

Gender Equality in Academia and Research

Family-leave without consequences for the academic career (FI)

Hanken School of Economics (Finland) automatically extends temporary contracts of teaching and research personnel if they have been absent due to maternity, paternity and parental leave. The policy was included in the Human Resources instructions of the School in 2010, and it is also inscribed in its gender equality and non-discrimination plan. The policy was adopted in order to support long-span research work and ensure that research projects will be finalised, as well as to promote career advancement of women researchers. The practice also improves the reconciliation of work and family life for all workers on temporary contracts, but in particular for women, who in Finland take most of statutory leave. A recent survey by the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers (2013) revealed that one fourth of university workers had not received a contract extension due to family leave. The present policy ensures staff members are treated equally in this matter. It has improved the career prospects of young women researchers at Hanken and their possibilities to combine research career with family. Researchers on temporary contracts are able to finalise their projects after returning to work after parental leave, even if the projects had officially ended during their absence. Not losing research time and being able to return to a position after parental leave is crucial for career advancement in the highly competitive academic job market. From the perspective of reconciliation of work and family life, the policy makes taking parental leave more attractive to researchers – also for men. Hanken’s policy offers a contract extension for the length of the statutory leave (maternity leave three months, paternity leave two weeks and parental leave six months).

FURTHER INFORMATION

- [Presentation](#) by Lotte Granberg-Haakana at Learning and Dissemination Seminar on Promoting Gender Equality in Research and Higher Education Institutions (9 September 2016)
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