

## The proportion of women in Higher Engineering education has increased 1995 - 2005

In Finland the proportion of women in the branch of technology has increased over the last ten years. In the year 2002 the proportion of women graduating Engineering education was 18 per cent<sup>i</sup> and correspondingly the proportion of women graduating Higher Engineering education was 22 per cent.

These figures deal with matriculation examination, entrance examination, accepted students, students and degrees in Higher Engineering education based on the statistics of Ministry of Education (KOTA-database) and Central Statistical Office of Finland.

From the Figure 1. you can see that the amount of students passing the matriculation examination is 35 000 on an average (Approximately half of the age class in Finland.) The proportion of women is about 60 %.

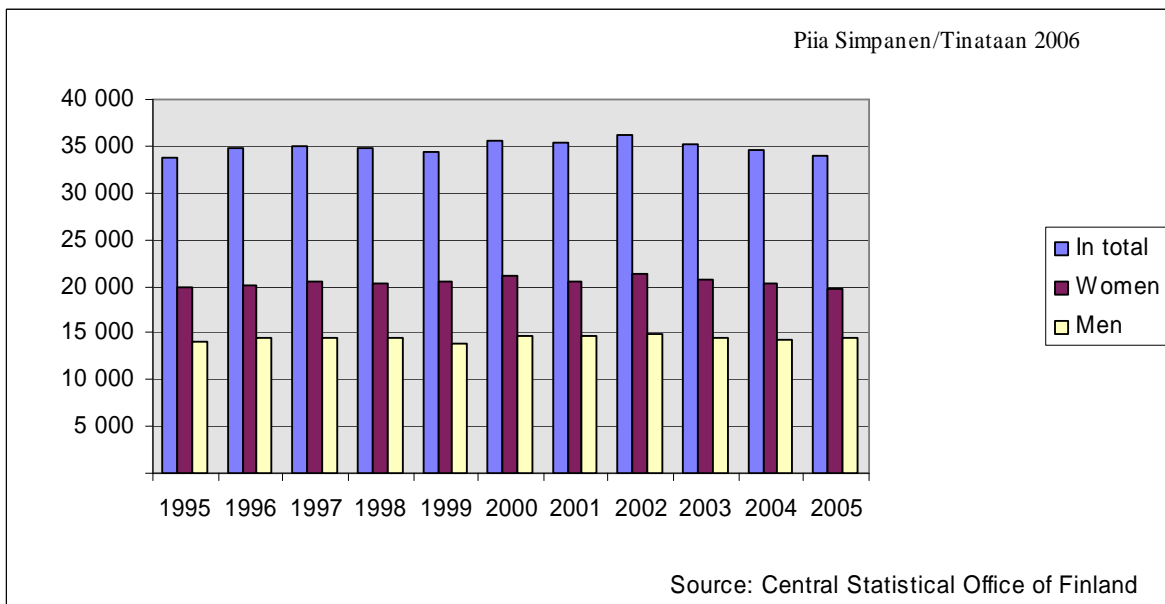


Figure 1. Matriculation examination

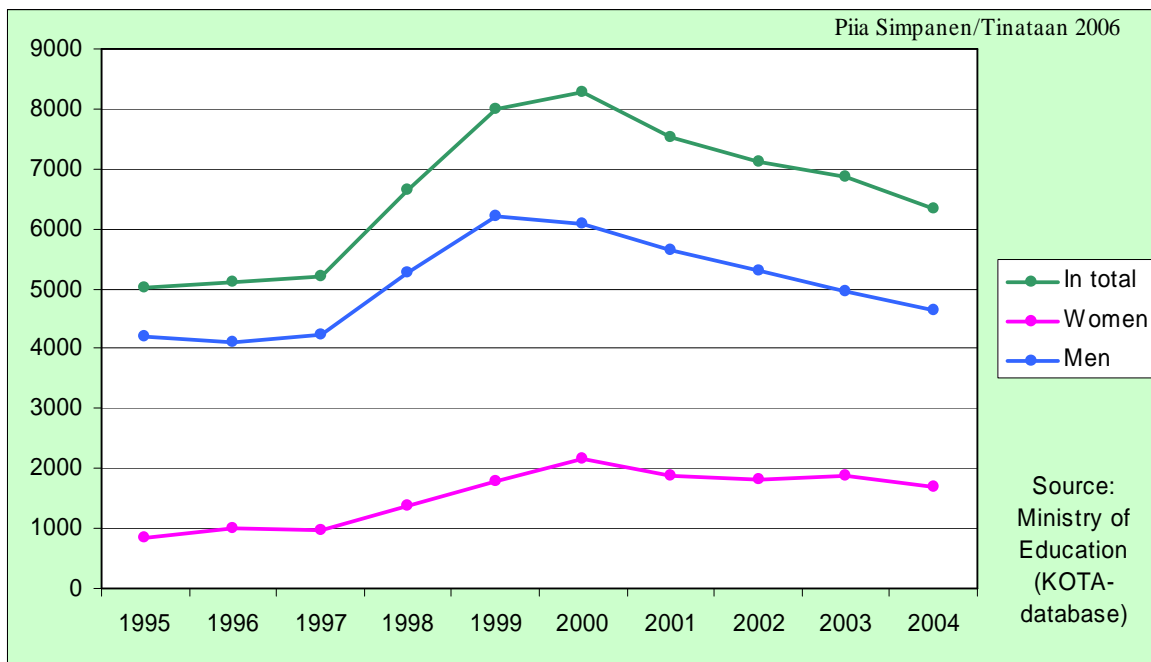
### Participation in entrance examinations

Over the last ten years the amount of applicants to the Higher Engineering education has increased from 5000 (year 1995) to 8000 (year 2000) and then decreased to 6500 (year 2004) as you can see

from the Figure 2. The proportion of women has increased evenly. In year 1995 the proportion of women in applicants was about 17 % but in the year 2004 it was as much as 27%.

In the year 1997 the amount of applicants started to increase highly. Intake was extended a lot in the late 1990's and that must be one of the effective reasons to the increasing. Some other possible reasons are the IT-boom that boosted the interest and awareness of the branch and the good employment situation of the branch.

The proportion of women started to grow at the same time that the amount of applicants as a whole. Many equality projects have presumably influenced to the growth of the proportion of women. First projects were launched already in the 1980's and the amount of projects has increased in the decade of 2000. New and interesting study programmes that women favour, for example the Bioinformation Technology study programme in Helsinki University of Technology, can also be one reason.



**Figure 2. Participation in entrance examinations**

### Accepted students and students in total

As you can see from the Figure 3., the amount of students accepted in to Higher Engineering education has increased evenly over the years 1995 – 2002. In the year 2002 the amount had almost doubled comparing to the amount of accepted students in the year 1995. After 2002 they started to reduce the intake.

The corollary of the increasing of the intake is the increasing amount of students, both men and women (Figure 4.) The proportion of women in accepted has grown over the last ten years from 20 per cent to 24 per cent and the proportion of women in students is about 20 per cent these days. 70 % of the women that have participated in the entrance examination have been accepted. The percentage proportion of men is equal.

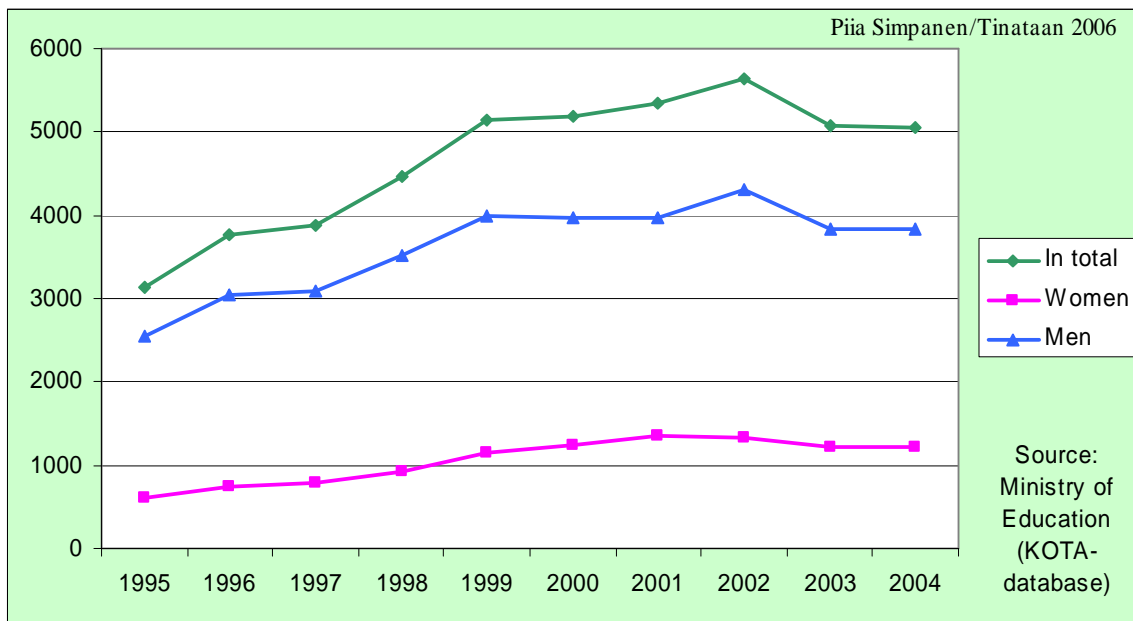


Figure 3. Accepted students

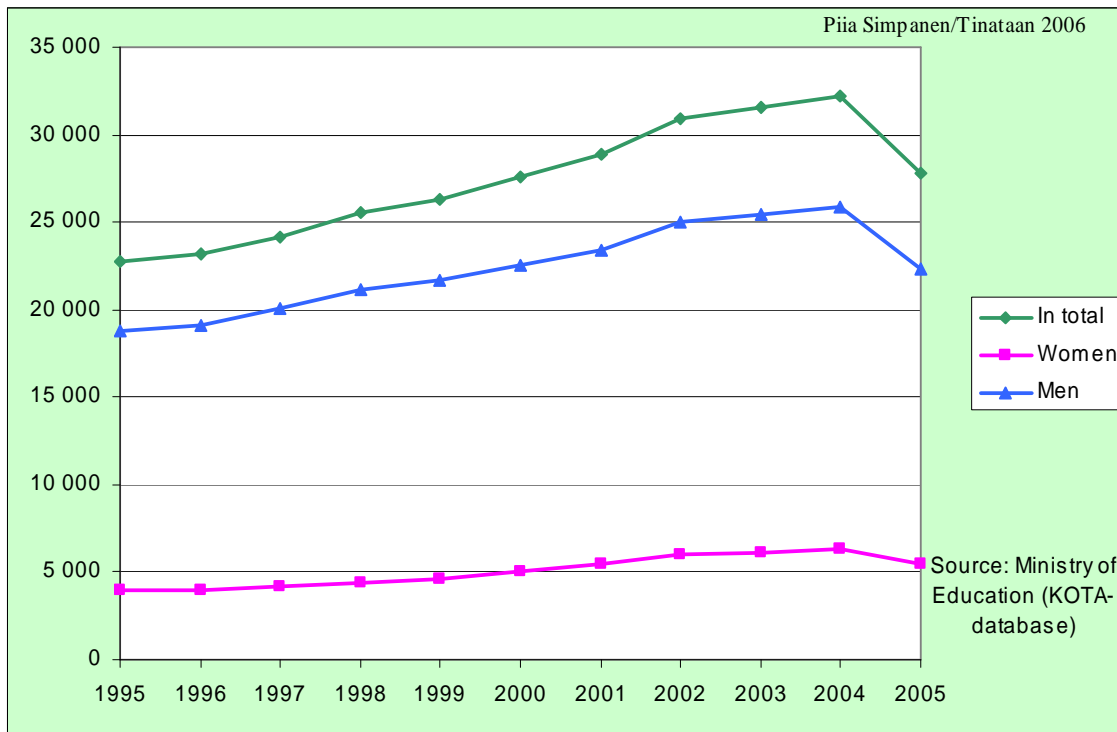


Figure 4. Students

## Degrees

You can see from the Figure 5. that the amount of degrees have been increasing over the last ten years. The proportion of women in graduated has increased from 20 per cent to 25 per cent. One effective reason to the amount of degrees over the years can be new systems of degrees and curricula, for example the year 1995 system of degree that obligates students to graduate before 31.7.1999 if they study according the old system.

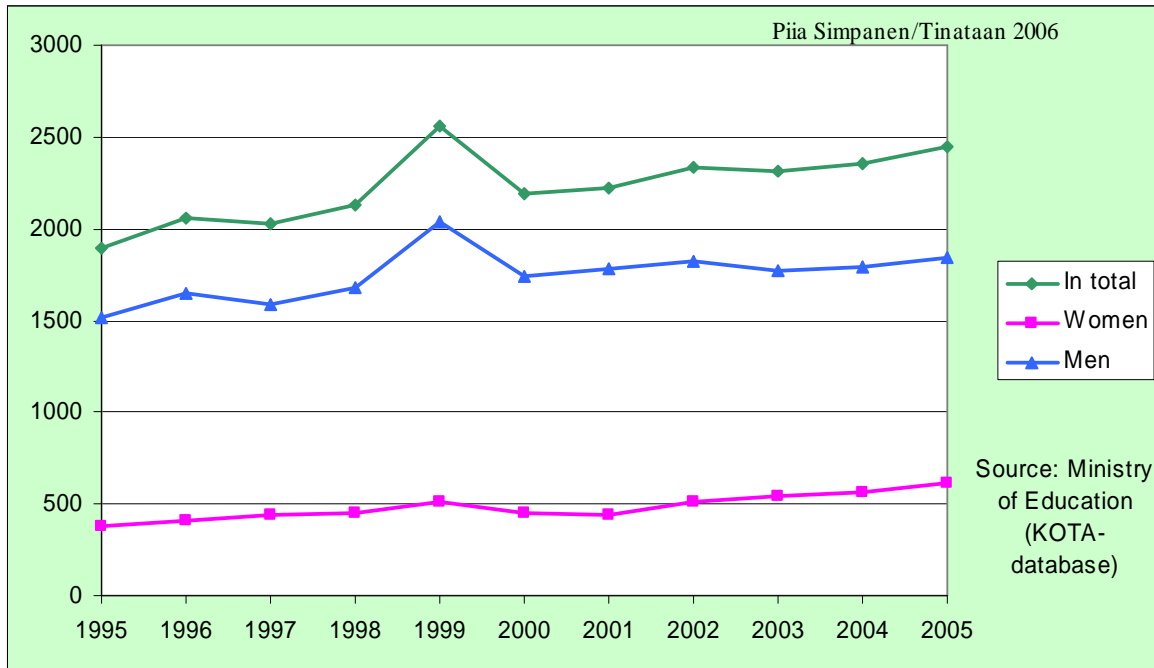


Figure 5 Degrees

## Conclusion

Over the last ten years the work of demolishing segregation has started to bear. The proportion of women applying to the branch of technology has increased. There is still work to do, because great number of women doesn't yet feel the branch as own and won't apply as students. Girls's attitudes towards technology are negative and they consider the job dull and stressing<sup>ii</sup>.

<sup>i</sup>Statistics of the Union of Professional Engineers in Finland

<sup>ii</sup>[http://esrlomake.mol.fi/esrtiepa/loppuraportti\\_S80874.html](http://esrlomake.mol.fi/esrtiepa/loppuraportti_S80874.html)