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TEXT NO. 2

RESEARCH ON WOMEN IN POLITICAL  
DECISION MAKING IN DENMARK

BY  
ANETTE BORCHORST

Anette Borchorst

*Research on Women in Political Decision Making in Denmark*

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# Research on Women in Political Decision Making in Denmark

*Associate professor Anette Borchorst*

## Introduction

Within the framework of the Studies programme on Equal opportunities, connected to the mid-term Community Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 1996-2000, the General Directorate V of the European Commission financed state of the art reports on research in five areas.

Women in decision making was one of these focus areas.<sup>1</sup> Professor Joni Lovenduski, Department of Politics, Southampton University, UK, was the co-ordinator of this project and has made the overview report on the basis of 17 expert studies. They cover the fifteen EU member states, Norway and the institutions of the EU.<sup>2</sup>

The reports and their bibliographies were made on the basis of a common matrix divided into political, economic and social decision making. Common guidelines for the definition of decision making were determined. Firstly, decision making processes should have a certain degree of publicness and involve persons other than the persons making the decisions; secondly, the decisions should fall within the purview of an institutional position; thirdly, the decision making function had to be performed over a certain period of time; and fourthly, the decisions had to produce changes in behaviour in the system of social norms, in legislation or in organisational procedures.

- 
1. The others were: a) reconciliation of family and working life, b) the image of women in the media, c) gender in work: general issues, entrepreneurship and migrant women, d) gender in work: segregation, different forms of work, unpaid work and gender pay gap.
  2. The reports will be available electronically.

The studies concentrate on the period from 1980 till today.

This report focuses on Denmark. In a few instances, reference is made to Nordic literature, insofar as it also includes Denmark. On the theoretical level, certain hypotheses that have been discussed in a Nordic context are discussed, because they have had a certain influence on the Danish debate.

Some general information on Denmark has been added in the appendix for the benefit of readers with no or limited knowledge of Denmark.

Annette Andersen has assisted with the lay-out of the manuscript and with language corrections, KVINFO conducted a search for the bibliography and Joy Torpdal helped selecting from it. Susan Stephenson suggested some language corrections, and Drude Dahlerup and Hanne Nexø Jensen have contributed with valuable comments to the manuscript.

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# I. Political Decision Making

## 1.1 Government

### 1.1.1 National Level

#### *Head of State:*

Denmark has had a queen as head of state since 1971.

#### *Prime Minister:*

There has never been a female prime minister.

#### *Cabinet:*

Denmark was the second country in the world to get a female minister, Nina Bang, who was appointed Minister of Education 1924-26, but it took another 20 years to get the second female minister. Fanny Jensen was appointed as minister without portfolio in 1947, with special reference to the interest of families, children and women in paid work. During the following years, the number of female ministers increased very slowly (Haavio-Mannila et al., 1985: 180), and reached 15 percent in 1981. In 1985, their share was 24 percent, and when the present government was formed in 1994, 35 percent of the ministers were women (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen, Danmarks Statistik, Ligestillingsrådet, 1995). This number corresponds for the first time ever to female representation in the parliament.

Women have mainly occupied positions as ministers related to reproductive matters such as social affairs, education, culture and church (Refsgaard, 1990: 132ff.). A woman has never been appointed minister of foreign affairs or finance. Presently, a woman is minister of economy, and until recently another woman was minister of commerce.

#### *Legislature:*

The percentage of female members of parliament,<sup>3</sup> compared to the percentage of female candidates has been as stated in figure 1.

---

3. Women's share of the elected candidates is calculated on the basis of the 175 proper Danish seats in parliament in official statistics. Another option would be to compare with all the 179 seats in the parliament, since the four North Atlantic members are full participants in the daily work of Folketinget. There has never been any female representatives among these seats, so the average share of women tends to become lower when the latter method is applied. During the past seven elections, women's share of the parliamentary seats would have been one percent unit lower in six cases, based on such a calculation. Female representation in the current parliamentary body is for instance 33 percent and not 34, which is stated in the official equal opportunity statistics (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen, Danmarks Statistik, Ligestillingsrådet, 1995: 60; Ligestillingsrådet, 1997: 128).

Female representation in the parliament has been on the increase in the post-war period. At the landslide election in 1973,<sup>4</sup> there was a marked decrease in female representation, but since then no decline has occurred. At the national elections in 1981 and the latest in 1994, there was no increase. This representation is the lowest among the Nordic countries (minus Iceland), but until Sweden and Finland joined the EU, it was the highest of the EU member states.

In the 17 national elections since 1953, the chances of getting elected has been lower for women than for men in 11 elections. In one election in 1988, there was no difference between men and women.

The number of women nominated has been on the rise almost during the whole period. The number of "black spots" with no option to vote for a woman has been highest in rural areas and lowest around the capital (Wamberg, 1990a: 52f).

The percentage of women candidates has not been higher in the socialist bloc than in the right wing bloc, and as shown in table 1, there are distinct differences between parties. The Social Democratic Party had a below average share of women until 1977.

Women tend to vote more preferentially for women than men. According to a survey, 32 percent of all women who voted preferentially at the 1984 national election voted for a women, whereas only 14 percent of men did (Wamberg, 1990a: 56). In the same election, 11 percent of the voters could not vote for a woman, because none were nominated in their constituency (Ligetillingsrådet, 1984). Left wing voters and social democratic voters vote preferentially for a woman more often than right wing voters, but among some of the leftist parties, women are disfavoured by the party lists unless they are top candidates. Preferential vote is more widespread in urban rather than rural areas (Wamberg, 1990a).

Folketinget has been characterised by a horizontal and vertical gender division of work in the sense that women are concentrated in areas related to reproduction, and there are fewer women the higher up one moves in the power structure. This tendency weakened in the 1980s. However, in the 1980s, the average seniority of women in top posts in committees and party elites was not higher than men's, so it is not accurate to conclude that women have to be overqualified to obtain the same posts as men (Refsgaard, 1990). The parliament has never had a female chair, but often a female deputy chair (there are four of them).

The parliament has 24 standing committees. Since 1970, the female representation here has been at the same level, and since 1981, slightly higher than the female representation in the parliament. The number of committees where women have been represented has been continuously increasing since the beginning of the 1970s, and today, all committees have female members. Female representation is low in political-economical committees and

---

4. See Appendix.

particularly high in committees related to internal matters of the parliament (Refsgaard, 1990: 112f.). In 1994, 36 percent of all members of the standing committees were women. During the last 15 years, women have mainly chaired committees related to church, culture, education and commerce. In 1994, women chaired seven of the 24 committees and held positions as deputy chairmen in seven committees (Christensen, Damkjær, 1997).

Refsgaard argues on the basis of a number of interviews with female politicians that their primary loyalty lies with their political party and the ideological differences are greater than what unite them as women. Networks among female politicians do exist and have resulted in cross-party initiatives on equal opportunities. Networks with social aspects among female politicians (1990: 138) and female ministers (Wamberg, 1990b: 153f.) have also existed.

Dahlerup suggests on the basis of interviews with one female president and 28 female politicians (of which four are Danish) in the five Nordic countries at all levels of the political system that there are more profiles than the three types of female politicians often mentioned: the feminist, the traditional woman related to care and social affairs, and the politician who deliberately avoids feminist issues (1985: 23). Several of the female politicians who have been interviewed in various contexts contend that it has been an advantage for their political career to be a woman (Wamberg, 1990a), but some also talk about the patriarchal political life (Møller, 1987) or about sexual harassment and discrimination (Dahlerup, 1985).

Gender differences in drop-out rates have not been explored in a scholarly way in Denmark, neither as a quantitative phenomenon, nor qualitatively.

### 1.1.2 Regional Level

#### *Leadership:*

In 1985, no county mayors were women. In 1993, there were 21 percent. The same years, the percentage of female deputy mayors increased from 15 to 37.

#### *Council and/or Assembly:*

The number of women in county councils has been as follows: 1981: 20 percent; 1985: 29 percent; 1989: 29 percent; and 1993: 31 percent. Thus it is a little lower than at the central level.

In the county elections from 1970 to 1981, the share of women elected was lower than their share of the elected candidates. In the three following elections it was at the level or higher than the share of nominated candidates (Arbejdsmarkedstyrelsen, Danmarks Statistik, Ligestillingsrådet, 1995: 62).

### 1.1.3 Local Level

#### *Leadership:*

In 1985, four of the municipal mayors were women, in 1993 it was 10 percent. The number of deputy mayors in same years was 17 and 17 percent.

#### *Council and/or Assembly:*

The representation of women in municipal councils has been steadily increasing (Wamberg, 1980; Bentzon, 1981: 110; Sinkkonen, 1985: 83), but female representation here is the lowest of the three levels of elected assemblies. In recent years, the representation has been as follows: 1981: 21 percent; 1985: 24 percent; 1989: 26 percent; and 1993: 28 percent.

In the seven elections since 1970, the share of women candidates has been lower than their share of elected in six elections (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen, Danmarks Statistik, Ligestillingsrådet, 1995: 62). Relatively more women have been elected around the capital than in rural areas (Bentzon, 1981; Adrian et al, 1990). The number of areas without women has diminished (Dahlerup, 1985: 20; Raaum, 1995b: 255).

Kjær concludes in an analysis of the impact of the electoral system in the election in 1993 that even though the voters seek to favour women through preferential voting, women are disfavoured both by the standing in parallel lists and in particular the party lists (1997, ch. 22).

Women's role in local and regional decision making is very poorly investigated. In a unique study, Ketscher analysed the role of female politicians in municipal and county commissions in 1977 (1979). She noted that the influence of women in local politics greatly depends on their share of the committees and concluded that women fared better in terms of influence in the counties than in the municipalities. They were particularly few in the powerful economic committees and more numerous in the social committees.

In 1992, politicians from three municipalities participated in a study. They registered their time schedules and answered a questionnaire. The results revealed a remarkable difference between the time use of men and women. The men slept more, relaxed more, and engaged in paid work much more than the women, who spent more time on family activities and preparations for the meetings in the municipal assembly. Only five out of 19 women had children living at home, and 13 out of 34 men. More male than female politicians believed that their opinions were of importance in their political work. The men appeared more at ease, while women often felt uneasy. The analysis of the drop-outs revealed no clear gender patterns (Foged, 1992).

In a study of the language of female and male politicians during four council meetings in 1992, Gornard concludes that gender is negotiated and practised in the interactions. Her observations and analyses of questionnaires indicate that men more often used performance

and approached the subjects broadly, and they were more negative towards their fellow politicians than women. Women were more polite, modest and considerate (1996). In an analysis of the televised, so-called cross-fire debates with the political parties in the 1988 national electoral campaign, she found that female politicians obtain less time to speak than the male politicians, are often interrupted, and are not encouraged to the same extent as men (1990).

#### 1.1.4 State of research (1.1-1.1.3)

Statistical information on candidates, elected representatives and cabinets broken down on gender is systematically supplied and published,<sup>5</sup> for instance in the annual reports from the Council of Equal Status.

A number of scholarly articles, analysing the political representation of women at all levels or one of them, have been published at various times (see for instance Haavio-Mannila et al, 1985; Wamberg, 1990a; Raaum, 1995a; Christensen, Damkjær, 1997), but most data is from the 1970s and 1980s. Recent studies of the local and in particular the regional level are scarce.

Studies of the effect of women in cabinets are also rare. Biographies (for instance Frastein, 1986; Detlefsen, Lopes, 1997), or various interviews or accounts of former and present female ministers and politicians provide some evidence of their experiences as women in a male dominated political world (for instance Dahlerup, 1985; Henriksen et al, eds., 1987; Rée, Philip, 1990a; 1990b; Refsgaard, 1990; Wamberg, 1990b; Junge 1994; Hansen, 1994), but no attempt has been made to analyse in a scholarly way which impact the presence or absence of women has on policies.

#### 1.1.5 Main questions explored (1.1-1.1.3)

##### *Which factors determine the level of female representation?*

No clear conclusions on the impact of the electoral system in female representation can be generated, because it is relatively complicated and differentiated. The parties apply different list systems, and they differ according to which level of the party organisation is decisive for the nominations. Hence, the net result of women's share of the candidates stems from a number of different events (Dahl, Dahlerup, Milthers, 1989; Wamberg, 1990a).

On the basis of studies of different elections, it has been revealed that the share of women elected does not automatically increase if more are nominated; it can even split the votes and work to their disadvantage. One of the decisive factors is where women are nominated geographically, and if there is a party list, which priority they have (Dahlerup,

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5. Information on gender has been published since the 1908 local elections and the 1918 national election.

Milthers and Dahl, 1989; Wamberg, 1990a). One may distinguish between “valgpladserne”, “kampladserne” and “pyntepladserne”, according to the likelihood that the position on the list leads to election, but it is a myth that women more often than men are relegated to “pyntepladserne” which are not likely to involve election (Dahlerup, 1988b: 33). The high re-election turnout implies that it is crucial for women to get nominated for the vacant spots when previous candidates withdraw or are not renominated (Dahl, Dahlerup, Milthers, 1989; Wamberg, 1990a). Other important factors are the number of preferential votes for women and the use of quotas in some periods (see below).

Some scholars argue that it no longer appears legitimate for the political parties not to have female candidates, and it is also acknowledged that women attract votes (Wamberg, 1990a).

At a more theoretical level, explanations in the 1970s related to the fact that women lagged behind men in terms of political representation, and factors such as women's fewer resources and structural barriers were suggested (Dahlerup, 1979b). Since the 1980s, scholars have been preoccupied with explaining why women's political representation did in fact increase. A number of scholars have pointed to the fundamental changes in the situation of Danish women since the 1960s as an important factor, highlighting women's large scale entry into the labour force, the higher level of education among women and decreasing fertility. Also the political mobilization of women, among other things reflected in the breakthrough of the new women's movement, has been considered of great impact (Skard, Haavio-Mannila, 1985b; Dahlerup, 1985; Wamberg, 1990a; Siim, 1991; 1993; Togeby, 1994; Christensen, Damkjær, 1997). Dahlerup argues that one of the achievements of this movement was that it succeeded in articulating the interest of women as a group (1997). Christensen and Damkjær also note that egalitarian ideals are embedded in the political culture as well as a high degree of openness to new demands, and this has consequences for gender, too. In this way the integration of gender in politics is explained by a combination of pressure from below and a positive political opportunity structure towards new groups and demands from above (1997).

The question remains why political representation of women in Denmark, which in many ways resembles the other Nordic countries, has been the lowest among these countries for some time (except for Iceland), and why the level of female representation has stabilised during the 1990s. One explanation might be the fact that the political parties in Denmark have no women's organisations within the political parties, and moreover none of them apply gender quotas (see below). Women's political activities also seem to be channelled through other arenas than the political parties, as observed by Togeby (1984; 1989; 1994). The fact that Denmark was the only Nordic EC member from 1972-1994 may also have caused relative optimism and passivity, since Denmark had the highest political representation of women in the Community in this period. Previously, the other Nordic countries were frequently applied

as the frame of comparison, but increasingly comparisons and statistics have been related to the EC/EU member states.

*Is the political system characterised by an iron law of power?*

Among Nordic scholars, it has been argued that an iron law applies to politics in the sense that the higher one gets in hierarchies, the fewer women one finds, or where power is located, women are absent and vice versa. This phenomenon is also termed the law of decreasing proportion. Dahlerup and Haavio-Mannila conclude, on the basis of a major study of women in Nordic politics, that this phenomenon is not absolute or invariable and that there are exceptions (1985: 165). As indicated above, Refsgaard finds that this phenomenon has diminished in Folketinget, but there is a clear horizontal division of work, because women relate more to reproductive issues in a broad sense like social affairs, culture, education and church (1990). There is, however, some disagreement as to how this should be interpreted. Some scholars argue that this reflects women's relative powerlessness (Skard, Haavio-Mannila, 1985b). Others argue that the reproductive areas do indeed account for the bulk of public expenditures. Therefore this area is by no means non-influential. Women probably choose this area out of genuine interest (Dahlerup, 1988b: 170f). One may also conclude that women have been placed in ministries of strategic importance to them (Skjeie, 1992: 27ff.).

*Is the theory of shrinking institutions valid?*

The theory of shrinking institutions, which implies that women have gained influence in institutions of declining importance, has been advocated by Norwegian scholars in particular, for example, Holter (1981; 1996). Hernes and Hänninen-Salmelin (and many others) argue that there has been a shift from the parliamentary channel to the corporate, and that women have lost power during this process (1985; Hernes, 1987). This hypothesis has also been widely discussed in Denmark. The theory of shrinking institutions has been challenged by Karvonen and Selle (and others), who propose a time-lag hypothesis instead (1995a). This implies a shift from a more pessimistic to an optimistic view on gender equality, and a belief that the increasing female representation is largely an irreversible phenomenon (1995b: 7). Meanwhile, it is hardly a gain to replace one kind of automaticity with another (Borchorst, 1996a).

It is, however, also thought-provoking that comparatively, the shift in political power and decision making towards the EU also implies much less influence for Nordic women, measured by the differences in the level of women's representation in decision making institutions at the national and supra-national level.

### *Do women in politics constitute a critical mass?*

In a predominantly theoretical article, Dahlerup discusses the significance of the relative size of a minority in the case of politics (1988a). The conclusion is borrowed from nuclear physics, and Kanter has applied it to women in corporations (1977). Dahlerup asks whether it causes changes in the political system when women move from being a small to a large minority of about 30 percent, and suggests a number of different effects:

- ◆ the stereotyping of women diminishes without being totally removed.
- ◆ new role models of women in public life are created.
- ◆ the social conventions are somewhat changed, even if the main feature of the political culture remains untouched.
- ◆ the open resistance against women politicians is removed - now it seems hopeless to bring women back to the house.

She concludes that it is difficult to isolate the effects, and suggests looking for critical acts, like for instance when women politicians recruit other women, quotas for women or enactment of new legislation and new institutions (1988a: 296f.).

The hypothesis of possible changes when women move from being a small to a large minority in politics has not been thoroughly tested empirically.

### *Which barriers against women in politics can be identified?*

Dahlerup summarises the barriers minorities face, like tokenism, high degree of visibility, stereotyping, role conflicts, exclusion from networks and lack of allies (1985: 256; 1988: 279).

Refsgaard concludes that today there is room for more different types of women in politics. Open resistance towards female politicians and open ridicule are rare, but interviews indicate that some women find that discrimination has become more indirect and unconscious (1990). Larsen points to examples where women in a municipal assembly complained in the press about open harassment (1990: 20). According to Dahlerup, female politicians respond in four different ways, when they are asked about possible discrimination (1985: 14)

1. They deny it exists.
2. They confirm that it exists, but give no account of personal experience with it.
3. They deny it exists, but later in the interview give examples of it.
4. They confirm it.

Some scholars find that the media often operates with stereotypes of women (Dahlerup, 1985; Larsen, 1990), and that they provide an opportunity structure which is less benevolent for women than for men (Gomard, 1990). However, systematic scholarly studies in this area are few.

### 1.1.6 Main methods used

A lot of the studies mentioned above contain analyses of the available statistical data. In addition, a number of questionnaire surveys have been carried through, and finally numerous interviews have been collected. Only a few large in-depth studies of Danish politicians have been made and analysed so far.

## 1.2 Political Parties

### 1.2.1 Party Leadership

Of the nine political parties currently represented in Parliament, three are headed by women.

Women's position in the party elites has been improving (Dahlerup, 1979b), but there is evidence that the role of women in party leadership is more modest in Denmark than in Norway and Sweden (Skard, Haavio-Mannila, 1985a; Sundberg, 1995). Apart from one study which dates back to the 1970s, information on women's role in party leadership is restricted and outdated (Dahlerup, 1979b).

Gender quotas have rarely been applied internally in parties, but there are some examples. The Socialist People's Party was the first to introduce internal quotas in 1977, the Social Democratic Party was the next in 1983, followed by the Left Socialists which enacted quotas in 1985 (Dahlerup, 1985: 84ff; Wamberg, 1990a: 69ff). The use of quotas is, however, very controversial at any level in Denmark, and by 1996 all quotas in the Socialist People's Party and the Social Democratic Party were abandoned (the Left Socialists no longer exist as an independent party).

### 1.2.2 Candidates

There is systematic information on the percentage of female candidates, which can be compared to the percentage of those elected in each political party (see figure 1 for national elections).

Quota systems in nomination of candidates have been applied by the same three parties that had them for internal leadership. Presently, no political party in Denmark applies a gender quota system for nominations in national elections. The Socialist People's Party has only applied quotas in elections for the European Parliament. The first time was in 1983, when a man was favoured. The Social Democratic Party applied quotas for the first time in 1989 in municipal elections and has never had them in nominations for national elections. The remaining quotas were abandoned in 1996.

### 1.2.3 Activists

No information.

#### 1.2.4 Members

Except for the Social Democratic Party from 1915-1969 (Dahlerup, 1979b: 122), political parties do not publish information on the gender composition of party members. Meanwhile, some general information from survey data is available (as indicated in table 2). It shows that along with the decline in membership, gender differences have diminished.

Unlike parties in most of the other Nordic countries, only one Danish political party, the Conservative Party, has a separate a women's section today. The development of women's sections has been summarised by Dahlerup in four stages (1978):

1. Slow growth in the number of women's sections in the inter-war period. The main objective was recruitment of women as members.
2. Period of growth during and after the Second World War. The main objective was the increase in the political representation of women.
3. Crisis during the 1960s. The sections were dismantled.
4. After the breakthrough of the new feminist movement, examples of more informal women's groups and networks in the left wing parties and the Social Democratic Party. The main objective has been to work in the interest of women.

There are no recent investigations of women's activities in the political parties.

#### 1.2.5 State of research

Scientific studies on political parties from a gendered point of view are very scarce. Basically, only figures for a few years are available. At the local and regional levels there is hardly any data.

### 1.3 The Corporate Channel

Statistical investigations of women's representation in government committees reveal that the corporate channel has been the most male dominated part of the political system (Hernes, Hänninen-Salmelin, 1985; Hernes, 1987).

In 1981, women were 10.4% of members of public committees, and they held 5% of committee chairs (Ligestillingsrådet, 1992). After 1985, when the Committees Act was enacted, the representation of women increased more visibly. The total share of **women in committees** increased from 16 percent in 1985 to 27 percent in 1996 (Ligestillingsrådet, 1997). **In boards covered by the Board Act** from 1990, women's share of the members increased from 24 percent in 1990 to 29 percent in 1994. Of the nominating agencies, the social partners and other organisations contribute with the lowest share of women. Of the committees established in 1995, only 21.4 of the representatives of the organisations were women, whereas 66.7 percent of the representatives of the municipalities and 33.6 of the state representatives were women (Ligestillingsrådet, 1996).

Hernes and Hänninen-Salminen support a conclusion that the corporate channel is the least participant democratic, the most hierarchical, oligarchical and elitist of all the avenues of influence to decision making bodies (1985: 110), and moreover they note that it has little constitutional foundation. They also argue that the under-representation of women in national committees is a structural phenomenon which reflects the weaker position and lack of elite status of women in economic life and in the public administration (1985).

#### 1.4 Judiciary

Information on women at different levels of the judiciary is not systematically available. According to a report on the judiciary system, women made up 18 percent of the judges in the High Courts and 13 percent in the Supreme Court in 1993 (Justitsministeriet, 1996). In January 1997, 25 percent of all judges were women (Information from the Ministry of Justice).

In a recent news paper article it is asserted that the court system has acquired more female values during this process and that this has resulted in milder verdicts. It is noted that the politicians have intervened to make the judges punish harder in cases of crude violence and of drunk driving. A professor in sociology of law maintains that the judiciary has become less pompous and authoritarian and more down-to-earth and obliging. It is also argued that men prefer jobs in law firms, among other reasons because the salary is higher. Conversely, women are not attracted to the competitive atmosphere in the law firms (Jyllandsposten, 4. maj 1997). So far, these conclusions have not been tested empirically, and it is questionable whether it is precise to talk about a gender shift and female dominance when women make up 25 percent or less of the judges.

#### 1.5 Public Administration (Senior Grades)

##### 1.5.1 Main findings

Women still make up less than ten percent of the top managers in the central administration, but their share has been increasing since the early 1980s (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen, Ligestillingsrådet, Danmarks Statistik, 1995: 120). Top leaders in the municipalities (which include more than administration) increased from one percent in 1983 to six percent in 1993 (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen, Danmarks Statistik, Ligestillingsrådet, 1995: 68). Tables illustrating women's and men's position in the local and regional hierarchy reveal a clear pyramidal structure for women and an inverted structure for men (Pyndt, 1988: 7, Ligestillingsrådet, 1997: 122f). The share of women in top management tends to be higher in small municipalities than in the large ones (Schmidt, 1988). There is a modest trend toward a higher share of women in top positions (Grosthøl, Pedersen, 1997).

From a cross-national point of view, it appears that Danish women lag behind women in many other countries in terms of their share of management positions. Relatively few women

are self-employed, but their share of all self-employed has increased from 16 percent in 1984 to 24 percent in 1994 (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen, Danmarks Statistik, Ligestillingsrådet, 1995: 41).

A survey focusing on top management at the local level demonstrated that female leaders tend to emphasise dialogue and interplay with politicians, colleagues and employees, whereas men above all stressed the counselling of politicians. Male and female top managers also appear to give priority to different subjects in management (Carlsen, 1995).

On the basis of an investigation in 1979, Torben Jensen concluded that in the central administration, women are promoted less and later than men (1981). Hanne Nexø Jensen questions the conclusion of Lægreid (1995) that a feminization of the public administration has occurred in the Nordic countries (1997a). She shows that it has taken 30 years, namely from 1965 to 1994, for women academics in the central administration to triple their share. During the same period, women's share as leaders in the central administration has risen from seven to 20 percent. Compared to other Nordic countries, this is more modest than in Finland and even more so than in Norway. More women have entered more areas, but men outnumber women the most in the largest ministries, i.e., Finance, Foreign Affairs and Economy. In the Ministry of Church and Energy, there are no female leaders, and in the Ministries of Finance, Fishing and Foreign Affairs, there are only 11 percent. Interestingly enough, women make up a much higher proportion of leaders in the two latter ministries in Norway (Lægreid, 1995: 234). This indicates that the areas as such are not necessarily connected to gender values, and gender cultures can be subject to changes.

Studies of the organisational structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicate that it is highly bureaucratic, old fashioned and competitive. Many jobs involve stationing in foreign countries which is difficult to reconcile with having families. The work culture in other areas also favours men without family responsibilities (Billing, Alveson, 1989a; Holt, 1995).

Today no women occupy the position as top administrative leader of a ministry in Denmark.

### 1.5.2 State of Research

Public administration has been the object of several scholarly studies, mainly at the central level. There are few scientific studies of women in management in local and regional administration.

### 1.5.3 Main questions asked

Apart from the question of how the female share of employees and leaders in public administration has developed, the main question discussed is, why the development is as it is. Torben Jensen summarises possible explanations as: discrimination, lack of interest on the

part of the women, the tasks employees acquire when they are hired, and the problems for women with combining family and work (1981). Hanne Nexø Jensen argues that the increasing number of women graduates within the relevant areas partly explains the increasing number of women in central administration. She precluded hypotheses that balance between “soft” and “hard” areas or the size of the growth within areas can explain variations in the number of female employees and leaders. She hypothesises, but does not test, that the share of economists and the possible alternative supply of jobs may explain gender differences (1997a).

A handful of organisational studies of specific areas conclude that the organisational culture of public (and private) units facilitates or impedes career opportunities of women (Højgaard, 1990; 1991a; Billing, Alveson, 1989a). In two qualitative studies of private and public organisations, Højgaard excludes systematic discrimination of women and the horizontal division of tasks as explanations for career differences between men and women. The same is true for additional training and criteria selection of promotions. The investigations conclude that male dominance in a broad sense reproduces itself and is embedded in the culture. Negotiations on the meaning of gender also tend to disfavour the promotion of women. One of the findings is that women reveal patterns of what is termed uneasiness. This implies that they do not wish to perceive themselves as women in their jobs, but are inclined towards gender neutral behavior (1990; 1991a; 1991b).

#### 1.5.4 Methods used

Applied methods in this area range from analyses of available statistics to organisational studies and qualitative in depth interviews.

## II. Economic Decision Making

### 2.1 The Social Partners

#### 2.1.1 Employers' organisations

Statistics on women's position in the hierarchy of employers' organisations are not available, and these organisations have not been the object of scientific studies of decision making from a gendered point of view.

#### 2.1.2 Professional Associations

Scholarly studies of the gender profile of associations are also few in number, but numerous pamphlets on the subject have been published during the years, for instance by women's groups within the associations. These publications typically provide statistics that illustrate the gender segregation within the associations, the position in the labour market and gender

differences in salaries. (See e.g. Nielsen, Rantorp, 1984, Overenskomstforeningen, 1987). These publications are not included in this overview.

### 2.1.3 Trade Unions

Today, the level of unionisation of women is at the same level as men (see figure 1). Figures on the number of men and women in various unions are available on an annual basis. Some of the major unions have from time to time charted the gender structure of their unions (LO, 1992a; 1992b; Specialarbejderforbundet i Danmark, 1993; HK, 1995), but apart from that, the knowledge is very limited.

Karvonen concludes that the unions in Scandinavian countries (in which he includes Norway, Finland, Sweden and Denmark) have undergone a dramatic feminization in terms of membership. He finds the level of women's representation in decision making bodies within the unions far less impressive (1995). Indeed, the case of the unions reflects that the time-lag hypothesis is inaccurate as a general conclusion, as asserted by Karvonen and Selle (1995a). The marked increase in the number of female union members has not resulted in any major improvement in their representation at higher levels of decision making within these organisations.

## 2.2 Women in Management

At a general level, statistics (which must be applied with reservations) reveal that women make up less than ten percent of top leaders in the public as well as the private labour market, and that women fare much better in the public than in the private labour market. In all areas, modest increases can be traced in women's share of managerial positions (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen, Danmarks Statistik og Ligestillingsrådet, 1995: 64). The share of female entrepreneurs was 16 percent in 1980, and in 1994 it had increased to 24 percent (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen, Ligestillingsrådet, Danmarks Statistik, 1995: 41)

At the very top of private business, men are still totally dominant. Statistics on the share of women on the boards of directors of the 100 largest corporations in Denmark show that women in 1993 made up one percent of members of boards and 10 percent of the directors (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen, Ligestillingsrådet, Danmarks Statistik, 1995: 68f.).

The position of women in management has first of all been explored by scholars with a background in organisational sociology. Several studies include both the private and the public sector, and the findings on women's access to managerial positions mentioned in the sections on public administration to some degree apply to economic decision making as well.

In Carlsen and Toft's thesis, based on a questionnaire sent to women and men in managerial positions in the private and the public labour market in 1983, the social background of the women appeared to be better than for men. The women faced more choices than men, for instance in terms of marriage, and more often than men they made a career at

the expense of marriage and family life. Men in managerial positions in the private labour market had the most stable marriages, and they were frequently married to full-time housewives. Negative attitudes towards women in managerial positions were found more often in the private labour market than in the public. It was also observed that the more women in an organisation, the more positive attitudes towards women leaders. More female than male managers in the private sector found that they had not acquired the influence they expected from their position. It was concluded that private firms more frequently than public are managed by an "esprit de corps", built on masculine values. The respondents did not experience differences in female and male managerial style (1986).

Billing and Alveson, in a study of three different organisations at the private and public labour market, concluded that the situation of professional women differed vastly in the three organisations. In the welfare organisation of the central administration, the career opportunities of men and women were equal, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, women's chances of promotion were very modest, and the same applied for SAS (Scandinavian Airline Systems). The latter went through a radical restructuring during the 1980s which brought about far reaching changes in traditional gender patterns (1989a).

We can add further information to Højgaard's conclusions which were stated earlier. She found that the career and promotion opportunities of men and women emerge in a configuration of the structural framework of organisations, the work culture and the external understanding of gender. Men seemed much more at ease with the culture in the organisations examined, whereas women problematized the culture and their own role within it. Both men and women contributed to the reproduction of gender images in the culture (1990; 1991a; 1991b).

In a theoretical article, Rittenhofer argues that images of management are gendered, and prejudices and myths colour the perceptions of female managers. According to the cultural constructions of management, it is connected to values that are normally ascribed to men. Therefore women appear incompetent in terms of management. She reaches the rather pessimist conclusion that this is a persistent phenomenon over time and across countries, which implies that one cannot anticipate any changes in the near future in the share of female managers (1995).

The number of men and women who received a special benefit to start their own business in 1989 was almost the same (Høgelund et al., 1992: 50). A study of the effects of a project for female entrepreneurs in one county from 1978-89, revealed that the potential female entrepreneur is relatively well educated, married and/or cohabiting with children. This corresponds to results from other investigations. Less than one third of the women participating in the entrepreneurial classes started their own business, and they did it mainly as a small scale business with no or few employees. Their firms mainly related to retail trade and

manufacturing (Boolsen, Mærkedahl, 1990). Several other reports evaluate other projects and reach similar conclusions (e.g. Auring, 1985, Nielsen, 1987, Vestergaard, 1987).

In an investigation of the vertical sex segregation of banks from 1985, Humeniuk and Madsen conducted a questionnaire survey and undertook qualitative interviews. The report demonstrated that the promoting strategies for women and men were formally identical, but not informally, and men very early in their career attained tasks that turned out to be crucial for promotion later. The authors used the metaphor "glass ceiling", which originated in American research, to illustrate the barriers that women encounter. They concluded that women were handicapped by structural contradictions between work and family (1987; 1989).

Apart from these scientific studies, countless reports from conferences (e.g. Haslebo, 1986), collections of essays (e.g. Bistrup, Winge, 1984) or documentation from specific organisations deal with the question of women in management and how to enhance their opportunities. They are not included in this overview.

## 2.3 Women in the Professions

### 2.3.1 Members of Dansk Magisterforening

In 1984, a quantitative and qualitative investigation was conducted on the job and family situations of members of Dansk Magisterforening (the Danish Master of Science/Arts Trade Union). The members are mainly employed in universities, other institutions of higher education, training schools and upper secondary education. The quantitative study, which was based on a questionnaire, revealed gender differences in employment opportunities and concluded that it is a myth that education is the key to equality, which has been the general wisdom in Denmark for many years. 12 percent of the male members of the union held managing positions, compared to five percent of the female members. Women fared much worse than men with the same seniority, and they more often occupied irregular part time positions (Emerek, 1986). On the basis of the qualitative interviews and the quantitative data generated during the investigation, explanations such as parent background, patterns of education, current family type, and different attitudes of men and women towards family and career were rejected (Pedersen, 1986; Emerek, 1986).

### 2.3.2 Young Engineers

Kolmos, in co-operation with Ingeniørforeningen i Danmark (Danish Associations of Engineers) conducted a survey in 1993, which according to the author revealed surprisingly few gender differences. Women engineers occupied management positions in fewer numbers than men, and felt that they had less opportunities to make a career, but the differences were small. More pronounced differences were found in the share of housework and care responsibilities that men and women had, and the much higher numbers of women than men who wished to be able to combine a family with their career (1996).

### 2.3.3 Doctors

A questionnaire from 1993, sent to all 1982 graduates in medicine in the Nordic countries, demonstrated that compared to female doctors, male doctors more frequently occupied management positions, worked more overtime, and more often had secondary employment. The men to a larger extent than the women engaged in research which serves as a point of departure for promotion. Female doctors lived alone more often than the male, and their partners were more often academics. They performed a larger share of housekeeping and child care. The women found that they were not as often expected to make a career and obtained less support to do so. The investigation points to three explanations for the gender differences in career patterns:

1. Women encounter barriers, and men are favoured in terms of career opportunities.
2. The female doctors do not wish to make a career to the same extent as the men, among other things because their family responsibilities are greater than their male colleagues'.
3. The male doctors exhibit a greater focus and effort towards career making than women, but gender differences were not found in relation to attitudes towards career and qualifications (Korreman, 1994)

### 2.3.4 Gynaecology

Sjørup analysed gynaecology as a profession through qualitative interviews and observations at a hospital with the same number of female and male gynaecologists. With reference to Foucault, she argued that the female gynaecologists underplayed and sought to neutralise their femininity because the scientific basis of their profession is considered objective and depersonalised. This is framed by the term "the medical gaze". The interviews demonstrated that the male doctors were much more family oriented than the female, and the essay concluded that a woman has to assume the male rationale to prove that she is professional, and the female rationale in order to prove that she is a woman (1995).

### 2.3.5 Nursing

In an essay on nursing as a profession, Sjørup contends that the professional images of the nurses themselves and popular images are inconsistent. She contrasts images from an American television fiction series with scenes from a political action against sacking at a hospital in Copenhagen. She concludes that the gendered images of doctors and especially nurses are closely tied to the symbolic order of the genders. The rationality of care which is supposed to be embedded in the profession of nurses is tied to female essentialism and to the sexualisation of the profession (1996).

## 2.4 Women in Decision Making in Educational Institutions

### 2.4.1 Universities

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the gender composition of scientific positions at the universities have increasingly been subject to debate. Three national reports published in 1992 showed that no progress had been made at the universities in terms of gender equity in scientific positions during the past decade (Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 1992; Borchorst et al., 1992; Ståhle, 1993). Women's share of full professors at the universities had remained at four percent, the share of associate professors increased from 16 to 17 percent, and among assistant professors it decreased from 24 to 22 percent (Borchorst, et al., 1992: 36). Recent analyses indicate that no major change can be traced yet. Women's share of full professors, associate professors and assistant professors were 6, 18 and 27 percent respectively (Jensen, 1997b). It can also be added that there are no female vice-chancellors in Denmark today.

In addition to counting numbers, Jensen approaches the question of gender and research from the point of formal organisation, legal framework and economy. She concludes that the formal rules do not discriminate against gender per se, and the same is true for the legal framework, but the way they are implemented may possibly lead to gender differentiation. Finally, she concludes that the economic resources are channelled to areas dominated by male scholars (1997b).

The major achievement of the reports from 1992-93 was to provide figures that reflected the gender profile of institutions of higher education and how they had changed during the last decade. The authors only to a limited extent engaged in scientific analysis of explanations. Meanwhile, some hypotheses have been generated: the persistent gender hierarchy has been characterised as homo-social reproduction, which implies that male dominated organisations tend to reproduce themselves without being openly oppressive or discriminating towards women. Other characteristic are the "Old Boy's Network", "the Buddy Club", or what is named the "Huey-Louie-and Dewey" effect. Hereby, it is signalled that male dominance is rooted in the tendency to hire employees that look like yourself. The analytical value of the terms is restricted and so far, organisational studies of scientific institutions have not been conducted, but some work is in progress (see below).

### 2.4.2 Gymnasier (Upper secondary Schools)

Upper secondary schools (gymnasier) also exhibit a horizontal gender division in subjects as well as unpaid supplementary tasks of the teachers, and a strong vertical segregation prevails, too. Women's share of headmasters is low, but it has been increasing from four percent in 1980 to 11 percent in 1990 and 16 percent in 1993 (Damkjær, 1994). An explorative study of the reasons why women do not apply for positions as headmasters was conducted via

questionnaire (with a relatively low share of respondents) and qualitative interviews with female headmasters. The study generated some hypotheses on why women do not often apply for jobs as headmasters, which included gender socialisation and gender images of management, work load and problems reconciling job and family.

## 2.5 State of Research

At a more general level, the studies of women in management have grown into quite a voluminous research field, but still only a restricted number of areas have been investigated empirically. The representation of women at the elite level of the economic organisations and their role in decision making are, however, very poorly depicted and constitute a serious research gap.

The gender composition in scientific positions at the universities also represents a major research gap, and many hypotheses generated in international research could be tested in order to explain why this part of the labour market, contrary to many others, exhibits such modest changes (Borchorst, 1995a).

## 2.6 Main Questions Explored

### 2.6.1 Why are women outnumbered by men in management?

The many different studies mentioned above reflect that it is by no means a simple question. Indeed, the strong gender hierarchy in management appears to be a complex, multifaceted and dynamic phenomenon. A short answer to the question would necessarily rest on oversimplifications. During some periods, there has been a tendency to locate explanations of gender differences in management either in the choices and qualifications of women, or in discrimination on the part of employers or male colleagues. This dualism seems to be utterly futile. Fortunately, the growing number of organisational studies to some extent moves beyond this stage by focusing on gender and management as a configuration of many different factors. The organisational approach has generated valuable insights in the way organisations are gendered. It has become obvious that organisations vary greatly with respect to the career opportunities they provide for women and men, but organisations themselves are very different, and they should also be considered as dynamic entities.

Billing and Alveson question the tendency of gender studies of management to simplify the ideas of gender and management, for instance by perceiving of women and men as homogeneous groups, or as very similar. In the first case, women are seen as better leaders. In the second case, the gender differences are often explained by external factors (1989a; 1989b; Billing, 1991).

In recent years, the social constructivist approach to gender and management has become more widespread, and it contributes to a more multifaceted understanding on how and why gender hierarchies are negotiated and reproduced.

### 2.6.2 The impact of family on career opportunities

Billing finds that one of the most striking results in her investigation is that more than half of the female managers were single, whereas almost all men were married. This corresponds to international findings that family constitutes a resource for male managers, while it often represents an impediment for female managers. She distinguishes between three types of coping strategies of managers in terms of family and work orientation and applies the concepts "exit", "voice" and "loyalty" to characterise them. The exit strategy is applied to individuals who leave the family or the job, the voice strategy marks a quiet protest, and the loyalty involves loyalty towards the family or the organisation. The strategies are combined in various ways in the different organisations. Some women make a priority of children rather than a career, others express ambivalence in relation to managerial jobs. Finally some women have chosen not to have a family (1991).

Holt's study of work places and the flexibility towards family responsibilities is not focused on career opportunities, but it generates some interesting conclusions in this regard. The study, which used data from a questionnaire and qualitative interviews, compared different types of workplaces, such as a hospital and a police station. The main finding was that the space to adapt work life to the needs of practical care of parenthood is embedded in formal and informal structures at individual workplaces. She found that the space for adaptation was greater for men than for women, regardless of their numerical size. Women, more than men, took advantage of the space available to manoeuvre, and when they co-operated they expanded the space for care. When men co-operated, they expanded the space for economical support, for instance by facilitating the engagement in extra jobs (1994).

### 2.7 Main Methods Used

The methods of the studies of economic decision making range from analysis of quantitative data, qualitative interviews to organisational studies and observations.

## III. Social Decision Making

### 3.1 Voluntary Organisations and Charities

During the last decade, voluntary organisations have become the object of an increasing political interest, which has resulted in several empirical investigations of these organisations. The interest concentrates at the level of activism, and who engages in which kind of voluntary work. An example of this approach is a study by the Institute of Social Research which conducted a major survey in 1993, comparable to a previous one from 1987. Voluntary organisations were defined rather broadly as non-profit organisations. The survey revealed that gender differences in voluntary work had been levelled out since the 1987 study. Women's activities had increased, and they now participated at the same level as men. Likewise, their activities were similar to men's. The large majority of the voluntary workers

worked for the benefit of children and young people. The activities primarily related to sports, leisure and culture (Anker, Nilsen, 1995).

There are very few scholarly studies of the role of women in decision making in voluntary organisations, but there are examples of case studies, such as a sports club (Borges, 1995).

### 3.2 Churches and Religious Organisations

A quantitative and qualitative study of the position of female vicars in the National Church of Denmark from 1989 showed that the position of women was far from equal to men's in terms of positions. Women made up about a third of the vicars, but their share was increasing. The study mainly identified barriers against an increasing number of female vicars on the part of women. Structural barriers were also located in terms of discrimination and resistance in communities towards female vicars (Boolsen, 1990).

Some religious voluntary organisations operate in Denmark, particularly in the field of social work for the poor, the homeless and alcoholics, but they have not been studied from a gender approach.

### 3.3 Social Movements

Women seem to be more actively engaged in grass root activities than in political parties (see table 1). Women's activity is at the same level, or a little higher than men's, especially among the younger generations. This has been documented in many different quantitative studies.

The role of women in the social movements is much less evident. An exception is Christensen's study of women's role in the peace movement, No to Nuclear Weapons (NNW) which she compared to the women's peace movement, Women for Peace (WP). The study was primarily based on qualitative interviews with activists.

The comparison between the two movements indicated significant differences in the organisational profile of the two organisations. WP had a more democratic, decentralised and segmented structure than the NNW, in which the central office was ascribed a central role. Christensen did, however, warn against equating decentralisation with democratic influence. Informal authorities and leaders were indeed more prominent in the WP than in NNW.

The women activists in the two movements differed significantly with regard to age and life cycle, and their mobilising efforts were closely tied to their different every day lives. The majority of the WP activists belonged to the parent generation (above 45 years), whereas the majority of the women in the NNW belonged to the adult generation (29-45 years). Most of the men in NNW belonged to the youth generation (17-28 years) (1991). Christensen identified three types of women engaged in the peace movement. One group that was inspired by ethical and moral values, mobilised on family orientation and motherhood. A second group with progressive technical expertise as a point of departure, aimed at influencing policy

making. A third group, mobilised on the basis of radical feminist ideas, was connected to the new feminist movement (1989b; 1991). She also analysed how the three groups met and interacted in a women's peace camp inspired by the Greenham Common camp. The strategies of the women in the camp were conceptualised in terms of non-violence and civil disobedience (1989a).

### 3.4 Women's Organisations

Women's organisations can be defined as organisations whose members and leaders are predominantly women, and feminist organisations as organisations which have been formed to oppose a patriarchal society. The borderlines between them are, however, somewhat blurred and historically changing. One can also distinguish between equal value, equal status and liberation as the basis of principal ideological differences. The housewives' associations are typical representatives of the first kind of ideology, the women's rights organisations of the second, and the new feminist liberation movement of the latter (Dahlerup, Gulli, 1985).

#### 3.4.1 The women's rights organisations

The women's rights organisations work predominantly for political reforms by means of traditional pressure group tactics, which require a national organisation and a certain degree of professionalization (Dahlerup, 1986a: 9).

A substantial number of feminist scholarly studies have analysed the history of the women's rights organisations in Denmark in books, articles and theses. Also many aspects of the history of organisations have been dealt with in anniversary publications, for example the 125th anniversary of the national organisation, Dansk Kvindesamfund (Kvinden og Samfundet, 1996) and the 100 year anniversaries of local districts of the same organisation, like in Århus (Nielsen, Lous, 1986) and Aalborg (Algreen-Ussing, Ravn, 1988).

The role of the women's rights organisations in the establishment of a permanent agency for gender equality, The Equal Status Council, and adoption of policies of equal opportunities are also relatively well documented. A group of women organised in the women's rights organisations and in different political parties were quite influential in putting pressure on the political parties and the government (Borchorst, 1986; Dahlerup, 1990; Borchorst, 1995b; Borchorst, 1996b).

The women's rights organisations have not been the object of major studies during recent years.

#### 3.4.2 The new feminist movement

In a major study of the rise and fall of the Redstockings, Dahlerup analyses a series of questions related to the emergence of the movement, its structure, its ideas and its impact. The

study is inspired by the resource mobilisation school within the social movement research tradition and the new social constructionist approach (1997).

The movement was a radical and loosely organised movement which initially adopted a negative attitude towards the state, and it appeared more anarchical than the corresponding movements in the other Nordic countries (Dahlerup, Gulli, 1985).

Dahlerup divides the history of the Redstockings into three stages: The first from 1970 to about 1974 was a period of collective learning with direct actions. The second from 1974 to 1980, was characterised by multiplicity and creation of a feminist counterculture. In the third from 1980 to 1984 a specialisation took place, and the establishment of centres for battered women was the most important activity. Contrary to conclusions of social movement theories, she demonstrates that the Redstockings were mainly recruited by identification with new images of an independent women and not on the basis of personal contacts.

The question is raised, to which extent the movement created a flat non-hierarchical structure with no leaders, and it is concluded that there were many informal leaders. However, the consciousness-raising groups did occupy a central position in the movement, and the level of activity of the members was high.

The study is rather unique, in the sense that it documents what has happened to the former Redstockings through a questionnaire which was sent out in 1992 and returned by 1.296 former Redstockings. It turns out that only a minority of 16 percent still participate in feminist organisations or groups. In terms of feminist and left wing attitudes she divides the former Redstockings into three groups: firstly, the active feminists, who comprise 17 percent of her study; secondly, the passive feminists, who made up the bulk of the study at 74 percent; and thirdly, the drop-outs, who constituted only eight percent (1997).

### 3.4.3 The traditional women's organisations

Several historical studies of specific organisations have been conducted. The history of the organisations of housewives has been the object of a number of studies, and another example is a study of the cultural history of KFUK (YWCA) (Christensen, 1995). More recent studies of these organisations are scarce.

## 3.5 State of Research

There is a flowering feminist tradition, focusing on the feminist movement, but most studies are historical. Studies of the recent period are scarce. Gender sensitive analysis of other organisations and movements are few in number.

### 3.6 Main Questions Explored

#### 3.6.1 What has been the impact of the feminist organisations?

It is of course difficult to measure the impact of organisations, and one has to be explicit about on what impact is traced. Gulli and Dahlerup concluded in 1985 that the women's organisations did not stand in a particularly strong position in relation to public authorities and they found that by and large they have not had a great influence on public policies (1985). It depends, however, on which policies are assessed. The women's rights organisations have undoubtedly had a great influence on policies of equal opportunities, but this area can be characterised as low politics, and in terms of the political system equal opportunities are located in a niche, separated from some of the vital policies for women, such as child care policies (Borchorst, 1995b).

In the case of the Redstockings, Dahlerup concludes that the movement changed the discursive opportunity structures of Danish politics and thereby contributed indirectly to the increase in women's representation. In terms of policies its role was mainly related to agenda setting and changing of the discourse. She formulates the interesting hypothesis that the movement gave new legitimacy to the more moderate feminism of the women's rights organisations. Hence, the strong, radical movement outside the institutions empowered the increasing number of women inside the formal political institutions (1997: 789).

#### 3.6.2 Women's Interest?

Dahlerup asserts that one of the achievements of the new feminist movement was to articulate the idea of women as a politically relevant group (1997: 747). During the last decade there has been some discussion among feminist scholars in the US and Scandinavia on specific women's interests. The discussion has related to the question whether one can indeed determine women's interest beyond the "form aspect", i.e. to "be present" and be represented and also look at a "content aspect" in terms of specific policies. Borchorst found on the basis of a study of conflicts within Dansk Kvindesamfund throughout its history that the form aspect or the objective of improving women's representation has united the organisation during its long history, whereas substantial issues, which are central to women, such as reproductive questions, have caused serious conflicts (1989).

#### 3.6.3 Equality or difference as the strategy?

During the last decade, feminist scholarly studies have focused on how the feminist organisations have related to the contested issue of equality or difference in their strategies. Ravn analyses the means and ends of Dansk Kvindesamfund as expressed in their objects clauses. She found that the organisation moved through a cycle from highlighting essential sameness between the genders from 1871-1915, to underlining essential differences between

1915-1968, and then returning to the essential sameness today. A similar circle could be traced in the new feminist movement from the 1970s and onwards. Ravn agreed with the conclusion of the American historian, Joan Scott, who has suggested that feminists should insist on difference and claim gender equality. Ravn concluded that feminists should refuse to answer questions about essential sameness or difference by choosing between equality or difference (1989).

### 3.7 Main Methods Used

Applied methods in the analysis of social decision making have been historical analysis, questionnaires and qualitative interviews and some organisational studies.

## IV. Policy Evaluation

### 4.1 Arrangements to Study, Audit and Monitor Policies to Increase the Presence of Women in Decision Making

There is no systematic evaluation of the representation of women in elected political bodies, apart from the statistics which are published after each election. The Equal Status Council published analysis of elections in 1979, 1981, 1984 and 1988 (Ligestillingsrådet 1980; 1982; 1984; 1987), but has not done it since this time.

The number of women in public committees and boards, covered by the two laws in this area, are systematically collected by the Prime Ministers Office, and they are published in the annual reports of the Equal Status Council.

In connection to the Government's Action Plans for gender equality, reports from the central public administration are evaluated. According to a decision in the parliament, every public institution with more than 50 employees shall make an action plan and set up goals for gender equality. The results are evaluated every third year by the Equal Status Council (Andersen, Carlsen, 1991; Ligestillingsrådet, 1993; 1996) and submitted to the parliament. Notwithstanding the varying quality of the information from the ministries, these reports do give some impression of the gender composition at different level of public administration at the central level. Since 1995, the municipalities must also make action plans, and this may bring some more systematic information about the local and regional level in the coming years.

At the level of the EU, the network on women in decision-making has evaluated the role of women in decision making in several reports, where the situation in Denmark has also been subject to considerations (e.g., European Expert Network "Women in Decision-Making, 1995; 1996).

General statistics on women in management at the private and the public labour market, broken down on the national, regional and local level are published systematically at a very general level.

#### 4.2 Assessment of the Scope of Laws and Policies on Equality Between Women and Men

It is quite difficult to measure the effects of policies on equality between women and men which cover a broad range of issues and are affected by factors other than policies. Therefore it can be difficult to isolate the effects of the legislation from other factors such as the market. For example, these problems arise when the effects of the equal pay and equal treatment acts are measured. It is, on the other hand, quite evident that the Equal Pay Act has not removed unequal pay, and likewise there are still pregnant women who get sacked, due to their pregnancy, even though the Equal treatment Act renders it illegal. The Committee's Act and the Board's Act are different cases, in the sense that their scope is much more restricted, and because their effect is easily measured. The two laws require that organisations or institutions which appoint members for these bodies, should suggest both men and women as representatives. The minister in charge decides the final appointments. The effects have been an increasing female representation, especially in the committees and boards which were formed after the laws were enacted. During later years, this development has, however, stopped.

As mentioned above, the access to perform affirmative action is very restricted in the Danish Equal Treatment Act, and the social partners have a veto to turn down requests for applying affirmative action. Relatively few requests are submitted to the Equal Status Council, and during the recent period, two requests to apply affirmative action for appointments in the university area have been turned down by the social partners.

It is a widely held view among feminist scholars that women's societal position was improved during the 1960s and 1970s due to the indirect effects of welfare state policies, like for instance child care policies, and the extension and changes in education (Siim, 1991; Borchorst, 1994). However, these policies are formally outside the realm of gender equality which means that the remedies and tools for seeking gender equality are not applicable to them.

The general conclusion of scholarly studies of equal opportunity policies is that they constitute a low politics area in Danish politics, but they provide some remedies to prevent open gender discrimination (Eduards et.al., 19895; Dahlerup, 1990; Siim, 1991; Borchorst, 1986; 1995b). Studies of the implementation processes and effects of equal opportunity policies are however very few in number.

### 4.3 Assessment of the Machinery to Implement Laws and Policies of Equality Between Women and Men

The court system is crucial for the implementation of laws and policies of equality between men and women, since cases of violation are brought before the courts. There has been a tendency for the courts to sentence relatively low fines in cases of violation of these laws.

An implementation problem relates to the sometimes vague formulations in the laws of equality between women and men. An example of this is the Equal Status Act, according to which all public authorities must work for gender equality.

Within the different areas of policy, the implementation of equality depends greatly on the individual ministers in charge. Ministers who take the legislation seriously, have indeed contributed to an improvement in the representation of women. For example, this is true in the case of the representation of women in the corporate channel.

## V. Good Practice

### 5.1 Research Strategies

Overcoming dualisms is a research strategy which should be highlighted. The unfortunate tendency in economic decision making to stress either the role of the women or of the employers and male colleagues is very unfruitful. To some extent the organisational and cultural approach has moved the studies some steps forward by stressing the interaction of many different factors.

In political decision making, the problem has been the tendency of stressing either very pessimistic or optimistic explanations and visions for the future, like the theory of shrinking institutions or the time-lag hypothesis. This tendency has not been especially prevalent in Danish research, but some elements of this can be traced in the discussions.

Finally, it is important to be aware of differences between women and between men, according to variables including age, class, race and ethnicity. When the role of women in decision making is studied, it is important to decide whether an increase in the level of women's representation benefits all women, or whether it enhances differentiation between women.

### 5.2 Political Strategies

Suggestions of strategies for improving the political representation of women and for increasing the number of women in management are countless and cannot possibly be summarised in a sensible way for the whole area. Meanwhile, one important point is that political strategies are qualified by thorough scholarly studies of women's roles in decision making.

## VI. Priorities

### 6.1 What are the Main Gaps in Research on Women in Decision Making?

Of the three areas of decision making covered by this study, the political is by far the most investigated and the economic the least.

#### 6.1.1 Political decision making

This area has been subject to a number of studies, but a lot of the studies and their findings date back to the 1970s and 80s, and a lot of the analyses need to be updated. Studies of women's actual role in decision making are few.

*The political parties* constitute a major research gap in terms of members, activists and especially party leadership, and no studies have concluded on the effects of quota systems.

In the Danish case, *the impact of the increasing political representation of women on policies*, nationally and locally, remains to be explored.

It is widely accepted that, during the last 10 years, Denmark has witnessed *a shift in the locus of power and policy making*, on the one hand from the national to the supranational level of decision making in the form of EU and, on the other hand, from the national to the regional and local level. The implication for women of this shift has not been explored. Quantitatively, women have attained the highest representation at the national level, and this could lead to a hypothesis that the process will imply a relative loss of power. However, this has not been thoroughly explored.

*The civil servants and the role of bureaucracy* constitute another area which is poorly covered from the point of view of gender. Systematic statistics are available, and the question of how many is relatively well documented. The position of bureaucracy at the supranational, regional and local levels, and between the corporate and numeric channel is very poorly illuminated. It has often been argued that the elected politicians have lost influence over the years. If this is valid, an important agenda for research would be what the implications are for women's role in decision making.

*The role of the media in politics* is also poorly covered. It is widely acknowledged that it is crucial. The focus on specific cases, scandals and individuals in policy making can largely be ascribed to the rationale of making good news and headlines. The question remains which implication this has for gender differences and how female and male politicians are portrayed in the media.

Women's position in *the corporate channel* in different policy areas is also an area in need of research.

### 6.1.2 Economic decision making

The power structure of the *unions and the employers' organisations* constitute one of the major black spots in the economic decision making. An interesting question is how the organisational restructuring of the unions during the last decade has affected women and their conditions of negotiating women's interests, bearing in mind that Denmark is one of the few countries in the world that has a large union solely for women.

The trend towards decentralisation of wage negotiations which has been witnessed during the last decade, should also be investigated from a gender point of view.

Gender and management in *private business* has been the object of a number of analyses, but there is still a lot to be done in terms of concrete empirical studies, and women's role at the very top of organisations, and *gender and economic power* constitutes a major gap. An interesting question is, why there are relatively few Danish women at the top of private business, compared to many other countries.

### 6.1.3 Social decision making

In social decision making voluntary organisation and social movements have only to a limited extent been analysed from a gendered point of view. A substantial number of studies have been conducted on the feminist organisations, but studies of the women's rights organisations have mainly been historical, leaving a gap in terms of the recent period.

### 6.1.4 The impact of women's representation on policies

The question of which difference women make in decision making is intriguing and important to explore in a scholarly way. One of the crucial issues is the relation between the welfare state policies adopted in the 1960s (and previously) and the gender neutral policies and agencies launched in the 1970s. Who were the political actors and why were policies on gender equality separated from the policies that was decisive for the fundamental changes in women's situation?

### 6.1.5 The discourses related to women's role in decision making

What has been the substance of the discourses on women's role in decision making, who has influenced them, and how do they relate to different groups of women (ages, classes, races, ethnicity)? Why is affirmative action such a contested issue in Denmark when it comes to women, but appears much more legitimate when it comes to implying more men in child care institutions and primary schooling? How do discourses on gender balances emerge into a question of feminization and dominance of women, when areas with less than 50 percent women are in focus? (See for instance above under judiciary).

### 6.1.6 Theories

At the level of theories, it goes without saying that comparative work is extremely important. Many important results have been achieved on the basis of Nordic and international co-operation. Generating theories requires testing hypotheses in more than one country, and it is quite obvious that comparative studies, however demanding they can be, are of great value.

### 6.2 What are the Prospects for Filling the Gaps in Research on Women in Decision Making?

At least five major research projects are in progress at the moment.

1. *Comparative Leadership* (international project with a Danish case study) focuses on the career path of women in politics, among civil servants and in private business. A questionnaire was sent out and collected in 1995, and qualitative interviews are currently being conducted.
2. *Parliamentarians and Parliaments* (a Nordic study) has a section on gender. A questionnaire was collected in 1995.
3. *Halva Makten* (half the power), which is a follow-up book to "Unfinished Democracy", focuses on women's political representation and mobilisation and the institutionalisation of equal opportunities.
4. *Barriers in Research*, a Danish research program which includes four projects initiated in 1997. Analysis of various aspects of the gender profile in research.
5. *Gender Empowerment and Politics, GEP*, Danish research project, launched in 1997. Focuses on a) Citizenship and Democracy, c) The Welfare State, and c) State Feminism and Gender Equality.

Together, these project will fill some of the gaps mentioned above, but needless to say, they can only fill some of them.

## VII. Funding

### 7.1 Main funding agencies of research on women in decision making

The main funders of research on women in decision making are:

- ♦ the Danish Social Sciences Research Council
- ♦ the Nordic Council of Ministers
- ♦ The Danish Equal Status Council

## VIII. General Information

### 8.1 THE DANISH POLITICAL SYSTEM

#### 8.1.1 General

According to the Danish constitution, Denmark is a hereditary monarchy. Prior to 1953 there was only male succession. The Act of Succession from 1953 enacted female right of succession as well, but a son still takes precedence over a daughter.

The political system is based on representative democracy and parliamentarism in the negative form. A government can remain in power, unless the parliament passes a vote of no confidence in the Prime Minister.

Since 1953, the parliament has only one chamber, entitled Folketinget. It has 179 members of which 175 are elected in Denmark and two each from the Faeroe Islands and Greenland.

Men got the vote in 1849 at the same time as the first written constitution. Women (and servants of both sexes) obtained the vote in local elections in 1908 and in national elections in 1915.

The Prime Minister may call a national election at any time, but elections must be held every four years. There have been 11 elections since 1971. Local and regional elections are held together every four years.

#### 8.1.2 Central Government

Since the beginning of this century no single party has had majority. All governments since 1973 have been minority coalitions, with one exception in 1993-94. Since 1953, when the constitution was amended, there have been 19 governments.

The Social Democratic Party has headed several governments in the post-war period. In 1982, a right wing coalition took over and remained in power till 1993, with various parties participating. Since 1993, social democratic-led governments have been in power .

During the past 15 years, the number of ministers has been around 20. There are presently 19 ministers.

#### 8.1.3 Local and Regional Government and Administration

Denmark has 275 municipalities and 14 counties. Mayors and elected councils govern at each level. Health is the most substantial task of the counties. The municipalities are responsible for much of the service and care provided to citizens (social welfare, child care, elder care), and they are also in charge of primary schooling, and they collect taxes of their own.

#### 8.1.4 Electoral System in National Elections<sup>6</sup>

The electoral system is based on proportional representation. Of the 175 proper Danish seats, seventy five percent are constituency seats which are distributed among 17 multi-member constituencies. The remaining 40 seats are compensatory seats which are distributed among three electoral regions. Each constituency contains a number of districts.

The nomination system is basically a list system with provisions for effective preferential or personal voting within the party lists.

There are two forms of list organisation:

1. Standing by district: The parties decide the rank order of candidates in advance. They can choose between several ordering systems. One option is to place a candidate at the top of the party list in the nomination district. This person receives all the votes for the party in the district plus the preferential votes for her/himself. Another option is that parties indicate that they want to present the candidates in a fixed order, this is called party list.
2. The candidates stand in parallel: All the party's candidates in the multi-member constituency stand in each nomination district. Votes for the party as such are distributed among the party's candidates in exact proportion to the number of preferential votes they get.

The standing in parallel system has become more prevalent and is also the most widespread. The left wing parties in particular have applied party lists.

Each voter can cast one vote, either for a party or a candidate among all the party's candidates on the ballot in the multi-member constituency. The effect of preferential voting is increased, when parties apply the standing in parallel nomination system.

The electoral system has three different thresholds of which the most important is that parties must acquire two percent of the votes.

Voting age is 18 (since 1979). Voting turnout is usually 80-85 percent, and men's turnout is a little higher than women's, but gender differences have been diminishing (Andersen et al, 1993: 49 f.).

#### 8.1.5 Party System

The political parties are not mentioned in the constitution, but they play a crucial role in the political system. Their functions can be summarised as follows (Svensson, 1997):

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6. This section is mainly based on Elklit, Pade, 1996.

1. They organise the elections
2. They organise the work in the parliament
3. They organise the formation of government

The classical party system that dominated Denmark from the late 19th century until the beginning of the 1970s consisted of four parties: The Liberal Party (agrarian), the Conservative Party, the Social Democratic Party, and the Radical Liberal Party. These parties were closely tied to the main economic classes: peasants, business in the cities, workers, and small farmers. A number of other small parties have been represented in the parliament at various times, but none of them as persistently as the four old parties. After the so-called landslide election in 1973, the number of parties in Folketinget increased by five, two of which had been in the parliament before. The landslide effect is reflected by the percentage of seats the four old parties occupied before and after this election. After the election in 1971, it was 84 percent, and after the election in 1973, it was 58 percent. Many scholars agree that the political parties in Denmark are in the process of changing from mass and class parties to media parties.

The number of political party members in Denmark has been declining like in many other countries, but the decline seems steeper than in the neighbouring countries (Bille, 1995). Party membership has been decreasing during the entire post-war period. In 1947, 26.6 percent of all voters were members of political parties, in 1971 this was only true of 13 percent of the voters. In 1981 the number was 8 percent, and in 1994 it was 6.7 percent (Elklit, 1991; 1996). The Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party have suffered the greatest losses. There are particularly few members of parties among the young generations (Andersen et al, 1993: 169).

Elklit (1991) argues that the decline in party membership can be attributed to, on the one hand, structural factors like the loosening ties between classes and political parties, and on the other hand, it may have been caused by rational calculations on the basis of cost-benefit calculations by the voters and by some of the political parties.

Togeby argues that the total decline in party membership can be explained by three factors:

1. The radical decline in people working in agriculture.
2. The weakening of the organization of the workers.
3. The political mobilization of the new middle class, the well-educated and women was channeled through grass-root organisation activities and did not benefit the political parties.

She emphasises that the decline in the number of party members does not signify a decrease in political participation, and she notes that the opportunity to revitalise the political parties was presented in the 1970s by the political mobilization of the new middle class and of women. However, the parties failed to take advantage of that opportunity (1992: 18).

#### 8.1.6 Political Participation

The gender gap in political participation has diminished after the large scale entry of women into the labour force, and the political mobilization of women (Togeby; 1989; 1994; Andersen et al, 1993). However, women's political activities are different from men's, as indicated in table 2. Women's level of participation in trade union meetings is only slightly lower than men's, and their grass-root participation is higher. Hence, their activities are more connected to the mass than to the elite level.

Women have voted to the left of men since the election in 1981, and men have not voted to the left of women since 1971. The gender gap is, however, modest, and it is most marked among well-educated groups (Siim, 1994: 64). Since the gender gap in party choice among the younger generations is larger than among the older, there are indications that the gap will widen (Oskarson, 1995).

The gender gap in political attitudes is wider than in voting behavior, for instance in the sense that women are more in favour of the welfare state (Togeby, 1989; 1994; Siim, 1994), and this is particularly clear among the younger generations (Christensen, 1994).

#### 8.1.7 The Corporate Channel

The political system has, especially since the 1960s, involved the organisations of labour and capital in many areas of political decision making, and their influence has been formalised in the corporate channel where the state, organised interests and various forms of expertise intersect. This corporate channel consists of government committees, arrangement for public hearings, negotiations and various other informal forms of contact between public and private institutions and organisations. It has been alleged that corporatism has been on the decline, but there is evidence that the role of interest groups in political and administrative decision making increased. On the basis of survey studies, it has been observed that the number of contacts between organisations and public authorities has increased during the last decade (Christiansen, Sidenius, 1995).

There is no tradition for formalised lobbies that seek to influence policy making in Denmark.

### 8.1.8 Public Administration

At the central level each minister is politically and legally responsible for his or her area of the state administration. Public administration in Denmark has no party-politically appointed civil servants.

### 8.2 The Labour Market and the Commercial Structure

The activity rates of women have increased from 65 percent in 1980 to 71 percent in 1994 (for the age group 15-69). In 1994 there was only a 9 percent difference between the activity rates of women and men. 19 percent of all women in the labour force worked part time in 1995, compared to eight percent of men (Ligestillingsrådet, 1997).

Denmark has had a high unemployment rate since 1974, but it has been on the decrease since 1993. In most years, the unemployment rate has been higher for women than for men. In 1996, female unemployment was 9.9 percent and male unemployment 7.8 percent.

Denmark has a large public sector, and the private sector of the economy is dominated by small and medium-size firms. In 1993, 64.2 percent of all public employees were women. Among the women in the public sector, 64.9 percent were employed by the municipalities (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen, Danmarks Statistik, Ligestillingsrådet, 1995: 44f.).

The labour market is highly gender segregated. One aspect is the public-private division, and additionally, further down in the occupational structure the horizontal division is very outspoken. Vertically, women are much more concentrated on positions in the lower part of the hierarchy, whereas men are more evenly distributed at different levels (Dahlerup, 1989). Women's hierarchical position became relatively worse during their period of large scale entry into the labour force in the 1960s and early 1970s (Borchorst, 1984). However, the share of women in top positions seems to be slowly increasing (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen, Danmarks Statistik, Ligestillingsrådet, 1995; Ligestillingsrådet, 1997).

### 8.3 Unions and Employers' Organisations

Since 1899, with the historic September agreement, employer organisations and unions have co-operated. The agreement affirmed the right of employers to manage and discharge employees, but recognised the trade union movement and gave the two organisations the right to conclude collective agreements that were binding for all members. Today collective agreements are prevalent on most of the labour market. A formal system of conflict regulation between the parties has been institutionalised, for instance through the Industrial Court. The Government Conciliator also intermediates in conflicts. The workers have a relatively high degree of unionisation. Since 1901, Denmark has had a special union for unskilled female workers, Kvindeligt Arbejderforbund (The General Union of Women Workers).

## 8.4 Feminist Organisations

The major women's organisations that exist today were formed in the late 19th century. Dansk Kvindesamfund (Danish Women's Society) was established in 1871, and Danske Kvinders Nationalråd (the National Council of Women in Denmark) in 1899. The latter is an umbrella organisation which comprises a large number of women's organisations, political parties and unions. The new feminist movement, the Redstockings, emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It was more leftist and anarchic than the old women's organisations.

## 8.5 Policies of Equal Opportunities

### 8.5.1 Legislation

There is one national agency for equal opportunities between the genders, the Danish Equal Status Council. It was formed in 1975, has 9 members, and the chair is appointed by the government. Three members represent the social partners (the employer organisation, and two different unions). Four members represent the women's organisations and one is a women's researcher, chosen by the rest of the council.

Five laws on equal opportunities are in operation:

- ◆ The Equal Pay Act, passed in 1976
- ◆ The Equal Treatment Act, passed in 1978
- ◆ The Equal Status Act, passed in 1988
- ◆ The Committees Act, passed in 1985
- ◆ The Boards Act, passed in 1990

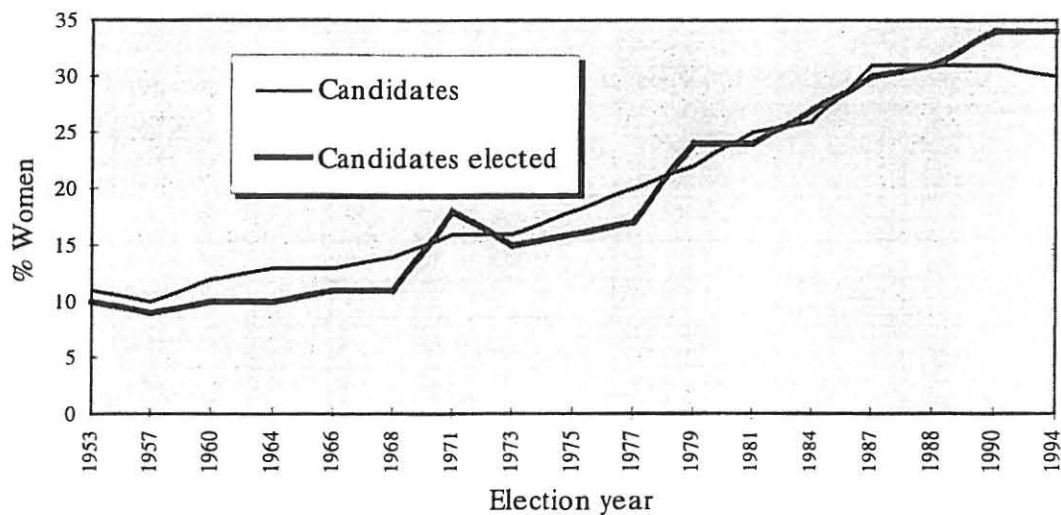
(The last two laws relate to the representation of women in public council committees and boards)

### 8.5.2 Government Action Plans and Plans for Municipalities.

According to decisions in the parliament, all public authorities with more than 50 employees must make action plans for equality. These plans are evaluated every three years by the Council of Equal Status and discussed in the parliament. Until now, the Council of Equal Status has evaluated action plans from the following periods: I. 1987-1990 (Andersen, Carlsen, 1991), II. 1991-1993 (Ligestillingsrådet, 1993), and III. 1994-1996 (Ligestillingsrådet, 1996).

According to a law, passed in 1995, municipalities shall make statements at least every other year on their policies of equal opportunities.

Figure 1. Women as percent of candidates<sup>1</sup> and elected<sup>2</sup> in national elections.



1. Nominations of the political parties in Denmark.
2. Of the 175 proper Danish seats.

Sources: Dahlerup, Drude, Kristian Hvidt (red.), *Kvinder på Ting*, Rosinante, Herning 1990, pp. 234, 238; Danmarks Statistik, *Folketingsvalget den 10. januar 1984*, København 1984; Indenrigsministeriet, *Folketingsvalget den 21. september 1994*, København 1995.

**Table 1. Women as percent of elected candidates in political parties**

Party	66	68	71	73	75	77	79	81	84	87	88	90	94
All parties	11	11	17	15	16	17	24	24	27	30	31	34	34
Social Democrats	7	5	14	13	11	18	24	19	18	24	29	35	39
Radical Liberal	23	19	22	25	31	17	30	33	20	45	50	43	50
Common Course	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	0	♦♦	♦♦	•
Conservative	18	16	23	13	20	27	32	35	31	34	31	23	33
Center Democrats	•	•	•	14	0	18	33	40	38	44	44	56	40
Single Tax	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦	0	♦♦	50	20	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦	•	♦♦	•
Socialist People's	15	9	24	27	22	29	64	43	43	33	33	40	23
Communists	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦	17	14	14	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦	•	•
Christian People's	•	•	♦♦	29	33	33	20	25	20	25	25	25	♦♦
Liberal (Agrarian)	3	9	10	14	17	10	14	5	27	11	14	31	31
Left Socialists	♦♦	25	♦♦	♦♦	0	0	17	20	40	♦♦	♦♦	•	•
Progress	•	•	•	11	13	4	5	6	17	56	44	33	27
Unity List - Red Green	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	♦♦	17

Sources: Danmarks Statistik, *Folketingsvalget den 10. januar 1984*, København 1984; Indenrigsministeriet, *Folketingsvalget den 21. september 1994*, København 1995.

- The party did not stand for election.
- ♦♦ The party did not obtain representation.

**Table 2. Political Participation by Gender (percent)**

Type of political participation	1971	1979	1987
Party membership:			
Men	21*	14*	12*
Women	13	10	9
Frequent participation in trade union meetings <sup>a</sup> :		26*	21
Men		17	19
Women			
High level of grass-roots participation:			
Men		15*	17
Women		9	19
Often reads about politics in the newspapers:			
Men	58*	53*	52*
Women	35	34	43
N: Men	639	893	1361
Women	693	876	1418

\* The relationship is significant at the 1 percent level.

<sup>a</sup> Among wage-earners.

Source: Lise Togeby, "The Nature of Declining Party Membership in Denmark: Causes and Consequences", *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1992, p. 12.

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## GEP - THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME GENDER, EMPOWERMENT AND POLITICS

THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME GENDER, EMPOWERMENT AND POLITICS (GEP) deals with the changing political importance of gender in modern societies. During the last 30 years, women have moved from a position of political powerlessness to political presence and influence in the Danish democracy. Women's new role in politics has had deepgoing consequences - not only for women but also for men.

The aim of the programme is to analyse the interplay between gender relations and discourses of gender on the one hand and changes in the European welfare states and models of democracy on the other. The basic hypothesis is that politics is a determining factor for the construction of gender - and conversely that gender relations influence the political discourses and the political institutions. From this double assumption, new questions concerning the interconnection between civil, political, and social citizenship are analysed.

The programme emphasises two factors: First analysing processes and patterns behind the double tendencies toward empowerment and social exclusion of social groups in terms of gender and class. Secondly, the differentiation within the group of women and men analysing the interplay between gender and class. Maintaining the perspective of gender, these differentiations will make visible the differences of generations as well as the differences between the educated/employed and the marginalized groups.

Questions connected with public equality politics, the increasing representation of women, women's participation in the local political communities and the political elite, as well as strategies against marginalization and poverty will be discussed through projects and case studies.

The project is carried out by six scientists from four different institutions.

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