WELLKNOW project at the Kick-off meeting in Brussels which was organised by the European Commission on 13–14 March, 2003.</p> <p>Presentation by Lilja Mósésdóttir at the conference Atvinnuráðstefna ASÍ, organised by the Icelandic Federation of Labour (ASÍ) which was held 1 October, 2003. The name of the presentation was '<i>Er þekking uppspretta starfa?</i>' (Is knowledge the source of new jobs?).</p> <p>Presentation at a workshop organised for students at Bifrost School of Business in October 2003. The name of the presentation was '<i>Vanmenntun og ofmenntun á íslenskum vinnumarkaði</i>'. (Underqualifications and overqualifications in the Icelandic labour market). The presentation was published by the Federation of School teachers in their monthly journal.</p> <p>Presentation at the workshop Unpacking the European Social Model which was held in Brussels on 4 December, 2003 and organised by the ETUI. The name of the presentation was '<i>Gender Equality and the European Social Model</i>'.</p> <p>Presentation at the workshop Gender Mainstreaming: Comparative Analysis which was held in Leeds, UK, on 7–9 May, 2004. The name of the presentation was '<i>Gender Mainstreaming in the European Social Model</i>'.</p> <p>Presentation at the workshop the European Social Model which was held in Brussels on 11 October, 2004 and organised by the ETUI. The name of the presentation was '<i>Gender Equality and the European Social Model: Economic Necessity rather than Social Justice</i>'.</p> <p>Dissemination of the results of the WELLKNOW project at a meeting on 17 April, 2004 which was held in Akureyri, Iceland, and organised by the Social Democratic Party (Samfylkingin) to discuss the future of the educational system in Iceland.</p> <p>Presentation of the WELLKNOW project and its results at the workshop Eigum við erindi? (Do we have business?) which was held at the University of Iceland on 27 April, 2004. The aim of the workshop was to</p>

introduce the EU framework programmes to Icelandic academics as well as projects which had received funding and had Icelandic coordinators.

Presentation of the WELLKOW project and its main results by Lilja Mósesdóttir at **WELLKNOW** final conference in Brussels, 23 September, 2005.

Presentation by Lilja Mósesdóttir called 'Gender Mainstreaming the Transition to the KBS', at **WELLKNOW** final conference in Brussels, 23 September, 2005.

Presentation by Lilja Mósesdóttir of the main results of the WELLKNOW project at **The 4th International Conference WoMen and DEMOCRACY**, 6–8 October, 2005, St Petersburg, Russia. The conference was organised by the Nordic Council of Ministers and around 600 people participated in it. The name of the presentation was 'Gender mainstreaming European labour markets'

Presentation by Lilja Mósesdóttir and Rósa G. Erlingsdóttir at **The UNIFEM conference: Women in a Globalized World. Beijing a Decade Down the Road** which took place in Reykjavík, 21 October 2005. The name of the presentation was 'Spreading the Word Across Europe: Gender Mainstreaming as a Political and Policy Project'.

Presentation of the main results of the WELLKNOW project at an ESRC-funded seminar on **Gendering the Knowledge Economy**, in the Institute for Advanced Studies at Lancaster University, 16–17 March 2006. The name of the presentation was 'Gender equality in the Knowledge-based society'

Presentation of the main results of the WELLKNOW project at a workshop organised by the Centre for Women's and Gender Studies at the **University of Iceland** to be held in April, 11th, 2006. The name of the presentation is 'Þekkingarsamfélag án jafnréttis?' (Knowledge-based society without gender equality?)

Presentation of the main results of the WELLKNOW project at a workshop organised by **Bifrost School of Business** to be held in May 2006.

Teaching:

Presentation of the WELLKNOW project in an MA course on the socio-economic development of the Icelandic economy.

Project work:

Insights from WELLKNOW were used during 2004–2006 in the project **På sporet av likelön — Evaluating**

	<p>Equal Pay — Mælistikur á launajafnrétti. The project was initiated by the Minister of Social Affairs in Iceland but financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers (ÄK-A & ÄK-JÄM) and administrated by the Centre of Gender Equality (Jafnréttisstofa) in Iceland. The results of this project were published as: Lilja Mósesdóttir, Andrea G. Dofradóttir, Thorgerður Einarsdóttir, Kristjana Stella Blöndal, Einar Mar Thórðarson and Sigurbjörg Ásgeirsdóttir (2006) <i>Evaluating Equal Pay in the Nordic Countries</i>, Reykjavík: the project group on equal pay.</p>
<p>Spain (Partner 2): Maria Caprile</p>	<p>Conferences, seminars and workshops: Participation in the Launch Conference of the European Social Survey (ESS) on 25–26 November, 2003 in Brussels. The primary aim of the EES is to provide data on underlying value changes within Europe.</p> <p>Presentation by Maria Caprile called 'Is Europe's Progress towards the KBS improving Quality of Working Life and Gender Equality?: Empirical evidence' at the WELLKNOW final conference in Brussels, 23 September, 2005.</p> <p>Participation in the ESRC seminar Gendering the Knowledge Economy, 16–17 March 2006, at the Institute of Advanced Studies at Lancaster University. The name of the presentation was 'Measuring progress towards the Knowledge-based society: quality of working life and gender equality'.</p>
<p>The Netherlands (Partner 3): Chantal Remery Joop Schippers</p>	<p>Conferences, seminars and workshops: Presentation by Chantal Remery called 'Why do developments with respect to employment, the KBS and gender mainstreaming differ across the seven partner countries?' at WELLKNOW final conference in Brussels, 23 September YEAR.</p> <p>The results of WELLKNOW will be used as input for a gender impact assessment meeting on the introduction of the Knowledge-based society in the Netherlands that will be part of the gender audit of government policies in the Netherlands. The meeting will be organised by the National Gender Audit Committee (VCE). Professor Joop Schippers will act as an expert on gender issues at the meeting.</p> <p>Teaching: Presentation of the WELLKNOW project in relevant MA courses such as Labour Economics.</p>
<p>Denmark (Partner 4): Kenneth Reinicke</p>	<p>Conferences, seminars and workshops: Presenting some of the results from the WELLKNOW project at a seminar about Gender Strategies and Mainstreaming, 26 January 2004 INNy København, Denmark</p> <p>Presenting some of the results from the WELLKNOW project in at a seminar about Gender Equality and</p>

<p>Karen Sjørup</p>	<p>Mainstreaming 27 March 2004 Århus, Denmark</p> <p>Karen Sjørup attended EU conference on Female Entrepreneurship, Calabria, Italy, 22 February, 2005.</p> <p>Presentation by Karen Sjørup, 'The state of mainstreaming the Danish labour Market', at Equal Programme Conference, Odense Denmark, 7 February 2005.</p> <p>Presentation by Kenneth Reinicke, 'Gender Equality', at the Annual National Conference of the political party SF, 2 April 2005.</p> <p>Presentation by Karen Sjørup, 'Labour Market and PES Services', at Hearing of the Danish Parliament on gender mainstreaming in Danish Structural Reforms on 1 June 2005.</p> <p>Kenneth Reinicke presented some of the results of the WELLKNOW project at a Conference for Social Workers on 17 October 2005.</p> <p>Kenneth Reinicke presented some of the results of the WELLKNOW project at a seminar with the Danish telecommunication firm TDC on 20 September 2005.</p> <p>Karen Sjørup presented some of the results the WELLKNOW project at a conference which was arranged by the Finnish Labour Union KTV on 17 November 2005 in Helsinki.</p> <p>Presentation by Karen Sjørup and Kenneth Reinicke called 'Do national policies reflect the main characteristics of divergent welfare models?' at WELLKNOW final conference in Brussels, 23 September 2005.</p> <p>Teaching: Presentation by Karen Sjørup, 'Gender Mainstreaming in the EU', at The Basic Programme in Social Science, Roskilde University, 1 March 2005.</p>
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<p>Finland (Partner 5):</p> <p>Seppo Roivas Pertti Koistinen</p>	<p>Conferences, seminars and workshops: Seppo Roivas presented the main results of the analysis of National Action Plans of five countries in the seminar of Labour Net – A graduate School on Labour and Welfare Studies in Työverkko, 1 October 2004.</p> <p>Pertti Koistinen organised a two-day workshop in Finland in October 2004 on Knowledge Based Society for the graduate students of Finnish universities.</p> <p>Pertti Koistinen organised a seminar on Knowledge Based Society for graduate students of the University of Milan-Biccoca in November 2004.</p> <p>The presentation 'Online learning in higher education – social and pedagogical dimensions' at the Conference of the Virtual University Days, in Otaniemi, Helsinki. March 2005.</p> <p>Presentation by Pertti Koistinen, László Neumann and Seppo Roivas called 'Policy choices in relation to the move to the KBS' at the WELLKNOW final conference in Brussels, 23 September 2005.</p> <p>Presentation by Seppo Roivas called 'Role of the European Employment Strategy in the transition towards the KBS' at the WELLKNOW final conference in Brussels, 23 September 2005.</p> <p>Teaching: Presentation of WELLKNOW results in a post-graduate course on the Knowledge Based Society and labour markets at the University of Joensuu, Continuing Education Centre.</p> <p>In Spring 2005, Pertti Koistinen and Seppo Roivas gave lectures about the Knowledge Based Society in three training and re-training seminars organised for the staff of the Ministry of Labour in Finland.</p> <p>The issues of the WELLKNOW project have been extensively examined by doctoral students. The Graduate School of Work and Welfare Studies (LabourNet) is a national graduate school of Finnish universities but has also wide international cooperation. There are five students in the school whose doctoral studies are on the Information Society. The documents of WELLKNOW project have also been used as materials of studies in social policies at the University of Tampere.</p>
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<p>Hungary (Partner 6):</p> <p>László Neumann</p>	<p>Conferences, seminars and workshops: Presentation of the WELLKNOW project at the Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen (IWM, Vienna) in 2004 together with Margit Leuthold.</p> <p>Presentation by Pertti Koistinen, László Neumann and Seppo Roivas called 'Policy choices in relation to the move to the KBS' at the WELLKNOW final conference in Brussels, 23 September 2005.</p> <p>Participation in a symposium on New Challenges for Employment Research in Manchester on 17 February 2006.</p> <p>Teaching: Presentation of the WELLKNOW results in a 'research seminar' course at the Social Science Faculty of the ELTE University, Budapest</p>
<p>Austria (Partner 7):</p> <p>Ute Behning Margit Leuthold</p>	<p>Conferences, seminars and workshops: Margit Leuthold presented the WELLKNOW project at a seminar in the IWM in Vienna in 2004.</p> <p>Margit Leuthold presented the WELLKNOW project at a Conference in Madrid, in 2004.</p>

<p>Belgium/ETUI (Partner 8):</p> <p>Amparo Serrano Pascual</p>	<p>Conferences, seminars and workshops:</p> <p>Participation in a clustering conference called Educational research in the European research area. The learning society in research ON 26-27 June 2003 which was held in Paris. At the conference, presentations were given on the results of the 4th and 5th research framework projects aimed at shaping European policies in education and training.</p> <p>Presentation at the conference Nuevas tecnologías de la información y comunicación e igualdad de género in the seminar 'Competencias, igualdad de oportunidades y eficacia de la formación continua'. Summer school El Escorial, Spain. 27 July 2004.</p> <p>Presentation by Amparo Serrano called 'Transition towards the KBS and its implications for gender relations: state-of-the-art' at THE WELLKNOW final conference in Brussels, 23 September 2005.</p> <p>Participation in an ESRC-funded seminar on Gendering the Knowledge Economy, at the Institute for Advanced Studies at Lancaster University, 16-17 March 2006. The name of the presentation was 'Gender and employment challenges of the Knowledge based society'.</p>
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VII. ANNEXES

1. Publications

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EUR 22365 — EU RESEARCH ON SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES — From Welfare to Knowfare. A European Approach to Employment and Gender Mainstreaming in the Knowledge Based Society - WELLKNOW

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

2007 — 102 pp. — 21,0 x 29,7 cm

ISBN 978-92-79-07790-6

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