

The Equality of Men and Women in Labour Relations in the Czech Republic and the Nordic Countries

Abstract

The subject of the equality of men and women in labour relations is the key topic of this thesis. The main attention is paid to equality and non-discrimination of both parents in the performance of paid employment, especially in terms of opportunities to reconcile their work and family life provided by employers.

The scope of this thesis is a comparison of family policies in the Nordic countries, i.e., Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, and Iceland, with the rest of the European countries, especially the Czech Republic. The Nordic countries are generally considered to be the most progressive in many areas, but exceptionally in the area of equal access to both sexes as so-called gender-neutral states, where gender plays almost no role. This specificity was essential for their choice as role models in the field of family policy and the harmonization tools used.

First, the introductory chapters are devoted to a detailed analysis of the necessary terminology associated with the issue, especially the concepts of gender, discrimination, or equality, but also the relevant legislation on equality and non-discrimination, especially in relation to both sexes and parenthood, at international, European and national level. The next chapter is then devoted to family policies in the Nordic countries and the Czech Republic, including the differences in the concept of individual family policies across Europe. First of all, the specifics of the Nordic countries are described here, which make them different from the rest of the European states and, at the same time, which were of fundamental importance in the creation of their current family policies. The next chapter deals with the possibilities of reconciling family and professional life of parents, both provided on the basis of legal regulations, especially parental, maternity, and paternity leave or labour law institutions such as part-time work, work from home or childcare services, as well as provided by employers over the framework of the law. Concerning this issue, attention is also paid to the differences between employers in the private and public sectors. The final chapter describes the solution to the observed problem following the example of the Nordic states, which can be applied in other social conditions. Sweden is a model that has successfully completed these changes.

The aim of this work is to offer solutions for the family policy in the Czech Republic, especially in the field of harmonization tools, but also aimed at a fundamental change in social thinking to achieve real equality of parents because the traditional division of roles between partners is already obsolete, and a functional double-income family has not yet been reached.