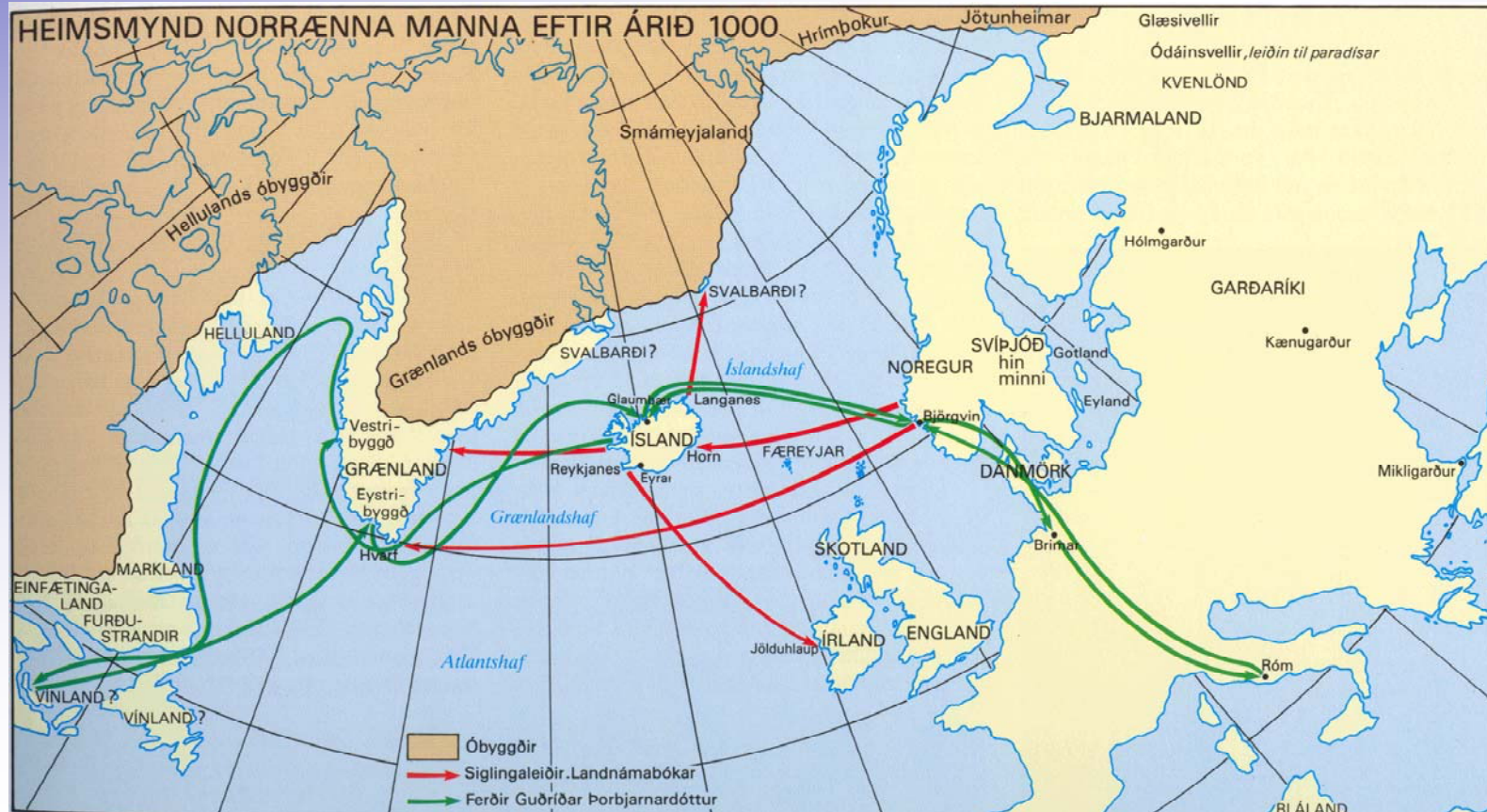


Women as decision makers

Berglind Ásgeirsdóttir
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Health in Iceland

June 7th, 2008

The journeys of Guðrún Þorbjarnardóttir to the New World and to Rome some 1000 years ago



Gender Equality in Iceland

Stepping Stones

- 1850 Equal inheritance rights for men and women
- 1882 Widows and single women gain local suffrage
- 1886 Girls can enter secondary school
- 1900 Married women gain the right to control their income and personal property
- 1907 Icelandic Women's Rights Association founded
- 1908 Women gain local suffrage and the right to hold local office
- 1908 The first women's list participates in local elections in Reykjavik
- 1911 Women get equal rights to grants, study and civil service

Members of Parliament 1916-2007

Kjörnir þingmenn 1916-2007



Heimild: Hagstofa Íslands

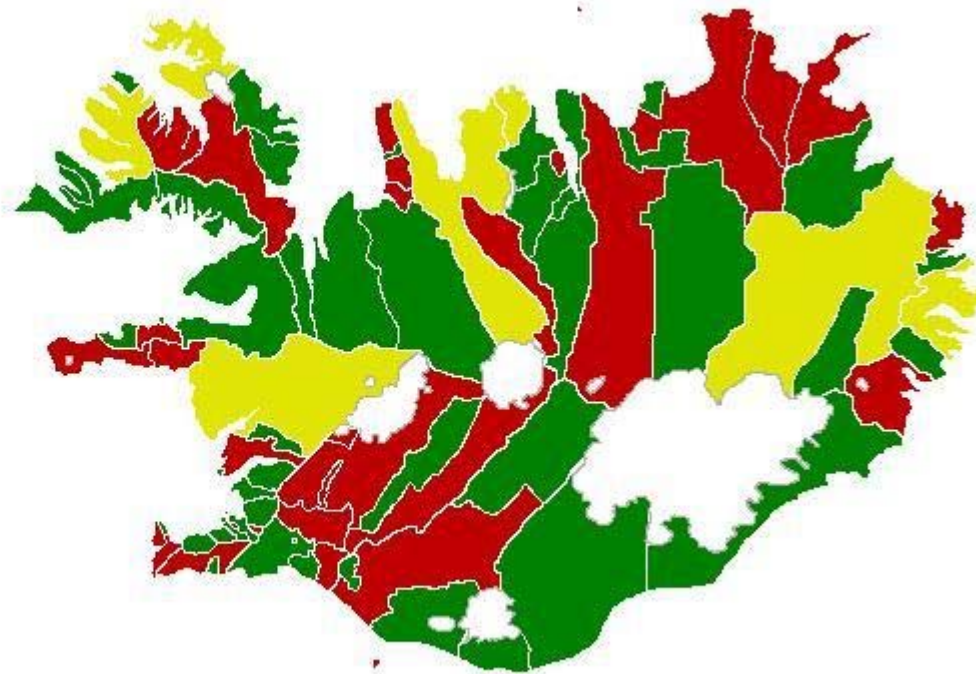
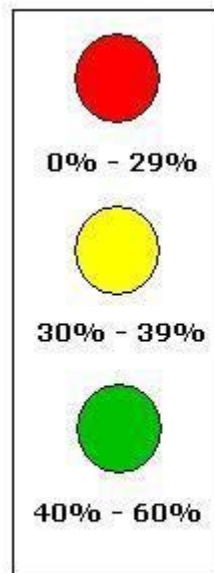
Women in Local Councils 1958 - 2008

- 1958 - 1%
- 1978 - 6,2%
- 2008 - 36%



Local Authorities

79 local authorities in Iceland, after the elections 2006
elected representatives are **35,9%** women – **64,1%** men

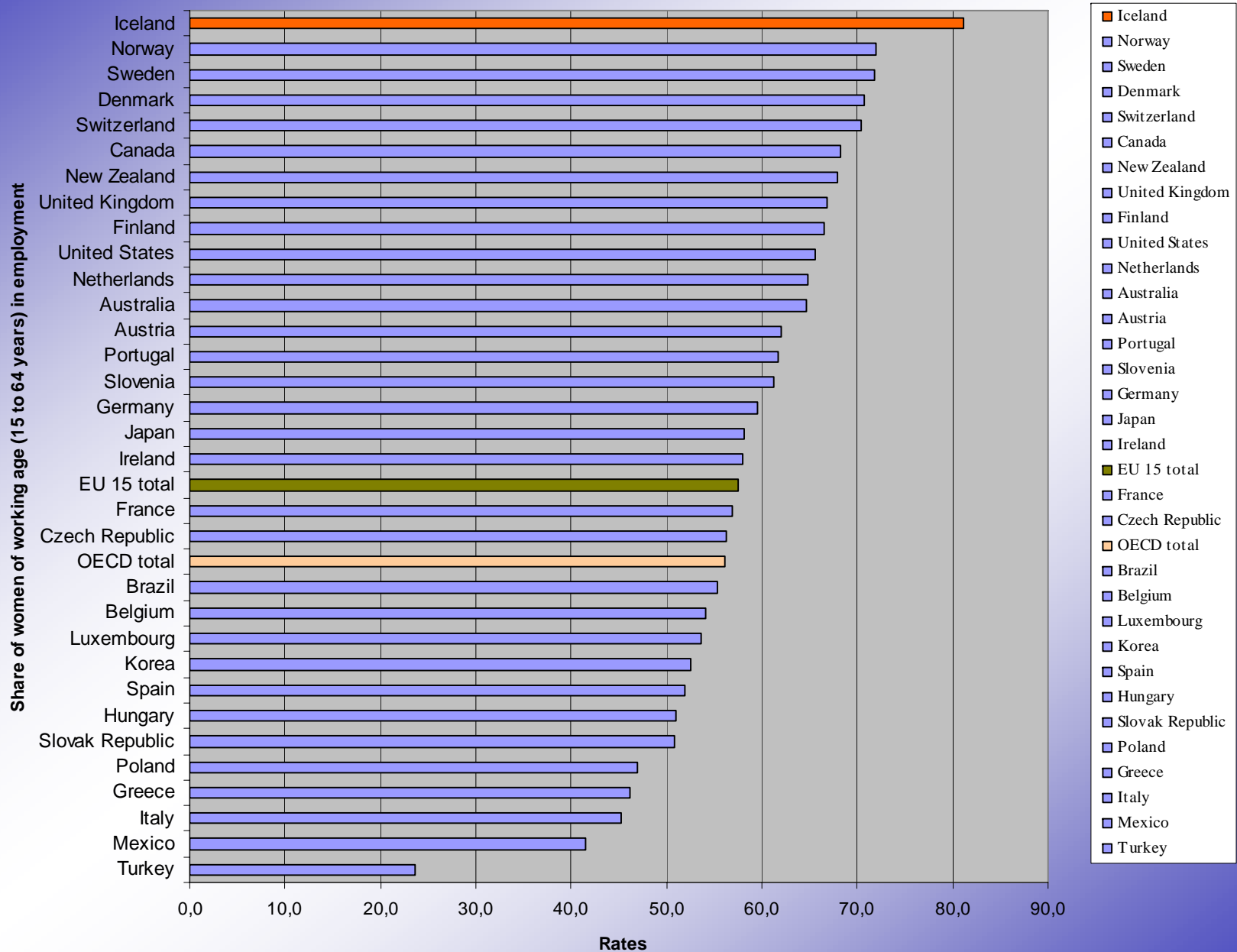


Gender Equality in Iceland

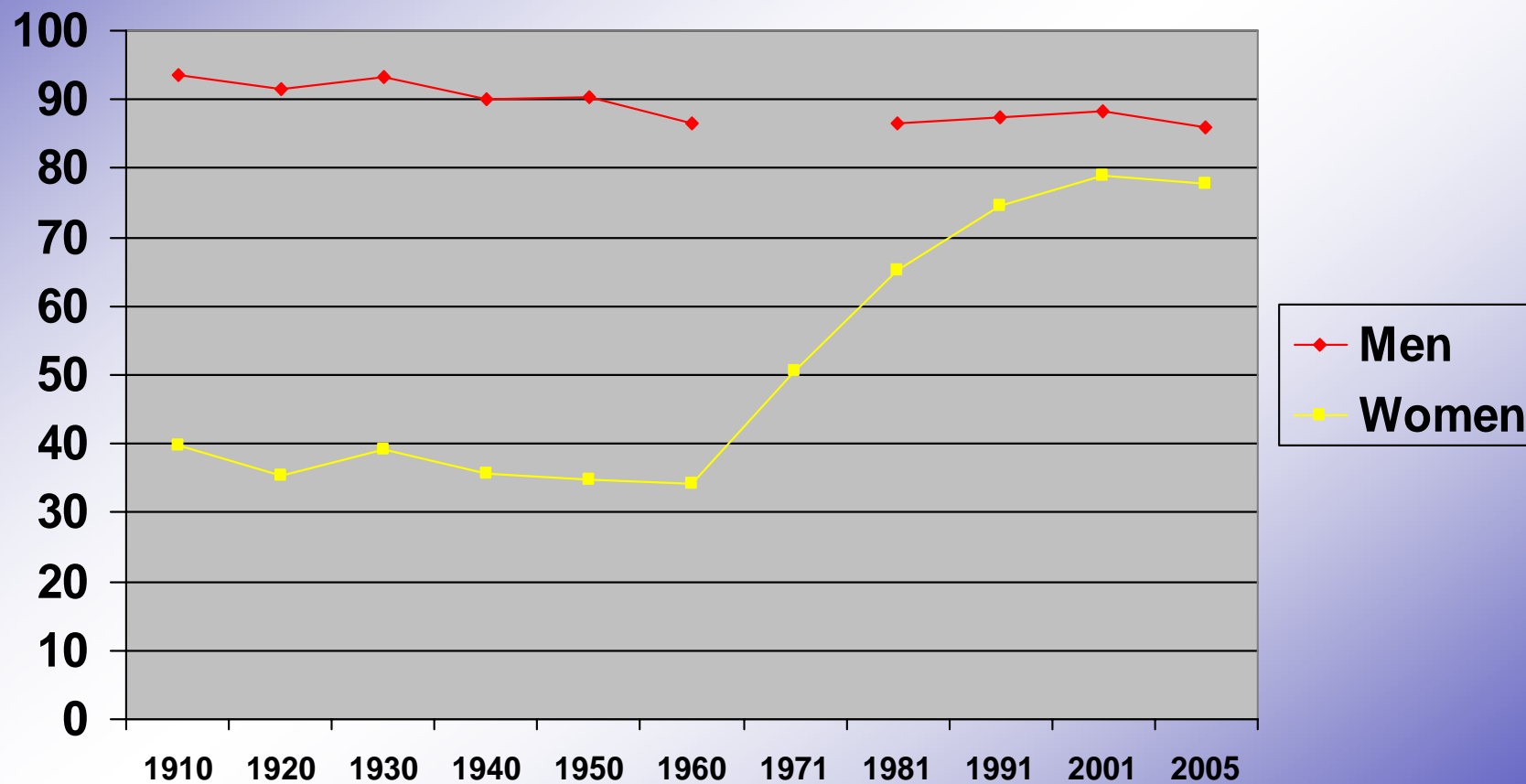
Stepping Stones

- 1914 First women workers' association founded
- 1915 Women over the age of 40 gain national suffrage and the right to hold office
- 1920 All women gain national suffrage and the right to hold office
- 1921 New marital law guarantees equality for spouses
- 1922 The first woman elected to the Icelandic Parliament, from a women's list
- 1926 The first Icelandic woman defends a doctoral thesis
- 1957 The first female mayor in an Icelandic municipality
- 1961 Equal Pay Act
- 1970 First female Cabinet Minister
- 1975 Women nationwide take a day off on October 24

Employment rates: women 2005



Participation in the labour market



Parental leave

- In 2000 the total leave period is nine months long.
- Each parent has three months leave which is non-transferable.
- During their leave parents who have been working full time receive 80% of their former salary.
- Fathers have grasped this opportunity, around 90% use their paternal leave.
- In 2004 fathers used 96 days, while women used 182 days.



Men's applications for paternity leave as a percentage of women's applications

- 2001 82,4%
- 2002 83,6%
- 2003 86,6%
- 2004 89,8%



Gender Equality in Iceland

Stepping Stones

- **1976** The first Gender Equality Act and the Gender Equality Council is founded
- **1980** The first nationally elected female president in the world
- **1982** The Women's Alliance runs for the first time in local elections
- **1983** The Women's Alliance runs in parliamentary elections for the first time
- **1995** Equal rights of women and men stated in the constitution
- **1997** Fathers get an independent right to two weeks paid parental leave
- **2003** Fathers get an independent right to three months of paid parental leave
- **2005** Women take part of October 24 off on the 30th anniversary of the original event



Education

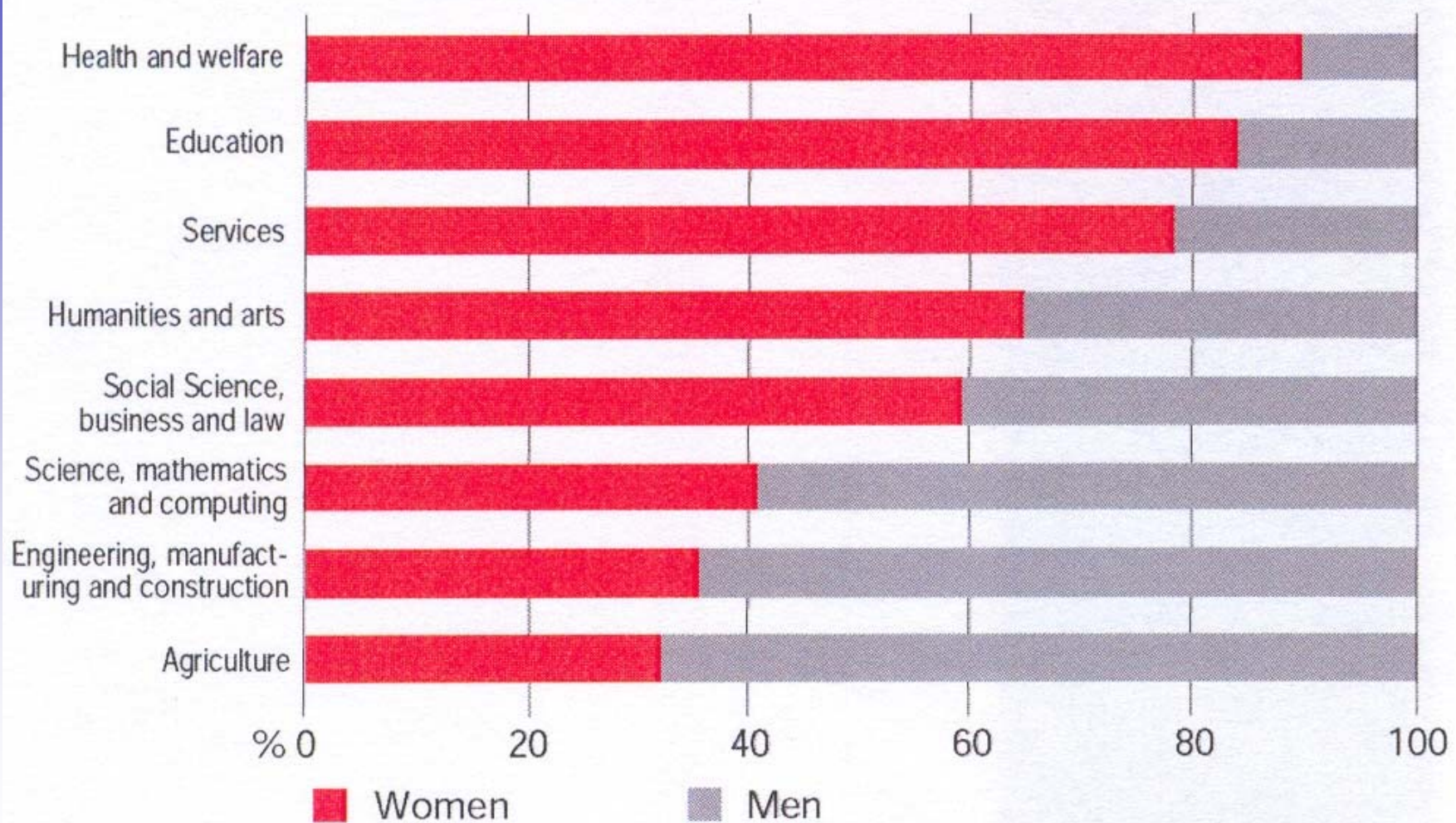
Secondary school graduates

1970 Women 34%

2006 Women 59%



Graduations at tertiary level 2005/2006





Education

University students, in Iceland and abroad

1977 Women 39%

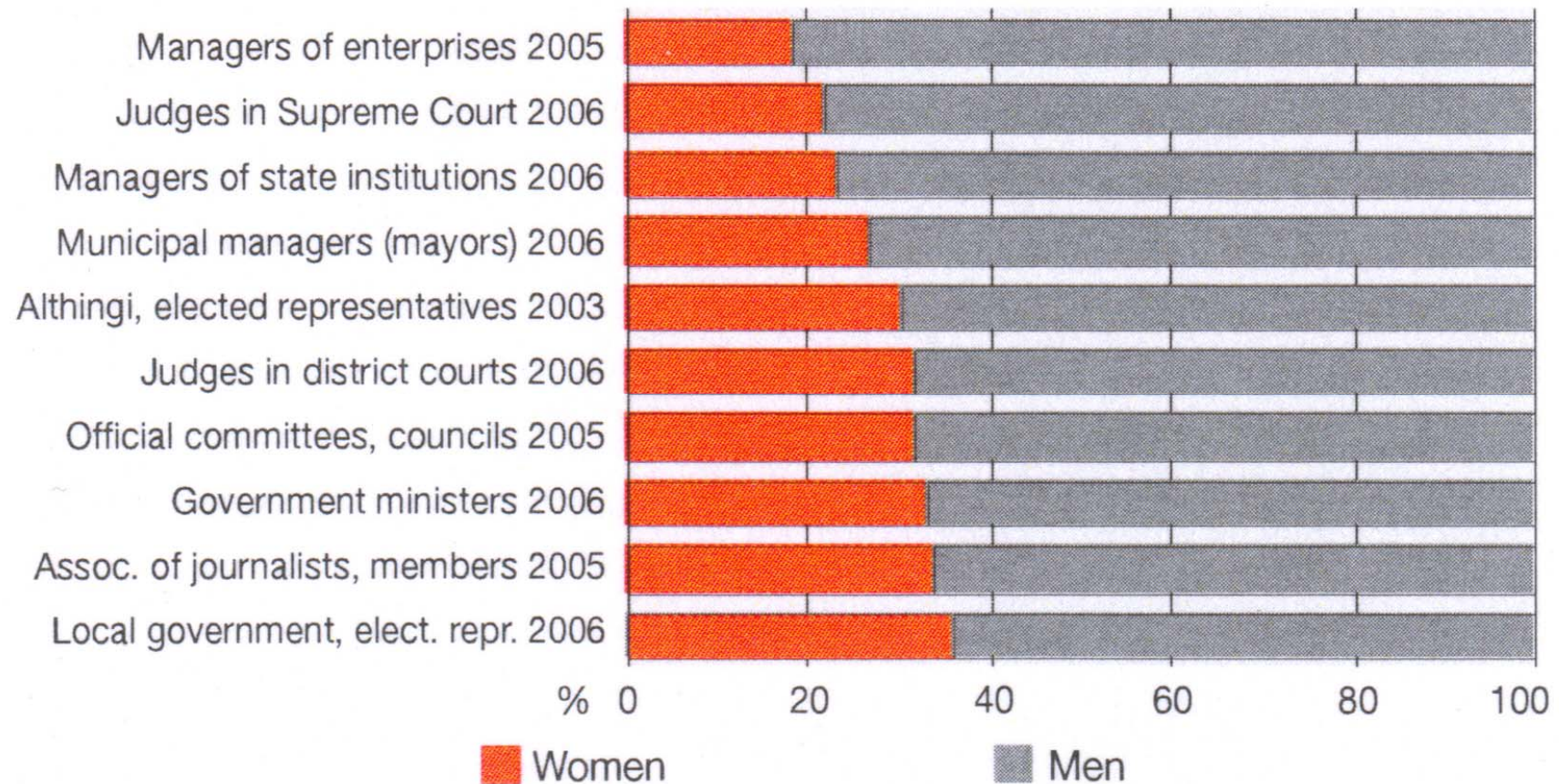
2006 Women 61%

2008 University students, women 65%

2008 University of Iceland,
professors women 18%



Positions of influence



My conclusion

1. **Upbringing based on encouraging boys and girls to do their utmost**
2. **Education lays the foundation for gender equality**
3. **Student loans and grants that give both boys and girls the financial means**
4. **Advertising vacant post**
5. **Play school – child care**



Thank you

