



# TEN THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT NORDIC EQUALITY

- 1. Global leaders:** According to the Global Gender Gap Index, the Nordic countries are amongst the highest-ranking countries in terms gender parity across four thematic dimensions: Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival and Political Empowerment. The Nordic countries consistently hold top spots on the UNDP Human Development index.
- 2. Regional collaboration:** Gender equality has been a part of Nordic co-operation since 1974, when the Nordic Council of Ministers decided that each of the Nordic governments must nominate an individual to liaise with the other governments on gender issues. Following this, the first Nordic contact group on gender issues was set up in 1975.
- 3. Labour market participation:** The Nordic countries have some of the most gender-equal labour markets in the world. Seventy-four percent of Nordic women have jobs – well above the OECD average of 66%. Over 80% of women in Iceland work, with similar percentages in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. An OECD study shows that, current GDP per capita in the Nordic Region would be lower by between USD 1,500 in Finland and USD 9,000 in Norway if female employment rates had remained at levels of the mid-1960s. Gains in Finland were smallest as many women were already in paid work at that time.
- 4. Family friendly:** The family-friendly policies introduced by Nordic countries over the past 50 years and associated increases in female employment have boosted growth in GDP per capita by between 10% and 20%. Support from employers and unions have made it possible for workers to opt for more flexible and family-friendly working hours.
- 5. Advanced care systems:** The Nordic countries have increasingly invested in subsidised childcare, care for the elderly and paid parental leave for both mothers and fathers. Strong public healthcare systems ensure that everyone is given equal access.
- 6. Equal opportunity and access:** Social rights provide everyone with equal access to healthcare systems, social services, education, culture, and the labour market. Socio-economic equality is a key characteristic of the Nordic countries and helps create safe and secure societies.
- 7. Income equality:** Equal pay for equal work is a legal right in all of the Nordic countries and one of the main objectives of gender-equality policy. However, like everywhere else in the world, there is a pay gap between women and men, partly due to choice of profession, among other factors. In the Nordic Region, the gap is 15.4% on average. In the EU, it is 16.7%. On 1 January 2018, Iceland became the first country in the world to make it illegal to pay men more than women for doing the same job.
- 8. Economic equality in an unequal world:** The Nordic countries are among the most equal in terms of distribution of income.
- 9. Same-sex marriage:** The Nordics are among some of the first countries to legalise same-sex.

STARTING CONVERSATIONS  
#thenordics