Women's Occupational Situation in Scandinavia

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The role of men and women in occupational life

IN SOME WAYS Scandinavian women today enjoy more independence and greater equality with men than do women in many other countries. It is equally true that groups of women—and men—in Scandinavia are still dissatisfied with the social position of women.

The public discussion about what are, and what ought to be, the respective social roles of men and women in the family and society has been very lively for some years in Scandinavia, perhaps particularly in Sweden.[2] Those who want to move further away from the established pattern of rights and obligations of the two sexes point to the modest influence of women in political life, business and centres of economic power, and to the stereotyped image of men's and women's personality held up in many spheres of life. The defenders of the traditional role of each sex express equally strong misgivings about the consequences of change.

One of the most controversial issues in the discussion is the participation of women in the labour force. The rules governing the division of labour between the sexes seem to epitomise the whole complex of norms that differentiate male from female, and the question of women's role in occupational life provokes especially strong feelings.[3] This has been felt not least by those advocates of women's rights who maintain that the only way to obtain equality lies in an extensive participation by women —married as well as unmarried—in economic activity.

[1] The author is indebted for information and critical remarks to Associate Professor Elina Haavio-Manilla, Finland; Fil. Lic. Rita Liljestrøm, Sweden; Soc. Drs. J. A. Noordhoek, Denmark; and Kari Vangsnes, Secretary of the Equal Pay Council of Norway.

[2] The Swedish sociologist E. Dahlstrøm suggests a categorisation of the present tendencies into " conservative ", " moderate " and " radical ". See E. DAHLSTRØM, et al. : *Kvinnors liv och arbete* (Women's life and work) (Stockholm, 1962).

[3] Information on adolescents' views on " the division of work " between the sexes is given in R. ROMMETVEIT: *Social norms and roles* (Oslo, 1953).

It may be suggested, however, that mere occupational participation does not in itself radically change the system of norms and values that differentiate the lives of men and women.[1] Modern occupational life has shown itself fully capable of taking over the traditional roles of man and woman, and fitting them into the frame of reference of work organisation. The conception of women as being submissive, patient, modest and erratic leads many women—who often share these views and are willing to be led—into subordinate, routine work and positions with low pay.

This is a patterning of men's and women's roles which is found in other spheres of society too. It is sometimes suggested that the core of this norm system lies in a patriarchical family structure, and that a change in the authority relationships in the family would produce equality between the sexes. This proposition would need several modifications to be tenable. It seems that a position of authority within the family may, indeed, be combined with a very low status in society at large, and with practices of discrimination in general—as a matter of fact such association is to be found in a number of cultures. In other words, a strong family position may in certain ways be a hindrance if women want to gain rights and influence in other spheres. The fact that the family structure in Scandinavia provides a fairly influential position for women may not automatically lead to occupational or social equality.

Thus the more radical views in Scandinavia are in favour of a redistribution of rights and obligations in family life which implies a greater participation by men, as well as changes in other spheres of society. These views are concerned not with " the rights of women " but with the whole complex pattern of the social roles of the two sexes; that is, with men's roles as well. It is significant that the post-war interest in the role of the mother in a child's life is now in some circles matched by concern for the father's importance in the personality development of children.

The radical reformers are met with strong arguments involving the mother's biologically determined relationship with her child and her special faculties for making family life pleasant. The possible consequences for the children of a sweeping change in family living are among the chief arguments of adherents to more moderate views.

This background should be borne in mind during the present survey of the occupational situation of Scandinavian women. It should, furthermore, be noted that the article which follows provides information about four different countries, with special reference to one of them, Norway. The Scandinavian countries may share many important characteristics,

[1] It is debatable whether the proportion of economically active women in a given country actually is a dependable measure of women's independence and status in that country. It provides only a very rough indication. For example I doubt whether the fact that the United Kingdom has 48 per cent. of the female population in the labour force and that Sweden has 38 per cent. can be taken to mean that English women have a stronger social position in general than Swedish women.

but they also differ to an extent which makes it a research topic in itself to compare in a fully satisfactory manner the occupational status of women in them. The limitations of the present review in this respect are obvious but unavoidable in view of the space available.

Past trends in the employment of women

The very first steps towards women's occupational equality in Scandinavia were the result of social or economic necessity. In the middle of the nineteenth century the process of industrialisation pushed unmarried and widowed women out of the family unit and thus caused this group to become a social problem to the middle and upper classes. New rights were therefore granted to unmarried and widowed women in about 1850, permitting them to conduct certain businesses and trades.

Then began a slow development towards more and better occupational openings, a development which, however, shows significant class differentiation.

For the working-class women the fight primarily involved better wages and improved working conditions and, not least, the economic possibility of staying at home as housewives if they wanted to. These attitudes prevailed among working-class women until after the Second World War. In the middle and upper classes, women long had few occupational possibilities compared with men of equal social standing, and poor ones at that; nursing, teaching and clerical work were the best openings. In Norway, for example, women were allowed to become teachers in rural elementary schools in 1860 and from about 1880 the question of women's rights to civil service and government posts was raised. In 1884 they were allowed to take university degrees and they obtained access to higher teaching jobs in 1896. It was as late as 1912 that most government positions were opened to them, and not until 1956 could they become ministers of the Church.

Although these rights, mostly obtained half a century ago, are of great importance from the point of view of principle, women's participation in occupational life has all the time been in subordinate, manual or servicing work. This is the background against which a statistical description of women's employment in Norway should be viewed.

The percentage of women in the total employed population of Norway has decreased steadily since 1900. Several factors may have contributed to this development. The continued lowering of the age of marriage and an increasing tendency to marry, evident throughout the whole population, have reduced the number of unmarried women available for the labour market. This development has been only partially counteracted by the increasing employment of married women in recent years. However, in 1950-60 the increase in the number of married working

women equalled the number getting married. Certain shifts in age composition also have been at work.

Over the last hundred years considerable changes have taken place in the branches of activity in which women have been working. Table 1 indicates this development in Norway.

TABLE I. NORWAY: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION BY SEX AND ECONOMIC BRANCH

Year	Agriculture and forestry	Fishing, whaling and sealing	Manufacturing, industry, etc.	Commerce	Transport and communications	Services	Total (including unspecified)
Males:							
1875 . .	50.1	6.4	19.7	4.2	10.8	4.5	100.0
1890 . .	44.8	10.2	23.2	5.4	10.2	4.9	100.0
1900 . .	39.2	8.1	28.5	6.3	9.8	5.1	100.0
1910 . .	39.8	7.8	26.7	6.4	9.9	5.0	100.0
1920 . .	36.1	7.5	32.3	8.3	9.9	5.3	100.0
1930 . .	34.8	9.5	29.6	9.3	10.5	5.8	100.0
1946 . .	28.5	7.0	36.0	8.1	11.4	7.9	100.0
1950 . .	24.9	6.5	39.7	8.5	11.7	8.1	100.0
1960 . .	19.1	5.0	40.7	10.4	13.6	10.7	100.0
Females [1]*:*							
1875 . .	40.5	0.2	14.1	1.8	0.3	37.6	100.0
1890 . .	35.8	0.2	18.8	4.0	0.5	39.1	100.0
1900 . .	25.8	0.1	21.4	6.8	1.0	42.7	100.0
1910 . .	18.7	0.1	20.9	8.9	1.4	47.9	100.0
1920 . .	19.3	0.0	20.1	12.2	2.9	45.4	100.0
1930 . .	12.8	0.1	18.1	13.8	2.2	52.9	100.0
1946 . .	11.8	0.0	21.9	15.6	4.0	46.1	100.0
1950 . .	8.1	0.1	26.1	18.3	4.9	42.2	100.0
1960 . .	3.9	0.1	22.1	23.0	6.2	44.6	100.0

Source: Census data from Central Bureau of Statistics, *The economically active population in Norway 1875-1960 and forecasts up to 1970* (Oslo).

[1] Women working in the family enterprise excluded.

In 1875 about 40 per cent. of the employed women in Norway were in agriculture and 38 per cent. in services, mainly domestic work. In 1930, 13 per cent. were in agriculture, 53 per cent. in services. By 1960 the percentage employed in agriculture had decreased to 4 and that in services to 45. On the other hand, in industry the percentage of women increased from 14 in 1875 to 18 in 1930 and to 26 in 1950. From 1950 to 1960, however, the figure dropped to 22, as the number of women seeking clerical work increased rapidly after the Second World War.

The recent changes in women's employment in Scandinavia is tied to an increase in geographical mobility. Young women tend to move from

rural to urban districts, more frequently in fact than young men. This exodus from the countryside has become a problem and the lack of female labour on the farms is now pronounced. At the same time the number of adult women in the larger cities is increasingly greater than the number of adult men.

Women's economic activity today

In 1960 the percentages of women in the total labour forces of the four Scandinavian countries were: Finland 39.4, Denmark 30.9, Sweden 29.7 and Norway 22.9. The labour force is taken to include domestic servants but not wives working in the family enterprise. This may have a differential implication in the four countries, since Finland and (especially) Norway have relatively many small farms on which wives play an important part in the farm work. Caution should in any case be used in comparisons between Scandinavian census data. For example, different definitions of "economically active" have been applied at different times in the various countries. Among the inter-Scandinavian differences is a considerable variation in the percentage of married women economically active in these countries. This phenomenon will be discussed below.

Some important characteristics of the general post-war economic and social development in Scandinavia should first be considered.

Full and over-full employment in the post-war period has made female participation in the labour force easy, for employers cannot choose between men and women employees to the same extent as they could during a depression. Married women employees do not meet with the strong objections that are often raised against them during periods of unemployment. Especially in recent years, married women staying at home have come to be looked upon as a labour-force reserve—a view deprecated by "the emancipationists", who argue that gainful employment should be a stable and normal activity of all women, regardless of business cycles. Furthermore, a steadily rising standard of living, smaller families and a higher level of education present an increasing number of women with a choice between staying at home and paid employment. Also, new occupations and vocations have developed as a result of the progressive industrialisation and urbanisation of the Scandinavian countries, with the result that certain comparisons with past trends in occupational activity are difficult to make.

It seems clear that to an increasing extent women prefer clerical work to manual or factory jobs. If we take Norway as an example, table II shows the trend to clerical work very clearly.

The movement of women employees from basic industries and manufacturing into office work and service implies a certain social as well as geographical mobility. An increasing proportion of the white-collar women employees have a working-class background. The comparable

TABLE II. NORWAY: WHITE-COLLAR EMPLOYEES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION, 1920-60

Sex	1920	1930	1946	1950	1960
Men [1]	11.4	11.6	14.5	16.2	18.2
Women [2]	18.9	19.1	27.0	31.6	40.9
Both sexes [3]	13.5	13.6	17.6	19.8	23.4

Source: Census data.

[1] As a percentage of all economically active men. [2] As a percentage of all economically active women. [3] As a percentage of total economically active population.

mobility among young men of similar background is from unskilled to skilled labour.

The frequency of women working outside the home is clearly related to their age, marital status, residence and level of education.

TABLE III. NORWAY: PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE IN 1960, BY AGE GROUP AND MARITAL STATUS

Age group	Unmarried	Married	Widowed or divorced	All categories
15-19	43.8	15.9	48.1	42.5
20-24	76.6	18.3	58.5	47.7
25-29	79.9	12.7	63.4	25.6
30-39	75.6	9.8	64.8	18.8
40-49	73.5	10.1	67.7	21.2
50-59	70.6	9.5	58.2	25.9
60-64	59.3	5.4	38.0	23.1
65-69	41.8	2.2	21.4	16.1
70 and over	6.8	0.4	3.0	3.1
All ages	55.7	9.5	28.3	23.8

Source: Census of 1960.

The last column of table III, for example, shows that younger women are more often gainfully employed than older women. A comparison of the first three columns clearly shows that it is the married women who least readily take jobs. Unmarried women aged 20 to 64 are more often in employment than those in the age group 15-19, who nowadays are ever more likely to be still at school. It should be noted, too, that the percentage of married women economically active in 1960 was greater than the figure of 5.4 recorded in 1950.

In Scandinavia, as elsewhere, women who live in urban areas show a greater tendency to take employment than those living in rural districts. In Norway, for example, out of all unmarried women aged over 15 years who live in urban areas 65.1 per cent. are gainfully employed; in rural areas the figure is 49.2 per cent.; and in Oslo it is 66 per cent. The percentages for married women are: urban areas, 15.7; rural areas, 6.5; and Oslo, 20.8. Women working on family farms are excluded from the statistics on which these percentages are based. It is clear, however, that urbanisation implies increased employment of women, married as well as unmarried.

Women's activity rate in Norway increases with the level of education. Out of every 100 women who had attended only elementary school, nearly 22 were in paid employment in 1960; the corresponding figures were 37 for women from secondary modern schools *(realskole)* and 43 for those from grammar school *(gymnasium)*.

The association between education and economic activity is stronger for married women than for all women. For example, 55 per cent. of married women with a university degree worked outside the home in 1960, compared with only 9.5 per cent. of all married women.

When vocational or professional training, in contrast to general education, is considered there are equally striking differences. Out of every 100 Norwegian women without such training about 21 were gainfully employed in 1960; but the figure for those who were trained was almost exactly double.

We may sum up the picture thus: the tendency to participate in occupational life is more pronounced for younger than for older women, for unmarried than for married, for city dwellers than for rural women, and for the highly educated than for the less educated. It could also be shown that married women with few or older children are more inclined to take employment than those with many or small children. Certain of these factors are mutually related to each other: some—such as age and marital status—influence the volume of employment in the same direction; others are negatively correlated and tend to counterbalance each other, such as age and level of education.

Married women and economic activity

So far we have treated Norwegian data mainly as representative of Scandinavian trends in women's employment. On one particular point, however, considerable differences are found between these countries: the degree to which married women are gainfully employed. The percentages in the four capitals in 1960 were: Oslo 21, Copenhagen 33, Stockholm 37 and Helsinki 53. (It is to be noted that the figures for Oslo, Copenhagen and Helsinki cover " metropolitan areas ", and that in Copenhagen wives working in a family enterprise are included.) The figures for each

country as a whole were: Norway 9.5, Denmark 22.7, Sweden 23.3 and Finland 25.9

Whereas Sweden, Denmark and especially Finland have a fairly high proportion of married women working outside the home, Norway has one of the very lowest in Europe (although probably rapidly increasing).

Various explanations have been offered of this phenomenon. Norway has a lower degree of industrialisation and a more scattered population than Denmark and Sweden. Women's opportunities for employment in their traditional occupations are clearly fewer in districts with a very low population density. In Norway the percentage of economically active married women varies from 21 in Oslo (which itself has by far the lowest figure of any of the four capitals) to about 3 in one of the western countries. However, Finland is no more industrialised or densely populated than Norway, and yet has a very high proportion of economically active married women.

Differences in the availability of child-care institutions may partly explain this contrast between Norway and the two countries of Sweden and Denmark. It may be significant that Norway provides kindergartens for only 7 to 8 per cent. of all its children, whereas the figure is considerably higher in the other two countries.

Furthermore, one might ask whether differences in women's opportunities to earn acceptable wages may vary between the four countries. This is however, not the case, at least not in a way that explains the present differences in married women's economic activity. On the contrary, whereas Denmark, Finland and Sweden still have tax systems unfavourable to married women's work outside the home, Norway since 1960 has taxed a number of working wives separately (exception is made for a spouse employed in the firm of her/his spouse, these couples being taxed as having one joint income). In countries with steeply progressive tax systems this may be an important factor influencing a married woman's decision whether or not to take up gainful employment.

The Scandinavian variations in the proportion of married women economically active may to some extent be associated with variations in levels of education. If we consider the proportion of women to all persons taking a university degree we find it is rather high in Finland and low in Norway. The significance of education as a factor associated with married women's work outside the home has already been noticed. The relationship itself may, however, be spurious in the sense that certain basic attitudes towards education *and* occupational participation may be at work. Thus we cannot say that the existing differences seem to be completely explained by the available statistical data, although we might now formulate our question thus: Why are married Norwegian women less likely than other Scandinavian women—especially Finnish—both to have had a better education and to work outside the home?

Some speculations may be offered for the time being. It may be asked whether Norwegian mothers are more protective and more anxious about leaving their children than other Scandinavian mothers. According to an investigation (of a rather small number of mothers) in Sweden, Denmark and Norway, both Norwegian and Danish mothers are more child-centred and dependent on their children than Swedish mothers, although in different ways.[1] This finding does not support the hypothesis of particular anxiety or dependence on the part of Norwegian mothers. It is furthermore reasonable to inquire what differences there may be between the Scandinavian countries in wives' relationship with their husbands: are Norwegian wives more dependent, more dominated by patriarchal traditions than, for example, their Finnish sisters? Sufficient data are not available, but it may be mentioned that Finnish sociologists are investigating the possibility that remnants of a matriarchal tradition are influencing the pattern of differentiation by sex in Finland and possibly producing more independent attitudes in Finnish women than in the rest of Scandinavia.[2]

Another possibility (if nothing more) is that the attitude towards work and leisure in general is somewhat different in Norway from the rest of Scandinavia. Norwegians tend to value leisure rather highly and—according to popular belief—to be less work-oriented than other Scandinavians. They may consequently be more apt than others to make use of a higher standard of living by devoting more time to leisure. Men do not have the same type of choice as their wives on this point, and it may be that Norwegian wives, because of a generally relaxed attitude towards work, choose to stay home rather than work outside the home.

The above hypotheses—which in any case would most probably provide only partial explanations of the small proportion of Norwegian wives who go out to work—can be tested only by further empirical research.

Women's wages

In Scandinavia, as in most Western countries, women in general receive lower pay for their work than men do. Until recently a sex differential in the wage schedules was upheld even in formal agreements. This has now been dropped. Thus, formally, these countries have adopted the principle of the I.L.O. Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100).

Since women, however, seek—and get—only the lower status and the poorer-paid positions, the principle of equal pay for equal work does not mean that women's earnings are in general as high as men's.

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[1] H. HENDIN: *Suicide and Scandinavia* (New York, 1964).

[2] Associate Professor Elina HAAVIO-MANILLA, mentions this hypothesis in her unpublished paper *Activity and passivity among Finnish women.*

In this connection, certain differences between private and government employment, as well as between various branches and occupational fields may be noted. In the civil service (governmental and municipal) men and women have had the same salaries since the beginning of this century, when women won entrance to this field. The same is true of most highly professional or academic work.

Some comparisons between men's and women's wages within various occupational branches in Norway may usefully be surveyed.

For blue-collar employees in manufacturing the general level of women's wages in relation to men's during the decade 1950-60 fluctuated by over 3 per cent. Figures gathered by the Norwegian Council on Equal Pay disclose that the average hourly earnings of adult women in manufacturing as a percentage of the earnings of men showed the following variations: 1950: 65.8; 1952: 68.9; 1953: 68.0; 1956: 67.8; 1958: 67.5; 1960: 67.1; and 1964: 70.7. It must be borne in mind that few men and women have exactly the same type of job in work of this nature. If we compare the earnings of men and women with roughly equal work, who are in the same age groups and have the same forms of payment, the percentage for 1960 rises from 67.1 to 80.

In the period 1944-52 women's wages increased rather rapidly in relation to men's in Norwegian manufacturing. From 1952 this development ceased, but was resumed from 1960.

For white-collar employees in manufacturing, data for 1961 show that women's monthly salaries ranged from 82 to 87 per cent. of men's in the same category. Before 1961 the levels of salaries of men and women in equal positions had been gradually moving closer together. However, women's wages showed a downward trend, relatively speaking, because of the movement of women into subordinate and low-paid jobs.

No income differentiation based on sex is made between men and women having equal positions in municipal service, where, in 1962, women's average earnings ranged from 95 to 97 per cent. of men's.

In general, women in trade and commerce earn 77 to 80 per cent. of the average earnings of male employees in substantially comparable positions.

According to a collective agreement of 1962, men and women employed in banks should have equal pay for equal work. Nevertheless a comparison shows that women's wages are from 9 to 17 per cent. lower than men's for similar work.

Improvement of women's wages and equal pay for men and women have for many years been among the aims of various women's organisations and of labour unions, and partly too of the governments in the Scandinavian countries. The differentiation between wages for men and women is now being gradually dropped in collective agreements about wage schedules. In Norway a Council on Equal Pay was established in 1959 with representatives of the employers, labour and the central Govern-

ment. This Council collects and gives out information about women's employment, women's wages and salaries, women's education and training, and initiates new arrangements and efforts to improve the employment position of women.

As we have seen above, adoption of the principle of "equal pay for equal work" is not enough to secure a fair treatment of women as far as wages and salaries are concerned. As long as women are employed mostly in low-paid branches of work and do subordinate and menial tasks they will remain a low-paid group; I.L.O. Convention No. 100 does not apply to those conditions.

Level of skill and responsibility

It has been repeatedly stated in this survey that women in general mostly occupy subordinate positions at work. In some important branches this corresponds to their level of skill, which is often lower than that of men, especially in blue-collar work. In other branches, however, there are great discrepancies between the level of skill or education of the female employees and their modest positions.

Some Norwegian figures collected by the Council on Equal Pay illustrate the sex differentials in occupational status in various fields.

In municipal administration, 41 per cent. of the civil servants are women. But an analysis by level of responsibility shows that women represent 67 per cent. of civil servants in subordinate positions, 21 per cent. of these in low supervisory positions, only 8 per cent. of those in "middle-management" positions, and as little as 2 per cent. of the top administrators.

Of employees in retail trade in 1962, 4 per cent. of the women as against 30 per cent. of the men in shops had positions of authority. Of clerical employees in retail trade, 1 per cent. of the women were managers, compared with 29 per cent. of the men.

Table IV shows the position in the professions in Norway for the year 1960.

TABLE IV. NORWAY: NUMBERS IN THE PROFESSIONS, 1960

Profession	Number (both sexes)	Number of women
Professors	291	5
Chief physicians	339	3
Physicians	3 500	392
Architects	1 506	167
Chief engineers	1 172	4
Engineers	7 805	47
Consultants, secretaries in central government	2 040	289
Rectors of grammar schools, etc., heads of elementary schools	1 071	58

The discrepancy between women's level of skill and their actual position is probably most evident in the middle ranges of the occupational ladder. In white-collar employment (except in some of the professions) women's capacities and skills are obviously not made use of. To illustrate this we give some data from a sociological study made by the author in Oslo in 1962. A comparison was made of representative samples of men and women employees holding subordinate positions in seven of the larger insurance companies of Oslo. There were only minor differences between the men and the women in levels of formal and vocational education. Nevertheless, 70 per cent. of the men were in more responsible, well paid positions as against only 17 per cent. of the women. The same study showed that 46 per cent. of the white-collar female employees, as against 68 per cent. of their male colleagues, wanted advancement. In the age groups above 30 years, the difference between the two sexes in this respect is smaller.

These data seem to correspond to results from other parts of Scandinavia. They reveal one of the main problems of women in occupational life: training and skill are not sufficient to gain higher positions for women. Lack of aspiration and probably a certain amount of submissiveness, as well as negative attitudes on the part of employers, are still effective barriers to equality.

Preparation of women for working life

Preparation for occupational life starts in childhood, when important aspects of the social roles of the two sexes and their work roles are learned. We have reason to believe that girls in Scandinavia, as in many countries elsewhere, are less encouraged than boys to look upon economic activity as an important part of their life. " Marriage and children " are primary goals in the upbringing of girls.

Nevertheless, as a part of the rising standard of living, girls are, to an increasing degree, given a general education in the Scandinavian countries. As a matter of course, girls as well as boys receive an elementary education lasting from seven to nine years. The 1960 census in Norway showed that 32 per cent. of the women, as against 40 per cent. of the men, reported having had formal education beyond elementary school. Slightly more women than men had spent three or four years in secondary modern school *(realskole)* after elementary school (9.2 per cent. of the women, 8.8. per cent. of the men); 3.6 per cent. of all women had gone through grammar school *(gymnasium)*, as against 6.4 of the men. Finally, 0.3 per cent. of the women, as against 2.8 per cent. of the men, had a university degree. This set of figures does not do full justice to the diminution of sex differentiation in education over the last decade; in recent years about as many young girls as young boys have passed through the grammar schools in all the Scandinavian countries.

In Finland in 1960 it was found that 14 per cent. of all men over 15 years of age had had vocational training, whereas this was true of 11.2 per cent. of the women. Table V illustrates the Finnish situation with regard to vocational training.

TABLE V. FINLAND: PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AMONG PERSONS WITH VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND NUMBER OF TRAINED PERSONS, BY BRANCH, 1960

Branch	Persons with vocational training	
	Percentage of women	Number of persons
Agriculture	27.4	55 644
Manufacturing, etc.	19.9	103 737
Trade	57.6	68 200
Transport	15.0	10 216
Services	71.1	152 187
	47.5	389 984

Source: Census data, 1960. Taken from unpublished work by Prof. E. HAAVIO-MANILLA.

At the Scandinavian universities there has been a certain increase in the proportion of woman students, in Norway from 16 per cent. in 1950 to 23 per cent. in 1963-64. Norway is, however, behind the other Scandinavian countries in this respect. In Sweden the figure is about 32 per cent., and in Finland about half of the students taking a university degree are women.

But in the Scandinavian countries in general there is a clear tendency for women to stop their education at a lower level than men do, and they are less inclined to take special or vocational training. Furthermore, women mostly seek education in the traditional fields of women's activity: teaching, social service, secretarial work, nursing, etc. Their perceived field of choice is far more limited than men's. Research indicates that this narrow conception of possibilities is formed in girls at a rather early age.

Present policies and future development

Some Scandinavian organisations and agencies have very definite views on ends and means with regard to women's employment; these are not always bodies with great influence on day-to-day policy in the field. Other organisations that are only mildly or not at all interested in the problems are often of such a nature that their decisions greatly influence

the position of women in occupational life. Others again stand between these two types.

The women's emancipation movements in Scandinavia are quite vigorous, and advance their ideas whenever possible. Their advice is asked in various connections by government authorities, and they are apt to press rather hard for measures favouring women's occupational opportunities in educational matters, active vocational guidance, retraining of women who have temporarily withdrawn from employment and, not least, child-care institutions. Some women's organisations have their own child-care institutions, with limited government support.

In certain respects the governments of the Scandinavian countries have a policy concerning women's position in work life—they may be said to follow a general, fairly vague, official ideology of equality. For example within government administration a person's sex is officially supposed to be irrelevant to recruitment and to advancement to higher positions. Complaints about violations of this rule do occur, but not very often. Furthermore, in educational policy the governments can be said to favour equal treatment for boys and girls. Some years ago, for example, the subject " domestic work " was introduced in the schools of Norway for boys as well as girls. Girls, however, still have difficulties if they want to be taught carpentry.

Care is taken to secure equality of men and women in new laws and administrative rules. A few legal inequalities still exist, however; for example in the public social security system. The Swedish Government obviously has the most active policy in the matter of women's participation in economic activity, and it passed certain measures aimed at increasing it. In Denmark the Cabinet has appointed a government commission to survey the problems of women's position in the country.

Recently an interest in women's roles has been shown by the political parties as well as by the governments; this is partly due to the present tightness of the labour market. The Social Democratic parties, which have a parliamentary majority in Sweden and had one until recently in Norway, have set up special committees to survey and make suggestions about the position of women in society, and these committees have come forward with fairly radical proposals. Most of the other political parties, at least in Norway and Sweden, have taken a public stand on the matter. It may be noted that the Swedish Government in its replies to a questionnaire from the International Labour Office in 1963 about women workers, expressed some of the most radical views of the 64 member countries which replied to this questionnaire. The Swedish answers pointed explicitly to men's equal responsibilities in child care and household work and favoured virtually no special protection for women.

The employers' organisations may be said to have a very mild interest in women's occupational situation. They have resisted the step towards equal pay, chiefly on the grounds that women on the whole

provide less satisfactory labour than men (with respect to turnover, absence and lack of skill). On the other hand, in the present situation the employers are interested in new manpower resources, and many individual firms, especially in Sweden, have tried out new jobs for women, for example in the metal trades.

The labour unions in Scandinavia have a long tradition of siding with women's interests, at least on the ideological level. The recent advance towards equal pay is partly a result of struggles by the unions and federations.

In labour protection very few special rights are granted to women. Scandinavian women in labour unions have by and large refused such special protection on the grounds that this makes women second-grade employees. In Norway the Workers' Protection Act, however, prohibits underground work for women. During and after pregnancy women are granted a total of three month's leave and enjoy statutory protection from dismissal in such circumstances. If an employed mother nurses her child she is entitled to the necessary time off to do this. Women civil servants and certain groups of clerical workers are granted full pay during the three months' pregnancy leave, and civil servants are also allowed a further nine months' leave without pay if they want it. Marriage or pregnancy is not a lawful reason for the dismissal of a female employee in Scandinavia.

Present problems

Whenever women's occupational opportunities are discussed in Scandinavia the subjects most likely to crop up are: the need for more and better child-care institutions, possibilities of part-time work, the encouragement of women to go in for more and different types of education, re-education and vocational training, active vocational guidance for women, and the provision of new types of job openings for women—for example by the planning and launching of new industries. A change in the attitude towards promotion on the part of private employers and also on the part of women employees themselves seems necessary, as does a redistribution of domestic duties in the family. Women's organisations, government authorities, political parties, labour unions and other organisations and agencies are all concerned with these questions.

Child-care institutions

We have seen that Sweden and Denmark have the greatest number of child-care institutions to which working parents may bring their children. In 1963 Norway had 8,180 places in such institutions, whereas Denmark had 40,000 and Sweden 34,000. Sweden plans to have 69,000

places before 1970. The Norwegian plans aim at a 25 per cent. coverage of children below 4 years of age. A Finnish survey [1] indicates that only 2 per cent. of all working mothers took their children to an institution while they were at work. Comparisons, however, should be made only with great caution, for the types of child-care institution vary from country to country.

In Norway the Government gives limited financial support to some types of child-care institution: the support provided by municipalities varies. The training of sufficient qualified personnel for child-care institutions is considered to be inadequate. The demand for a more active policy by the Government in this field is raised again and again in discussions about women's work.

A certain interest is evident in various circles in the possibilities of collective household units as a means to reduce and rationalise domestic work and child care. In Norway the Government is considering what it could do in the matter.

Part-time work

Part-time work as a solution to women's occupational problems was for long a controversial issue among the women of Scandinavia themselves. While it seemed to many the perfect solution to the stresses of women's dual role, the more radical women's organisations claimed that it would mean an acceptance of women's inferiority in the labour market and a prolongation of the stage of " two roles for women, one for men ". The desire of many women to get part-time work is, however, obvious, and the radicals have, in addition, come to see part-time work for men as a way to stimulate their participation in domestic work and child care. It now therefore seems agreed that part-time work is desirable.

It is only recently, however, that the provision of part-time employment has been conceived of as a government task. In Norway certain measures were put forward in the long-term plan of the last Labour Cabinet; in Finland the authorities are considering the possibilities for encouraging part-time employment; and in Sweden the Government has implemented an " activity programme for female labour " including the promotion of part-time employment. There is probably some increase in the number of private enterprises that try out part-time work for women—as an attempt to solve their own labour-force problems, not as a result of a planned occupational policy for women, or for parents in general.

Educational measures

It is perhaps in education and training that the most active policy to promote women's occupational participation can be found. " Encourage-

[1] *Yearbook of population research in Finland, 1961-62.*

ment ", " re-education " and " active guidance " are the catchwords that can describe the measures already taken.

Certain attempts are being made through pamphlets, lectures given in schools and on the radio, and the press to stimulate girls to go in for higher education and specialised training. For example in Sweden and Norway financial support is given to unemployed and underemployed adults for training to facilitate their transfer to new types of work. Married women who have been away from employment for several years may enter such training courses and obtain the same support as others, depending on their status as " breadwinners " or " dependants ". The latter get half the support of the former. In Sweden a large number of married women have made use of this opportunity.

The employment offices (run by the State or the municipality) have been strongly criticised by radical groups in some Scandinavian countries for their silent acceptance of a sex-differentiated labour market. In their placement and guidance activities these offices have been apt to follow traditional leads, partly because they are expected to take a neutral attitude to the various points of conflict in industrial life, and not to influence their clients in controversial matters. This seems to be changing as far as the question of women is concerned, for in Sweden a more active encouragement of women to seek new occupations and jobs is favoured.

New industries

One way in which the authorities can influence private industry is by their active support of planning and building new industries in the less developed parts of the country. A tendency to plan a new industry according to the old pattern of distinguishing between men's work and women's work supports the traditional sex differentiation in the labour market. Suggestions have been put forward that care should be taken, when planning new government-supported industries, *not* to think of only low-pay branches for women. Government support should be given to industries paying high wages and which are willing to open up new training and work possibilities for women.

Future outlook

A Swedish investigation in 1964 into the number of housewives who wanted a job outside the home showed that, during the week studied, out of 108,700 housewives, 9,400 had been trying to get work, 19,700 had worked less than 35 hours because they could not get more work, and 79,600 would have attempted to get a job if they had thought there was a possibility of success. These figures strongly suggest that an increase in married women's participation in economic activity would not be difficult to achieve.

There is no doubt that in Scandinavia powerful forces are operating towards a change in women's occupational situation in the direction of a more active work role for them, closer to the occupational role of men. If the mere number of women participating in gainful employment were an indication of an independent occupational role for women equal to that of men, the forecasts made by Scandinavian statisticians should be welcomed by those who favour a new deal for women in the world of work. In Sweden the National Labour Market Board has based one of its forecasts on the assumption of an increase on the number of married women at work from the present figure of 655,000 to over 1 million in 1980—an increase of 58 per cent. of married women working. An article emanating from the Central Bureau of Statistics in Norway mentions a possible increase in the number of married women working from 79,341 in 1960 to 127,241 in 1970. This calculation is based on the assumption that the number of working married women will increase as much between 1960 and 1970 as it did from 1950 to 1960. Even if the Norwegian figures are more modest than the Swedish ones, they imply fairly great changes in the tendency for married women to work outside the home.