UN Commission on the Status of Women 2017

The Nordic Council of Ministers' (NCM) panel for the Nordic Ministers for Gender Equality

**Gender equality the Nordic way:**
*What can we learn from it?*

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**Panel of Ministers of Gender Equality and Nordic Experts**

**Title:** Gender equality the Nordic way: What can we learn from it?

**Time:** 13th March 2017, 13:15-14:45

**Place:** Conference room 7, UN Building New York

**Host:** Ms. Solveig Horne, Norway's Minister of Gender Equality

**Moderator:** Ms. Brigid Schulte, Director, The Good Life Initiative/ Better Life Lab at New America (TBC)

**Ministers:**
- Ms. Solveig Horne, Minister of Children and Family, Norway
- Ms. Åsa Regnér, Minister of Children, the elderly and Gender Equality, Sweden
- Ms. Eyðgunn Samuelsen, Faroe Island (cancelled)
- Ms. Pirkko Mattila, Minister of Social Affairs and Health, Finland
- Ms. Karen Elleman, Minister of Equal Opportunities and Nordic Cooperation Denmark
- Ms. Katrin Sjögren, Minister of Self Government, Equality and Law, Aaland
- Ms. Sara Olsvig, Minister of Social Affairs, Family, Equal Opportunities and Justice Greenland
- Mr. Þorsteinn Viglundsson, Minister of Social Affairs and Equality, Iceland

**Experts:**
- Dr. Mari Teigen, Research professor, Director Centre for Research on Gender Equality, about Teigen: [http://www.socialresearch.no/Staff/Researchers/Teigen-Mari](http://www.socialresearch.no/Staff/Researchers/Teigen-Mari)
- PhD. Lynn Roseberry, former associate professor at Copenhagen School of Business, about Roseberry: [http://www.lynnroseberry.com/about/](http://www.lynnroseberry.com/about/)

**Aim:** To address and discuss common goals and remaining challenges in order to achieve Gender Equality in the world of work

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**Background**

Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden have been members of the Nordic Council of Ministers since 1971. In addition, Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland are represented in the Nordic Council of Ministers.
The Nordic countries’ shared history and democratic traditions have enabled our region to work closely and constructively together on gender equality. Through the Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality, our five countries have worked together on promoting gender equality for more than 40 years. The Nordic Ministers for Gender Equality meet at least once a year to discuss key gender issues and to make joint decisions in areas where working together can achieve more than the individual countries can on their own.

Panel of Nordic Ministers of Gender Equality at the CSW
All the Nordic countries are eager participants at the CSW every year and see themselves as strong defenders of women's rights as part of the human rights framework and a pre-requisite for gender equality. This is why the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM), arrange a panel discussion with all the Nordic Ministers of Gender Equality at the CSW. Norway holds the presidency in the NCM 2017 and as such leads the Nordic events at the CSW, which includes organizing and hosting the subsequent Nordic Council of Ministers’ panel discussion on Monday 13rd March at 13:15-14:45 in conference room 7 in the UN building.

Concept of the Panel
The main topic during the CSW 2017 is Women's empowerment in the changing world of work. The main topic for the ministers’ panel will be to address how the Nordic countries can progress more rapidly towards, and achieve gender equality in the labour market. As a region, we have achieved a lot, yet there is much work still to be done. Importantly, the panel discussion is aiming to bring out those aspects of progress and the mechanisms/models behind it, that other organizations, countries or regions in the world may benefit from, and in addition, where the Nordic region can benefit from learning elsewhere.

A strong and knowledgeable moderator will lead the panel, Ms Brigid Schulte, The Good Life Initiative/ Better Life Lab at New America. Schulte joined on the NCM's travel in the Nordic countries fall 2016 and knows the topic and the region very well.

As a start, two Nordic experts. Ms Lynn Roseberry (DK) and Mari Teigen (NO) will point out the greatest achievements when it comes to equality in the labour market in the Nordic countries. More importantly, they will also address the challenges that remain (part-time work, equal pay, sex-segregated labour market, lack of women in top leadership, as CEO's, etc).

After the experts have pointed out the main challenges, all the ministers are allowed a short opening statement – 2 minutes each. Then the moderator will lead the ministers’ discussion on how they will work on bridging the remaining gap/s. The ministers have picked 1-3 topics they will focus on. The point of departure for the moderator is to enable and facilitate for a dynamic and lively discussion.

Head line / topic
The CSW's main theme in 2017 is Women's empowerment in the world of work. In a Nordic setting, that can be translated to Gender equality in the labour market – achievements and challenges. Its decided that the head line for the panel is: Gender equality the Nordic way: What can we learn from it?
The Nordic societies have enjoyed a long tradition of women’s entrepreneurship, modern welfare states that provide support to working parents (parental leave, subsidized kindergartens, flexible working time arrangements), high levels of women’s participation in the labor market and populations that strongly support the idea of gender equality. Despite high levels of support for women to work, Nordic countries have few women among top-managers and business owners (the Nordic gender equality paradox). There are still gaps of equality as regards pay, full time/part time, there is both a horizontal and vertical segregation, few women in top management positions etc. The panel of ministers will discuss what can be done in order to achieve gender equality in the labour market and the world of work.

Time frame
13:15 Opening by moderator Bridgit Schulte,
13:20-13:40 Mari Teigen and Lynn Roseberry: The remaining challenges
13:40-13:50 Opening statements by all ministers – 2 min each in this order (Norway, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and Denmark)
13:50-14:20 The Ministers’ discussion led by the moderator
14:25-14:40 Q and A from the audience (and/or moderator) – interaction with the audience
14:40-14:45 Moderator sums it all up

The Minister’s topic(s)
All the Ministers/Countries have ahead of CSW chosen 2-4 topics they especially want to address, see the list below:

Ms. Solveig Horne, Norway
- How to break traditional/stereotypical choices of education and occupations for boys and girls
- Equality in leading positions
- How to strengthen immigrant women's participation in the labour market

Ms. Åsa Regnér, Sweden
- the importance of welfare and taxation systems that enable women and men to participate in the labour market on equal terms
- combating gender stereotypical vocational and educational choices,
- strengthening women’s sexual reproductive health and rights, including the right to abortion,
- the urge to include men and boys in gender equality issues at large
Ms. Eyðgunn Samuelsen, Faroe Island (not participating)

Ms. Pirkko Mattila, Finland
- How societies can ensure the equal participation of women in the labour market (e.g. through education, social security and public services).

Ms. Karen Ellemann, Denmark
Main theme: Women at work – everybody gains.
- Gender equality is not a law of nature, but dependent of historical drivers in society
- Gender equality is a prerequisite for economic growth, prosperity and cohesion in society – it is a win-win deal
- What are the prerequisites for women’s participation in the labour market? Take a look at the Nordic welfare models

Ms. Katrin Sjoegren, Aaland (not confirmed yet as of 17.02.2017)

Ms. Sara Olsvig, Greenland (not confirmed yet as of 17.02.2017)

Mr. Þorsteinn Víglundsson, Iceland
Special Measures to promote Gender Equality in the Labour Market - the Case of Iceland.
Discussion points:
- Paternity Leave
- Women on Boards
- Equal Pay Certification and Equal Pay Standard