

Summary of the report “The Role of Women in Fisheries”

This document is a condensed version of the study “The Role of Women in Fisheries” by MacAlister Elliott and Partners Ltd (MEP) and was prepared by DG Fish to give a concise overview of this complex subject matter.

The Study was executed and compiled by MacAlister Elliott and Partners Ltd (MEP) under contract by DG Fish and was finalised in 2002.

The ultimate purpose of the study was to address two interlinked community priorities : the promotion of social and economic cohesion, particularly through lessening the developmental differentials between regions and the promotion of equal opportunities and rights for men and women.

Evidence shows that despite all the cultural and economic diversity within the EU, the position and perception of women regarding the fisheries sector presents a considerable degree of commonality. Thus, women feel unwelcome in the seagoing fishing sub sector, but have little interest in participating anyway. In aquaculture women feel discriminated against, but to a much lower extent. Processing is the one sub sector where women are over-represented, but mainly because they predominate in low-grade unskilled jobs. Women have made significant inroads into the management/administration segment, both of which are more rewarding and viewed in a more positive light. Finally, the role of women as support to seagoing spouses was found to both very important and highly undervalued by the fishing community.

1. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study has been intended to address two interlinked community **priorities** : the promotion of social and economic cohesion and the promotion of equal opportunities and rights for men and women. It aims to facilitate the integration of these two Community priorities to the fishery sector, in other words, gender mainstreaming in fisheries development.

Briefly, the study was to achieve this purpose by:

- Examining the roles of women in the fisheries sector of the communities dependent on fisheries (and also where appropriate those not dependent upon fisheries)
- Providing an analysis of the obstacles and the potential related to women's contribution to the socio-economic development and diversification of these communities; and
- Identifying ways and means for the promotion of equal opportunities for women in the fisheries sector.

To this end seven **key tasks** were set for the study:

1. Characterisation of EU **fisheries employment**, specifically identifying women's roles (including informal/unpaid work)
2. Defining **social status and legal rights** of women in EU fisheries, specifically identifying deficiencies
3. A comparative assessment of the women's **organisational support** within EU fisheries
4. A comparative investigation of **problems and obstacles** preventing women's greater involvement in EU fisheries
5. A comparative investigation of the **opportunity and potential** for women's involvement in EU fisheries and adjacent activities
6. Analysis and presentation of potential **interventions to solve the problems and exploit the opportunities** identified above, with a view to gender equality and socio-economic development in FDAs
7. In parallel with the above, an analysis of women's roles in significant fisheries activities in **areas not otherwise dependent upon fisheries (non FDAs)** – e.g. inland aquaculture and urban fish processing

The study has also intended to propose some **practical measures** that could enhance women's involvement and benefit within fisheries, with particular reference to financial or legislative intervention by the Community or its Member States.

The study is EU wide, but concentrates on Fisheries Dependent Areas (FDAs) within each member State, whilst not disregarding areas where the activities such as processing and aquaculture are locally important in otherwise non fisheries dependent communities (non-FDAs).

Statistical indicators as well as objective judgements were used to chose **criteria for selection of Fisheries Dependent Areas**. The statistical level at which these decisions were made was at NUTS3, the key indicator being *the index of fisheries added value as a percentage of total added value* as determined in regional socio-economic studies. Absolute values were discarded in favour of relative values and the leading areas in each member state were chosen accordingly.

2. METHODS, SOURCES AND AREAS COVERED

2.1. Methodology

A team of fisheries socio-economists with knowledge of the role of women in fisheries throughout the EU¹ has prepared an appropriate template of the whole report.

The template defined “**Fisheries**” as all aspects of the fish & seafood sector including capture, culture and up & downstream activities, categorised in the following sub-sectors listed below. In this regard, “**Fishing**” on the other hand, is the narrower activity of seagoing fish capture :

Fishing (commercial & small scale)

Aquaculture

Marketing & distribution

Processing

Administration, management & public sector

Other: significant other category

Informal: unpaid, (e.g. wives managing, book-keeping & marketing)

2.2. Principal data sources

The **quantitative (numerical) data** used in this study was collected/estimated nationally whilst **qualitative data** was based upon specific assessments (literature, case studies, impressions gained etc) related to fisheries dependent areas and expressed in narrative form. There were then two types of source for this study: **key reports** (EU Member State literature, the Small Scale Coastal Fisheries Projects studies SSCFP, PESCA Initiative evaluation reports etc.) and **key respondents** (leaders from the fisheries institutions; fishing, aquaculture, processing industry trade associations & unions; fishing women’s group leaders etc.)

2.3. Key areas covered

The Main sectors investigated can be broken down into three broad areas economical, educational and sociological, with these areas significantly overlapping. Allowing a investigation which looks in to the *how*, *where*, *why* and *why not* the role of women in European fisheries.

- **Employment data**, including gender differentials, for each main discrete occupation within the fisheries sector i.e.: fishing, aquaculture, marketing & distribution, processing, administration & management and informal (especially unpaid spouses support).
- **Legal and social status**; women’s legal position concerning involvement in the sector, and problems inherent in this.
- **Organisational**, concerning how women are organised within the industry (e.g. unions), what formal support systems there are (e.g. childcare) and how education serves women in the sector.
- **Socio-cultural constraints**, resolved into three aspects – external social factors that effect women’s decisions, the social status (thus desirability) of fisheries occupations and “internal” psychological factors related to women’s interests, aspirations and concerns.

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- **Economic**, mainly concerned with the respective earnings for various fisheries occupations, and particularly with gender related earnings discounts and economic alternatives.

3. THE LEGAL POSITION FOR WOMEN IN FISHERIES

Several EU directives, concerning gender rights and binding directly all Member States, have complemented the provisions of the Treaty, also considered directly applicable by the European Court of Justice. However, the methods of transposing and implementing these directives within Member States vary: also the interpretations of the national regulations, put in place to comply with the implementation obligation of these directives, might present results rather different from each other. In these circumstances, the legal base and its factual applications to the situation of women employed or to be employed in fisheries also appear to produce implications which could easily differ from one part of the Union to another.

The legal position for women in fisheries in non-FDAs is essentially no different to that for them in FDAs: in other words the legislative framework consists of national (and indeed Community-wide) regimes, so applying mostly at this broad level. However, as non-FDA fisheries activities mostly concern processing and aquaculture, it is the legal connotations of these occupations that are relevant here. This means gender related labour rights and union legislation for fish processing (essentially industrial shop floor employment) and general gender equality legislation in the case of aquaculture.

The most important issues concerning the interaction of the legal framework in place and its social surroundings would undoubtedly have been to elaborate upon the differences observed in the practical consequences of provisions intended to be applied similarly throughout the Community. Also the national legislative patterns and their impacts upon the social circumstances of women would have merited a more deep-going analysis. In these aspects, the study, however, embarks upon largely uncharted territory; therefore, directions clearly have been pointed out for further advances in order to establish an appropriate base for future actions in this field.

4. KEY FINDINGS ON THE WOMEN'S ROLE IN FISHERIES

4.1. Common figures

Despite all the cultural and economic diversity within the EU, the position and perception of women regarding the fisheries sector showed a considerable degree of commonality. Within this common pattern the following findings stood out as interesting and important:

- Women feel unwelcome in the **seagoing fishing** sub sector, but have little interest in participating anyway. It is not surprising that very few women are involved (3% of the workforce)
- Women feel discriminated against in **aquaculture**, but to a much lower extent, and are far more representatively involved. There are a few specifically women-managed aquaculture activities.
- **Processing** is the one sub sector where women are over-represented, but mainly because they predominate in low-grade unskilled jobs. Seafood processing is perceived to hold few career prospects for women, mostly with good reason

- **Management/administration:** women have made significant inroads into this segment, which is both better rewarded and more positively viewed by women. It is particularly in the public sector that women have been successful.
- **Informal:** the role of women as **support to seagoing spouses** (“collaborating spouses”) was found to both very important and highly undervalued by the fishing community. This was seen as providing the most relevant and potentially productive avenue to explore in order to better women’ position in fisheries.
- The study found that there was **economic discrimination against women** in the sector. Women are paid 12% less than men for what appears to be the same work, though given the limited data, like may not have been compared exactly with like. However, this is much less than the overall earnings discount women face across the EU economies of around 22%.

4.2. Women’s employment in fisheries

The following table makes some **important points** clearly, particularly regarding the very different levels of female involvement in the different fisheries sub-sectors. These are set out below:

(i) Women clearly play a very small part in **fishing per se**, (i.e. the capture fishery), with their representation in the workforce averaging 3% throughout the EU, within a range of 0 to 7%. In short, their involvement is marginal in all countries

(ii) More women are involved in **aquaculture**, according to the available data. The average is 27% of the workforce within a range of 3 to 44%. The lower figure (for the Netherlands) is believed to be unrepresentative; possibly reflecting the fact that Dutch aquaculture mainly involves mussel culture, a seagoing activity more akin to fishing than farming. Indeed, as with much of this data, the generalised data inevitable disguises much regional variation, with aquaculture in regions like Galicia being a traditional female preserve.

(iii) As would be expected, **processing** is clearly the sub sector where women are most involved in fisheries, demonstrating a small majority of the workforce at 53%, but within a range of 11 to 75%. However women are mostly 40 to 60% of the workforce, with only Greece (11%) having markedly less than 40% female involvement.

(iv) Finally, women’s involvement in the **management and administration** element of the sector is, at 39% perhaps higher than might have been expected in what has notoriously been a male dominated preserve. However, this does not necessarily mean that women have made inroads into the senior management roles, and anecdotal evidence suggests that indeed women are generally not represented at the higher levels. Indeed, it is legitimate to question what the 39% represents. In some cases, it is the public sector (regulation, research & training) that predominates in the data, and here conscious efforts to achieve equal opportunity have clearly borne fruit. The position in the commercial sector would seem to be one of less female emancipation, reflecting the still largely traditional structure of the industry.

Table 1 : Women’s employment in fisheries by country (units: % of workforce female)

Country	Data cover	Women in: Whole sector	Fishing	Aquaculture	Processing	Management & admin
Belgium	national	30%	3%	-	45%	35%
Denmark	national	39%	0%	-	75%	50%
Finland	national	14%	0%	-	58%	-
France	4FDAs	15%*	2%	-	64%	28%
Germany	national	34%	0%	19%	55%	-
Greece	national	8%	7%	10%	11%	15%
Ireland	national	16%	0%	30%	45%	-
Italy	3FDAs	3%	1%	11%	37%	22%
Netherlands	national	26%	5%	3%	43%	10%
Portugal	national	19%	2%	14%	60%	53%
Spain	2FDAs	43%	1%	44%	75%	37%
Sweden	national	29%	4%	13%	48%	59%
UK	national	40%	1%	15%	46%	40%

* this figure is misleading in two ways: (i) some data is national (fishing) whilst other data is related to the FDAs (processing) or to segments (e.g. a single research establishment) (ii) if the 8,760 registered supporting wives are included (people who are probably registered in other countries as marketing/support) are added in, then the figure rises to 32% which is perhaps more representative

4.3. Social context

The study found that women almost universally belong to the same unions and producer organisations as men, the one difference being France. Women are less likely to be in producer organisations in the Mediterranean states, but this may well be a function of the prominence there of fishing organisations (as opposed to those for fish processing), so excluding women who rarely fish. Specialised women’s fisheries associations are the exception rather than the rule, and this is the one area where significant change seems to be underway. Whether the absence of multi-gender unions in France was a spur for the successful development of these specialised women’s organisations there, or is in fact a result of this development, is hard to say though.

Childcare facilities are a potential important factor in liberating women to take on a more active role in fisheries. As the table shows, these tend to be available in the North, and especially in Scandinavia, but less so in the south. However, the respondents noted that family networks play a large part in childcare in Mediterranean cultures, and so it may well be that informal arrangements remove this constraint anyway.

Finally, **education and training** are likely to be critical in any moves to improve women’s status in fisheries, and so the availability of fisheries/maritime training and education was questioned, as was its availability to women. It transpires that some form of vocational or specialised training is available in most Member States and is universally (where an answer was received) available to women. Thus, in principle at least the potential availability of training and education seems not to be a constraint.

Table 2 : Comparative data on women’s organisational status & support in the European Union Member States

Member State	Men & women in the same unions	Men & women in same trade organisations	Specialist women’s fisheries organisations	Women equal to men in these orgs	Presence of child support facilities	Fisheries Education access equality
Belgium	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	-	-
Denmark	Mostly Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
France	No	No	Yes	Yes	-	Yes
Germany	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Some	-
Greece	Yes	Yes	yes (co-ops)	No	No	Yes now
Ireland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Italy	Yes, some areas	No	No	-	Yes	Training courses
Netherlands	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Some	Yes
Portugal	Yes	Yes	No	No	Little	Yes
Spain	Yes	No	No	No	-	-
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
UK	Yes	Yes	Some	Yes	Some	Yes

4.4. Women’s informal role in fisheries

Unpaid work by women in support of fishing family enterprises has long been seen as being significantly important. Indeed, in some regions it is probably the major connection that women have with the fishing (i.e. fish capture) sub-sector. There are two aspects to this :

- Normal child minding and household management tasks
- Specific shore side management and other support provided to a family fishing concern (especially where the husband is at sea)

The types of activity in which women are involved fall into at least five main categories. They range from what are clearly senior management tasks to basic administration:

- **Overall management:** essentially allowing the spouse to concentrate on fishing per se, relieving them of all the financial, compliance/fiscal, supplies sourcing, crew/staff management and marketing responsibilities and duties
- **Communication:** providing an essential communication link whilst the spouse is at sea, formerly a critical requirement but now one made less so by communication technology – sea-going fishermen can communicate directly with better radios, mobile phones, satellite links and on-board fax or internet
- **Bookkeeping:** keeping track of expenditure and revenues, dealing with the bank and state fiscal or other requirements
- **Marketing:** from maintaining a marketing net work, keeping track of current prices to actively selling fish, finding the best deals and proactive market development
- **Practical backup:** at the lower end of the scale, women provide essential routine logistical functions, picking up equipment and crew (traditionally many fishermen didn’t drive) etc.

More information about the role of women in the fisheries sector in the European Union Member States may be found in the enclosed country reports.

5. PROBLEMS & OBSTACLES

A key objective of the study was to identify and understand the principal factors that discourage women from a wider participation in the fisheries sector. The final objective was to identify areas where ameliorative Community/Member State action can be taken (financial or legislative), and this has guided the enquiry here. The enquiry covers three areas: **Socio-cultural** (defined as constraints imposed externally upon women), **Psychological** (conversely, constraints imposed internally by women's concerns & aspirations) and **Economic** aspects (mainly concerning earnings, but also other benefits if relevant).

The key findings concerning **external factors** show the following :

- 1) There is an overall perception that there are external pressures that discourage women from entering the fisheries sector. This differs between sub-sectors, but nevertheless in no category was the perception that there were zero barriers to women's involvement higher than 60%.
- 2) Fishing per se stands out quite distinctly as an activity where women feel that are unwelcome: scores of 60-74% show fishing to be an activity where on all counts assessed, women felt highly excluded. The reasons for this are diverse, ranging from the pragmatic (lack of required strength, need for extra facilities on board, too dangerous) to the social (the disruptive impact of mixed sex crews on cramped vessels) and to the superstitious (women are "bad luck" on board)
- 3) The only other sub sector where significant discrimination is evident is aquaculture where 61% of respondents reported some discrimination (i.e. within the high & low categories combined)
- 4) In contrast, the other sub sectors are seen as having distinctly lower external barriers - i.e. there is less preventing women from entering processing, marketing of management with low barrier levels of 1 to 30%. Within this range, the only area where there was consistently higher levels of perceived external resistance to women's involvement was management & administration, but this is perhaps the more a question of the "glass ceiling" that is believed to frustrate women's advancement in management across all economic sectors
- 5) No particular external factor was seen as an across-the-board barrier (25-35% was the average discrimination rating), with the possible exception of their spouse's attitudes (62% high and low barrier level).
- 6) Finally, it is clear that women with children felt that this did add to the external pressure preventing their involvement with fisheries, with a 70% to 30% balance between those believing child-rearing responsibilities prevented their free entry to the sector.

As far as the **psychological constraints** concern, they may be summarised as follows:

- (1) It is evident that as well as feeling generally unwelcome by the fishing sector, women generally have little wish to become involved with fishing. This varied between sub sectors but the highest positive response (i.e. no internal barrier) was 60%.
- (2) This negative response is particularly true for fishing per se - it does seem that few women actually want to go fishing, especially offshore marine fisheries. The reasons given for this provide few surprises, generally revolving around the unattractiveness of seagoing activity (discomfort, danger, lack of facilities, low status and "rough" male company).
- (3) In aquaculture, the barriers were lower, but still significant. Whilst the level of high internal resistance to involvement in aquaculture was much less than that for fishing (35% rather than 70%) but overall resistance differed a great deal less (71% as opposed to 82% for fishing). The desire to enter this more "agricultural" activity is then low, in spite of the perceived lower external barriers to entry.
- (4) There is also a clear general perception that the whole sector presents poor career opportunities for women. This is especially true of fishing, but also applies to processing and aquaculture and to a lesser extent marketing & management. This is demonstrated by a strong perception of a lack of career prospects (75%), and of there being better alternatives (75%).

This is not necessarily a gender differentiated response though - women were clearly aware of the generally declining employment prospects for the sector, problems with the resources and the way that lower grade jobs most open to them (processing labour) are trending downwards (to immigrant labour, being replaced by machinery or being migrated out to low-cost economies) rather than becoming more worthwhile. Thus there were repeated statements that mothers were keen for their children not to enter the sector, and were taking pains to ensure they didn't have to.

(5) Of the alternatives available, one, the preference for child caring rated highly (67%) and the belief that women with children were more discouraged from entering fisheries than those without was very high at 80% to 20% against.

6. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The characteristics of women's involvement in the fisheries sector seem to be similar the world over, in spite of wide cultural, social, political and economic differences. Key aspects can be summarised as follows:

- An involvement in processing and marketing rather than fishing per se
- A greater primary production role in aquaculture or in the harvesting of littoral organisms than in fishing
- An important support role, which is generally unrecognised and under-rewarded
- However, this support role, especially when it involves managing the downstream activities can be the basis for significant economic progress by women
- An increasing role in administration and public sector activities, especially research and resource management

Following these findings, a number of practical recommendations for subsequent action by the EU and Member States became clear:

- **Fishing:** Women on the whole don't wish to go to sea and aren't particularly wanted, so whilst ensuring that women can participate if they so wish (i.e. no unfair barriers) there is little point in pushing for greater involvement. However, for some small scale, discrete inshore fisheries there could be scope for community based management (CBM), an approach both potentially beneficial in itself, and one offering women a more widely acceptable as well as a more genuine role in the primary production segment.
- **Aquaculture:** Barriers are lower and opportunities significant in this sub-sector. Focussed training should enhance access to technical and managerial positions viewed as desirable by women. Women already manage a few specialised aquaculture activities and enhancing their skills in this direction is also recommended, with community-based management (CBM), seen as the most appropriate approach.
- **Fish Processing:** There is clearly discrimination in processing, but it is perhaps best to help women exit the industry rather than concentrate on upgrading what are likely to always be low grade jobs. So in non-FDAs there is little justification for special support other than the general education/training that will allow women to move out of these undesirable jobs, which possibly are insecure. In short, this is part of general national gender-support and overall development programmes. In FDAs, though, there is justification in assisting women to take "ownership" of some added-value or processing functions so that they can maximise and upgrade their shore based role as co-managers of family businesses
- **Administration:** Environmental and resource management issues are potential key themes for women's continually expanding involvement, and so training should focus on these as well as core management subjects. Public sector administration and research are identified as key areas where women's involvement and equality are relatively high, and

probably where there are the best prospects for further enhancement. Thus training directed towards the public sector will probably yield best results.

- **Women's shore-side support role - "Collaborating spouses"**: Our principal recommendation concerns acknowledging, upgrading and expanding women's support role in the sector. A package of support should be devised to promote the enhancement of this role for women, possibly containing specific support for (a) enhanced mutual support networks, (b) assistance with improved communication (especially internet-based), (c) public awareness campaigns to enlist wider community support (especially from fishermen), (d) training including a mix of specific local technical and managerial courses plus IT skills to encourage women to become the internet managers for their family enterprises. This would reinforce the networking capabilities of shore-based women as well as generating transferable skills in a marketable area, should fisheries fail the family, or the women require greater independence. Topics that training would need to cover could include: management, marketing, selling, quality control, modern processing, business planning, accountancy & bookkeeping, employment regulations and taxation, safety at sea, environment and long term resource management.

COUNTRY STUDY : BELGIUM

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

The only FDA (Fisheries Dependent Areas) in **Belgium** is the zone around Oostende and the municipality of Bredene: the total level of economic dependence on fisheries in this region is of 4%.

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

There are 20 women employed in the **sea fishing** activities in Belgium. Only one works onboard a vessel. She goes to sea with her husband on a small coastal vessel. The others are all salaried staff of fishing companies. Overall, there are very few women in the sector. Those interviewed explain this by the particularly arduous and dangerous nature of most jobs.

The **processing industry** in Belgium employs around 1300 people, of which women make up on average 45%. They also play an important role in the **marketing of fresh produce** for local market.

Women are nearly always economically involved where there is an owner-skipper in the family (usually husband). They usually undertake two jobs: marketing of the produce, and accountancy and management (going from basic accountancy work through managing links with suppliers to more generally management of the enterprise). It is likely that some of them play a role in the strategic choices (including technology).

From a **legislative point of view**, it is clear that women do not benefit from a status which recognises the economic importance of their activities as unpaid collaborating spouse. Evidence suggests that there is a real and legitimate need for change in this area.

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Many obstacles to the **improvement of women's integration** have been identified, as for example the conflicts of interest between owners' and fishermen's wives which prevent co-operation or some negative attitudes of men in the sector towards the organisation of women in the sector.

Women's support and participation is not considered important by managers and public officials overseeing the sector. This is exacerbated by the lack of precise qualitative and quantitative data describing the role, skills and involvement of women in the sector, and the generally small numbers of women in the sector given its limited overall importance for the country.

However, women in the sector have the **potential** to contribute to its development through the role that they could play in :

- **Training of young people.** If women were better informed on the outlook for the sector, they would be better able to guide young people towards the industry, especially in a context where there is a lack of skilled labour.
- **Management of the family enterprise.** Even though it is difficult to quantify their participation in the management of the enterprise, it is certainly important. It would be very useful for women to develop their skills in this area.
- **Making the fishery sector more dynamic.** Because of the role that they play onshore, women could play a very useful role in acquiring knowledge on possibilities for technical diversification and innovation which may be necessary in order for some enterprises to survive in a context where fishing quotas are being reduced within the E.U.

COUNTRY STUDY : DENMARK

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Case studies examining the level and variety of dependency on fishing in Denmark were carried out in the Bornholm County and Ribe County (including the city of Esbjerg). The geographic situation of the two areas obviously has a big impact on the economic outcome of changes in the fisheries sector. The Esbjerg area is a metropolitan area with strong industrial growth and easy access to higher education. Bornholm, on the other hand, is geographically isolated and therefore has limited development potential.

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

The key findings of the report show that women make an almost equal contribution to men in Danish families. Their main contribution to sea fisheries is often to act as a buffer income when their husbands' income fluctuate. These women also often have sole responsibility for the family, as many fishermen are at sea for long periods of time.

It is commonly accepted that the lack of fish depresses the **possibility of development** in the fisheries sector. At present, there are no female skippers or crew on fishing vessels in Denmark. There are no formal barriers to entry, but in general women are not attracted to commercial fishing. The most common explanation from men and women in the sector is the physical requirements of fishing; people also mention the discomfort and long duration of fishing trips. Tradition is also important.

Women contribute to **the processing industry** mainly in the capacity of unskilled labour, in professional capacities in the laboratories and cover most clerical work. Hardly any women own processing or trading companies (although there are two women owners: one runs a curing factory in Copenhagen and the other owns a factory in Skagen, in the county of Nordjylland).

Most women factory workers come from background of unskilled labour and are married to unskilled or skilled labourers. Women contribute equally to public administration, research and public development, although men still have more opportunities in this field.

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion of this report is that **prospects for women** in the fisheries industry are limited. Special provision for women to enter the sea-going fishery seem needless and in fact counterproductive given the limitations of the resource. Small-scale family businesses in coastal fisheries cover very few people and in fact this way of life seems to be disappearing.

The fish-processing industry has in some ways shown **positive trends** towards creating more stable year-round employment in many fields of work. In all sectors, opportunities for unskilled female workers are very scarce, so conserving these **opportunities** is very valuable to the group of women who have had difficulties in the education system.

Concerning the **legislative measures**, alternative employment and diversification to ease the transition away from declining employment opportunities in the industry is imperative. The problem of obtaining and keeping additional unemployment benefits under seasonal working conditions is very difficult to cope with in a consistent way. On the one hand it imposes a major strain on the women workers in much of the fish processing industry, whilst on the other hand exemptions from general regulations in the labour market are difficult and may create unwanted side effects for both the employees and society (e.g. indirect subsidies to the industry and lack of efficiency). Thus, there seems to be little sense in striving for highly specific legislative change that may backfire, and the priority must be to seek economic diversification in areas dependent upon seafood processing.

COUNTRY STUDIES : FINLAND

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Finland has proud traditions when it comes to the development, implementation and monitoring of gender equality. Finland was the first country in Europe where women received voting rights for national elections and the first country in the world where women got the right to stand for this elections, both in 1906. From the early 20th century women have had equal rights to inheritance, education, work and their own property at marriage. On the social front, kindergartens were established, maternity allowance was passed, and school meals were introduced, already in the 50's – 60's.

From the point of view of women in the labour market, unemployment has affected women and men at different times and in different ways. The recession, which hit Finland in the early 1990s with a growth rate of –0.5% in the period 1991-1995, initially hit man-dominated sectors, e.g. industry and construction. Later on, unemployment also rose in typical women's professions, such as health care, social, administrative and clerical work as well as commercial and service professions. The mergers and rationalization in the banking and finance sectors have increased unemployment among women in particular. As a consequence of the recession, the employment level among women fell between 1990 and 1998 from 72% to 62% and among men from 77% to 67%. However, the recession did not manage to push women away from the labour market. While employment among men has been improving since 1995 but among women only since 1996, unemployment is still a large problem.

The Finnish legal framework for equal treatment (1996) has been established around the Act of Equality. Equality matters fall within the scope of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Those responsible for the practical interventions on behalf of equality are the Ombudsman for Equality and the Council for Equality.

The Ombudsman monitors compliance with the Act of Equality, and the Council is a permanent council with advisory status within the state administration. In the labour market the principle of equal pay for work of equal value was established in both the private and the public sector as early as 1962; however, the present legal framework on equality, the Act on Equality between Women and Men was passed in 1987.

Two Fisheries dependent areas were chosen in Finland: **Rymättylä** and **Taivassalo**. These are two sparsely populated, rural municipalities in the region of Varsinais-Suomi. The fisheries sector and fishing related activities provides 12% and 8% of employment and 12% and 8% of value added respectively.

Finnish fisheries overall output (in value) is declining, and the Finnish commercial sea fishery consists of mainly coastal small scale fishermen, who find it difficult to make a living from fisheries. Only 49 vessels were over 21 metres in length out of a total of 3 762 vessels registered in January 2000. The arctic climate conditions cause particular problems, because much of the grounds are covered by ice for part of the year, so the fishing season is restricted. The main fishing periods are from April or May to the beginning of July and from late August to November.

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

There are 700 women working in processing industry, however, there are no female fishermen. From the point of view of aquaculture, administration and management, we do not have enough data to draw conclusions.

The Finnish fresh water fisheries are carry out mostly of part time fishermen. Only a few vessels trawling for vendace are likely to be able to continue making the main part of their income from fishing in the bigger lakes. Due to environmental regulations and price decreases (Norwegian competition), aquaculture has no development potential at present. Fisheries employment overall is low and continues to decline due to low profitability and lack of recruitment. The work force is also clearly aging faster than society as a whole.

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The general trend in development of the Finnish fisheries sector does not leave room for further employment for women. The primary sector as well as the processing companies do not generally meet the social ambitions of Finnish women, and the present involvement is therefore mostly guided by family relations (family businesses) or lack of alternative employment opportunities in the archipelago regions. The key challenge in these regions is to develop a viable labour market which is not fully dependent on production from natural resources (fisheries and farming) to counteract the migration of young people to the larger cities.

It is an open question whether increases in imports of raw fish for further processing in Finland, coupled with centralisation of the industry, could meet the discrepancies between supply and demand to the Russian market. Very large structural adjustments are simply needed to cope with the Russian market and the domestic catch may not be large enough to offset this development.

There is a need to create a better public image of the fisheries sector, thereby giving people in the sector higher self-esteem. Secondly, the women running family firms with their husbands would be better off if their spouses were better off. The very low-income levels and short seasons in the coastal fisheries is a strain on communities and families, therefore adjustments to catch quotas and fleet size to rationalise fisheries must be envisaged.

COUNTRY STUDIES : FRANCE

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Historically, women have always played an important role in fishing in France, either helping on board or fishing on their own account, for shellfish for example. Productivity gains related to mechanisation gradually reduced their role at sea. As a result, their role is now concentrated in the tertiary sector, mainly in management and marketing activities.

Women have remained much more involved in aquaculture, where the amount of work onshore is much greater. It is a less risky activity because production is more predictable. The contribution of women has been essential especially in family businesses. The last decade has seen the development of GAEC (Groupement Agricole d'Exploitation en Commun) as a legal company, which allows, amongst other things, women to be involved officially as co-managers of the family or fishing enterprise.

The contribution of women in these sectors is what may be called “invisible” work in the sense that is provided on a voluntary basis and is often not even recognised since wives undertake it in a family framework and are not salaried. The position of women can be grouped into four categories, depending on their status and the relative importance of their contribution in terms of work and pay:

- Wives of fishermen or of salaried shellfish workers: little contribution to the fishing enterprise.
- Wives of skippers or shellfish producers who work part-time in the enterprise.
- Wives of skippers or shellfish producers with a co-management role.
- Female skippers or shellfish producers.

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

There is a tradition of female workers in processing with a strong majority of female salaried staff. It would seem that out of 3,500 people employed in processing sea products in France, two-thirds are in the canning sector and within these two-thirds women undertake the less qualified and the lower paid jobs. At the managerial level, there is reported to be a more even gender balance

The most recent legislation has only recently given fishermen’s wives legal status while working in activities related to the fishing enterprise. The law gives them the right, in return for specific contributions, to a personal pension and a maternity allowance. However, this status:

- does not take into account partners (only wives in the legal sense);
- is not of financial benefit, in particular for older women;
- does not provide cover for accidents in the workplace;
- allows women to participate in co-operative, mutual, and maritime credit organisations but not become a member of the professional organisations.

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Current priorities concerning Fishery Legislation are equal opportunities, the removal of all sources of discrimination and the taking into account of the social dimensions of economic development. These priorities have led to an improvement in the integration and recognition

of women at all levels. Since 2000, there has been a general policy of equality (which may of course also concern men's rights).

However, there is a need for action to increase the legitimacy of women's role in the sector and to reinforce it through training. In order to achieve this, attention should be focussed on existing structures (associations and federations) and on pivotal organisations such as CEASM (Centre d'Etude et d'Action Sociales Maritimes). But these associations have inadequate operational and communication budgets. There is a need therefore to reinforce their technical and financial resources so as to improve their professionalism and their representativeness. It would also be useful to reinforce the representation of wives of crew and to identify their specific needs, in particular to improve the living conditions of those whose husbands undertake fishing trips lasting several days.

Moreover, it must be emphasised that action must not remain centred only on women, there is a need also for awareness building amongst men in the sector to facilitate the integration and recognition of women as a group. This is essential to remove cultural and institutional obstacles to progress in the sector. Indeed, it has been shown in more general contexts that improving the representation rate of women in decision structures (with a minimum of 30%) and providing training, information and awareness building is very helpful in removing cultural obstacles.

The variety of situations and contexts demands that measures be adapted to the type of territory, both in terms of the nature of measures and their implementation. Finally, where measures are publicly funded, there is a need to monitor the actions, the partners, the beneficiaries and the results so as to facilitate the future evaluation of the impact of the measures.

COUNTRY STUDY : GERMANY

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Selected target areas for this study in Germany were Bremerhaven and Rügen.

The key findings show that the seagoing fishery has no record of a women vessel owner or women crew-members. There is no tradition of women on board German fishing vessels and the physical nature of the work is most often cited as the main barrier for women entering into this field. The sea-going fishery does not meet the social aspirations of most women and women attracted to inland fishery, small-scale coastal fishery and aquaculture are mostly born into families with a tradition in these industries.

From a legislative point of view, Germany has no special agencies at the federal level (e.g. ombudsmen) supporting women in the application of equality in society. However, many private organisations do support women, for example the Deutsche Landfrauen Verband – the Association of Women in Agriculture - but there are none specifically within the fisheries sector.

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

GERMANY	N°Women	N°Men	Overall	% Women	% Men
Fishing Overall	0	4400	4400	0,00%	100,00%
Aquaculture Overall	2742	14299	17041	16,09%	83,91%
Processing Overall	6050	4950	11000	55,00%	45,00%

Unlike most other countries, fisheries overall output (in value) is growing in Germany, due to the imported raw material for the processing companies. German imports of fish from third countries will most likely increase and offset the declining trend in catches from EU waters. However, fisheries employment overall is declining.

The fisheries workforce is ageing, quite as the whole population. With registered unemployment of 9.9% in the former territory of the Federal Republic and 20.0% registered unemployment in the New Länder and Berlin-East, recruitment to most positions is possible. Actual unemployment could be even higher; interviews suggest figures as high as 28% in Bremen.

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the active fishing does not seem to meet the personal aspirations of women, there are presently very few of them involved in this activity. Thus little effective action can be taken here. More important is to support the women in the processing industry who wish to have a career, either in management or in quality assurance.

The problems foreseen in quality assurance departments, mostly staffed by women, is difficulty keeping up with increasing regulation and more sophisticated measurement methods. Women's experience tends to be that their responsibilities increase whilst the power to react lies with management and shareholders. Thus they find themselves in the invidious position of having responsibility without control, and moreover a responsibility that continues to become more onerous. This may discourage many women in the industry if not dealt with. This requires a dual initiative: (i) increase the status of the quality management function so that its importance is recognised and (ii) train women to take on the this role at this higher level. The results sought should be an increase in the authority of this function within fish processing businesses, so that women involved gain the control (and reward) they require and merit.

COUNTRY STUDY : GREECE

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

The information concerning the role of women in the fisheries sector in Greece were collected on five small scale fisheries projects (implemented in Kavala, in Rethymno, in Kato Achaia, in Cyclades and respectively the fish net project of PASEGES). All of these pilot projects were financed by DG XIV of European Commission and were implemented mainly in 1998 and 1999.

The key findings show that women's involvement with fisheries is predominantly in the regional and rural labour markets and the position of women in Greek fisheries does not differ a lot from the position of women in the countryside in general.

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

GREECE	N°Women	N°Men	Overall	% Women	% Men
Marine fisheries	2905	38595	41500	7,00%	93,00%
Aquaculture	300	2700	3000	10,00%	90,00%
Processing	350	3150	3500	10,00%	90,00%
Marketing and Management	300	1700	2000	15,00%	85,00%
General Total of Fisheries	4000	46000	50000	8,00%	92,00%

Women's involvement with the fisheries sector in Greece mainly concerns the inshore fisheries, i.e. small coastal vessels, which operate in a similar way to farm enterprises.

Women's rights in the fishery sector in Greece relate to the specific laws and regulations that concern the primary sector (which includes agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries and silviculture, with agriculture having a predominant position).

Concerning **the organisation**, Greek women do not have separate fishery co-operatives, but they may be members of the about 100 existing fishery co-operatives and unions.

The discrimination against women in the fisheries sector has cultural and social reasons. In general, **social barriers** to women's integration in fisheries are related to traditional family roles, the development of local labour market (i.e. whether it is dependent upon the primary sector or other sectors have been developed) and the low socio-economic status of women in most economic activities. **Cultural barriers** to women in fisheries are also linked to the family and the generally patriarchal organisation of society and production, which do not allow a role for women separate from their spouse, despite institutional support for women's rights. Women are still considered non-professionals, with a role as assistant to the head of the fishery or household.

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions of the report state that **women's contribution to fisheries** in Greece is related to their involvement in the family enterprise and to their contribution to the household's survival.

There are different views on women's participation in the fishery sub-sectors. There are basically two points of view: the 'optimists' who focus on the local trends of increasing women's employment in fisheries, and the 'pessimists' who underlines the crisis which has

hit the sector as a whole and suggest that future opportunities for women are likely to be limited in this context.

In general, the ‘optimists’ are the policy makers and those who have been involved in the preparation of small scale fishery projects, while the ‘pessimists’ are the fishery union representatives and the women who are involved with fisheries themselves.

Based on the key findings, some recommendations were formulated:

- **The educational level of women** needs to be improved, in order to offer them concrete access to employment positions.
- **Child care facilities** would relieve women from a very serious barrier in their involvement with fisheries or any other economic activity.
- **Family constraints** (such as child care) linked to the attitude of men need to be addressed through training of both spouses.
- Women in the fisheries sector would be helped if they could obtain **professional status** for some of their tasks.

COUNTRY STUDY : IRELAND

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

There is a general perception that the role women play in the fisheries sector in Ireland is still determined to a large extent by tradition. This defines the role of the woman as homemaker, as support for the fisherman, as labours in fish processing, but not as a fisher woman in her own right. The impact of tradition is at its greatest in the fish-catching sector; and is least in aquaculture. The role that women play in the processing sector, i.e. that of a source of labour, has generally been maintained, albeit in the context of the general decline in numbers employed within this sector.

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

The rights of Irish women employed in the fisheries sector are protected through the Employment Equality Act 1998, which replaced earlier legislation (i.e. the Anti Discrimination (Pay) Act 1974 and the Employment Equality Act 1977).

From the information available, it seems that men and women belong to the same **unions** and **trade associations**, where representation exists. The International Transport Workers Federation (ITWF) has a women's and a fisheries section with some knowledge of the Irish fisheries sector.

With the Irish economy currently growing rapidly, there are **alternative employment opportunities** in most sectors. In the light of this, it seems highly likely that a key reason why women do not seem to participate fully in the fisheries sector is quite simply that they neither want nor need to. On the other hand, there are **potential opportunities** for both women and men in the fisheries sector because need for labour resulting from Ireland's modernisation and economic expansion. Working in the sector has some advantages: hours can be flexible, working outside the office environment.

IRELAND	N°Women	N°Men	Overall	% Women	% Men
Fish Capture	0	5494	5494	0,00%	100,00%
Aquaculture	327	764	1091	29,97%	70,03%
Fish Processing	1467	1794	3261	44,99%	55,01%

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the key findings of the report, some **prospects** for improving women's position in the fisheries sector in Ireland were made:

For women currently involved at the management and policy level, there is still the implied assumption that they should occupy the 'softer' positions, albeit at senior level. This means that the perception is that women should take on areas such as personnel, marketing and administration. However as more women begin to occupy tougher career-orientated positions in management and policy, so the barriers begin to disappear. However, there clearly is a need for the numbers women employed in all parts of the fisheries sector to reach a "critical mass", as without this the general perception of wider society will always be that it is a male-orientated occupation. The perceived barrier of the physical nature of the work, the requirement of physical strength is more about cultural perceptions of society at large, i.e. what society deems to be the correct roles for men and women.

Thus right across the sector, in the non-FDAs (Fisheries Dependent Areas) and FDAs alike, there is a need to change the way in which women view the industry and the way in which the industry views women. Increased education and access to training, backed up by some public awareness campaigning on the subject, are some positive approaches to helping overcome the social barriers to participation in cases where women do desire to enter the fisheries sector.

COUNTRY STUDIES : ITALY

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

The fisheries sector play a fundamental role in the Italian tradition, as demonstrated by its social and economic importance to many coastal communities. The importance of the sector can be measured in terms of the number of people directly or indirectly employed, the national fleet tonnage and size and the high production and internal consumption levels. Fish, in its different forms, is at the base of an important socio-economic system which involves a considerable amount of economic and human resources in its different phases of production, processing, distribution, and consumption.

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

The combined data for the three FDAs covered (Ancona, Brindisi and Trapani) is given in the consolidated table below. This combines the results of the employment structure from the three FDAs.

ITALY	N°Women	N°Men	Overall	% Women	% Men
Fishing Overall	12	3619	3631	0,33%	99,67%
Aquaculture Overall	22	181	203	10,84%	89,16%
Processing Overall	71	123	194	36,60%	63,40%
Administration, management	13	47	60	21,67%	78,33%

The Italian Country Study follows a slightly different format to that of most other regions in that the template was applied independently to three separate and very different FDAs chosen to represent the range of Italian fisheries communities

The data collected in the three FDAs show consistently a very limited presence, often complete absence, of women employed on board fishing vessels. Work at sea, in the great majority of Italian fishing districts, remains traditionally associated with men for reasons which are deeply rooted in fishing communities.

In any case, women have always had a fundamental, albeit cryptic, role of support with respect to men's work at sea. They generally take care of distributing and retail trading the product, repairing nets, following bureaucratic procedures (i.e. permits, taxes etc.) and managing relationships with fisheries cooperatives. Generally, the submerged economy of unpaid work within family businesses, fish processing activities and other enterprises is very common in Italy, especially in the southern regions.

Data collected for the three FDAs demonstrate a more important role for women in the aquaculture, processing and scientific research sectors at levels that are aligned with women employment trends across all sectors of economy. The progressive shift of women employment towards the tertiary sector is also confirmed (75% of women labour as been absorbed by the tertiary sector against the 52% registered for men). Regarding wages, marked differences between men and women do not seem to exist although, as mentioned, often women are part of the submerged unpaid labour market.

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Although there is a complete lack of legislation with regard to the role of women in the fisheries sector, the last decade has seen the issue of various pieces of legislation at the national and regional level, to regulate women's employment by promoting equal opportunities and women's access to the labour market in general.

Promotional policies for female managed businesses have been able to mobilise funding available under Law n. 215 of 1992 in favour of women entrepreneurs. The policies have been accompanied by a multi-media campaign, the creation of an ombudsman, the establishment of a free information number and other structures to facilitate women's access to funding under Law n. 215.

In conclusion, the following recommendations can be made with regard to the role of women in the Italian fisheries sector :

- Generalise and consolidate the disaggregation by gender in all statistical information collected. This implies the re-planning of statistical analysis and associated communication of results. New indicators should be adopted to highlight gender differences;
- Allocate more funds to the promotion of women entrepreneurial initiatives (Law n. 215/92);
- Facilitate the reintroduction of adult women who have fallen out of the labour market through specific training initiatives and support actions;
- Give priority to projects aiming at the promotion of women employment; promote the recognition, valorisation and development of women capabilities; plan interventions for the equal distribution of family responsibilities;
- Introduce in the existing legislation on business incentives a parameter taking into account the effects on women employment, with related systems for monitoring and evaluating results;
- In the context of EU Structural Funds it is necessary to provide for the development priorities capable of integrating gender equity issues systematically. For this purpose, the use of VISPO (Equal Opportunities Strategic Impact Verification), which provides specific indications to Italian regions and other planning bodies on how to undertake an impact analysis, is recommended.

COUNTRY STUDIES : NETHERLANDS

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

The Netherlands has a small, but efficient, modern fishing fleet that mainly catches flatfish, shrimps and to a lesser extent herring, cod and whiting. Fishing grounds are the North Sea and Waddensea. There are also 15 trawlers fishing mainly outside the 200-mile zone or fishing in territorial zones of third countries, e.g. in Africa. There is also a strong shellfish section comprising oyster cultivation, mussel cultivation and cockles.

In terms of number of vessels, fishermen, horsepower (HP) and catch value, the cutter fleet is the most important fleet in the Netherlands. However, this fleet is gradually decreasing due to EU fisheries management requirements (MAGP) and due to the ITQ system under which it is impossible to start a new fishery enterprise for total newcomers.

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

NETHERLANDS	N°Women	N°Men	Overall	% Women	% Men
Fishing Overall	202	4120	4322	4,67%	95,33%
Aquaculture Overall	11	400	411	2,68%	97,32%
Processing Overall	2611	3440	6051	43,15%	56,85%
Administration, management	20	180	200	10,00%	90,00%

The major categories of work in which Dutch fisheries women are active are the processing industry and family enterprises. There are also several women work in desk jobs in the supplying companies and (semi-)governmental organisations. A few women work in aquaculture. One works as fishing vessel crew on a regular basis, with four doing so occasionally. In the Netherlands there is a general shortage of labour in different categories of work outside (and inside) the fisheries. This is especially in urban centres, but counts as well for rural centres, for instance in schools, health jobs, shops, care services, tourism, IT etc.

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

From a legislative point of view women and men are legally equal in the Netherlands. The Equal Treatment Law forbids discrimination by sex, religion, race etc. There is also a Commission for Equal Treatment to monitor this law. It is official policy to strive for equal career chances; equal pay; equal share in care responsibilities and to cancel the dividing line between the traditional male and female domain. Reality is different from this ideal. Only few women reach the top; women have generally lower salaries and are the main child carers (there are not enough childcare centres). Traditional male and female roles have become blurred, however fisheries, especially sea fisheries, remains a male domain.

With regard to the position of women, two aspects should be kept in mind: (a) The informal or formal degree of influence in the family enterprise, and (b) the degree of participation of women in decision-making and consultation in fishery organisations. Fourteen percent of the women are co-owner of the family enterprise. Sixty percent of the women participate in decision making with the family. The position of women within the family enterprise can above all be described as informal.

There seem to be few obstacles to women's participation in the family fishing enterprise, which is generally high. Women usually do not want to do much more than they already do. Their level of work activities can be combined successfully with childcare. Fishermen's wives

seem to be satisfied with this situation and do not seem to be unhappy (on the whole) about not being paid for their efforts.

Young women see taking over the administration and bookkeeping as an obstacle. The prevailing male culture is also an obstacle that complicates access to the vessel as a crewmember. Married women do not seem to be very anxious to do this job. But the small number of female students in fishery schools indicate that women in general are not encouraged to follow this kind of education. Women would like to do more courses, so a lack of knowledge is also considered an obstacle.

COUNTRY STUDIES : PORTUGAL

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

In order to collect the information concerning the role of Portuguese women in fisheries, all NUTS 3 areas have been chosen.

The fishing sector involves a great many people with low educational attainments. Therefore the entrance of people with higher educational achievements (women or men) is important to development and modernisation, especially in the areas of product marketing, producers organisation and product development in aquaculture and bivalve production (*viveiros*).

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

PORTUGAL	N°Women	N°Men	Overall	% Women	% Men
Fisheries Total	8666	35680	44378	19,53%	80,40%
Fishing Overall	490	26862	27352	1,79%	98,21%
Aquaculture	42	123	165	25,45%	74,55%
Processing Overall	4668	1626	6294	74,17%	25,83%
Trade	2208	2872	5080	43,46%	56,54%
Administration, management	255	278	533	47,84%	52,16%
State Research Institutions	183	107	290	63,10%	36,90%
Training Institutions	122	102	224	54,46%	45,54%
Producer Organisations	55	210	265	20,75%	79,25%

Women are the majority in the fish processing industry, administration and fisheries research, trading and fish marketing, and are also represented in the aquaculture sector.

Processing factories actually have a preference for women for this type of job, as they are considered better handlers and processors of fish. Women represent the majority of technical posts in the industry, although the owners of processing companies and the top administration, on the other hand, are almost all men. Women also play an important role in administration and fisheries research, as is reflects in the high numbers of women graduates in the fields of biology and marine biology.

In the trade sector it is common to find women managing small businesses buying and selling fresh fish, independent of any particular fishing enterprise. From the point of view of fishing(in small scale fisheries) they usually play a complementary role to the fishing activity at sea. They undertake informal activity as self-employed fishermen's wives, responsible for onshore activities, such as at auction sites. In some cases women are the owners of the vessels due to inheritance.

Aquaculture, in comparison with fishing, is a fairly recent activity, therefore the role of men and women are not stuck in the traditional family breakdown of tasks, and the role of each gender are more similar. Specialised biological knowledge is important, and the role of women is growing.

In terms of employees in the sector, the women can be divided into two main groups:

1. The major involvement of women in the processing sector. These women usually have a poor education level
2. The high proportion of women graduates in fisheries-related fields provides skilled women with specific training in aquaculture, for intensive and semi-intensive production companies and in research, fisheries management and training. These highly qualified women are very important in the development of the sector because they are interested in

fisheries related activities (aquaculture, quality control, research, fisheries management and resource conservation) even when alternatives in other sectors are also available.

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

From a legislative point of view, the Portuguese Constitution guarantees equal rights regardless of gender within the Portuguese society in all sectors (education, health, labour, justice, social security, politics, etc.). There are a number of national laws specifically affecting women's rights, the most important of which in this context are prohibiting or creating conditions concerning women working in specific fields, equality of opportunities and treatment at work, guarantee of rights for women associations, equality of opportunities and treatment at work, in respect with public administration, setting up Commission for equality and women rights and direct and indirect discrimination.

The overall opinion of all key informants from all sub-sectors is that there is no need for specific measures to consolidate women's position in the sector or to increase involvement in fisheries. In general, reasons for lack of involvement are not specific to women, being related to overall problems of the sector in terms of structure, organisation and strategy. These are frequently cited as:

- Poor condition of vessels (poor working and hygiene conditions);
- low wages for crew members, related to low profits and high running costs of the vessels;
- lack of marketing strategy for fish products and consequent price reduction; first sale price is not favourable for producers;
- lack of strong producers organisations which could support product marketing and provide recognised representation for people in the sector
- decreases in landings and increases in vessel costs.

COUNTRY STUDIES : SPAIN

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

The study covers two areas of Spain : Galicia in the north west, traditionally a major fisheries dependent area, and Andalucia in the south, where fisheries has always been an economic feature.

Galicia, in the North-west of Spain, is a region with a characteristic Atlantic climate and mild temperatures. With its 1,200 km of coastline Galicia has an important fishing tradition and a well-developed fisheries industry. Fisheries have always been an important resource to Galicia. Galicia has the three most important fishing ports of for fresh fishing landings and deep sea fleets in Europe (Vigo, La Coruña & Ribeira). The coastline of Galicia has 42 ports, most of them with important fisheries activities (fishing, aquaculture and processing industries).

In Galicia, the output by value of coastal fishing is stable, because although resources are declining market prices have been increasing year after year. Some fishermen from deep sea fishing have been forced to change to coastal fisheries to make a living. Women's employment seems stable in this sub-sector, but it is very limited. Practically all jobs are taken by men. Most women working in the sector are between 30-40 years old, and have started working in fisheries relatively recently.

On the Atlantic coastline of **Andalucia** there are 14 fishing ports, three of them deep sea fishing ports. 12 ports have a fishing auction. There are 14 Fishermen Associations where women are not represented. Aquaculture activities are located in 4 of these ports and there are processing facilities in ten of them. In general the fishing sector on the Atlantic coastline of Andalucia is in a difficult situation, with an overcapitalised fleet, conflicts with the Moroccan fishing fleet, overexploitation of coastal fishing grounds and a high rate of unemployment.

There are some 23 processing industries and some 44 aquaculture enterprises registered. In both sub-sectors enterprises can have very variable numbers of employees depending on season. The main aquaculture is fish and bivalve farming (hatcheries and growth) which mainly produce seabream, oysters and shrimp.

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

GALICIA (SPAIN)	N°Women	N°Men	Overall	% Women	% Men
Coastal Fishing	45	3164	3209	1,40%	98,60%
Aquaculture	58	3211	3269	1,77%	98,23%
Processing Overall	3035	1012	4047	74,99%	25,01%
Administration, management	63	109	172	36,63%	63,37%

ANDALUCIA (SPAIN)	N°Women	N°Men	Overall	% Women	% Men
Aquaculture	46	155	201	22,89%	77,11%
Processing Overall	756	325	1081	69,94%	30,06%

In **Galicia**, the employment in **the aquaculture** sector (a sector once dominated by female workers) has declined by around 50% over the last ten years. Recently the Galician Government has established rules about what constitutes a professional *mariscador*, which have limited the number of people considerably. In terms of age, the “marisqueo” reflects broader society.

Mussel farm output has grown in value by more than 60% since 1996. Women often rotate their job activity between working in mussel rafts, harvesting bivalves, depuration plants or at

home. Women working in mussel rafts are relatively young: around 40% between 19-29 years old; around 60% between 19-40 years old and 40% more than 40.

The fish farms are consolidating their output, which is growing (around 40% over the last three years). Employment seems stable, with few women.

The canning industry has a high percentage of temporary employees, most of whom are women. 60% of men are permanent employees but only 38% of women. As well as frequently being temporary employees, women are mainly in position such as manual workers, without responsibility. The workforce is mainly 30-45 years old.

In **Andalucía**, fishing and intertidal harvesting are not activities carried out by women, although women can be ship owners and represent husbands on land (managing fishing licences and other complementary tasks). The only fisheries activity where women play an important role is the processing industry (in this sub-sector most of the work is carried out by women) with a little participation in some inland aquaculture enterprises.

There is little incentive for women to work in the fisheries sector. Socially is a man's world, and it is not easy for women to compete with them for work positions.

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the role of women in the fisheries economy in Galicia is increasingly important, they are still disadvantaged socially and economically. Women are usually in lower categories and temporary jobs, and they have limited representation in the sector. Women carrying out processing tasks in fresh water fish farms have the same difficulties as women in the processing industry in general: low pay, gender discrimination, and lack of specialisation. Women usually earn the legal minimum wage but the men may earn a significant percentage more even when doing similar work. Work is often seasonal. Women working in these industries usually also contribute to family earnings through agricultural activities.

In Spain, discrimination on the basis of gender is prohibited. A number of laws and directives from 1999 and 2000 have brought Spain into line with elsewhere in Europe in this regard. Spain also has a number of organisations specifically responsible for seeing that this legislation is enforced: e.g. the Council for Promotion of the Family, Servicio Gallego de Igualdade, Andalusian Institute for Women, all have an interest in gender equality, albeit in a multi-sectoral context. The Ministry for Employment and Social Security (Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social) has state responsibility for gender equality issues.

The following **key actions** would improve women's position:

- Support women's attempts to be considered professionals within the sector.
- Provide opportunities for a professional education
- Promote jobs with stability and future prospects, and promote equal pay for equal work.
- Improve working conditions in female dominated sectors.
- Provide training courses that permit women to expand into work activities currently dominated by men.

Prospects for improving women's position in non fisheries dependent areas :

Villages in non fisheries dependent areas are usually dependent on agriculture as well as industries located in that area, many of which use women as a cheap workforce. Fisheries activities in these areas include processing and fresh water fish farms (trout). These industries have mostly women workers in low status manual jobs. The situation is generally similar to that in fisheries dependent areas.

It is interesting to note that in the more technologically advanced turbot farms, women are more commonly found in management positions as well as in educated technical or laboratory roles, although this only includes a small number of individuals.

COUNTRY STUDIES: SWEDEN

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

In Sweden women's participation in sea fisheries has historically been limited to small-scale, inshore fisheries on the basis of low technology gear operated close to home. On the contrary, they have historically been the main workforce in the processing industry, where most work was manual (e.g. fillet and canning).

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

Women face strong **social and cultural barriers** to their entry into sea fisheries, based on tradition and the views of existing practitioners. They also perceive that there are better alternatives. The social-cultural reasons which hinder women to join processing and trading are more diverse. On one hand, they have to do with the image of factory work as jobs with low social status, which is a barrier to social relations and advancement. On the other hand, the working conditions and the issue of handling of a "repulsive" product is important. The lack of women in the Swedish aquaculture is more difficult to explain from a socio-cultural viewpoint (estimates of women's participation are very uncertain).

Women in fishing operated at the small-scale level and often on a seasonal basis or combined with other activities. Household issues strongly influenced how women and men organised their time in **sea fisheries**.

Women are often interested in **nature conservation** and the potential role of women in the **management** of fisheries in private waters should not be disregarded.

As in inland fisheries, women involved in fresh water **aquaculture** were also involved in other sectors, hence their recognition requires a more integrated approach.

The entrance of women at **the administrative level** in fisheries has changed in the last decade with the increasing emphasis on conservation issues. The use of social science is still under developed in fisheries management and in this field there may be opportunities for women.

With respect to **the fishery law** the issue is that treating everybody as equals does not equate to equal opportunities and equal impact. Two institutional arrangements were seen as somehow problematic for women's involvement in sea fisheries: the licence system and the unemployment benefit fund.

In order to get a **fishing licence** in Sweden, the applicant has to show that the main income over than last three years has come from fisheries. Even when amount of « main income » is small the system requires that the applicant is economically dependent on fisheries. Evidence show that women involved in fisheries work part-time in salaried jobs, or combine fishing with different business activities on land, both paid and unpaid. Thus, the system discriminates against women because they do not have the opportunity to gain access to the resource on a part-time or seasonal basis.

In general, the **unemployment benefit fund** system is designed for specialised fishermen without other occupations. From a gender perspective this is discriminatory because women in general do not organise their time in such a specialised manner, particularly not in rural areas where the access to full time salaried jobs and child care facilities is limited.

Both women and men engaged in fisheries are often organised, either in conventional trade-unions or in specialised **fisheries organisations** such as Fishermen's Federation and Regional Associations, Employer's Interest Organisations, Producer Organisations.

SWEDEN	N°Women	N°Men	Overall	% Women	% Men
Fishing Overall	113	2880	2993	3,78%	96,22%
Aquaculture Overall	52	348	400	13,00%	87,00%
Processing Overall	1024	1094	2118	48,35%	51,65%
Trade Overall	669	361	1030	64,95%	35,05%
Total Sector Overall	2004	4885	6889	29,09%	70,91%

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

In Sweden women are mainly employed in the processing industry, in retail trade and in administration. In all other sub-sectors women are under represented. Informally, women may participate in family businesses in capture fisheries and aquaculture. Women were least well represented in capture fishing followed by aquaculture and the wholesale trade.

Some recommendations for the promotion of equal opportunities for women in the fisheries sector and for taking advantage of their potential contribution to this sector were formulated :

- To mainstream a gender equality perspective and strengthen the institutional capacity to develop gender-aware initiatives.
- To promote gender mainstreaming in the private industry.
- To take advantage of development trends and methods.
- To improve women's access to resources.
- To increase the social status of works at the production level.
- To improve the working conditions of women in the processing industry.
- To improve the working conditions of women in retail trade.
- To assess and strengthen women's role in inland fisheries and management as well as aquaculture.
- Empower women in development and decision making.
- Mobilise the capacities of fishermen's wives and support their community work.

COUNTRY STUDY : UNITED KINGDOM

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Different regions of UK exhibit slightly different roles for women in the fisheries sector. In the more rurally isolated areas, women are more likely to be found playing a part in the physical side of fish catching, although often within the exclusivity of family environment. However the more usual role, that of informal/unpaid bookkeeper, fish salesperson, whilst it has diminished in the more professional segments of the industry, still very much plays an integral part in maintenance of the social fabric in particularly small close knit fishing communities.

2. KEY DATA COLLECTED

A principal piece of **national legislation** to impact specifically on the rights of women employees in all types of employment was the Sex Discrimination Act of 1976. This act made it illegal for employers to discriminate on the basis of terms of employment.

There is no discrimination for women in membership of producer **organisations**, fishermen's associations' etc but still their overall involvement in these organisations are limited.

In the context of a declining resource, the analysis of key constraints and opportunities in FDAs (Fisheries Dependent Areas) shows that there would seem to be very little opportunity for women to increase their direct involvement in the catching sector. Women though, have become more prominent as vessel owners, operators, and merchants, with one FDA in the UK, (South West England), having a number of very visible and successful women.

In the processing sector, the trend for increased rationalisation and integration of companies could increase the opportunities for women to occupy senior positions. However as key respondents in the sector noted, the feeling still exists that women should only occupy positions up to a certain level. The processing sector in the United Kingdom is currently going through a difficult period. A decline in the numbers employed is likely to impact negatively on the overall level of female participation in the sector.

UNITED KINGDOM	N°Women	N°Men	Overall	% Women	% Men
Fish Catching	200	20000	20200	0,99%	99,01%
Fish Processing	10237	12017	22254	46,00%	54,00%
Management and Retail	5800	8750	14550	39,86%	60,14%

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Evidence gathered from interviews with key respondents would suggest that women want to be involved in the industry in a number of different areas. It is unlikely that many women will become or would want to become involved in the actual process of going to sea, and catching fish. The perceived nature of this activity (time away from home, long hours, dirty work, dangerous environment), does not appear attractive to women in the UK. Those few women, who have in the past participated in the UK, have invariably soon ended back ashore, taking care of other parts of the family fishing business.

As the aquaculture sector in the UK has developed outside the cultural traditions of the catching sector, the barriers to entry for women are lower. Whilst men generally take up the opportunities for training and education, women play an important role, particularly in the management and research sectors.